

MISSION NOTICE

USAID Nairobi Complex

DATE: November 27, 2013

NOTICE NO: 13 – 72

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY – VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT FOR REGIONAL ACQUISITION & ASSISTANCE SPECIALIST, REGIONAL ACQUISITION AND ASSISTANCE OFFICE, USAID/EAST AFRICA

OPENING DATE: Immediately (Subject to Availability of Funds)

CLOSING DATE: December 18, 2013

Office: Regional Acquisition & Assistance Office

Title: Regional Acquisition & Assistance Specialist (3 Positions)

Grade: FSN - (PSC) – 1102-9/10/11

Who May Apply: All qualified Kenyan citizens. Employees currently on probation are ineligible to apply.

BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION:

The incumbent is a professional Acquisition & Assistance (A&A) Specialist and has responsibility for managing the procurement portfolio of a large program of the East Africa Region. The USAID/ East Africa Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office (RAAO) provides support to the East African Missions of Kenya, Djibouti, Somalia, Congo, Burundi, and Rwanda, and intermittently to Ethiopia, Tanzania, Sudan, Uganda and elsewhere. Presently, the Mission has over a dozen acquisition specialists.

As the principal assistant to a lead Contracting/Agreement Officer with responsibility for East Africa Region programs, the incumbent shall be required to perform independently in a program requiring complicated and sensitive contracting operations. In this portfolio, most of the acquisition and assistance processes involve complex, multi-million dollar contracts, grants and cooperative agreements, many of which are structured with a prime contractor/grantee having one or more subcontractors/sub-grantees and requiring substantial contract/grant administration. The Regional A&A Specialist will be required to apply a broad range of highly specialized acquisition and assistance functions. The Regional A&A Specialist plays a key role in negotiating, administering, and modifying various types of contracts for the acquisition of services, equipment, supplies, materials, and other needs for projects having a strong contracting orientation. While not a warranted Contracting/Agreement Officer, the incumbent must have

developed specialized procurement knowledge by completing at least FAC Level II certification. It is understood that an individual hired for this position may require training to meet the required qualifications and performance level.

MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

The Regional A&A Specialist is responsible for managing the procurement portfolio and performing acquisition and assistance functions for missions in the East Africa Region. Transaction levels for both acquisition and assistance will typically range in size from \$50,000 to \$300,000,000 in estimated value per transaction. All acquisition and assistance methods are employed, including full and open competitive actions done through negotiation or sealed bidding, task orders, delivery orders against established indefinite quantity contracts, interagency agreements, cooperative agreements, grants, and simplified acquisitions. Supervision is provided by a lead Contracting/Agreement Officer in the Regional Acquisition and Assistance Office (RAAO). As a fully empowered representative of RAAO, the Regional A&A Specialist is a core team member on multiple Mission Development Objective (DO) teams covering different development sectors, and advises Mission and DO team management on the interpretation and application of acquisition policies and regulations to specific acquisition and assistance activities, both operational and project support. The incumbent advises on the need for waivers, and ensures that procurements comply with USAID regulations.

Sealed bidding is not often used, but the Specialist is sufficiently familiar with the procedure to know when it is appropriate and know how it differs from negotiated procurement, because it is expected that more construction contracts will be executed in the region. The Specialist should also be familiar with Simplified Acquisition Procedures.

Both cost reimbursement and fixed price contracts are used routinely and the incumbent fully understands and applies the legal and procedural differences between them.

The incumbent is familiar with the procedures applicable to the acquisition of goods. The Regional A&A Specialist duties involve the procurement of personal and non-personal services. The work load involves the award of delivery orders against indefinite quantity contracts (and the award of those basic indefinite quantity contracts themselves), as well as unique, one time purchase of technical assistance, studies, workshops, training, logistical support arrangements, and direct provision of services in a broad range of program areas.

The incumbent must be able to provide authoritative technical guidance to Contracting and Agreement Officer's Representatives (C/AORs) in the performance of their procurement-related responsibilities.

A comprehensive knowledge of the Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) process is required since the incumbent is responsible for providing guidance and training in A&A matters to Mission staff and partners. The Specialist must possess a clear understanding of the differences between acquisition and assistance so that he/she can effectively and accurately represent U.S. Government (USG) policy not only to outside organizations but also to programmatic and administrative officials within USAID/East Africa. The Regional A&A Specialist performs Temporary Duty (TDY) assignments to missions within the East Africa Region. Moreover, the

Specialist must be able to discuss and assess procurement issues with a degree of expertise sufficient to form the basis of well-founded recommendations to the cognizant Contracting/Agreement Officer.

a. Pre-Award Duties and Responsibilities (60%)

Participate in procurement planning functions that may include reviewing strategic objective agreements/results frameworks, participating in program planning meetings, and identifying components of the plans that are accomplished through the participation of outside provider organizations.

Advise DO team members/activity managers of the selection of appropriate acquisition and assistance mechanisms for accomplishing Agency programmatic objectives; identify acquisition issues/potential problems requiring guidance from the Regional Legal Advisor; make choice of instrument recommendations to the cognizant Contracting/Agreement Officer.

Collaborate with DO team members/activity managers in the preparation of advance procurement planning documents for each proposed action which reflect the steps required by regulation or policy in the selected mechanism's process, realistic estimates of the time required to accomplish each step and a commitment to maintain the agreed-upon schedule. Keep the Contracting/Agreement Officer informed of anticipated workload demands.

Assist DO team members/activity managers in the preparation of required descriptions of the proposed activity including, as appropriate, statements of work, specifications, program descriptions, program announcements, evaluation criteria, etc. Such assistance may take the form of participation in the original drafting process, review of drafts, training in the preparation of such documents or on USAID regulations as contained in AIDAR, ADS, and AAPDs, and in the Federal Regulations under FAR, CFR, OMB circulars, Executive Directives, and the statutes. Such documents must adequately reflect and protect USG interests in the accomplishment of the programmatic objectives and comply with pertinent statutory, regulatory, and policy requirements. Guides the DO/project teams in best practices and performance-based technical approaches.

Review incoming requisition documents to ensure compliance with all Agency and Mission requirements and appropriateness for the proposed action. Ensure proper recording and processing of requisitions in the Agency's GLobal Acquisition and Assistance System (GLAAS).

Prepares all required pre-solicitation documents, including determinations and findings, synopses, justifications, IFBs, RFPs, and/or RFAs. When necessary, he/she conducts pre-award conferences with potential offerors and advises the Contracting/Agreement Officer concerning such matters as the adequacy and choice of evaluation criteria, type of contract, the extent and mechanisms of advertising, the appropriateness of the time permitted for bid or pre-proposal preparation, the need for a pre-solicitation or pre-proposal conference, and any special terms and conditions that may be required, particularly if their use would require a deviation from governing regulations. Most importantly, the incumbent shall ensure that procurement integrity is upheld and maintained for all actions and by all members who participate in the evaluation of those actions.

Prepare solicitation documents which reflect federal grant law and USAID regulations governing assistance instruments or federal acquisition and USAID regulations, policies and procedures, as applicable. Issue necessary amendments to answer questions concerning such topics as specification changes, language ambiguities, clarification of contract clauses, etc.

Control the flow of information from the Mission to the offering community during the proposal preparation stage, ensuring that all requirements of full and open competition are met and that the integrity of the procurement process is upheld.

Provide instructions to the technical evaluation committee regarding rules and procedures in the conduct of a competitive source selection. Represent the Contracting/Agreement Officer in the evaluation of bids and proposals, ensuring compliance with all published evaluation criteria and factors, and Federal and USAID regulations, policies and procedures. Evaluate bids and offers for responsiveness to the particular solicitation, and documents the relative strengths and deficiencies of each proposal.

Analyze cost proposals and technical scores from the technical evaluation committee, and, based on this analysis, advises the Contracting Officer concerning the makeup of the competitive range in competitively negotiated acquisitions and presents documentation for signature to the Contracting/Agreement Officer. Coordinate issues of technical weakness and excessive costs with the project team prior to the commencement of negotiations.

Perform evaluations and in-depth Cost Analyses of bids/offers/applications. Obtains pricing assistance as necessary and available, and performs cost or price analysis as appropriate, and documents findings. Perform extensive analysis on cost issues with consideration to economic conditions and factors of material, labor, and transportation costs. Closely examines cost and pricing data submitted by offerors to substantiate direct and indirect costs and profit. Advise in determining the reasonableness of proposed costs.

Prepare pre-negotiation strategies which address price, profit/fee, and term's special conditions, as applicable; prepares requests for confirmation of the results of the negotiation, including requests for final revised proposals or revised program descriptions/financial plans, as applicable. Formulate the negotiation strategy, identifies areas subject to negotiation, and consults with technical specialists concerning data submitted by offerors. Conduct extensive negotiations on cost and technical issues prior to contract award, presenting USAID issues of concern and persuades offerors to address technical deficiencies and reduce costs where appropriate. Document the results of the negotiations and makes recommendations in regard to responsibility determinations, which may require either performing or requesting pre-award, financial and program management reviews as circumstances dictate or permit.

Request submission of revised proposals and prepares appropriate contract or grant instruments for award. Coordinate last stages of selection with the project and technical evaluation team(s). Negotiate and draft grants and cooperative agreements with U.S.-based and indigenous PVOs and NGOs, colleges and universities and other non-profit organizations. Analyze transactions to ensure compliance with Agency cost-sharing and registration policies, as well as local laws

governing status. Coordinate contracting activities with other government agencies, frequently negotiating and drafting interagency agreements.

Obtain reports and references, ensuring that offerors' past performance has been relevant and of a high quality. Clarify, and as necessary, instruct the members of the project team, host country counterparts, and other Mission staff on the USAID procurement process as implemented in the Agency.

Ensure that data provided is consistent with all USAID requirements on eligible geographic sources, and that salary structures are consistent with Agency policies. Identify circumstances that will call for a waiver.

Ensure that offerors have adequate management, accounting, personnel, and procurement systems, corporate leadership, available resources, and quality control to satisfactorily carry out contracts. As part of the responsibility determination process, ensure that apparent successful offerors have a have record of integrity in their business dealings and are not otherwise precluded from doing business with the US Government.

Prepare award documents that reflect the results of all discussions, any special needs of the project, and applicable terms and conditions.

Distribute award documents, ensure proper recording of the obligation by the Controller's Office, provide all required notifications to unsuccessful bidders, offerors, and USG award publication points, arrange debriefings and ensured proper data entry and processing into USAID acquisition and assistance management systems.

b. Post-Award Duties and Responsibilities (40%)

Responsible for contract administration sufficient to ensure that the terms and conditions of the award are met and that the contractor meets delivery schedules and/or performance milestones in a timely manner to achieve Mission objectives. Organizes and conducts post-award conferences to include orientation meeting with the selected contractor/grantee and all cognizant Mission support offices, beneficiaries, and relevant implementer employees to ensure that mobilization efforts will be conducted efficiently and that all terms and conditions of procurement instruments are clear and well-understood by all parties. Provides support in debriefing unsuccessful offerors. Contract/grant administration includes, among other tasks, site visits, change orders, drafting correspondence, initiating contractor performance evaluations, monitoring of reporting requirements, advising C/AORs and contractors on their administration responsibilities, etc.

Advise the Contracting/Agreement Officer and prepare appropriate documentation on any issues that may arise in the course of performance, including changes, disputes, work stoppages, problems with Government Furnished Property or Materials, changes in scope or direction, replacement of key personnel, failure to make acceptable progress, default, payment problems, or unacceptable performance/deliveries. Recommend appropriate action on all required prior approval requests for the Contracting/Agreement Officer.

Analyze and act to resolve findings contained in audit reports, such as cost items questioned or unresolved. The incumbent supports recommendations with detailed analysis of each cost, category or element as necessary. Prepare necessary documents to resolve all aspects of audits, questioned or ineligible costs, and accounting issues. Present documentation to the Contracting/Agreement Officer for signature. Review completed (after full performance) official contract/grant files to determine that all contractual actions are satisfied and that there are no pending administrative actions to be resolved. Ensure that all file documents are signed, that there are no litigation actions pending, and that the contract is complete in every respect and ready to be closed. Ensure that contracts nearing annual anniversaries or final completion have a performance report filled out by the Technical Officer, and submits the report to the contractor for comment.

REQUIRED QUALIFICATIONS:

Applicants may apply for any of the three grade levels listed below to be considered. Applications that do not meet the minimum requirements indicated below for the grade level for which the applicant is applying will not be evaluated. Only short listed applicants will be contacted. If you have not been contacted within one month from the closing date of this advertisement, please consider your application unsuccessful.

a. Education:

Entry Level FSN 9

A two-year diploma in business administration, political science, international relations, international procurement, supply chain management, social science, or a related field, is required. Specialized training in USG acquisition is desirable, but can occur after employment.

Entry Level FSN 10

A bachelor's degree in business administration, political science, international relations, international procurement, supply chain management, social science, or a related field, is required. Specialized training in USG acquisition is desirable, but can occur after employment.

Entry Level FSN 11

A master's degree in business administration, political science, international relations, international procurement, supply chain management, social science, or a related field, is required. Specialized training in USG acquisition is desirable, but can occur after employment.

- b. Prior Work Experience:** Minimum 4 years (FSN 9), 5 years (FSN 10), and 6 years (FSN 11) of progressively responsible, professional experience. At least 2, preferably 3, years of them must be in procurement in a professional capacity with USG or similar organization.
- c. Communication Skills:** Excellent oral and written English communication skills are required including the ability to draft various procurement-related documents and to

develop sound solicitation and instrument documents. Level IV (fluent) in spoken & written English and fluent Kiswahili is required.

- d. **Interpersonal Skills:** Excellent interpersonal skills to deal effectively with various officials, usually with highly divergent points of view. Must be diplomatic and tactful in setting forth ideas, constraints, or courses of action.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- 1. **Past Performance (30 points):** Degree to which the applicant has demonstrated successful past performance in relevant positions of increasing responsibility and of a similar complexity over the past five years or more.

(Applicants may provide supplementary information (i.e. performance evaluations, documentation of performance awards or recognitions, etc.) with the application package to substantiate successful past performance. Past performance will be verified through reference checks for top-ranked candidates only.)

- 2. **Knowledge, Skills and Abilities (30 points):** Demonstrated knowledge, skills and abilities related to the position as described herein or the ability to learn these skills and develop the knowledge necessary to perform at the full position grade.

- 3. **Interpersonal and Communication Skills (20 points)**

- 4. **Prior Work Experience (20 points):** Score will be based on the relevance of applicant's education and work experience.

(Note: Initial evaluations will be conducted based on the application package submitted. Reference checks, interviews, and written exercises will be administered for only those applicants who are considered among the most highly ranked after an initial review of applications.)

POSITION ELEMENTS:

- a. **Supervision Received:** Receives general guidance from a U.S. Direct Hire Contracting/Agreement Officer, who gives assignments in terms of procurement actions to be performed. The incumbent plans and implements the procurement approach and interacts with cognizant DO and project teams, providing policy and strategic guidance on how to best fulfill the requirements. He/she initiates any necessary coordination with the accounting and legal offices staff of other agencies, and with contractors, to obtain supporting documentation and resolve any conflicts including disagreements over technical descriptions, elements of cost, legal matters, and performance problems. The incumbent keeps the supervisor updated via periodic status reports and verbal briefings. Completed work is reviewed from the overall standpoint of providing a viable procurement approach for meeting established objectives, or for results achieved in meeting delivery schedules and contractual conditions.

- b. Available Guidelines:** USAID ADS, Administrative Notices, Mission Orders, Federal and AID Acquisition Regulations (FAAR), the Code of Federal Regulations, the CONet, AAPDS, PEBs.
- c. Exercise of Judgment:** The employee must exercise independent judgment and initiative as the sole procurement representative on the DO team or the project team to: 1) identify those aspects of regulations which apply to the particular procurement; 2) develop justification for adopting a procurement posture; 3) tailors provisions to meet special requirements and develop criteria or justifications involving contractors claims; 4) to recommend the selection of winning contractors or grantees. He/she also determines and uses special clauses, clearances, and determinations applicable to certain procurements. The exceptional exercise of judgment and discretion is required given the sensitive nature of contracting procedures.
- d. Authority to Make Commitments:** The incumbent has considerable latitude in dealing with problems arising during the pre-award or post-award phases of the procurement action, and to independently manage full and open competitive transactions from inception to completion. He/she makes decisions on the basis of analysis of alternatives, adaptation, or modification of procedures, or resolution of incomplete or conflicting technical or contractor data. The Contracting/Agreement Officer relies heavily on the decision of a Regional A&A Specialist to make the appropriate decisions. Decisions that are unsound result in legal conflicts and put the Agency at risk. The incumbent is authorized to distribute official documents including, solicitation documents, contract modifications, etc to authorized personnel and client missions. However, he/she has no authority to bind the USG to contract or order any goods or services.
- e. Nature, Level and Purpose of Contacts:** Contacts include large and small U.S. business firms, other local national and international business firms, bilateral government officials, U.N agencies, PVOs, inter-governmental bodies, public international organizations (PIOs), and the Bureau's Office in USAID/Washington. Typical contacts with contractors include officers and technical experts representing these firms. The incumbent works with technical staff, attorneys, auditors, and others from within the Agency or other agencies. The contacts occur in moderately unstructured settings, with the roles and authorities being developed during the negotiation or discussion. The purpose of contacts with external groups is to conduct conferences, share USAID policies on recent procurement innovations, techniques and reforms, to conduct fact finding, negotiate contracts, and modifications, and resolve numerous problems during contract administration. Contacts at host country counterpart institutions are to represent USAID overseeing briefing sessions by potential contractors, and ensure that the counterpart employees understand USAID procurement processes fully.
- f. Supervision Exercised:** The incumbent does not have supervisory responsibility, but provides guidance and delegates work to junior acquisition staff.

- g. Time Required to Perform Full Range of Duties after Entry into the Position:**
One year.
- h. Post Entry Training:** The incumbent must have developed specialized procurement knowledge by completing FAC-C Level II certification.
- i. Knowledge:** A very good knowledge of Federal and Agency procurement regulations and procedures and highly specialized knowledge of:

 - (i)** analyzing and organizing large amounts of detailed information, such as cost factors and contract types, as relates to requirements;
 - (ii)** ability to deal effectively with intermediate to high level representatives of U.S., interregional, international and local business and industry, missions, and the host government;
 - (iii)** results-based assistance instruments (grants and cooperative agreements) and how these documents can help fulfill mission objectives. Good knowledge of market conditions, the political context and social conditions impacting USG procurement actions. Knowledge of the organization's interested in, and capable of performing USG contracts, grants, cooperative agreements, etc. Knowledge of the concerns from public voluntary organizations (PVOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), 8(a) firms, small businesses, and large businesses;
 - (iv)** a highly specialized knowledge in all phases of the procurement processes leading to award, particularly soliciting, reviewing of applications or proposals and contract award and administration procedures, providing technical advice in complex contractual arrangements to USAID client missions and host country officials; knowledge of program, project, or other commodity requirements. Knowledge of local market conditions and costs. Knowledge of U.S Federal and Agency acquisitions a plus. Ability to work independently.
- j. Skills and Abilities:** Excellent negotiation skills to negotiate multi-year, multi-million dollar contracts and other instruments. Excellent analytical skills and sound judgment to select appropriate acquisition or assistance instrument types; to evaluate bids or offers; conduct cost and price analysis; determine the responsibility of contractors on the basis of competition, historical costs, reports, etc.; and the ability to work with minimum or no supervision

NOTE

Current USG employees must meet the "time-in-grade" requirement of 52 weeks in the previous lower grade to qualify for the position at the level in this vacancy announcement or be at the same grade for which the position is being recruited.

Through this vacancy announcement, USAID reserves the right to fill the number of positions listed above and may choose to utilize this announcement to fill additional vacancies that might arise during this hiring process or thereafter.

HOW TO APPLY

- Step 1:** Complete the job application questionnaire at www.myjobsinkenya.com/usaid. Complete the questionnaire to the end. Once this is done, go to Step 2.
- Step 2:** Internal Applicants/Current USG Employees: Send a memo explaining your qualifications for the position, up-to-date resume, and a copy of your most recent Performance Evaluation Report to nairobihr@usaid.gov.

OR

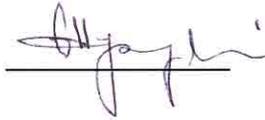
External Applicants: Send a letter explaining your qualifications for the position and up-to-date resume/curriculum vitae to nairobihr@usaid.gov.

Scan and send all your attachments as one document. The Notice No. (on the top left-hand side of the vacancy announcement), and your name, as it appears on your online application, MUST be included in your e-mail subject line.

All applications must be done electronically. Hard copy applications will not be accepted. Incomplete application packages will not be considered.

The closing date for receipt of applications is **COB December 18, 2013**.

EXO:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'S. J. ...', written over a horizontal line.