

**U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS FOR INNOVATION AND IMPACT (HEPII)
ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)**

APS No: APS-OAA-15-000048

USAID and Higher Education Institutions

Issuance Date: June 30, 2015

Closing Date: June 29 , 2016

This program is authorized in accordance with Part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended.

This Annual Program Statement announces opportunities for higher education institutions to work with USAID to build partnerships around development challenges. This solicitation can be viewed and downloaded from the Internet at www.grants.gov. USAID bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes. Further, be aware that addendums to this solicitation may be issued and will be posted on the same Internet site from which you downloaded this APS.

In addition, this APS is not supported by specific funds. Any funding for a partnership proposed under this APS would have to be requested from the specific USAID Mission, Bureau or Independent Office with which the applicant seeks to collaborate and to which the Concept Paper will be submitted to the requesting USAID Missions/B/IO.

Issuance of this Notice does not constitute a binding commitment on the part of the Government to issue a Solicitation, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any Concept Papers or full applications.

Sincerely,

Alina Menicucci
Agreement Officer
Office of Acquisition and Assistance

OAA Cover Letter:

This APS requests concept papers in response to APS No APS-OAA-15-000048

This APS consists of this cover letter and the following:

I: Introduction

II: Partnering for Impact: HEIs and USAID

III: Application and Funding Information

IV: Concept Paper Submission and Review

V. Purpose of APS, Applicant Eligibility, and Award Considerations

VI: Full Application Instructions for Organizations which Submitted Concept Papers under this
APS

VII: Additional Considerations and Resources

VIII: Additional Resources

Appendix I: List of Acronyms

Appendix II: Key Definitions

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Background

This Annual Program Statement (APS) announces opportunities for higher education institutions (HEIs) to work with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to advance USAID's strategic priorities and objectives, and achieve sustainable development outcomes, results, and impact. USAID seeks to optimize its relationship with HEIs by identifying and promoting successful partnerships and collaboration models, and increasing USAID's access to higher education technical resources.

This APS will be a flexible mechanism that promotes opportunities for leveraging HEI capabilities across USAID's portfolio and its program cycle, and strengthens developing country HEI capabilities to respond to and solve critical development challenges, according to the country context. This APS has the flexibility to award Cooperative Agreements, Grants, Fixed Amount Awards, and Leader with Associate Awards in accordance with ADS 303.3.5.4 Annual Program Statement (APS).

Note: This solicitation is an Annual Program Statement (APS). It is not a Request for Applications (RFA) or a Request for Proposals (RFP). This APS requests Concept Papers from U.S. and non-U.S. higher education institutions. USAID anticipates that in order to increase meaningful engagement targeted to HEIs, any potential award will be led by an HEI. All concept papers and subsequent full applications, if requested, will be expected to feature an HEI as the lead implementer. Additionally, HEIs must carefully demonstrate their ability to partner effectively with other institutional partners, be they NGO, private sector, foundations or others. Based on those Concept Papers, USAID will determine whether to request a full application from the applicant.

In addition, this APS is not supported by specific funds. Any funding for any USAID-HEI partnership proposed under this APS would have to be requested from the specific USAID Mission, Bureau or Independent Office with which the prospective applicant seeks to collaborate and to which the Concept Paper will be submitted.

B. Overview

Economic and social development depends largely on well-trained human capital with globally-competitive knowledge and skills, citizens trained in the virtues and values of democratic societies, and institutional cultures that enhance rather than impede economic efficiency, human well-being, and justice and equality. Higher education has been a means to achieving this goal by training graduates in relevant fields for labor market needs, generating knowledge through research and dissemination, establishing and expanding networks of like-minded professionals engaged in mutual efforts, and building and sustaining institutions capable of responding to development challenges.¹

¹ "African Higher Education: Opportunities for Transformative Change for Sustainable Development", APLU, February 2014

Yet, many HEIs in developing countries still lag in quality, educational service delivery and capacity to effectively engage at national and local levels.

The APS will also facilitate access to novel approaches to development. This is achieved through open source collaboration and by seeking idea-driven approaches. To do so, it is important to understand the value propositions of each partner; be aware of successful collaboration models; and tailor engagement across the wide range of possible USAID and HEI actors.

By inviting HEIs and their partners to identify ways we can work together, the Agency seeks to foster a diverse array of results-focused, high impact HEI partnerships across a variety of regions, countries, and technical sectors.

II. PARTNERING FOR IMPACT: HEIs and USAID

A. Focus on Development Impact

USAID seeks to partner with HEIs across disciplines and collaboration models to facilitate USAID mission and country efforts to improve development outcomes, from small to large-scale activities. As an industry, higher education drives economic growth, generates skilled workforce and produces and supports entrepreneurs and innovators. Strong higher education institutions are better equipped to develop and deliver education, training and research that contribute to a country's economic growth. However, much of the world's human and technological resources for innovation are still largely untapped.

Illustrative examples include:

1. Improve the performance of higher education institutions and ministries of education/higher education in USAID partner countries

- Promoting public-private collaboration
- Develop synergistic connections between HEIs and their economic, social, and natural environments that allow them to be responsive and relevant to their contextual needs
- Institutional quality and performance improvement
- Access to workforce and entrepreneurship education and training for the traditionally underserved that meets the needs of business and industry
- Virtual universities, e-learning and blended learning approaches
- Improving quality of instruction
- Curriculum development
- Innovative measures for civil society engagement in higher education, research discovery and policy discussion
- Strengthening HEI abilities to graduate highly employable graduates

2. Achieve USAID development impact through HEIs and their partners' rigorous research capabilities; strengths in science and technology; subject-matter knowledge and experience; and partnership connections

- Strengthening education systems
- Matching the supply of education with market demand
- Support for integration of applied research in the design and implementation of development policy
- Research applications and dissemination
- Technical assistance to ministries of education/higher education
- Promoting alignment between HEIs and sector-specific ministries
- Data collection, analysis, and indicator assessments
- Monitoring and evaluation

HEIs are encouraged to consider the effective integration of non-HEI partners (private sector, NGOs, foundations, etc.), demonstrating their ability to pursue partnerships and manage relationships with a diverse set of actors, each focused on mutually supporting a specific project or activity with pre-established desired outcomes.

B. Value to HEIs and USAID

The partnership between USAID and HEIs spans more than 50 years and has contributed to numerous development advances. USAID depends on HEIs globally for their deep regional and technical expertise, well-resourced laboratories, rigorous research capabilities, capacity building skills, community connections, and innovative spirits. For their side of the partnership, surveys indicate that HEIs see USAID as a way to advance their roles as global players and contribute to development outcomes in countries beyond their own borders. USAID funding is critical to financing research and programs, and its convening power opens up partnerships and opportunities HEIs could not easily find on their own. The USAID-HEI relationship is one of shared value and overlapping interests.

Successful strategic engagement between USAID and HEIs requires an understanding of the unique values that each provides. USAID already has its own set of capabilities and assets (such as relationships with host governments and civil society groups along with field missions) as well as a wide network of implementing partners around the world including contractors, consultants, and NGOs. As an Agency of the United States Government (USG), USAID plays a unique role at the nexus of development, diplomacy, and defense, and does so “in the field” where theory meets application. For their part, HEIs have relationships with a variety of government agencies, private institutions, research networks, community bodies, and diverse individuals, including large student bodies and interest groups. USAID engagement of HEIs should provide an added value to both the universities and USAID that might not be obtained from other partners.

Research done by USAID on new or existing higher education programs, of how USAID and HEIs can collaborate to solve the complex development challenges of today and tomorrow, has outlined specific assets of USAID and HEIs that are of interest and use to the other. These assets were identified based on interviews with 150 HEI representatives and 30 USAID staff members.

USAID staff members revealed five main areas of value that the Agency gains through collaboration with HEIs, as reflected in the table below:

University Value	Description	Sample Questions Addressed by Accessing this Value
Topical Expertise	Faculty members spend their lives investigating and staying current in one specific technical field and sub-field.	-What questions need to be asked to effectively address a development issue? -What questions have already been answered on a given development issue, and what are the answers?
Methodological Expertise	Academics have the ability to answer questions with unparalleled rigor and impartiality through both primary and applied research.	-How can a given development question be answered? -What are the best ways to carry out certain methods to address a development issue?
Multidisciplinary Expertise	Universities include experts from the entire spectrum of disciplines, all of which are relevant for development interventions in complex systems.	-How do different development strategies interact across various sectors and parts of societal systems?
Innovation	Universities have the facilities, resources, and knowledge base to experiment with new ideas and question assumptions.	-What new ways could address a given development problem through new products, methods, distribution/ adoption systems, etc.?
Capacity Building	Universities understand how higher education and research institutions can best be set up and operated.	-How can overseas higher education and research institutions be improved in a way that will lead to long-term contributions to local development efforts?

The value proposition of USAID to HEIs extends well beyond financial resources. Non-financial values that USAID brings to HEIs include its power to convene diverse actors, particularly host-country government actors. HEIs also site the opportunity USAID’s field presence presents in giving students and faculty a chance to translate theory into practice. The “real world” aspect of USAID’s work can then feed back to HEI campuses through new data and analysis, improved curricula and degree programs, and more insightful awareness of student bodies on development issues, both domestically and internationally. The table below gives further details:

USAID Value	Description	University Needs Addressed
Convening Power	USAID’s wide network of partners gives it unique power in bringing together actors in new ways across the public, private, non-profit, and higher education sectors.	-The ability to form research collaborations -The ability to inform better teaching and research through a deeper and broader contextual understanding
Applying Research & Learning to Real-World Problems	USAID’s range of projects spanning sectors and regions provides a unique avenue for translating research into social impact.	-The ability to have an impact on solving real-world problems -The ability to provide new engagement opportunities for students -The ability to support universities to connect theory with practice

Research and analysis of partnerships with developing country HEIs reveals the strengths that lead to transformative impact over time. Supporting key stakeholders in-country and self-articulated development objectives of developing country partners greatly increases potential success in the long run, especially when engaging faculty, researchers, educators and technical specialists.

South-South cooperation fosters unique and valuable opportunities for strategic alliances and improvement of educational effectiveness, across the range of higher education, technical and vocational and training institutions. Strong U.S. and host-country partnerships offer improved institutional capacity of host-country institutions to deliver technical assistance, address measurable development goals, and strengthen public service.

III. APPLICATION AND FUNDING INFORMATION

A. Overview

HEI partnerships developed under this APS must advance the development objectives and priorities that guide USAID's development assistance programs and investments. Past experience has proven that is worthwhile for prospective HEIs to invest some initial time in the review of USAID initiatives, objectives, and priorities. A thorough overview of the Agency's core initiatives, objectives, and priorities – at the global and individual country level – can be found at <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do> and <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work>.

Under this APS, the requisite engagement, communication, exploration of interest and subsequent problem-solving collaborating is conducted through a four step process:

1. Independent review of USAID strategies and objectives for alignment
2. Submit a promising idea to a USAID Mission, Bureau or Independent Office (Mission/B/IO)
3. Formulate prospective partnership activities, role and responsibilities with USAID
4. Finalize an appropriate partnership agreement with USAID

Each of these steps is described in greater detail below.

1. Step 1 – Independent Research and Clarification

Applicants interested in building a partnership through this APS are encouraged to first explore USAID objectives and strategic priorities, Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS), USAID websites and other publicly-released materials for potential alignment of their proposed activities.

This APS constitutes an “open call” for the initiation of consultations by HEIs and their partners with USAID Missions/B/IOs, and reflects USAID's interest in diversifying and reaching a larger partner base of HEIs, and supporting ideas with high potential for transformative impact.

Alternatively, USAID Missions/B/IOs may choose to issue their own addendum to this APS. USAID addenda are time-sensitive, supplemental calls for concept papers. An addendum highlights a specific program or activity, where technical assistance or partnership opportunities are elaborated upon by a USAID Mission or Operating Unit. Applicants interested in pursuing an

opportunity posted as an addendum should follow the instructions and guidance set forth in that text.

While this APS is not supported by specific funds, funding levels or an estimated number of awards will be pre-determined in any addenda.

2. Step 2 – Submit a Promising Idea for Consideration and Development

The APS provides a pathway to submit a four-page concept papers through this APS open call, or through a specific addendum in response to a USAID Mission/BIO. Consultations are allowed between candidates and technical and program officers, when the Mission/B/IO determines a candidate has offered a highly promising and competitive idea. For example, the communications provide USAID an opportunity to clarify the ideas set forth in the Concept Paper and more fully understand whether and how the proposed partnership may relate to and advance USAID priorities and objectives.

With regard to all discussion noted above, the discussions do NOT constitute any sort of Agency commitment to developing or supporting a partnership; nor do they constitute any sort of commitment to fund a proposed partnership.

See Section IV for more information on submitting Concept Papers.

3. Step 3 – Formulate Prospective Partnership Activities, Roles and Responsibilities with USAID

If a Mission/B/IO determines that the proposed partnership warrants further discussion, consideration, and possible pursuit, technical and program officers from the Mission/B/IO will work with the various partners to jointly develop and build the prospective partnership. Possible partnership activities will be specified, prospective roles and responsibilities of the partners will be delineated and shared understandings of expected outcomes, results, and impact will be developed, including an approach to monitoring and evaluating the progress and success of the partnership.

If the partnership development efforts are productive, the Mission/B/IO will formally request whatever additional information or materials are needed for the Agency to be able to possibly make an award or otherwise provide resources and assistance aimed at supporting the partnership. In most cases, this request will include but not be limited to a Request for Application. Except as otherwise noted in this APS, the requested materials or information may vary and will be determined by the Mission/B/IO.

Any request for additional information or materials is not yet a commitment to funding, but a necessary step aimed at making funding possible. USAID will review the requested materials, continue discussions with the prospective partners, and make a determination whether to provide funding in accordance with ADS 303.3.5.4 Annual Program Statement (APS).

4. Step 4 – Finalize an Agreement with USAID

If the discussions and reviews conducted during Step 3 result in a determination to fund and support the partnership, USAID will seek to negotiate and finalize an appropriate agreement. Awards may take the form of grants, fixed amount awards, cooperative agreements, and leader with associate awards.

IV. CONCEPT PAPER SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

A. General Approach

Concept papers submitted under this APS must clearly demonstrate the ways in which the partnership – and HEI assets, expertise, contributions, and resources – will increase the reach, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainable impact of the proposed interventions and USAID’s investment.

B. Specific Instructions

The concept paper must be submitted directly to the Mission/B/IO from which the HEI seeks funding. The concept paper must be written in Times New Roman, 12 point font, and must include page numbers. Each page must be marked with the APS title and number. A page in the concept paper which contains a table, chart, graph, etc., not otherwise excluded below, is subject to the page limitation set by the USAID Mission/B/IO. Information submitted as part of the concept paper over the page limit will not be evaluated. Prepare the application for the concept paper according to the format set forth below:

The concept paper must include the following:

1. **Cover Page**, which shall not exceed **1 (one)** page, and must include the following information (**not included in four-page limit**)
 - a. Title of Proposed Program/Activity;
 - b. Name and Address of Organization;
 - c. Contact Point (lead contact name; relevant telephone, fax, e-mail information);
 - d. Names of other organizations (federal and non-federal) to whom you are submitting and/or have submitted the application and/or who are funding the proposed activity; and
 - e. Signature of authorized representative of the applicant.
2. **Technical Approach** (not to exceed **4 (four)** pages, and should include:
 - a. Concise title and objectives of proposed activity;
 - b. Proposed duration of the activity;
 - c. Discussion of the proposed development challenge and proposed solution/approach in response to this APS and/or a posted addendum, the anticipated result, and how the work will help accomplish USAID’s goals;
 - d. Describe how the applicant is best suited to achieve the stated goal or activity and how other partners are leveraged; and

- e. Type of support the applicant requests from USAID (e.g., funds, facilities, equipment, materials, personnel resources, etc.).
3. **Supporting Information (1-2 pages)**
- a. Proposed estimated cost, including:
 - i. Brief cost breakdown (e.g., salaries, travel, etc.);
 - ii. Proposed optional amount of the applicants financial as well as in-kind participation, if applicable;
 - iii. Proposed amount of prospective or existing partners(s) financial as well as in kind participation, if applicable; and
 - b. Brief description of applicant's, as well as prospective or existing partner(s') previous work or experience.

C. Concept Paper Evaluation Criteria and Considerations

The following criteria and considerations, many of which reflect the characteristics discussed in Section II, will be used to review and evaluate concept papers submitted under this APS.

1. **Alignment with Mission/B/IO Strategic Objectives and Programming Priorities:** The proposed activity must align with the targeted Mission/B/IO's strategic plan (including Country Development Cooperation Strategies) and programming priorities. Applicants should also integrate principles outlined in USAID's Policy Framework, USAID Forward, USAID Education Strategy, and other relevant documents, where appropriate.
2. **Higher Education Institution Engagement:** Proposed activities must be based on, or be inclusive of HEI capabilities in education, research, knowledge generation, connection to workforce and labor market demands, innovation and entrepreneurship, extension, data and analysis, etc.
3. **Development Impact: Feasibility, Sustainability and Scalability:** USAID will evaluate potential for development impact of the proposed partnership, paying particular attention to:
 - a. **Feasibility:** The partnership should have well-defined and achievable objectives. The enabling environment and the proposed combination of partner assets, resources and expertise should be sufficient to yield significant impact on a specific and important development challenge. Financial and technical approaches must be viable. In addition, the involvement of local partners and/or beneficiaries in the development and implementation of the activity should be clear and sufficient enough to indicate the partnership will be successful.
 - b. **Sustainability:** The partnership should demonstrate the potential to yield sustainable solutions to the development challenge being addressed. The proposed partnership should engage and strengthen the human and

institutional capacity of local partners and local beneficiary organizations (private, non-profit, public).

- c. **Scalability:** USAID will consider whether and how the proposed approaches can be scaled or replicated in a manner that would offer a broader set of impacts at the national, regional or global level.
4. **Partners:** The proposed partnership must involve at least one of the following types of partners as a critical and core member:
 - a. Developing country Higher Education Institution: college, university, community college, technical, vocational, research institute, association or group of universities, or other tertiary or post-secondary institutions.
 - b. U.S. Higher Education Institution: college, university, community college, technical, vocational, research institute, association or group of universities, or other tertiary or post-secondary institutions.
 5. **Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary Approaches:** Proposed partnerships should be inclusive of relevant disciplines and specialties, where relevant, bringing together professional and technical schools to maximize development impact.

In addition, as demonstrated by USAID's Local Sustainability objectives, involving a wide array of local partners - private, non-profit, and public – is a key Agency priority. Whenever possible, the proposed activity should bring new development actors into partnership with USAID and or expand USAID's engagement with academia, social entrepreneurs, foundations, business, diaspora and student communities. The partners should demonstrate a strong commitment to addressing the development challenge, experience partnering with others, and, where applicable, a proven track record in their particular areas of expertise. HEIs are expected to demonstrate how they will successfully engage other partners in their proposed activities, such as through building sustained private sector or foundation collaborations.

D. Concept Paper Review Process

The USAID Mission/B/IO to which the Concept Paper was submitted will review the concept paper using the criteria above.

The purpose of the review of the concept paper is to determine if the concept paper meets the requirements set for in in the solicitation. The review will result in one of two outcomes:

1. A decision to forego further consideration of concept paper; or
2. A decision to Request for Application (RFA). An Agreement Officer for the specific Mission/B/IO will provide the necessary additional instructions, technical requirements and specific evaluation criteria for a full application.
Note: A Request for Application is NOT a commitment to funding.

V. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY AND AWARD CONSIDERATIONS

USAID Missions and B/IOs are responsible for the application review process and management of the award process in accordance with ADS 303.3.5.4 Annual Program Statement (APS)

A. Eligible Applicants

This APS intends to make awards to Higher Education Institutions. Capable partners must demonstrate experience in the proposed areas and sectors of work with USAID and other partners.

Central Contractor Registration (CCR) and Universal Identifier: All applicants must be registered in CCR and have a DUNS number unless exempt under 22 CFR 25.100 to be eligible to submit a Concept Paper under this APS.

USAID will not accept Concept Papers from individuals. Foreign governments, state and local governments and USG departments and agencies may also not submit Concept Papers to USAID under this APS.

All applicants must be legally recognized organizational entities under applicable law. The following types of organizations may submit Concept Papers to USAID under this APS:

Qualified U.S. and non-U.S. colleges and universities (including minority serving institutions, community colleges, and women's colleges), consortiums of HEIs, or research institutes. USG and USAID regulations generally treat colleges and universities as NGOs, rather than governmental organizations; hence, both public and private colleges and universities are eligible. Non-U.S. colleges and universities in countries that are ineligible for assistance under the FAA or related appropriations acts are ineligible.

B. Considerations Regarding the Pursuit and Award of USAID Funding

Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Prospective applicants should be aware of the following considerations:

- **Issuance Period:** The 2015 APS seeks HEI partnership concept papers, letters of interest, and applications (if requested) for funding through June 29, 2016. (Note: Activities of an HEI partnership proposed under this APS can continue beyond this period.) Concept papers and/or request for applications received under this APS, but unable to be negotiated and awarded prior to the end of the fiscal year in which they are received, may be considered for award within the following fiscal year. It is expected that awards made as a result of the RFA will have an anticipated period of performance from 12 to 60 months.

- Award Discretion: **USAID reserves the right to make or not to make awards through this APS.** The actual number of assistance awards, if any, under this APS is subject to the availability of funds and the interests and requirements of Missions and B/IOs as well as the viability of applications received
USAID Funding Sources: **This APS is not supported by specific funds. Any funding for any project, activity or partnership proposed under this APS would have to be requested from the specific USAID Mission, Bureau or Independent Office with which the prospective HEI partners seek to collaborate and to which the Concept Paper will be submitted.** This APS simply provides a vehicle for soliciting and receiving concept papers and, if requested, full applications from potential implementing partners. Funding and other resources for any activity must be provided by the relevant USAID Mission, Bureau or Independent Office.
- Addenda: While this APS serves as a general solicitation for Higher Education Institution partnership proposals, Missions and B/IOs may issue addenda to solicit proposals related to their specific priorities, objectives, and programs. These addenda can be found at: www.usaid.gov/HEPII.
- Award Amounts: There is no minimum or maximum financial contribution that may be requested by prospective applicants from USAID under this APS. However, the scope of any partnership proposed under this APS must be significant enough to achieve the priorities and objectives set forth in this APS.
- Optional Participation: Missions and B/IOs may opt to not participate in this worldwide APS or seek HEI partnership proposals/applications by issuing their own solicitations, which can be found at www.grants.gov and www.fbo.gov.

If the applicant is considered appropriate to receive federal funding for the various procurement mechanism the applicant needs to be aware of the following requirements:

1. For U.S. organizations, 22 CFR 220 and 22 CFR 700, OMB Circulars and USAID Standard Provisions are applicable to any award that may result from this APS. **Please refer to <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf> for governing regulations, standard provisions, and required certifications that will need to be submitted by applicants at the time of award.** For non-U.S. organizations, Mandatory Standard Provisions mentioned in USAID's Automated Directive System (ADS) 303 are applicable.

2. In order to be eligible to receive U.S. Government funding, organizations must meet certain requirements. While these requirements do not have to be met in order to submit a concept paper under the APS, they will need to be met if the applicant is requested to submit a full application. The requirements are:

a) Registration Matters

- All first-time applicants for USAID funding are subject to a pre-award survey to verify that the applicant has proper procedures in place to receive USAID funding (ADS 303.3.8)
- In accordance with 2 CFR Part 25, all organizations (unless exempt) are required to have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and register with Systems for Award Management (SAM). To obtain information regarding the preceding, see the respective links: <http://www.dnb.com> and <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>. Note: the DUNS number must be submitted with the application (it is required on the SF-424).
- Please allow several weeks for processing through SAM.GOV.
- Some domestic organizations may also need to register as a U.S. Private Voluntary Organization (PVO). Applicants may determine if they meet the definition for a PVO and find registration instructions here (<http://www.usaid.gov/pvo>). Registration is not required before application submission but, if required, must be completed before funding can be disbursed.

b) Applications for Federal Assistance

- SF-424, Application for Federal Assistance
- SF-424A, Cost application Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, Assurances – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-425, Federal Financial Form
- Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient

Note: The family of SF-424 standard forms can be found at:
<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>.

The SF-425 can be found at:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/grants_forms/SF-425.pdf
and http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/standard_forms/SF-425_instructions.pdf.

Certifications, Assurances, Other Statements of the Recipient form can be found at:
<http://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mav>

Responsibility of Applicant

In order for an award to be made, the Agreement Officer must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is “responsible,” as discussed in ADS 303.3.9. This means that the applicant must possess, or have the ability to obtain, the necessary management and technical competence to conduct the proposed program, and must agree to practice mutually agreed-upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets provided or funded by USAID.

In the absence of an affirmative “responsibility” determination, an award can ordinarily not be made. However, in rare cases, an award can be made with “special award conditions” (i.e., additional non-standard award requirements designed to minimize the risk presented to USAID of making an award to an NGO for which an affirmation determination of “responsibility”

cannot be made), but on where it appears likely that the applicant can correct the deficiencies in a reasonable period.

Note to All Prospective Applicants: USAID may also amend this APS from time to time, as necessary or appropriate. Any such amendments can be found at www.grants.gov.

VI: FULL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS FOR ORGANIZATIONS WHICH SUBMITTED CONCEPT PAPERS UNDER THIS APS

A. Full Technical Application Format²

If the Mission/B/IO's review of the applicant's concept paper, results in a decision to request a full application, **the Agreement Officer for the Mission/B/IO will provide specific requirements and instructions for the full application.** However, any full application submitted under this APS must include all the information requested in a Concept Paper as well as the following:

1. A detailed monitoring and evaluation plan, including the gathering of baseline data, and the use of control groups and/or counterfactual approaches.
2. Letter(s) of intent or commitment from all partners to the activity.
3. Detailed sustainability plan clearly demonstrating how desired outcomes, results and impacts will continue to be generated after USAID support ends, as well as in the longer term.
4. Detailed budget and financial plan with major line items, identification of funding source (i.e., by partner) for each, and a narrative description of what the resources will be used for. Cost-share resources should be distinguished from other resource contributions, including private sector resource contributions.
5. Statement outlining gender and disability integration issues and how the applicant proposes to address the issues.
6. Implementation schedule
7. Branding and marking plans

Additional requirements will be specified by the Mission/B/IO Agreement Officer, including the evaluation criteria for the full application in accordance with ADS 303.3.5.4 Annual Program Statement (APS).

Note: An invitation to submit a full application does not constitute an award; USAID may choose to not fund applications even after they have been requested. If that happens, a USAID Agreement Officer will communicate the reasons for such a decision.

All full applications MUST be in English and submitted electronically via email to the appropriate Mission/B/IO POC. A copy should also be sent to Aaron Miles in E3/Education at HEPII@usaid.gov

² These instructions only apply to organizations that have successfully completed and submitted a concept paper, and were invited by USAID to submit a full application.

VII. ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS AND RESOURCES

A. Characteristics

The primary characteristics of this APS are:

- **Flexible:** This APS could be used to fund project implementation; establish or grow university partnerships; support research; provide scholarships; and/or conduct special studies, assessments and evaluations and scientific journals;
- **Direct:** Awards made under this APS would be evaluated, selected, and managed directly by the Mission/B/IO, with their funding, and in direct relationship with the awardee.

This APS is a flexible mechanism that promotes opportunities for leveraging HEI capabilities across the program cycle. The value proposition to USAID operating units is streamlined procurement. The value to HEIs is open, continuous avenues for engagement³.

B. Geographic Code

Applicants (including teaming partners and consortium members), regardless of entity type, may not be from a foreign policy restricted countries. The authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services for this APS and ensuing awards is 937, United States of America⁴.

C. Branding and Marking

All USAID-sponsored assistance awards are required to adhere to branding policies and revised marking requirements for grants and cooperative agreements in accordance with ADS 320. This includes visibly displaying the USAID Standard Graphic Identity that clearly communicates assistance is “From the American people” on all programs, projects, activities, publications, public communications, and commodities provided or supported through USAID assistance awards. ADS 320 requires that, after the evaluation of the applications, the USAID Agreement Officer will request the Apparently Successful Applicant to submit a Branding Strategy that describes how the program, project, or activity is named and positioned, how it is promoted and communicated to beneficiaries and cooperating country citizens, and identifies all donors and explains how they will be acknowledged. USAID will not competitively evaluate the proposed Branding Strategy. ADS 320 may be found at the following website: www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/320.pdf.

³ This APS is open to receive applications through the stated closing date, which will provide great flexibility for applicants to submit promising ideas for consideration.

⁴ [USAID ADS 310 Policy](#): Source and Nationality Requirements for Procurement of Commodities and Services Financed by USAID

D. Environmental Compliance

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, Section 117 requires that the impact of USAID's activities on the environment be considered and that USAID include environmental sustainability as a central consideration in designing and carrying out its development programs. This mandate is codified in Federal Regulations (2 CFR 220 and 2 CFR 700) and in USAID ADS 201.5.10(g) and 204, which, in part, require that the potential environmental impacts of USAID-financed activities are identified prior to a final decision to proceed and that appropriate environmental safeguards are adopted for all activities.

E. Applicable Regulations and References

For ease of reference, [Section VIII](#) provides an inventory of key websites, applicable regulations and references noted in this APS. These include links (<http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do> and <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work>) provide a thorough overview of the Agency's core initiatives, objectives and priorities – at the global and individual country level. Prospective partners should carefully review those initiatives, objectives and priorities, as well as the types of collaboration and resources that will be most effective in achieving those interests. As noted throughout this APS, Concept Papers developed by prospective partners must support one or more of USAID's core development initiatives and advance the development objectives and priorities that guide USAID's development assistance programs and investments. This includes the Agency's USAID Forward initiative and the related Local Solutions objectives⁵.

F. Cost-sharing

Cost-sharing is an important element of the USAID-recipient relationship. In addition to USAID funds, applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from own, private or local sources for the implementation of this program. There is no minimum or maximum amount of cost-sharing, but some amount is strongly encouraged, unless otherwise required by a Mission through an addendum or a request for application (RFA).

G. General Information on Reporting Requirements

Program implementation reporting will be determined based on the types of awards administered, and will be determined solely by the relevant Mission/B/IO responsible for the award.

H. Agency Contacts

The point of contact for this APS and any questions during the APS process is Aaron Miles, HEPII Program Manager at the following contact information:

HEPII APS

⁵ USAID Local Systems: A Framework for Supporting Sustained Development:
<http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1870/LocalSystemsFramework.pdf>

HEPII@usaid.gov

VIII: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Agency Initiatives and Priorities

<http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do> and <http://www.usaid.gov/where-we-work>

Mission Priorities, Programs and Points of Contact

Link to be provided in final APS

2011-2015 USAID Education Strategy

http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PDACQ946.pdf

Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) / Systems for Award Management (SAM)

<http://www.dnb.com> and <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

Mandatory Standard Provisions for U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients

<http://www.usaid.gov/pubs/ads/300/303maa.pdf>

Mandatory Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients:

<http://www.usaid.gov/policy/ads/300/303mab.pdf>

2 CFR 220 and 2 CFR 700 <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2012-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2012-title2-vol1-part220.pdf> and <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/retrieveECFR?gp=1&SID=0aef41b424c43ab50b2b8a3cd72cf8bc&ty=HTML&h=L&r=PART&n=pt2.1.700>

OMB Circulars A-110 and A-122 <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a122/a122.html>

ADS Series 300 Acquisition and Assistance <http://www.usaid.gov/who-we-are/agency-policy/series-300>

SF-424 Downloads and SF-425 Downloads

<http://apply07.grants.gov/apply/FormLinks?family=15>

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/assets/grants_forms/SF-425.pdf and

http://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/standard_forms/SF-425_instructions.pdf

Governing Regulations, Standard Provisions and Required Certifications at Time of Award <http://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303.pdf>

Guidance for Proposals Involving a Partial Credit Guarantee <http://www.usaid.gov/what-we-do/economic-growth-and-trade/development-credit-authority-putting-local-wealth-work>

APPENDIX I: LIST OF ACRONYMS

List of Acronyms

ADS	Automated Directive System
APS	Annual Program Statement
B/IO	USAID/Washington Bureau/Independent Office
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DUNS	Data University Numbering System
GC	General Counsel
E3	Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IPR	Implementation and Procurement Reform
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
PIO	Public International Organization
RFA	Request for Application
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USG	United States Government

APPENDIX II: KEY DEFINITIONS

Annual Program Statement (APS)

When USAID intends to support a variety of creative approaches towards developing methodologies to assess and implement development objective activities, the Agency may use an Annual Program Statement (APS) to generate competition for these awards.

Cooperative Agreement

A legal instrument used where the principal purpose is the transfer of money, property, services or anything of value to the recipient in order to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by Federal statute and where substantial involvement by USAID is anticipated.

Cost-Sharing

Cost-sharing is defined at 2 CFR 220 and 2 CFR 700.23. Cost-sharing may consist of cash or in-kind contributions but, by definition, may not include USG funds or USG-funded in-kind contributions. Cost-sharing must be used for the accomplishment of program objectives, and must consist of allowable costs under the applicable USG cost principles. Information regarding the proposed cost-share should be included in the SF 424 and the Budget. The cost-sharing plan should be discussed in the Budget Notes to the extent necessary to demonstrate its feasibility and applicability to the program.

Fixed-Obligation Grant/Fixed Amount Award

Fixed amount awards focus on outputs and results, and requires only limited financial and management capacity. Fixed amount (fixed price) awards are appropriate when the work that will be performed can be priced with a reasonable degree of certainty. Samples of appropriate mechanisms to establish an appropriate price include the non-Federal entity's past experience with similar types of work for which outcomes and their costs can be reliably predicted, or the non-Federal entity can easily obtain price estimates (e.g., bids, quotes, catalog pricing) for significant cost elements.

Higher Education

Education, training, research and community service outreach at the post-secondary level.

Higher Education Institution

Post-secondary institutions recognized as bona fide in their home countries. In the United States, recognition is by accrediting agencies recognized through the U.S. Department of Education. Normally, outside the United States, recognition is by a Ministry of Education or national accrediting entity.

Higher Education Community

The spectrum of individuals, institutions, and organizations integral to higher education, singly and in various combinations, local, regional, national and international, including associations, consortia and other forms of partnership. The term "higher education" in this APS refers to both U.S. and host country institutions, except when one or the other is specified.

Implementing Partner

Any for-profit or not-for-profit organization that receives USG funding to deliver foreign development assistance.

Operating Units

Operating units are the organizational units responsible for implementing a foreign assistance program for one or more elements of the Foreign Assistance Framework. The definition includes all USG agencies implementing any funding from the relevant foreign assistance accounts. In the field, these agencies work collaboratively under the authority of the U.S. Ambassador. USAID Operating Units include USAID Missions, regional platforms and USAID/Washington Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) (henceforth referred to as USAID Missions and B/IOs) that expend program funds to achieve foreign development objectives.

USAID Mission

Missions are USAID's field offices in developing countries. The majority of USAID development assistance is provided through our Missions.

USAID Washington Bureaus/ Independent Offices

USAID/Washington Bureaus/Independent Offices (B/IOs) are Washington DC based operating units that expend program funds to achieve foreign development objectives.

Local Organization To be considered a "local" organization, an entity must:

Be organized under the laws of the recipient country or a country within that region;

- Have its principal place of business in the recipient country;
- Be majority owned by individuals who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the recipient country or be managed by a governing body, the majority of whom are citizens or lawful permanent residents of a recipient country; and
- Not be controlled by a foreign entity or by an individual or individuals who are not citizens or permanent residents of the recipient country.