

**Funding Opportunity:** Management of the Lincoln Learning Centers in Afghanistan  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** SCAKAB-20-CA-001-SCA-02232020  
**Questions and Answers**

**Question 1:** Can you please share the number of visitors to LLCs?

**Answer:** There are more than two million visits to the LLCs per year.

**Question 2:** Can [we] form a Joint Venture/Partnership with an NGO, in with the NGO will be a lead to apply for this opportunity?

**Answer:** Per page 14 of the NOFO, Organizations may sub-award/contract with other entities, but only one **non-profit** entity may be the prime recipient of the award. **For-profit entities are not eligible to be the prime recipient of an award under this NOFO.** When sub-awarding/contracting with other entities, the responsibilities of each entity must be clearly defined in the proposal.

**Question 3:** Can the staff, if the staff agree, of the current grantee be hired by a new grantee?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question 4:** 3 qualified, certified, Education USA advisers: Since they will be stationed in 3 LLCs, will they be travelling to other LLCs? If yes, we have to budget their travel.

**Answer:** Three is the minimum number of EducationUSA advisers required by the NOFO; the applicant may propose more. As there are 25 LLCs, each advisor will likely need to cover a number of LLCs.

**Question 5:** How many LLCs require transition to Solar power?

**Answer:** During the course of the grant, all 25 LLCs should transition to solar power. Currently, three LLCs are already functioning with solar power.

**Question 6:** Disseminate promotional materials on all U.S. exchange programs in English, Dari, and Pashto: Are these materials and other required materials translated in local languages, or the grantee should translate them?

**Answer:** Applicants can assume that they will not be required to translate the materials.

**Question 7:** “The number of LLCs may increase or decrease during the life of this grant depending on PAS needs and interests. The Recipient must adjust to such increases and decreases as necessary.”

- a) Should proposals include a contingency plan for the possible increase or decrease of LLCs?

**Answer:** No. Should the need to increase or decrease the number of LLCs arise, the selected grantee will work with PAS to determine next steps.

- b) Should applications include room in the budget to account for a possible increase in LLCs?

**Answer:** No. Should the need to increase or decrease the number of LLCs arise, the selected grantee will work with PAS to determine next steps.

**Question 8:** Under Objectives “The Recipient may be required to work alongside the current LLC implementer for a period of up to two months to ensure a smooth transition” Who must come up with a transition plan? Should this be included in the proposal?

**Answer:** The grantee and PAS will work together to create a transition plan, should one be necessary. Applicants should briefly describe a transition timeline in their proposal.

**Question 9:** Employ between at least 3 qualified, certified, EducationUSA advisors to be based at separate, high-traffic LLCs around Afghanistan identified in consultation with PAS.” Does this refer to a minimum of 3 EducationUSA advisors across all LLCs? Or a minimum of 3 EducationUSA advisors per high-traffic LLCs?

**Answer:** At a minimum, three of the highest-traffic LLCs must have one EducationUSA advisor each (three total). Applicants may propose more than three total Education USA advisors.

**Question 10:** Under Maintenance for LLC and Equipment. “The Recipient should outline a plan to support a full transition to Solar Power for the entire network” and “Standard List of Office Supplies”

- a) How can we assess the current power needs? Should this plan be included in the proposal?

**Answer:** Currently, 22 of the 25 LLCs are running on diesel power generators; the other three have solar power. Applicants should include in their proposals a short description

of how they would transition the 22 non-solar LLCs from diesel generators to solar power, including a timeline and cost estimate.

- b) Does U.S. Embassy PAS have a pre-existing list of required LLC office supplies that applicants should budget for?

**Answer:** There is no standard list of required LLC office supplies; each LLC varies in size, audience, and capacity. Applicants should use their best judgement and propose supplies and materials it deems necessary to effectively operate the centers.

**Question 11:** Recipient must: “Select and deploy an electronic catalog of all LLC collections” Do Recipients have the option to use the current electronic catalog or is the Recipient expected to build this new data infrastructure from scratch?

**Answer:** The successful applicant will be able to use the existing electronic catalog.

**Question 12:** Third bullet point under Reporting “Utilize an online communication system between LLC staff, the Recipient’s administrative staff and PAS to provide...” Should applicants include a plan for development of this system in the proposal if we decide to not to use the current system and develop a new one?

**Answer:** If the applicant plans to develop a new communication system, it should briefly describe its function, cost, and the time needed for development. Alterations may be required at any time by PAS to meet reporting and data access requirements.

**Question 13:** What is the minimum level of detail that must be included in the security plan?

**Answer:** It is up to the applicant to determine what is included in its security plan.

**Question 14:** Are key personnel supposed to be solely working for this project? Or Can the recipient organization use its current staff in those positions on a part-time basis?

**Answer:** It is up to the applicant to determine the appropriate staffing levels and makeup to adequately operate and maintain the LLCs. For each position, the applicant should clearly specify what percentage of each position/individual’s time will be spent on this LLC project.

**Question 15:** Will the Monitoring and Evaluation template, Theory of Change template, and Indicator Reference Sheet count towards the 35-page limit of the proposal narrative? Or should these three documents be submitted as separate attachments?

**Answer:** These portions of the proposal will not count against the 35-page limit of the proposal narrative. They may be submitted as separate attachments.

**Question 16:** Page 19: “Application must include ... category summary budget for each option period” Is the U.S. Embassy PAS able to provide a sample format for the “category summary budget” for the option period?

**Answer:** There is no standard template for the category budget summary. See Annex A for budget category descriptions.

**Question 17:** Organization policy for working in high-risk environments. What is the minimum level of detail that must be included in the “Organization Policy for working in high-risk environments”?

**Answer:** It is up to each organization to determine what is included in its policy.

**Question 18:** Security Plans and Organization Policies: Should applications submit security plans and organizational policies for working in high-risk environments for all sub-awardees? Or does it suffice to submit these plans only on behalf of the primary Recipient?

**Answer:** The application should address the security plan for all aspects of the project. If a partner/sub-grantee is carrying out project activities, the security plan in the proposal should cover those activities.

**Question 19:** Section “Objectives” Part 4- LLC Programing states on page 9 that “In cooperation with PAS create and produce LLC promotional materials to be provided to LLC staff with recommended distribution strategies. The Recipient must produce and deliver promotional materials two times per year”. Are the promotional materials used for distribution to public or for LLC staff?

**Answer:** The promotional materials are for distribution to the public.

**Question 20:** Can you please share a list of LLCs with Rating Levels (Bronze, Silver and Gold)?

**Answer:** The Embassy does not offer a public list of the LLCs. LLCs in Afghanistan are not rated.

**Question 21:** Please send us the current Lincoln Centers Contacts that we could pay a visit to.

**Answer:** The Embassy does not offer a public list of the LLCs.

**Question 22:** Section “Objectives” Part 2- Maintenance for LLCs and equipment states on page 6 that the “Several LLCs have been transitioning to solar power to lower costs, and the recipient should outline a plan to support a full transition to solar power for the entire network”. How many of the LLCs have been transitioning to solar power by current grantee and how many are expected to be transitioned to solar power by future grantee?

**Answer:** See answer to question 10a.

**Question 23:** Section “Objectives” Part 3- LLC Programming states on page 7 that “Implement regularly-schedule, recurring programs, to include volunteer-led English language classes, internet and computer skills classes, professional development workshops, and other programming as directed by PAS”. Should all the computer skills training programs be volunteer-led or applicants can hire paid computer skills trainer?

**Answer:** Computer skills teachers may either be paid or be volunteers.

**Question 24:** Section “Objectives” Part 3- LLC Programming states on page 9 that “Develop and implement an annual training plan for LLC Coordinators and deputy coordinators”. Should the applicant consider budget for Mahram “a male relative who escorts a female traveler” for female LLC Coordinators or Deputy Coordinators who participate in annual training program and travelling out of their duty province?

**Answer:** No, the award will not fund travel for accompanying family members.

**Question 25:** Does Pakistani registered organization can apply subject stated funding opportunity Or Can we create a Consortium with Pakistan and Afghanistan registered NGOs.?

**Answer:** Any organization that meets the eligibility requirements in the NOFO may apply for this funding opportunity.