

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. SOLICITATION NO.:	72030620R00004
2. ISSUANCE DATE:	January 14, 2020
3. CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:	January 29, 2020 no later than 16:30 Kabul time
4. POINT OF CONTACT:	EXO, kblaidhr@usaid.gov
5. POSITION TITLE:	Senior Development and Outreach and Communication Specialist (Advisor)
6. MARKET VALUE:	\$92,977 - \$120,868 equivalent to GS-14 Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value.
7. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:	Initial 1 year, estimated to start on o/a June 1, 2020. The base period will be 1 year, estimated to start on June 1, 2020. Based on Agency need, the Contracting Officer may exercise additional 1-year option period(s) for 4 years.
8. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:	USAID/Afghanistan
9. ELIGIBLE OFFERORS:	United States Citizens
10. SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:	Secret Clearance

11. STATEMENT OF DUTIES:**1) General Statement of Purpose of Contract:**

USAID/Afghanistan is the largest USAID Mission in the world and manages one of the most complex, politically driven development portfolios in one of the most demanding and dangerous environments. The portfolio, with a \$2.6 billion-dollar budget, includes a broad range of activities including agriculture, economic growth, education, government-capacity building, health, humanitarian assistance, infrastructure, and women's empowerment. USAID/Afghanistan shares its messages with various audiences in a variety of outlets including public information and publicity materials prepared for Congress, general audiences, and visitors. The Mission also works on story placement with local and international television, radio, print, and various electronic media (Facebook, twitter, etc.). Outreach programs and events are also a major component of sharing USAID/Afghanistan's story and accomplishments.

The Senior Development Outreach and Communications Specialist (Advisor) manages a wide range of public information and outreach activities in support of USAID/Afghanistan's programs and objectives, targeting information to specific audiences in both the United States and Afghanistan in accordance with the Mission's public strategy. The incumbent will provide guidance on USAID's marking and branding policies and ensure USAID work is recognized.

This position is located in the Office of Program and Project Development (OPPD) and requires close collaboration and relationship building with the Embassy Public Affairs Section, Mission Director, two Deputy Mission Directors, seven Mission Technical Offices, as well as the Office of Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs (OAPA) and Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA) in Washington, D.C. ,and numerous other contributors to USAID communications. The position serves as the senior advisor on public-information, news-media relations, communications unit staffing, and outreach matters.

The incumbent builds and maintains relationships with international and local media entities and public outreach staff of USAID implementing partners. The incumbent must be a creative, independent professional with excellent writing skills, editing skills, social media knowledge, and event planning skills. Additionally, the incumbent must be able to multi-task and have experience in mentoring and training junior professionals to take on greater responsibility. The incumbent must demonstrate skills in managing staff/people and possess excellent interpersonal abilities. The incumbent coordinates information dissemination, outreach, and public events within the Mission, in collaboration with various entities. The incumbent is responsible for the drafting/updating of the Mission's Communications Strategy. S/he may also be assigned responsibility for USAID/Afghanistan strategic priorities within the communications realm.

The incumbent develops and maintains close working relationships with local (Afghan) journalists, media outlets, and implementing partners. The incumbent promotes USAID/Afghanistan's policies and actions. The incumbent provides expert advice and guidance in accessing, validating, interpreting, and applying a wide range of information resources. The incumbent is responsible for continually reviewing Agency policies, guidelines, protocols, literature, trends, and developments affecting the dissemination of USAID/Afghanistan's information to foreign audiences and ensure Mission staff understand their roles and responsibilities. The incumbent develops and maintains close working relationships with the Embassy Public Affairs Section (PAS) and LPA and helps to facilitate messaging and responses to international media via these entities.

The incumbent reviews the accuracy of information and works to improve the quality of available information and resources while developing new resources in response to specific requests or emergent policy developments.

2) Statement of Duties to be Performed:

A. Strategic Communications Planning, Management (including supervision), Coordination, Guidance, and Implementation

The incumbent is responsible for aligning Afghanistan communication messages and adhering to policies and procedures for Mission communications and outreach that clarify roles and responsibilities within USAID and with other Embassy sections and implementing partners. S/he will also maintain up to date knowledge of all USAID/Afghanistan activities and processes, as well as a keen awareness of political and policy issues.

The incumbent is responsible for:

- Ensuring standardization and clear guidance is provided for the creation of communication tool/templates, materials, and guidelines for planning and managing events.

- Leading the development/updating of the Mission communications strategy, identifying objectives, messages, audiences, products, and budgets.
- Developing plans in coordination with USAID managers and technical teams, consistent with the Mission development strategy and the overall Embassy communications strategy.
- Leading the design of public information products, ensuring that Mission communication products contain appropriate and consistent messages that support the approved Mission communications strategy; and, provides quality control on all print and electronic public information materials such as the external website, organizational brochures and information packets, and briefing books produced by contractors and other USAID staff.
- Overseeing the translation and interpretation of USAID materials for use in media, events, or other official capacities.
- Liaising with PAS media team and working closely with PAS staff and the DOC team to generate press coverage of USAID activities in Afghanistan. Such work includes arranging and preparing for press interviews, press conferences, briefings, tours of programs/projects/activities, and interaction with host-country and American journalists.
- Tracking USAID/Afghanistan's program/project/activity milestones and events to ensure appropriate press coverage is provided through advising the Mission Front Office and staff on press outreach priorities, and works closely with local staff to ensure coverage is culturally and politically appropriate; oversees and produces media materials (including news releases, backgrounders, and fact sheets) designed to inform both internal and external audiences of technical programs/projects/activities and their achievements; coordinates with technical offices and with PAS to produce and release timely, accurate, and useful written material for the host-country and American media; and, advises and works with PAS to expand opportunities for coverage of USAID efforts.
- Leading the missions DOC team comprised of six full time members to ensure the execution of the units tasks; including adequate teamwork, individual performance of team members, and corresponding to administrative and managerial tasks.
- Advising USAID staff and implementing partners on developing appropriate public information campaigns, media strategy and relations.
- Training, mentoring, preparing, and supervising USAID's staff and partners in support of their public speaking and media outreach roles.
- Contributing to the integration of communications during the project design and implementation process.
- Coordinating with and seeking guidance from the Regional Legal Adviser and LPA on potential disputes, waiver requests, web page creations,

B. Publicity Materials

The incumbent serves as the resident expert on branding, marking, and style guidelines; ensuring USAID regulations, policies and procedures are applied as outlined in USAID ADS 320 and the Agency's Graphic Standards Manual within the Mission and for Implementing Partners/Contractors. S/he is responsible for:

- The production of high-quality print and electronic communications products that translate complex messages and technical information into understandable,

meaningful messages to resonate with a variety of audiences; both Afghan and American.

- Serving as creative and editorial director of all website materials for the Mission's English language webpage (ensuring timeliness and accuracy of information), USAID Afghanistan Facebook page, twitter account, blogs, and other social media platforms as deemed necessary and permissible.
- Overseeing the social media platforms while ensuring active, substantive, and strategic engagements.
- Managing the drafting, editing, and dissemination of timely and high-quality products including information brochures, factsheets, videos, radio interviews, success stories, special publications, reports, weekly newsletters, etc. relating to USAID/Afghanistan's activities and accomplishments.
- Preparing and overseeing the submissions to the Mission Director's weekly update, USAIDs Frontlines, and other potential public information platforms.
- Managing small public relations contractors as needed in producing graphic designs, written text, photographs, videos, and other outsourced products; and, ensures contractor tasks are completed in a cost effective, high-quality, and timely manner.
- Overseeing and developing regular and specialized information materials for Washington opinion leaders and audiences, in coordination with OAPA and LPA colleagues;

C. Public Events and Activities:

Coordination and Representation of Public Events and Visitors: The incumbent serves as the USAID/Afghanistan's primary point of contact for publicity events, participation by official visitors from the U.S. Embassy, USAID/Washington, Congress, and other USG agencies or entities. In this role the incumbent is responsible for:

- Coordinating visits/events (including Ambassador, DCM, A/COM levels) and leading the professional and timely preparation of briefing materials, scene setters, talking points/speeches, and other information products and processes to support such activities. Such events could include ceremonies, ribbon cutting events, closing events, conferences, etc.
- Representing USAID/Afghanistan at the senior level in all matters pertaining to USAID public Affairs and outreach activities with other branches of the USG (including the military/NATO representation), Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, implementing partners, other donors, and various institutions.
- Supervising the oversight of the advance work for planning, including scheduling, coordination with technical teams (and other Embassy sections as appropriate), and overseeing the production of briefing materials and troubleshooting during VIP visits.
- Coordinating and consulting with technical offices on program/project/activity signing ceremonies or other milestone events, including finalizing press releases and ensuring logistics are handled.

During the period of this contract, the incumbent must provide at least 15% of his/her time to training of a Cooperating Country National (CCN) employee designated by USAID. The PSC Supervisor will establish a training plan with benchmarks to measure the contractor's progress toward achieving this training deliverable.

3) USAID Consultation or Orientation:

The selected applicant shall proceed to Washington, D.C. for at least two (2) weeks of mandatory training to complete the Foreign Affairs Counter Threat CT-650 (FACT) and the Afghanistan Familiarization RS-415 (FAM) courses (if FAM was not completed within the past five (5) years and if FACT training did not include the ESCAPE Module) prior to proceeding to USAID/Afghanistan to commence duties as outlined in the statement of work. FACT and FAM are mandatory courses for service in Afghanistan.

4) Supervisory Relationship:

The incumbent directly reports to the Project, Program and Development Office Director (or his/her designee) with general technical guidance from the Executive Secretariat and the Legislative and Public Affairs Office of USAID/Washington.

5) Supervisory Controls:

The incumbent directly supervises a team of six (6) Cooperating Country National (CCN) staff. The incumbent mentors, trains and builds the technical capacity of the CCN in media communication and public relations.

12. PHYSICAL DEMANDS:

The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

In order to be considered for the position, a candidate must meet the minimum qualifications. Offers will be pre-screened and only those that meet the minimum qualifications will be considered. The minimum qualifications necessary to be considered for the position are as follows:

- a) **Education:** A Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Journalism, Media and/or Communication, English Literature, Public Relations, Marketing, Business Administration, International Studies, International Relations or Writing is required. (Education requirement must be met at the time of application for the subject position).
- b) **Work Experience:** A minimum of eight (8) years, three (3) years of which in a supervisory capacity, of progressively responsible experience in strategic communications and outreach, diplomacy, and/or journalism work with an international donor, implementing partner, newspaper, magazine, or other communications entity. The incumbent must have successfully demonstrated experience in using social media; organizing and conducting events; producing web content, videos, podcasts; planning and delivering training; and working productively with journalists and other key members of the community. The incumbent may be requested to provide written articles and/or materials for the selection process. (Work experience requirement must be met at the time of application for the subject position).

III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

The Government may award a contract without discussions with offerors in accordance with [FAR 52.215-1](#). The CO reserves the right at any point in the evaluation process to establish a competitive range of offerors with whom negotiations will be conducted pursuant to [FAR 15.306\(c\)](#). In accordance with [FAR 52.215-1](#), if the CO determines that the number of offers that would otherwise be in the competitive range exceeds the number at which an efficient competition can be conducted, the CO may limit the number of offerors in the competitive range to the greatest number that will permit an efficient competition among the most highly rated offers. FAR provisions of this solicitation are available at <https://www.acquisition.gov/browse/index/far>.

The Evaluation Factors listed will be the basis for evaluating and ranking applicants for the position. Applicants will be scored based on the documentation submitted within the application. Applicants must submit a supplemental document outlining their responses to the evaluation factors in order to be considered. Only the highest-ranked applicants will be interviewed.

1. SELECTION PROCESS

After the closing date for receipt of applications, a committee will convene to review applications that meet the minimum requirements and evaluate them in accordance with the evaluation criteria. Applications from candidates who do not meet the minimum requirements will not be scored. As part of the selection process, finalist candidates will be interviewed. Reference checks will be made only for applicants considered as finalists. The applicant's references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities. If an applicant does not wish USAID to contact a current employer for a reference check, this should be stated in the applicant's cover letter; USAID will delay such reference checks pending the applicant's concurrence.

2. EVALUATION FACTORS

Those applicants who meet the minimum education and experience qualifications will be evaluated based on the content of their application as well as on the applicant's writing, presentation, and communication skills. On a supplement document included with the application package, applicants should cite specific, illustrative examples to address each factor. Responses are limited to 500 words (approx. 1/2 typewritten page) per factor. Applicants should describe specifically and accurately experience, training, education and/or awards they have received that are relevant to the factor. Applicants should include their name and the solicitation number at the top of each additional page. Failure to specifically address the Evaluation Factors will result in the applicant not receiving full credit for pertinent experience.

FACTOR #1: Professional Experience in Supervision and Teamwork (10 points)

The incumbent must describe one's supervisory capacity, of a progressively responsible experience in marketing, strategic communication work, or journalism in the international development field (preferably time spent in a conflict zone or critical post). Describe your experience working with diverse team members (various cultures, backgrounds, religions,

gender, etc.) at different professional levels. Outline and describe how you planned and delivered training for professional development of individuals. Describe your experience and engagement with the media and journalists; conducting outreach for international donor organizations; preparing talking points and speeches for high level officials. Lastly, explain your experience in areas of influencing behavior change, and working with Senior Leaders.

FACTOR #2: Development of Communication Strategy and Conducting Campaigns (10 points)

Outline and describe your demonstrated experience in the development and implementation of a communications strategy relevant to international affairs/development with a focus on national security, public policy, and messaging how countries must move towards self-reliance; describe your direct experience in the coordination of outreach events, creation of content and videos for such events and conducting various types of communication campaigns. Provide examples as to what type of outreach events were conducted. Share concrete examples of your ability to express skills and experience in exhibiting tact, judgement, diplomacy, leadership, and teamwork which are critical skills to design and execute strategic communication campaigns and outreach.

FACTOR #3: Social Media Knowledge, experience, usage, and implementation (5 points)

Describe your knowledge and experience with the usage of various social media platforms with an emphasis on messaging/marketing/social marketing. Explain and provide specific examples of your ability and experience to create compelling messaging across a variety of media (press releases, responses to media inquiries); including print, blogs, newsletters, social media, video, and speeches. Describe your ability to think creatively about other communication means to tell the USAID story and convey key messages through multi-faceted strategic communication campaigns. Describe your experience with engaging with the private sector and knowledge of a conflict environment or similar contexts.

FACTOR #4: Written Exercise (15 points)

Each qualified candidate will participate in a short written/practical exercise to demonstrate their technical skills in preparing strategic communication materials. This assessment will be conducted and scored prior to an invitation for an oral interview.

3. BASIS OF RATING

Applicants who clearly meet the Education/Experience requirements and basic eligibility requirements will be further evaluated based on scoring of their Evaluation Factor responses. Those applicants determined to be competitively ranked will also be evaluated on their interview performance and satisfactory professional reference checks. The Applicant Rating System is as follows:

Evaluation Factors:

- Factor #1 10 points
- Factor #2 10 points
- Factor #3 5 points
- Factor #4 15 points
- Interview Performance: 60 points

Interview questions will revolve around the candidate's propensity to:

- Manage a diverse group of individuals and complex and flexible situations.
- Adapt to change and intense working conditions.
- Manage multiple high-level activities
- Work with various levels of decision makers and employees

Satisfactory Professional Reference Checks – Pass/Fail (no points assigned). Negative professional recommendations might lead to disqualification for consideration.

Total Possible Points: 100

IV. SUBMITTING AN OFFER

1. Eligible offerors are required to complete and submit the offer form AID 309-2 (Offeror Information for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals,” available at <http://www.usaid.gov/forms>
2. Offers must be received by the closing date and time specified in Section I, item 3, and submitted by email to Afgpscjobs@usaid.gov
3. Offeror submissions must clearly reference the Solicitation number on all offeror submitted documents and in the subject line of the application email.

Eligible offerors are required to submit the following documents to be considered for this position:

1. Form AID 309-2, “Offeror Information for Personal Services Contract with Individuals,” available at: <https://www.usaid.gov/forms/aid-309-2>
2. A current curriculum vitae (CV) or resume.
3. A supplemental document with written responses to the Evaluation Factors.

Documents must be compatible with Microsoft Word or PDF and not compressed (.rar/.zip etc).

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted.

V. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSC HIRES

Once the Contracting Officer (CO) informs the successful Offeror about being selected for a contract award, the CO will provide the successful Offeror instructions about how to complete and submit the following forms:

1. Contractor Employee Biographical Data Sheet (AID 1420-17);
2. Declaration for Federal Employment (OF-306);
3. Medical History and Examination Form (DS-6561);
4. Pre-Deployment Physical Exam Acknowledgement Form (DS-6570);
5. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions for National Security (SF-86), or Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85);
6. Finger Print Card (SF-87);
7. Statement of Prior Service (SF-144A).

VI. BENEFITS/ALLOWANCES

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a PSC is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

1. BENEFITS:

- 1) Employer's Federal Insurance Contribution Act (FICA) Contribution
- 2) Contribution towards Health & life insurance
- 3) Pay Comparability Adjustment
- 4) Annual Increase (pending a satisfactory performance evaluation)
- 5) Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- 6) Annual & Sick Leave
- 7) Access to Embassy medical facilities, commissary and pouch mail service as per post policy

2. ALLOWANCES (If Applicable) *:

- 1) Post Differential (Chapter 500)
- 2) Payments during Evacuation/Authorized Departure (Section 600)
- 3) Danger Pay (Section 650)
- 4) Education Allowance (Section 270)
- 5) Separate Maintenance Allowance (Section 260)
- 6) Education Travel (Section 280)

* Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians Foreign Areas).

*Eligibilities for allowances are in accordance with Standardized Regulations (Government Civilians Foreign Areas) based on the type of appointment and Mission Policy.

VII. TAXES

USPSC's are required to pay Federal income taxes, FICA, Medicare and applicable State income taxes.

VIII. USAID REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND CONTRACT CLAUSES PERTAINING TO PSCs

USAID regulations and policies governing USPSC awards are available at these sources:

1. USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR),

- **Appendix D**, "Direct USAID Contracts with a U.S. Citizen or a U.S. Resident Alien for Personal Services Abroad," including **contract clause "General Provisions,"**

https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf.

2. Contract Cover Page form AID 309-1 available at <https://www.usaid.gov/forms>. Pricing by line item is to be determined upon contract award as described below:

LINE ITEMS

ITEM NO (A)	SUPPLIES/SERVICES (DESCRIPTION) (B)	QUANTITY (C)	UNIT (D)	UNIT PRICE (E)	AMOUNT (F)
0001	Base Period - Compensation, Fringe Benefits and Other Direct Costs (ODCs) - Award Type: Cost - Product Service Code: [e.g. R497] - Accounting Info: Appropriation: 7215/161037	1	LOT	\$ TBD	\$ TBD at award after negotiations with contractor

	Fund Code: es-oco/2015/2016				
1001	Option Period 1 – Compensation, Fringe Benefits and Other Direct Costs (ODCs) - Award Type: Cost - Product Service Code: [e.g. R497] - Accounting Info: To be incrementally funded	1	LOT	\$ TBD	\$ TBD at award after negotiations with contractor
2001	Option Period 2 – Compensation, Fringe Benefits and Other Direct Costs (ODCs) - Award Type: Cost - Product Service Code: [e.g. R497] - Accounting Info: To be incrementally funded	1	LOT	\$ TBD	\$ TBD at award after negotiations with contractor
3001	Option Period 3 – Compensation, Fringe Benefits and Other Direct Costs (ODCs) - Award Type: Cost - Product Service Code: [e.g. R497] - Accounting Info: To be incrementally funded	1	LOT	\$ TBD	\$ TBD at award after negotiations with contractor
4001	Option Period 4 – Compensation, Fringe Benefits and Other Direct Costs (ODCs) - Award Type: Cost - Product Service Code: [e.g. R497] - Accounting Info: To be incrementally funded	1	LOT	\$ TBD	\$ TBD at award after negotiations with contractor

3. Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives/Contract Information Bulletins (AAPDs/CIBs) for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals available at <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs>.

4. **Ethical Conduct.** By the acceptance of a USAID personal services contract as an individual, the contractor will be acknowledging receipt of the “**Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch,**” available from the U.S. Office of Government Ethics, in accordance with **General Provision 2 and 5 CFR 2635**. See <https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/OGE%20Regulations>.