



**Solicitations open to:** Afghan Nationals Only  
**Position Title:** Acquisition and Assistance Specialist  
**Type of vacancy:** Single  
**Opening date:** April 12, 2015  
**Closing date:** April 23, 2015  
**Vacancy announcement #:** USAID/306/15/25/OAA  
**Work hours:** 40 hours (Full time)  
**Position Grade:** FSN-12

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Afghanistan is inviting applications from Afghan Nationals for the position of **Acquisition and Assistance Specialist** in the Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA).

#### **BASIC FUNCTION OF THE POSITION:**

The Acquisition and Assistance Specialist/Administrative Contracting and Agreement Specialist (AAS/ACS) holds a position of trust, and holds limited warrant authority, as described in Major Duties as below.

As an AAS in USAID/Afghanistan, the Specialist is responsible for applying high-level acquisition and assistance (A&A) knowledge, skills, and abilities, while working independently on activity design and implementation with related A&A assignments. The Specialist's responsibilities involve a wide range of A&A actions, including complex instruments such as high-dollar-value contracts and cooperative agreements with US and local Afghan organizations, Indefinite Quantity Contracts (IQCs) and Blanket Purchase Agreements BPAs with local organizations, performance based awards, cost-reimbursement contracts, Public International Organization (PIO) grants, and Interagency Agreements. The Specialist fulfills a leadership role by guiding, directing, and mentoring lower-graded Acquisition and Assistance Specialists and/or Acquisition and Assistance Assistants within USAID/Afghanistan, OAA, and providing technical supervision to other Afghan employees and staff working in OAA on rotational or on a long-term temporary duty basis. The Specialist is expected to act as a primary Agreement Officer/ Contracting Officer (AO/CO) point of contact for USAID employees, and to deal with multiple US and host-government entities in order to manage complicated business relations. Assignments generally are long-term in nature, and, in addition to A&A expertise, knowledge of economic and project management procedures and principles, local specifics, as well as client office program structure and monitoring is required.

The Specialist oversees, mentors, and coaches lower-graded Foreign Service National (FSN) Specialists/Assistants to ensure A&A actions and awards within OAA's responsibility are properly and efficiently performed. The Specialist works closely with the Chief, OAA and his/her designee and USAID program and project staff throughout the Mission to ensure actions related to A&A contracts, task orders, grants, cooperative agreements, and interagency agreements, including modifications thereto, are effectively planned, competed, negotiated, awarded, and administered, in accordance with Federal statutes and regulations, and within USAID regulations, policies, and procedures. The Specialist protects USAID's interests by ensuring Mission A&A actions are accomplished with the highest degree of integrity and ethical

standards, that decisions are made in the best interest of USAID and the USG and in accordance with its foreign assistance strategic objectives, and that business with contractors, grantees, and other parties is conducted in a best-practice, proactive, and professional manner.

#### **MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

- a) The AAS serves the Mission and the Agency as an ACS with limited delegated warrant authority. In addition to the other Major Duties and Responsibilities listed in this position description, the Specialist has delegated authority to execute contract/cooperative agreement/grant administration functions that involve no additional cost to the USG, as detailed in applied policies and regulations (FAR subpart 42.302(a) and ADS 303.3.17). In addition, this delegation includes additional responsibilities on the Specialist and on the Mission, as follows:
  - i. The AAS/ACS is required to complete a self-assessment of accomplishments and performance in the Pilot Warrant Program every six (6) months, which will be submitted through the Supervisory Agreement/Contracting Officer to M/OAA/E;
  - ii. The Specialist must complete 80 hours of continuing training requirements every two years (this responsibility is equally placed upon the Mission to budget for the training, and on the Specialist to apply for, make themselves available for, attend, and satisfactorily pass any tests or meet any standards required by the training);
  - iii. The warrant includes automatic membership in the FSN Senior Advisory Corps (SAC). This membership demands that the Specialist actively seek, and accept, short-term SAC assignments totaling from five percent (5%) to ten percent (10%) of the work year (2-5 weeks per year) (this responsibility is equally placed upon the Mission to make the Specialist available, and on the Specialist to complete such short-term assignments); and,
  - iv. The Specialist, regardless of the local OAA structure, must serve as a mentor to new A&A Specialists, and an advisor to journey-person A&A Specialists and to technical professionals within the Mission.

The self-assessment of accomplishments and performance required in “i,” above, must address all of these elements in order to maintain AAS/ACS warrant authority, and must include an explanation for any that have not been met in the six-month period covered by the self-assessment. Note: if warrant authority is removed for any reason, the position will revert to the original (pre-warrant) title, series, and grade, in accordance with normal FSN personnel rules and regulations.

- b) Fiscal Year Planning: Planning includes but is not limited to: coordination with the Program Office to ensure consistency with Mission Objectives and Plans; preparation and updating, as necessary, the A&A fiscal year procurement plan, including the type of award/action (e.g. acquisition vs. assistance or new award vs. modification); consideration of whether the circumstances of a planned action will require special approvals, waivers, or decisions (e.g. competition waivers), and identifies relevant policies, procedures, and approval authorities; planning for consideration and observance of standard agency lead-times for the type of action, i.e., bona fide urgent needs and humanitarian disaster relief will be handled as necessary to meet the requirements and circumstances of each case; and, ensuring that OAA staffing is appropriate to meet the operational level of Office and Unit workload, so as to meet Mission objectives in a timely manner.
- c) Pre-Award: The Specialist guides, directs, and mentors lower-graded A&A staff in the performance of pre-award responsibilities, which vary in type and complexity, with the most complex being those required for large, full and open competitions for new awards. The work includes, but is not limited to: ensuring actions are prepared and updated as necessary, written milestone plans for significant A&A action (e.g. a new award) are realistic, noting key actions and estimated dates each will be completed; overseeing the

drafting of pre-solicitation notices and solicitations for posting on the appropriate Federal website; reviewing A&A responses by lower-graded A&A staff to questions from interested parties; reviewing amendments to solicitations; planning and conducting orientation for evaluation panels; reviewing proposals with particular attention to proposed costs and other business aspects of proposals and funding applications; comparison and analysis between competitive proposals such as technical-cost tradeoffs, relative advantages and disadvantages, and the degree of risk, in order to make best-value award recommendations; responsibility determinations for the apparent successful offeror; formal or desk pre-award surveys; review of the complete record of actions, including proposal analyses and making an award recommendation in a negotiation memorandum; and, ensuing the award is properly drafted.

- d) **Post Award: Oversight responsibilities vary in type and complexity.** The least complex involve the oversight of administrative actions, including incremental funding modifications and various routine approvals required by the terms of the award. More complex administrative actions, requiring higher levels of oversight, include considering and documenting waivers to an award's authorized geographic code for procurement of goods and services, closing out awards, and ensuring contractor performance evaluation reports are completed. The most complex post-award actions require significant mentoring and coaching, and include negotiating change orders or termination settlements, non-competitively adding new or additional work to a contract, or non-competitively adding a new period of funding to a cooperative agreement. Other examples of post award actions include resolution of audit findings, conducting post-award conferences or other meetings on special topics with contractors and recipients, and general monitoring of contractor performance and compliance with award terms.
- e) **Information Management and Reporting:** The Specialist is responsible for developing meaningful A&A information reports. Regular duties include, but are not limited to: oversight of the update of fiscal year plans; overseeing the updating of OAA databases (e.g. open award summaries; completed awards and their closeout status, etc.); data entry necessary to reporting A&A actions to USAID/Washington in the prescribed manner and schedule; reviewing the preparation of information for the USAID/Afghanistan website; etc.
- f) **Miscellaneous Duties:** The Specialist is responsible for other duties that may be assigned from time to time. These duties may be on behalf of OAA, other Mission Offices, or the Embassy. Illustrative examples outside OAA include attending to special Mission needs (such as assisting with a VIP visit), responding to USAID/Washington/OAA requests for TDY support, or responding to Embassy requests for volunteers or assistance for particular functions or programs.

#### **QUALIFICATIONS/EVALUATION CRITERIA:**

**Education:** Possession of a Bachelor's degree or the host-country equivalent of a four-year college/university degree, from a US or host country accredited university, in accounting, law, business, finance, contracts, purchasing, economics, industrial management, marketing, quantitative methods, organization and management, or other relevant field is required.

**Experience:** A minimum of six (6) years of Acquisition & Assistance experience in the US government is required. This experience must have been gained in a USAID Contracting/A&A Office and include demonstration of expert proficiency with USAID A&A rules, regulations, practices, and techniques utilized in effective A&A administration. The experience must demonstrate that the Specialist can plan, coordinate, and execute business functions necessary to support large, complex procurements, including those related to resource allocation, budget, finance, claims, and terminations. In addition, the experience must demonstrate that the Specialist meets all competency requirements outlined in the FSN Pilot Warrant Program for the level of Warrant approved.

**Language:** Level IV (Fluent) speaking/reading/writing of English language and Level IV (Fluent) speaking/reading of Dari and/or Pashto is required.

**Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:** Knowledge of US Federal and USAID Acquisition Regulations, and knowledge and understanding of how to execute and administer a complex acquisition portfolio is required, particularly as it relates to acquisition through methods of negotiation, sealed bidding, small purchase procedures, and that result in standard and established contract types. A good knowledge of Regional markets pertaining to program and project requirements for services and commodities, and a good knowledge and understanding of US market and pricing methods is required. Knowledge of business processes in public or private sectors is required.

The ability to plan and administer large acquisition activities, and provide adequate acquisition assistance and support for agency programs/projects/activities in a timely manner is required. The ability to apply governing contracting regulations, procedures, and policies to individual complex acquisition and assistance programs is required. An ability to deal effectively with high-level representatives of the US and Regional business community, and with colleagues in USAID Missions and host governments throughout the Region is required.

Good analytical, negotiating, and time management skills are required, with strong English-language proofreading skills and attention to detail is required. The ability to work calmly, tactfully, and effectively under pressure is essential, as well as the ability to maintain strict CONFIDENTIALITY AND HIGH ETHICAL STANDARDS throughout all phases of acquisition and assistance procurement actions.

Computer skills in Word and Excel sufficient to independently prepare or modify correspondence and documentation with minimal office administrative support are required.

## **HOW TO APPLY**

Applicants are requested to submit a complete application package which must include all required documents to [AFPAKjobs@usaid.gov](mailto:AFPAKjobs@usaid.gov) with a **Subject line: (Acquisition and Assistance Specialist (OAA 1525))**

**ANY/ALL application submissions after the closing date of April 23, 2015 will not be considered.**

## **REQUIRED DOCUMENTS:**

- 1. Cover memo/email outlining your qualifications and experience against the selection criteria.**
- 2. Application for Employment (AE) as a Locally Employed Staff (DS-174)**  
[http://kabul.usembassy.gov/job\\_opportunities2.html](http://kabul.usembassy.gov/job_opportunities2.html)  
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/136408.pdf> and/or
- 3. A current resume or curriculum vitae that provides the same information found on the DS-174 form;**

**(We understand that not all applicants are able to download the application from the internet. Please state this in your cover memo/email if this is the case. For candidates who are short listed, a DS 174 will be required in order to advance in the process.)**

## **Note:**

- Ø Only short-listed candidates will be notified.
- Ø This vacancy is open only to Afghan Nationals.
- Ø Applications with insufficient information to make a determination will not be considered.
- Ø No in-person appointments or telephone calls will be entertained.
- Ø Female applicants are encouraged to apply.

**USAID IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER  
ALL ETHNIC GROUPS AND BOTH GENDERS ARE URGED TO APPLY**