

**SOLICITATION No. SOL-663-16-000005**

**U.S. Resident Hire USPSC**

**Certifying officer**

**USAID Addis Ababa, Ethiopia**

1. SOLICITATION NUMBER: SOL-663-16-000005
2. ISSUANCE DATE: 12/2/2015
3. CLOSING DATE/TIME: 12/31/2015
4. POSITION TITLE: Certifying Officer
5. MARKET VALUE: The market value for this PSC is equivalent to a GS-11 level.  
  
Please note that U.S. resident-hire PSCs are not eligible for any fringe benefits (except contributions for FICA, health insurance, and life insurance), including differentials and allowances. Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value based upon the candidate's past salary, work history, and educational background.
6. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The PSC contract will be for 2 years, with the possibility of an annual extension. No PSC contract may exceed a five-year period of performance.
7. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: Addis Ababa, Ethiopia
8. DIRECT SUPERVISOR: Controller
9. SECURITY ACCESS: Employment authorization only
10. AREA OF CONSIDERATION: U.S. citizen (as further defined in footnote no. 1 below)<sup>1</sup>

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**A. BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION**

The Contractor/incumbent serves as a Payment Specialist (PS) and principal Authorized Certifying Officer (ACO) for the Office of Financial Management (OFM) at USAID Ethiopia. Incumbent is charged with the responsibility of final review and authorization of vouchers for payment and is held accountable for

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<sup>1</sup> Resident Hire” means a U.S. citizen who, at the time of hire as a PSC, resides in the cooperating country: (i) as a spouse or dependent of a U.S. citizen employed: (A) by a U.S. Government agency; or (B) under any U.S. government-financed contract or agreement; or (C) under any other contract or agreement that provides for repatriation to the United States; or (ii) for reasons other than employment: (A) with a U.S. Government agency; or (B) under any U.S. Government financed contract or agreements; or (C) under any other contract or employment arrangement that provides for repatriation to the United States. A U.S. citizen for purposes of this definition also includes persons who at the time of contracting are lawfully admitted permanent residents of the United States.

public funds. Has no public funds in their physical possession but is personally accountable for and required to make good to the U.S. Government the amount of any illegal or improper payment. The PS/ACO has a serious burden to avoid liability or to qualify for relief from an erroneous payment, and must rely upon the financial controls system in place to ensure the propriety of payments. To avoid personal liability, must be knowledgeable of financial controls systems and comply with established procedures, and is responsible to ensure that funds are legally available for payment; services for which bills have been presented have been rendered; advancement of funds prior to rendition of services is legally proper; vouchers are correct; computations are correct; and the amount of any illegal, improper, or incorrect payment is not certified for payment. The PS/ACO can have a definitive impact on the outcome of vouchers relating to internal (employees) or external (contractors, grantees, vendors) payments. Must use sound judgment and refer to frequently complex government guidelines when examining and reviewing vouchers and considering or disallowing all or parts of payments funded with USD and Trust Funded appropriations.

The incumbent may also be required to act as the payment section supervisor during the absence of the supervisor.

## **B. MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The Contractor's responsibilities include the following:

1) (70%) Review for correctness and certify for payment complex invoices and/or claims for payment involving program funded contracts, grants, host country contracts, PASAs, PILs and Commodity Import Program letters of commitment. Also review and certify a full range of complex administrative claims, including a substantial number of international travel vouchers and other entitlement payments. Claims reviewed include a variety of payment provisions including payroll claims, fixed price, cost reimbursement and variable cost contracts and require judgment in adapting USAID procedures to Ethiopian business customs and laws. Review and analysis includes:

- Ensuring that the obligation contains appropriate authorizations and administrative approval, and is supported by proper evidence showing that a valid, binding agreement has been executed and properly recorded;
- Ensuring that the request for payment is in accordance with the provisions, terms, and conditions of the obligating document;
- Verification that funds are available and that established controls to prevent improper or duplicate payment are in place and effectively working;
- Ensuring proper application of the Prompt Payment Act by processing vouchers within the correct time frame;
- Ensuring that disbursements comply with U.S. Government and host country laws and regulations;
- Preparing and communicating rationales concerning any portions of a claim where payment is suspended or disallowed;

- Communicating with payees and other mission staff to provide guidance, interpret the agency's voucher auditing requirements, and/or request clarifying information regarding proposed payments.

2) (10%) Function as the primary mission liaison with the USDO local banks to transmit payment files, provide procedural guidance, identify system issues, operate complex payment system interfaces, and troubleshoot local bank payment issues as they arise.

Incumbent is responsible for ensuring the physical security of computers and sensitive banking information. The system houses and transmits sensitive banking information of nearly \$500 million per year to local banks and regional finance centers; the ACO is responsible for controlling access to the equipment for use by others. The ACO is also responsible for communicating with Citibank and downloading and distributing monthly statements for items procured using the government credit card.

3) (10%) Projects as assigned by the Controller / Deputy Controller, including identifying and assisting in the development of Phoenix reporting and system applications for use by the FM payments section to maintain financial controls.

4) (5%) Monitor program and OE advances to ensure conformity to advance aging regulations, and take action as necessary to bring excess amounts into compliance.

5) (5%) Assist the Deputy Controller and the Controller to review and ensure that appropriate procedures and internal controls are in place and are adhered to, including review and clearance of bank reconciliations and travel authorizations.

### C. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS

The following specific qualifications are necessary:

**1. Education:** Bachelor's Degree in accounting, finance, business administration or related field required. Master's Degree in accounting preferred.

**2. Work Experience:** Bachelor's Degree and eight years of practical experience in applying accounting principles and accepted financial management practices is required. Alternatively, Master's Degree in business or accounting and six years of practical experience in applying accounting principles and accepted financial management practices is required. Prior financial management experience with USG/USAID regulations, laws and procedures is desirable. Professional certification such as CPA or ACCA (UK) preferred.

**3. Language:** Excellent spoken English skills required.

**4. Knowledge, Skills and Abilities.** The incumbent serves as a Payment Specialist (PS) and principal Authorized Certifying Officer (ACO) for the USAID Ethiopia , Office of Financial Management (OFM) . Incumbent is charged with the responsibility of final review and authorization of vouchers for payment and is held accountable for public funds. Has no public funds in their physical possession but is personally accountable for and required to make good to the U.S. Government the amount of any illegal or improper payment. The PS/ACO has a serious burden to avoid liability or to qualify for relief from an erroneous payment, and must rely upon the financial controls system in place to ensure the propriety of payments. To avoid personal liability, must be knowledgeable of financial controls systems and comply with established procedures, and is responsible to ensure that funds are legally available for payment; services for which bills have been presented have been rendered; advancement of funds prior to

rendition of services is legally proper; vouchers are correct; computations are correct; and the amount of any illegal, improper, or incorrect payment is not certified for payment. The PS/ACO can have a definitive impact on the outcome of vouchers relating to internal (employees) or external (contractors, grantees, vendors) payments. Must use sound judgment and refer to frequently complex government guidelines when examining and reviewing vouchers and considering or disallowing all or parts of payments funded with USD and Trust Funded appropriations. The incumbent may also be required to act as the payment section supervisor during the absence of the supervisor.

**D. SELECTION CRITERIA:** Applicants meeting the basic requirements will be evaluated based on information presented in the application, an interview process and reference checks as necessary. All applicants must address each qualification detailed above with specific and comprehensive information supporting each item. These qualifications, which serve as the selection criteria, will be evaluated based on the following points below.

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|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. Language           | 15 points  |
| 2. Education          | 15 points  |
| 3. Work Experience    | 35 points  |
| 4. Skills and Ability | 35 Points  |
| Maximum Points        | 100 Points |

**h. Selection Process:** After the closing date of receipt of applications, a committee will be convened to review applications and evaluate them in accord with the evaluation criteria. Applications from candidates which do not meet the required selection criteria will not be scored. As part of the selection process, finalist candidates may be interviewed either in person or by telephone at USAID's discretion. Reference checks will be made only for applicants considered as finalists. Only finalist will be contacted by USAID with respect to their applications.

**i.** All applicants must complete the [Universal Application for Employment \(DS-174\)](#).

Only applicants who meet or exceed the stated position requirements will be considered. All applicants must have the required work and/or residency permits to be eligible for consideration.

**Application should be submitted to:**  
**Points of Contact**  
**Fekadu Tamirate**  
**HR Specialist**  
**USAID Ethiopia**  
**Email: [Ftamirate@usaid.gov](mailto:Ftamirate@usaid.gov)**  
**Late applications will not be considered.**