



Request for Proposals

United States Institute of Peace Evaluation of USIP Projects and Grants in Iraq

June 21, 2013

Project Name: Evaluation of USIP Projects and Grants in Iraq

Response Deadline: Friday, July 26, 2013 at 3:00pm EST

I. General Instructions

- A. The United States Institute of Peace (USIP) requests proposals for one evaluation firm to evaluate two (2) USIP work streams in Iraq: 1) USIP's support to Iraqi minorities, which culminated in the Alliance of Iraqi Minorities and the Minority Caucus; and 2) the USIP Iraq Priority Grant Program, including a set of grants to local Iraqi civil society organizations.
- B. The project will require the evaluation firm to facilitate consultations with USIP staff, conduct fieldwork in Iraq, develop two evaluations reports (one for each project), and brief USIP staff on findings and recommendations.
- C. The response must be submitted by email to bsloan@usip by Friday, July 26, 2013 at 3:00pm EST.
- D. The Institute is not liable for any costs incurred by the responding firms prior to issuance of an executed agreement with the Institute.
- E. Submissions must be typed or printed, and must follow the organization of the requests for information in the Submission of Proposals section below. No changes or corrections to a response will be allowed after the deadline.
- F. Any questions concerning this Request for Proposals should be directed to bsloan@usip.org. Pertinent responses will be made available to all proposers by e-mail. No inquiries will be accepted or responses given after Friday, July 19, 2013 at 3:00pm EST.
- G. Proposed schedule:

June 21 – Issue Request for Proposals

July 19 – Responses to all questions concerning this RFP will be sent by 3:00pm EST

July 26 – RFP submissions due by 3:00pm EST

July 29 – Review submissions and selection of evaluation firm

August 5 – Announce results of selection process.

August 26 – Full performance of contract begins.

II. Scope of Work

- A. USIP is the independent, nonpartisan conflict management center created by Congress to prevent and mitigate international conflict without resorting to violence. USIP works to save lives, increase the government's ability to deal with conflicts before they escalate, reduce government costs, and enhance our national security. Since 2003, USIP has played a key role in promoting peaceful governance through collaborative civic engagement in Iraq. The current RFP is being issued to identify an evaluation firm to evaluate two (2) USIP work streams in Iraq: 1) USIP's support to Iraqi minorities, which culminated in the civil society organization the Alliance of Iraqi Minorities and in the Minority Caucus in the Council of Representatives; and 2) the USIP Iraq Priority Grant Program, including a set of grants to local Iraqi civil society organizations.
- B. The Alliance of Iraqi Minorities (AIM) and The Parliamentary Caucus for Small Components ("The Minority Caucus") in the Council of Representatives were founded in 2011 after USIP and the Institute for International Law and Human Rights (IILHR) brought together political and civic leaders from four relatively small Iraqi minority groups, including Christians, Yazidis, Sabeen-Mandean, and Shebaks in 2010. USIP has been providing technical and financial support to AIM and the Caucus since their establishment. AIM has focused primarily on two initiatives: revising Iraqi school textbooks to ensure the explicit recognition of the minority groups as indigenous Iraqis; and addressing infrastructure in underdeveloped minority areas. AIM has worked with both provincial- and national-level policymakers on these initiatives. The Minority Caucus has focused on promoting minority rights and interests in the Council of Representatives by lobbying for legislation to eliminate discrimination in education, law enforcement, and basic service delivery.

Key evaluation questions are as follows:

- How was USIP's theory of change with regards to minorities in Iraq developed and how did it shift over the course of the work? How was AIM's and the Caucus' theory of change developed and how did it change? How are AIM and the Caucus different from how they were initially envisioned? What were the key decision points that led to these changes?
- What have been the enabling and inhibiting factors (including the local context, organizational structures and processes, and USIP support) to AIM and the Caucus in achieving their programmatic objectives? How have opportunities been leveraged? How have challenges been addressed? How might USIP have provided better support to leverage opportunities and mitigate challenges?
- What impact have AIM and the Caucus had on the lives of minorities?
- How did the relationship and coordination among AIM, the Caucus, and USIP affect the overall success of USIP's minorities work?

- C. The Iraq Priority Grant Competition Program (PGC) supports the capacity building of civil society organizations, promotes peacebuilding and reconciliation, strengthens the rule of law, and facilitates the inclusion of and better relations among minority, ethnic, and religious groups. USIP has made over 80 grants to local Iraqi civil society organizations since 2004, including projects on the rule of law, women, youth, education, inter-communal tolerance, and institution building. Many of these grants have been individually evaluated; however, no aggregate evaluation has taken place to date. This evaluation will look at a sub-set of USIP's grants, focusing on those made in the last five years.

Key evaluation questions are as follows:

- How did the USIP Iraq PGC help improve grantees' organizational capacity to conduct peacebuilding activities?
 - What have been the enabling and inhibiting factors (including the local context, organizational structures and processes, and USIP support through training and guidance) to the grantee organizations in achieving their grant project objectives?
 - What was the aggregate impact of USIP's grants in the last five years? How did it correspond with USIP's mission in Iraq?
 - How did the USIP PGC grant policies and processes affect the overall success of the USIP's grants work? How are the USIP PGC grantmaking policies and processes different from those of other donors (according to grantees that received funds from multiple donors)? What are the strengths and weaknesses of USIP's processes?
 - How can the USIP Iraq PGC improve to better address developing trends in Iraq and support innovative peacebuilding initiatives?
- D. The project will require the evaluation firm to: 1) facilitate consultations with USIP staff to hone evaluation questions and methodologies; 2) conduct a desk review of available contracting, grant-making, and monitoring documents; 3) conduct fieldwork in Iraq, including trips amounting to approximately two weeks in Erbil and Baghdad for data collection with AIM and the Minority Caucus personnel and grantees as well other key informants; 4) write and edit one draft and one final evaluation report for each work stream; 5) brief USIP staff on findings and recommendations.
- E. The evaluation firm should be able to convene a team with technical evaluation expertise as well as subject matter expertise in Middle Eastern minority groups and grantmaking. The team should have language proficiency in Iraqi Arabic – training in Modern Standard Arabic will not be considered sufficient.
- F. The methodologies for the evaluations will be finalized in consultation between the contractor and USIP; however, it is envisioned that the guidelines developed by OECD-DAC will be used as a framework for developing the methodology, http://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/development/evaluating-donor-engagement-in-situations-of-conflict-and-fragility_9789264106802-en.
- G. The evaluation firm will be responsible for managing all travel arrangements and related expenses, including for visas, security, and insurance. Non-U.S. citizens should be able to

secure visas to the U.S. for the purpose of facilitating consultations at USIP. Preference will be given to evaluation firms capable of managing all travel-related logistics without USIP support.

H. Each report is expected to include the following sections:

- Executive summary
- Background/Context
- Methodology
- Findings
- Recommendations

I. Level of effort is estimated as follows:

- 10 person days preparation for fieldwork
- 15 person days fieldwork
- 20 person days report writing
- 3 person days presentation and consultations with USIP

J. Timeline for deliverables is as follows:

Deliverable	Date Due
Draft evaluation report	October 18, 2013
Final evaluation report	November 1, 2013
Presentation of report and consultations	November 8, 2013

Note: Exact dates for deliverables are negotiable and will be finalized no later than August 26, 2013.

III. Submission Requirements:

To be considered under this RFP, please submit the following:

Technical Proposal (no more than 8 pages)

The narrative proposal should include the following sections:

- A. Past Experience: Describe at least three projects of similar scope and complexity you have worked on previously. Provide a point of contact with telephone number and email address at the client of each of described projects.
- B. Overall Approach and Methodology: Based on the information provided, describe your proposed approach to field research, data collection, data analysis, research methodology, and development of conclusions. As noted above, the final research methodology will be developed in consultation with USIP.

- C. Specific Expertise: Describe your level of knowledge and expertise in: 1) Middle Eastern minority groups; and 2) grant-making and philanthropy.
- D. Key Personnel and Staffing Describe the key personnel as well as information on the overall staffing plan for the project. Please note that staff may be non-US citizens and do not require a security clearance.

Curriculum Vitae

For each of the key personnel, please provide a CV of no more than three pages. CVs will not count as part of the 8 pages of the technical proposal.

Cost Proposals

The cost proposal should include a budget summary, detailed budget, and budget narrative. The budget should include detailed travel costs (including for visas, security, and insurance) for fieldwork.

IV. General Terms and Selection Process

- A. The Selection Committee will review all submissions received on time using the selection criteria established for the project.
- B. The Selection Committee reserves the right to reject any submission or to reject all submissions in the best interests of the Institute. The Institute may cancel this Solicitation at any time prior to contract award if it is in the best interests of the Institute.
- C. The successful firm shall not discriminate against any person in accordance with Federal, state, or local law.
- D. Proposals will be judged as follows:
 - a. Technical Proposals will be judged on the following factors in descending order of preference:
 - Factor 1. Overall Approach and Methodology
 - Factor 2. Staffing and Key Personnel
 - Factor 3. Specific Expertise
 - Factor 4. Past Experience
 - b. Cost Proposals are a determinate factor whose value is equal to that of sum of the elements of the technical proposal.