

Question and Answer

RFA No: PAOP- RFA-2019-002

RFA Name: Distributed Electricity Services and Modern Cooking Fuel Delivery

Date: November 08, 2019

1. **Question:** Has there been similar grants in the past? And will there be more in the future?

Answer: No similar grant has been issued under the Power Africa Off-grid Project. Any future requests for applications/annual program statements will be issued and posted on the RTI Website (<https://www.rti.org/current-opportunities>). Companies should monitor this website for any announcements that may be posted.

2. **Question:** Is there a possibility for grant extension based on project result after a year?

Answer: The anticipated period of performance shall not exceed 12 months.

3. **Question:** Could you provide a list of all the abbreviations in the document and their meanings?

Answer: The list of abbreviations is attached to this document in Annex I.

4. **Question:** Is there an appeal process in place for candidates whose applications have been rejected?

Answer: There is no appeal process for applications not selected. Applicants are referred to the RFA Disclaimers on page 12 of the announcement.

5. **Question:** Can the beneficiary of the grant bring in partners for the realization of this project?

Answer: Applications may be submitted as a consortium however all consortium partners must meet and submit evidence of the eligibility criteria stipulated in the request for applications.

6. **Question:** Is there a preference of SHS over LPG for applicants who receive funding?

Answer: Applicants are expected to propose solutions for combined delivery of SHS and LPG systems. Applications that do not propose a combined delivery solution will not be considered eligible.

7. Question: If an applicant/business has not yet been operating for a calendar year, but can provide a roadmap to demonstrate the business model scalability even after one year of grant funding, would the applicant/business still be able to receive funding?

Answer: No, the applicant/business must be in operation for at least one-year. Applicants are required to meet the “Applicant Eligibility” criteria stipulated in the RFA (page 10).

8. Question: What is the maximum of companies/organization that can be on a single proposal for this specific RFA?

Answer: There is no limit to the number of companies/organizations that can be proposed on an application.

9. Question: If an applicant has been operating for over six months, almost a year, and can provide a roadmap to demonstrate the business model scalability even after one year of grant funding, would the applicant be eligible to receive funding?

Answer: No, the company should be in operation for at least one-year. Applicants are required to meet the “Applicant Eligibility” criteria stipulated in the RFA (page 10).

10. Question: Are there examples of prior proposals that were accepted and posted somewhere for the public to review?

Answer: There are no prior proposals available for public review.

11. Question: Is there an average score that applicants whom receive funding receive? If so, what is that range?

Answer: There is no average score. Applications will be evaluated against the merit review criteria in the RFA (page 8).

12. Question: Given that the “feasibility of (the) technical approach” is the criteria element that holds the most weight, can you elaborate on what this section should look like or what USAID will be looking for?

Answer: Applicants are referred to “ANNEX A: Technical Application Form” for guidance on the expected structure and content of the application.

13. Question: Is there a section in the merit review criteria that the majority of applicants tend to underperform in?

Answer: Each RFA has its own merit review criteria hence we are unable to provide an indication.

14. Question: Have there been any instances of a prior grant being terminated unilaterally in extraordinary circumstances? -If so, what were the instances and circumstances?

Answer: As indicated on page 9 of the RFA , the grant may be terminated at a date earlier than the grant activity completion date under the following conditions but not limited to:

- Significant change in the scope of work: If the requirements of USAID or the program change such that the work to be completed varies significantly from the proposed activities.
- Reduction or termination of donor funding: In the event USAID reduces funding or terminates funding earlier than the Grant Activity Completion Date.
- As a requirement of the donor: In the event the donor requests early termination of the Grant.

15. Question: With so many applicants, what are some of the ways prior applicants who received grants have stood out?

Answer: Applicants whose proposal meets or exceeds the RFA's merit review criteria and offered the best solution.

16. Question: Do products have to be sold through PAYGO only?

Answer: No, applicants may propose other payment solutions.

17. Question: What exactly is meant by "co-delivery?"

Answer: Co-delivery refers to simultaneous/combined delivery of distributed electricity services and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cooking solutions.

18. Question: Does the proposed SHS/LPG solution have to be combined in a single product or can they be separate (i.e. a SHS and an LPG cooking device)?

Answer: Applicants are expected to propose combined SHS/LPG delivery solutions.

19. Question: Can the funds be applied to the first phase of a pilot (i.e. first units in the field)?

Answer: Yes

20. Question: Can funding be used for BCC (behavior change communication) campaigns regarding financial literacy and the benefits of both LPG and SHS?

Answer: Funding may be used for behavior change communication campaigns pertaining to co-delivery of SHS and LPG solution; however, may not be used for financial literacy.

21. Question: Can you clarify solutions for supply chain? Does this include delivery efficiencies?

Answer: Applicants should propose a series of steps or processes to providing simultaneous delivery of distributed electricity services and LPG cooking solutions to the customer. Yes, it includes delivery efficiencies.

22. Question: Please can you clarify what you consider/define as a SHS? Will lanterns be included?

Answer: A solar home system (SHS) is defined as a multi light point system with cellphone charging capabilities. No, lanterns are not included in the SHS definition.

23. Question: Will inventory be considered an eligible expense, that will be funded by PAOP?

Answer: Inventory is not an eligible expense. Funding under this RFA may not be used to purchase products for sell to end-users.

24. Question: When you say the co-delivery of SHS and LPG, do you mean that SHS and LPG needs to be delivered to the same person or the same country?

Answer: SHS and LPG must be delivered to the same household.

25. Question: Can only SHS apply?

Answer: Applicants are expected to propose solutions for combined delivery of SHS and LPG systems. Applications that do not propose a combined delivery solution will not be considered eligible.

26. Question: Will applicants be informed of the decision of PAOP? Or only when successful?

Answer: All applicants will be notified on the outcome of their application.

27. Question: If a village has 500 households can we propose to construct solar mini-grid, and can we add LPG?

Answer: Funding under this RFA may not be used for construction of solar mini grid.

28. Question: On the MEL, two performance indicators appear to be largely redundant for this program i.e. New grid connections and productive use (unless SHS/LPG sold to a business/entrepreneur). Can you confirm/clarify?

Answer: The MEL template has examples of what indicators should look like. Applicants are expected to include indicators that are linked to activities they are proposing.

29. Question: Do customers have to be rural?

Answer: Customers can be urban, peri-urban or rural.

30. Question: Can one apply again after the most recent PAOP market entry/paygo?

Answer: Yes, the RFAs are independent and do not influence each other.

31. Question: What do you mean by integration of paygo in the LPG system?

Answer: Integration of PAYGO in the LPG system was only an example. Solutions do not have to be PAYGO and can be financed by other business models.

32. Question: Can the customers of LPG and SHS be different? Or in other words, can a customer have one and not the other?

Answer: No, the customer cannot be different. Co-delivery must be to the same household.

33. Question: More clarification needed on the applicants that need to apply both SHS and LPG or you can also apply with one?

Answer: Applicants must provide households with both SHS and LPG systems .

34. Question: Can funds be used on health/safety equipment?

Answer: Funds under this RFA may be used for health/safety equipment related to implementation of the program.

35. Question: If it is largely about piloting and pathway to scale, can we consider that the number of connections is secondary to 'quality' and feasibility of the technical approach? If we propose to pilot co-delivery for 200 households with a pathway within 2 years to reach 5000, will another applicant proposing to reach 5000 within 12 months, be scored higher?

Answer: Applications will be evaluated according to the merit review criteria in the RFA (page 8) and not only the proposed number of systems.

36. Question: All applicants don't have both solutions, only one company has such a solution. As a result, this will limit the number of applicants. Please clarify.

Answer: If currently the organization is only selling and providing either SHS or LPG services to households and propose to use the funding under this RFA to include the other LPG/SHS solution; then yes, the organization can apply.

37. Question: Can I have PAYGO for SHS and LPG not integrated PAYGO?

Answer: Yes, as long as the applicant can prove that it can service both systems after the sale and show the road map on how you can sustainably service the LPG system in the long term.

38. Question: If a company has a 5-year-old business in an eligible country and is proposing to enter in an adjacent eligible country. Will a project covering both countries be eligible, or just the existing country of business?

Answer: Both countries must be part of the 12 focus countries in the RFA and the applicant must be registered to operate in the adjacent country.

39. Question: Can we apply with the cooperatives as the Lead applicant?

Answer: Yes, applicants may apply as a consortium and must indicate the lead organizations.

ANNEX I – LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADS	Advanced Directive System
COIN	Catalyzing Off-grid Investment
DUNS	Data Universal Numbering System
FAA	Fixed Amount Award
GMT	Greenwich Mean Time
LPG	Liquefied Petroleum Gas
PAOP	Power Africa Off-grid Project
Q&A	Question and Answer
RFA	Request For Applications
RTI	Research Triangle Institute
SAST	South Africa Standard Time
SHS	Solar Household Systems
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
USAID	United States Agency for International Development