Request for Applications (RFA) No. LAA-2024-001

for

Small Grant Activities to Support Learning and Innovation Hub Events

Issuance Date:	April 10, 2024; 17:00 Ethiopia
Deadline for Questions:	April 24, 2024; 17:00 Ethiopia
Response from LAA:	April 26, 2024; 17:00 Ethiopia
Deadline for Submissions:	May 9, 2024; 12:00 Ethiopia

Dear Applicant,

The USAID/Ethiopia Learning Analytics Activity (the "Activity") is releasing a Request for Applications (RFA) to award a grant to support a local Ethiopian organization to host a series of relevant, engaging events at the Activity's Learning and Innovation HUB. Instructions for completing the application can be found in Annex A. The grants will be awarded and implemented in accordance with the USAID and US Government regulations governing grants and the Activity's internal grants management policies.

The Project's investments in individual grant activities are anticipated to not exceed $10,000 (ten thousand USD) per grant. The period of performance is anticipated to be for six to eight months, from May 2024 to November 2024 – January 2025, depending on the proposed grant activities. Only one qualified organization is sought for a single grant, but multiple grants could be awarded to multiple organizations if a single, suitable organization is not identified.

Please note that applications in response to this RFA are due by **May 9, 2024.** For any questions during the grant application process, please contact Anna Koontz at LAA.Grants@tetratechinc.onmicrosoft.com. Please note that all questions must be submitted no later than **April 24, 2024**.

This RFA contains the following documents:

- Annex A – Applicant Cover Letter
- Annex B – Grant Application and Implementation Plan
- Annex C – Grant Application Checklist
- Annex D1 – Budget
- Annex D2 – Budget Narrative

Request for Applications

Section I. Program Description

IA. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The USAID/ Ethiopia Learning Analytics Activity (LAA) is an activity designed to bolster the capacity of USAID/Ethiopia to work towards a Mission-wide systematic and intentional approach to learning. The Activity will improve data management and help the Mission to make timely decisions in program design and implementation. The Activity will enable wider collective impact of USAID and other partners - thereby better meeting the Development Objectives outlined in the Mission's Country Development & Cooperation Strategy (CDCS). This is a five-year Activity that ends in April 2028.

Part of Activity goals include setting up and running a robust learning and collaboration ecosystem for USAID, Activity staff, and the wider development community through the Learning and Innovation HUB, located at the Minaye Corporate Office Park, Floor 9, Behind Meskel Square.

IB. GRANT PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The USAID/Ethiopia Learning Analytics Activity (LAA) invites Ethiopian organizations to submit responses to this RFA. The purpose of this grant opportunity is to initiate an engaging series of learning events at the project's Learning and Innovation HUB, which seeks to enhance collaboration, learning and innovation in the Ethiopian international development and humanitarian sphere by bringing together relevant stakeholders. The target audience of the event series is the broader international development and humanitarian community in Ethiopia. Through this grant opportunity, organizations are encouraged to design an approach for effective, relevant, and engaging event series. Qualified local organizations can bid to receive up to **USD 10,000** in grants to implement activities in Ethiopia over six months. Only one qualified organization is sought for a single grant, but multiple grants could be awarded to multiple organizations if a single, suitable organization is not identified.

If selected, throughout the period of implementation, the grantee will be required to submit periodic project reports in accordance with the contract. Payment will not be based on actual costs incurred but instead issued as tranche payments linked to the completion and acceptance of the specific milestones or deliverables, as defined in the award.

Grantees are expected to propose a series of regular (approximately monthly) events to cover a six-month period. The events will be held at the Learning and Innovation HUB, so no venue costs are required. However, grantees are expected to use grant funds to cover staff and consultant labor, and any other event-related costs. Events must be engaging and relevant, and *may* be related to any of the following topics (or a combination of topics as proposed by grantee):

1. Innovative, multi-stakeholder approaches to addressing one or more of the following development and humanitarian challenges facing Ethiopia over the coming five years:
   a. Violent conflict
   b. Economic fragility
   c. Weak human development – especially for youth
   d. Climate risks
   e. Food and nutrition insecurity
2. Innovative, multi-stakeholder approaches to improving data access and quality for humanitarian and development decision making and programming.
3. Innovative approaches to making development more inclusive of historically marginalized groups.
4. Expanding private sector engagement to better achieve development objectives.
5. Expanding engagement with local organizations to better achieve development objectives.

Request for Applications

IC. AUTHORITY AND GOVERNING REGULATIONS

The Activity grant awards are made under the authority of the US Foreign Affairs Act, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) (2 CFR 200), and USAID's Automated Directive System (ADS) Chapter 303, "Grants and Cooperative Agreements to Non-Governmental Organizations." Grants administered under the Activity will adhere to the terms of the applicable USAID Standard and Required as Applicable Provisions, as well as the Activity's grants procedures.

The Activity is required to ensure that all applicants receiving USAID grant funds comply with the requirements found in these regulations, as applicable to the respective terms and conditions of individual grant awards. Under the Activity's grants program, USAID will retain the right, at all times, to terminate, in whole or in part, the Activity's grant-making authorities or any grants in progress.

Section II. Eligibility

IIA. ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS

Applicants that submit applications in response to this RFA must be entities that have legally registered in Ethiopia and possess a TIN certificate and must submit registration and TIN documents as a pre-requisite for receiving grants resources.

Please note that activities cannot be considered if they include any construction, renovation, repair or rent. If unsure, please contact us during the Q&A period listed on the cover page of this RFA for specific activities that you are considering for this application.

IIB. ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS OF ELIGIBILITY

To be considered eligible for grant receipt, applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Have up to date registration and TIN certificates in Ethiopia;
- Have organizational objectives which contribute to LAA's objectives and results, as laid out in this RFA;
- Submit an application per deadline listed in this RFA;
- Be committed to adhering to high ethical business standards, including transparency in business dealings and record keeping;
- Be prepared to undertake an independent financial review or audit, as requested;
- Demonstrate ability and/or willingness to learn how to maintain business, financial, and technical records, either manually or electronically;
- Ensure compliance with relevant environmental protection requirements, including the Environmental Review Form (ERF), if relevant;
- Complete and pass a site-visit and pre-award assessment;
- Agree to and sign the applicable certifications, such as the Certification Regarding Lobbying; Certification Regarding Terrorist Financing; Prohibition on Assistance to Drug Traffickers; and Certification of the Recipient;
- Agree to the terms and conditions of the Mandatory Standard Provisions and Required as Applicable Provisions for Non-US NGOs, if applicable; and
- Certify that the organization/individual is not debarred, suspended, or proposed for debarment from receipt of USG funds.

Request for Applications

While the Activity will consider all applicants, priority will be given to projects that will clearly demonstrate improved service delivery, impact larger numbers of beneficiaries, address under-served populations, including women and youth, and historically disadvantaged groups or demonstrate partnership with other entities when selecting potential awardees.

II C. INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS, ACTIVITIES AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS

The following entities are not eligible for grant funds:

- Any entity or member that appears on the U.S. Department of Treasury Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons list or in the System for Award Management (SAM) database;
- An entity having as key staff a direct relative (spouse, child, parent or brother/sister/sibling) of Kaizen or USAID staff;
- Entities or members engaged in any activities related to Trafficking in Persons;
- Entities or members engaged, transacting with, or providing resources to individuals or organizations associated with terrorism;
- Entities which have been debarred, suspended, or otherwise considered ineligible for an award by the US Government;
- Current recipients of the Activity's grants;
- Grant applications that have not been submitted on time;
- Grant applications that are incomplete;
- Applicants who are not registered in Ethiopia.

Applicants may not use grant funds for any of the following:

- Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or "representation" expenses;
- Purchases of restricted goods, which include agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, or fertilizers, without the prior waiver and approval provided by the Activity. Purchase of these goods requires additional approvals from USAID before they may be allowed and procured. As such, applicants are discouraged from requesting funding for these restricted goods unless the goods are necessary to the accomplishment of the grant objectives;
- Ineligible goods under USAID regulations, including but not limited to: military equipment; surveillance equipment; police or law enforcement equipment; abortion equipment and services; weather modification equipment; luxury goods; and gambling equipment;
- Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by Activity, including any applicant headquarters' expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed Project;
- Previous obligations and/or bad debts;
- Fines and/or penalties;
- Creation of endowments;
- Construction/renovation;
- Rent expenses;
- Indirect costs such as, but not limited to, overhead or indirect fringe, unless the Applicant has documented proof of such rates through audits or USAID-issued NICRA; and
- Any other costs unallowable per 2 CFR 200 Subpart E – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, for Federal Awards.

Request for Applications

Section III. Application Submission Information

III.A REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The Applicant must submit their application using the following templates. Failure to use the templates provided or the submission of incomplete documentation may result in the disqualification from this RFA. All documents listed below can be found in the Annexes of this RFA.

1. Annex A: Applicant Cover Letter
2. Annex B: Grant Application and Implementation Plan
3. Annex C: Grant Application Checklist
4. Annex D1: Budget
5. Annex D2: Budget Narrative

III.B APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION

All applicants who are interested in this offer must identify themselves to receive the compiled questions and answers from other applicants. To this end, Activity invites all applicants to identify themselves by sending an email to LAA.Grants@tetratechinc.onmicrosoft.com with the following subject line « RFA No. LAA-2024-001 Identification ». In the email body, the Applicant should indicate:

> Name of the Organization:
> Region:
> Email Address (if available):
> WhatsApp Number:
> Phone Number:

III.C QUESTION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Any questions related to this RFA must be submitted to **Anna Koontz** at LAA.Grants@tetratechinc.onmicrosoft.com **no later than April 24, 2023, 17:00 Ethiopia time.**

Questions must be submitted in writing; phone calls will not be accepted. Questions and requests for clarification—and the responses thereto—will be circulated to all RFA recipients who have indicated an interest in submitting Applications. Only the written answers issued by Kaizen will be considered official and carry weight in the RFA process and subsequent evaluation. Any verbal information received from employees of Kaizen, or any other entity should not be considered as an official response to any questions regarding this RFA.

III.B APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Grant applications will be accepted *only* in the application format given within the annexes of this solicitation. Applications and any required supporting documentation should be submitted **no later than May 9, 2024, 17:00 Ethiopia time.** Applicants must strictly adhere to the requirements of this RFA. Any one entity/organization may submit one (1) application for funding in response to this RFA.

Applications must comply with the following:
- Written in English;
- The Activity will not review any pages in excess of the page limits noted in the annexes. Please ensure that applications comply with the page limitations;
- Use standard A4, single sided, single-spaced, 11-point Times New Roman font;

Request for Applications

- 1" margins, left justification and headers and/or footers on each page including
- consecutive page numbers, date of submission, and applicant's name;
- 10-point font can be used for graphs and charts. Tables, however, must comply with the 11-point Times New Roman requirement;
  Online submissions must be submitted via Microsoft Word or PDF formats.
- The estimated start date identified in Section IB of this RFA must be used in the application assumptions.

Electronic applications should be submitted to LAA.Grants@tetratechinc.onmicrosoft.com with the following subject line « RFA No. LAA-2024-001 Grant Application ». Applicants should request a confirmation of receipt from the Activity when submitting applications, to ensure their submission was received.

Please reference the RFA number in any response to this RFA. Applications received after the specified time and date will be considered late and will be considered only at the discretion of Kaizen. Applicants must strictly follow the provided deadlines to be considered for award.

IV. Evaluation, Selection, and Award Information

All applications submitted in response to this solicitation will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

Criteria	Description	Points
1. The validity/status of the registration and TIN certificate of organization.	• Submits valid registration license and TIN certificate that confirms legal operations in Ethiopia.	5
2. The extent to which the applicant demonstrates end-to-end event management experience in their technical approach.	• Demonstrates event management experience and ability to carry out complex events.	30
3. The extent to which the organization's proposed series of events aligns with LAA's objectives and are relevant to the intentions of the speaker series program.	• Lays out clear event plan and learning agenda that aligns with LAA's objectives.	30
5. The extent to which the proposed project and activities are sustainable.	• Demonstrate how activity will remain effective after end of grant funding/period or contribute to continued future work in the area of intervention.	10
7. Demonstrated past experience with other donors (local or international) and understanding of development context.	• Number, type and amount of funding from all previous donors, or collaboration experience without funding.	5
8. Cost effectiveness	• Level to which the proposed activities can be accomplished with the grant award amount (USD 10,000), or if other funding sources are	20

Request for Applications

	anticipated (e.g., other donors, third party loans, investment partners) an explanation of these other funding sources to complete the proposed activities. Please note external funding sources are not required. • Level to which proposed activities are allowable, reasonable, and realistic.		
		TOTAL	**100**

Once applications have been submitted to Kaizen, members of the LAA Grant Selection Committee will evaluate applications in accordance with the above selection criteria. Applicants with the highest score will be selected will be eligible for receipt of grant funding. Applicants will be notified within fifteen (15) calendar days following the Grant Selection Committee meeting whether their application was considered acceptable or not.

If the application is considered acceptable, Kaizen will contact the Applicant to engage in further discussions. A decision to engage in more in-depth and specific discussion following initial selection is *not* a commitment to funding; it is simply a decision to move forward in the collaborative and joint effort to develop an impactful grant project. If the in-depth and specific discussions do not result in the identification and development of a grant activity worthy of further pursuit, then the Activity will inform the Applicant that it is no longer interested in advancing the grant project. However, if the more in-depth discussions result in a promising design and concept, the Activity will inform the Applicant of that determination.

Applicants considered to be successful will be subject to a site visit from LAA staff for an applicant pre-award assessment to verify the accuracy of their submission and viability to conduct proposed activities. This may include location, board engagement, past activities etc., If the site visit assessment uncovers no major issues, LAA will provide the necessary instructions, technical requirements, and next steps of grant award. Kaizen anticipates awarding fixed amount award (FAA) grants as a result of this RFA.

V. Terms and Conditions

Applicants understand, by submitting a response to this RFA, that application submission does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of LAA, nor does it commit LAA to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Further, LAA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, as well as issue amendments revising the terms of this RFA before or after receipt of applications. In submitting an application, Applicants understand that USAID is not a party to this solicitation and the Applicant agrees that any communications regarding this solicitation will be conducted with LAA, and not USAID. Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision made regarding their application.

Request for Applications

ANNEX A. APPLICANT COVER LETTER

The following cover letter must be placed on letterhead and completed/signed/stamped by a representative authorized to sign on behalf of the Applicant:

To: [enter point of contact]
                       [enter project office address]

From: [enter point of contact]
                       [enter applicant office address]

Reference: RFA no. [enter RFA number]

To Whom It May Concern:

We, the undersigned, hereby provide the attached application to perform all work required to complete the activities and requirements as described in the above-referenced RFA. Please find our application attached.

We hereby acknowledge and agree to all terms, conditions, special provisions, and instructions included in the above-referenced RFA. We further certify that the below-named firm—as well as the firm's principal officers and all commodities and services offered in response to this RFA—are eligible to participate in this procurement under the terms of this solicitation and under USAID regulations.

Furthermore, we hereby certify that, to the best of our knowledge and belief:
- We have no close, familial, or financial relationships with any Kaizen or Activity project staff members;
- We have no close, familial, or financial relationships with any other applicants submitting proposals in response to the above-referenced RFA; and
- The prices in our offer have been arrived at independently, without any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other applicant or competitor for the purpose of restricting competition.
- All information in our application and all supporting documentation is authentic and accurate.
- We understand and agree to Kaizen's prohibitions against fraud, bribery, and kickbacks.
- We understand and agree to Kaizen's prohibitions against funding or associating with individuals or organizations engaged in terrorism or trafficking in persons activities.

We hereby certify that the enclosed representations, certifications, and other statements are accurate, current, and complete:

Authorized Signatory:

Name and Title of Signatory:

Date:

Company Registration or Taxpayer ID Number:

Request for Applications

Annex B: Grant Application and Implementation Plan

The Grant Application serves as a first-screening test for grant activities. The form is designed to gather essential basic information about the Applicant and what it is proposing to do. Applicants should insert text where noted. Instructions are included in italics and should be deleted after reading. Applications shall be submitted in accordance with the instructions listed in III.B. of the RFA with a **maximum of 5 pages (five)** (annexes are not counted in this limitation).

1. About the organization

a. Legal Organization's name: [INSERT]

Address: [INSERT]
Telephone: [INSERT]
WhatsApp: [INSERT]
Cell phone: [INSERT]
Email: [INSERT]

Key contact person and title: [INSERT] *(The contact person (agent) that the organization legally assigns to be responsible for communications between the Activity and the Applicant and to make grant decisions on behalf of organization.)*

b. Organization's Profile and Background:
[INSERT] *(Briefly describe organization and its activities—should introduce the Applicant and its background: How it was formed, its mission or purpose, major accomplishments in the area of the targeted activity, current activities, and clients, when it was registered, number of members (if any), number of volunteers and/or full-time staff if any, types of activities implemented, geographic coverage, target beneficiaries, etc.)*

2. About the proposed grant

a. **Statement of Purpose:**
The grant will contribute to the Activity's overall objective of [enter proposed project objective].
Specifically, In this section please provide us with summary of what specific problems/challenges the proposed grant activities will address.

b. **Proposed Program Name:** [INSERT]
Please provide grant project name if you have one (optional). The title should relate to the grant objective.

c. **Program Goal and Objective(s):** [INSERT]
Program can have one or more objectives. Please list each objective and its related activities separately.

1. **Program Goal:** [INSERT]. *What does the proposed grant program aim at addressing? This should be measurable.*

Request for Applications

2. **Related Objective #** [INSERT] *(please repeat below per objective if you have more than one for this proposal)*

d. **Objective # Activities and Timelines:** *(NOTE: please include each event proposed – approximately 6 to 8 total in this table)*

Activity Name (milestone)	Estimated Time to Complete (days/weeks)	Detailed Activity and Target Description	Expected outcome/Results	Deliverable(s)
Example-Training workshop	*5 days*	*Conduct a two-day workshop to 25 participants on impacts of climate change on crop production in Ethiopia*	*25 individuals become more aware/engaged in this topic*	*Attendance sheet Pre and post-test Photos Agenda SOW Other*
[INSERT]	[INSERT]	[INSERT]	[INSERT]	[INSERT]

e. **Program overall target:**
- Direct beneficiaries: [INSERT] *(those that benefit directly from program interventions, e.g. households who receive immediate services).*

- Indirect beneficiaries (If any): [INSERT] *(those that will benefit indirectly from program interventions).*

f. **Program gender and/or person with disability consideration/inclusion:**
- [INSERT] *Describe how your program activities will include gender in its implementation. This could include direct target or inclusion in activities and/or services.*

g. **Grant sustainability:**
- [INSERT] *Please describe how your proposed activities/interventions are sustainable. Kindly describe how your activities will continue to benefit the targeted community after the activity ends.*

h. **Proposed project implementation partners:**
[INSERT] *Provide a list of potential implementation partners when conducting activities such as community leaders, other CSOs, regional government, etc.*

i. **List all previous donor experience (local or international)**
[INSERT]

Project Management

a. **Key Personnel (if applicable):** *Please provide names, titles, and contact information of any other team members who will be involved in the implementation of activities and in which role.*
- [insert key personnel]
- [insert key personnel]

Request for Applications

- [insert key personnel]

b. **Project Oversight:**
[INSERT] *Please provide the name, title, and role of the individual who will be responsible for the overall management, reporting and oversight of the grant deliverables.*

Request for Applications

ANNEX C. GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Grantees must ensure they submit the following documentation in order to be considered eligible for grant award:

3. Cover Letter (Attachment A) on Company Letterhead, signed by an authorized representative of the Applicant;
4. Grant Application (Annex B) with all questions answered;
5. Budget (Annex D1);
6. Budget Narrative (Annex D2);
7. Copy of Applicant's registration or business license and TIN certificate;
8. Three (3) contacts for references from organizations or individuals for which the Applicant has successfully worked with/for before.

Request for Applications

ANNEX D1. BUDGET

Please add as many lines for activities as needed depending on the number of activities your application is proposing. Please note that the Activity anticipates awarding up to USD 10,000 per grantee (in Ethiopian Birr equivalent). All budget lines must be denominated in Ethiopian Birr (ETB) and be clearly linked to specific project activities. Supporting information shall be provided, as necessary, in sufficient detail to allow a complete analysis of each line-item cost.

BUDGET						
Add the Association Logo						
Name of the Association						
#	**Designation**	**Specifications/Description**	**Unit**	**Quantity**	**Unit Cost (ETB)**	**Total Cost (ETB)**
Activity 1 - Name of activity						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
Subtotal of Activity 1						
Activity 2 - Name of activity						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
Subtotal of Activity 2						
Activity 3 - Name of activity						
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						
Subtotal of Activity 3						
					TOTAL COST	
Name of Association Representative:						
Date:						
Signature						

Request for Applications

ANNEX D2. BUDGET NARRATIVE

Please add as many lines for activities as needed depending on the number of activities your application is proposing. The budget must have an accompanying budget narrative and justification that provides in detail the estimated costs for implementation of activities listed in the technical application narrative. The combination of the cost data and narrative must be sufficient to allow a determination of whether the costs estimated are reasonable. If other funding sources are anticipated (e.g., other donors, third party loans, etc.) please indicate an explanation of these other sources within the budget narrative. Please note other funding sources are NOT required to apply for this grant opportunity.

BUDGET NARRATIVE			
Add the Organization Logo			
Name of the Organization			
#	**Designation**	**Justification of Unit Cost**	**Justification of Quantity**
Activity 1 - Name of activity			
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
Name of Representative:			
Date:			
Signature			