

Questions and Answers on PEPFAR Care LPI RFA
from 10-Jan-2008 information session and emailed inquiries

From 10-Jan-2008 information session:

Q1: Regarding the targets, are they to be reached by any one individual project or by all projects combined?

A: Targets are to be reached by the combination of all the projects within this initiative, whatever the number of projects ends up to be (up to 7 maximum).

Q2: Regarding geographic coverage, the different organizations could propose the same area, but what if two propose good projects for the same area in the concept brief round? Is it be okay for the applicant to suggest an alternative geographic area in the full proposal?

A: Your proposed geographic focus was one of the reasons your concept brief was selected to advance to the full application round. If you believe that the new geographic area fits equally well with the objective of the RFA, you may propose a change in your full application. If you are not sure whether a certain geographic area would qualify, please ask Pact.

Also note that while we have provided you with some information on the geographical distribution of HIV clinics and community-based services, we cannot guarantee the accuracy or comprehensiveness of the information provided. You will need to do your own investigation while preparing for the application in order to justify your original or a changed geographic focus.

Q3: If key personnel are not yet identified, what do we do for CVs?

A: Instead of a CV, you may provide a job description with detailed responsibilities and qualifications to illustrate the type and level of personnel you will be recruiting for.

Q4: Can technical staff who would support not only this project but also others be considered key personnel?

A: The definition of key personnel is flexible, and depends on your project design. Key personnel are the 2 people most important to the successful management and/or implementation of the project. They can be management or technical staff, and do not need to work full-time on the project.

Q5: Regarding travel, if one project activity includes travel for our staff and for our partners' staff, should these travel expenses be included partly in the travel line of our budget, and partly in the sub-grant line?

A: It depends on who is responsible for payment. If the travel is to be organized by and paid for by your organization, the expenses should be budgeted under travel in your budget. If your funded partner will organize and pay for their own travel, then the expenses are part of the partner's budget, the total of which is the amount to be inserted in the Sub-grant line in your budget.

Q6: Should we apply Pact and/or PEPFAR cost norms in determining unit costs – for example for per diem?

A: Expenditures should follow the applicant's own organizational policy. For example, per diem charges should be the same as those charged in other projects carried out by

the organization and in line with the current organization's per diem policy. Expenses for such things as equipment and rent should be based on market rate. USAID has ceiling rates for certain costs, but they are very high, and probably not realistic for local organizations. Applicants should apply the current cost norms of their organizations.

Q7: The inflation rate is high in Viet Nam, so can we account for inflation rates increasing in our budget over 17 months?

A: Yes. You can build into your budget allowance for inflation, for example, anticipating price increases for equipment, or salary adjustments, etc. Just be sure to explain how you calculate and justify your figures.

Q8: Entertainment costs are not allowable. Many organizations organize social activities for beneficiaries, care providers, peer educators, etc., as a kind of support that is part of project. Is this allowable?

A: Costs for "entertainment" purposes are not allowed. If the activity is designed to provide psychosocial support for the beneficiaries and caregivers, it is considered an appropriate component of HIV care and support, and not considered "entertainment", so it is allowed. Do not call it "entertainment" but list it as psycho-social support and show that it is clearly linked with project objectives.

Q9: In the summary budget template, what is a sub-grant?

A: When you provide a sub-grant to another local organization, you provide funding to them out of your grant. Just like you provide Pact with a proposal and budget, your sub-grantee also must also develop a scope of work and budget that you agree on, and you then issue them a grant agreement.

Q10: What is a sub-contract vs. sub-grant?

A: The simplest way to differentiate is to think of a grant as a gift for the organization to do what it proposes, while a contract is 'buying' something from a supplier. However, there is a lot to learn about how to use the sub-grant and sub-contract mechanisms when you are on USAID funding. Pact will work with the winners of this RFA on a case-by-case basis, post-award.

Questions emailed to Pact:

Q11: For the staff who will work on this project, we would like to charge the project according to the proportion of time they will work for the project. Is that OK?

A: The applicant should allocate staff for whatever level of effort they think is appropriate to manage and implement the project effectively and efficiently. It is appropriate to charge the project for the proportion of time (level of effort) spent by all relevant staff members on the project.

Q12: When we have a project event, we may need to hire people on a very short-term basis to organize and serve at the event. Should they be budgeted for as consultants?

A: They can be considered consultants and you should sign simple consultant contracts with them.