USAID | KYRGYZ REPUBLIC
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

SOLICITATION NUMBER: 07/2021
ISSUANCE DATE: 02/04/2021
CLOSING DATE: 03/04/2021 (6:00 pm Bishkek local time)

SUBJECT: Solicitation for Personal Services Contractor (PSC) No. 07/2021 Development Outreach and Communication Specialist, USAID/Kyrgyz Republic, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

Dear Prospective Offerors:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking offers from qualified persons to provide personal services under contract as described in this solicitation.

Offers must be in accordance with **Attachment 1** of this solicitation. Incomplete or unsigned offers will not be considered. Offerors should retain copies of all offer materials for their records.

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the offer.

Any questions must be directed in writing to the Point of Contact specified in the attachment 1.

Sincerely,

Michael Teske

Michael Teske
Contracting Officer

ATTACHMENT 1 **SOLICITATION NO. 07/2021**

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. SOLICITATION NO.: 07/2021

2. ISSUANCE DATE: 02/04/2021

3. CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS: 03/04/2021 (6:00 pm Bishkek local time)

4. POINT OF CONTACT: USAID/CA Human Resources, almatyhr@usaid.gov and centralasiajobs@usaid.gov

5. POSITION TITLE: Development Outreach and Communication Specialist

6. MARKET VALUE: $78,681-$102,288 per annum (equivalent to GS-13). Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value.

7. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: The U.S. Personal Services Contract will be for two years, (subject to possible two years extension)

8. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: The duty post for this contract is Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. The selected candidate is expected to work eight hours per day during the core working hours of the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic Mission.

9. ELIGIBLE OFFERORS: Eligible Family Members (All Agencies)/US Citizens Resident in Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic

10. SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED: Facility Access

II. STATEMENT OF DUTIES

1. Basic Function of the Position

The Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) Specialist, together with the USAID Media Specialist, oversee all USAID/Kyrgyz Republic communications and outreach efforts to increase awareness of USAID assistance programs among target audiences in the Kyrgyz Republic and the United States. S/he reports directly to the Supervisory Program Officer and works closely with Mission and Embassy leadership and staff, as well as USAID implementing partners. The DOC liaises with the U.S. Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) to ensure consistency in messaging and strong coordination to further U.S. Government (USG) goals in the Kyrgyz Republic. In addition, s/he coordinates closely with outreach staff in USAID's Asia Bureau and the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs (LPA), both located in Washington, D.C. The range of responsibilities and functions are outlined below.

Major Duties and Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership and Coordination 20%

- Provide training to USAID/KR technical staff and implementing partners to develop their ability to support the implementation of the Mission's outreach strategy. This includes training on branding and marking, public speaking, photography, drafting of press releases and talking points, etc.
- Work in close collaboration with the Mission's Media Specialist to ensure that the Mission-produced media content, including its website and social media presence, achieve their communication objectives. This includes analyses of social media posting approaches, as well as boosting, and their effectiveness.
- Review all outreach materials (published reports, banners, posters, signs, TV and radio spots, etc.) produced by USAID and its implementing partners to ensure compliance with award provisions and Agency policy.
- Ensure the integration of outreach and communications requirements and best practices into project designs and implementation processes, including through the review of statements of work, proposals, work plans, and branding and marking plans.
- Provide strategic leadership in developing USAID's outreach strategy. Coordinate with USAID Mission management and staff to establish strategic press outreach priorities and opportunities.
- Independently plan and carry out portions of the outreach strategy not otherwise implemented through the work of technical office staff or implementing partners.
- Prepare annual budget summaries of required resources and track related expenditures.
- Guide the Mission's professional staff in their fulfillment of portions of the outreach strategy relevant to their work.
- Serve as an expert on USAID branding and style guidelines, ensuring regulations are followed and applied as outlined in ADS 320 and the Agency's Graphic Standards Manual; seek guidance from LPA on any disputes or waiver requests related to branding and marking requirements.
- Monitor effectiveness of the outreach strategy, including through planning, procuring, and managing public polling services; and analyzing public opinion polling data. Provide feedback to inform ongoing activities, future programming, and annual updates to the outreach strategy.
- Coordinate information dissemination within the USAID Mission and the broader Embassy, including with management, technical staff, implementing partners, and others. Work closely with the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section to inform the public of noteworthy U.S. foreign assistance efforts in the Kyrgyz Republic.
- Respond, or coordinate responses, to external information requests and data calls about USAID programming.

Preparation and Dissemination of Public Information and Publicity Materials 50%

- Oversee the drafting, editing, and dissemination of timely and accurate information, including fact sheets, program summaries and results, calendars, photos, press releases, newsletters, brochures, presentations, and all other public information

materials relating to USAID's activities. These must be written in clear and concise English, and suitable for both the general public and the multilingual media.

- Edit USAID reports and documents, focusing them to the needs of the audience and bringing them to a level suitable for high-quality reproduction or paid publication and promotion.
- Travel to USAID activity sites throughout the Kyrgyz Republic and capture meaningful stories, photographs, and videos that demonstrate development impact, for publication both locally and in the U.S. Additionally, plan, procure, and manage contracted services to capture additional written and audio-visual content as needed.
- Plan, procure, and manage contracted services such as media campaigns and media bus tours to enhance the understanding and encourage the uptake of outreach content by media outlets.
- Provide text content for the Mission's growing social media efforts, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, and the Mission's website efforts – including content management, editing, clearance of materials through USAID/Washington, updates, posting, and answering queries on a regular and timely basis.
- Prepare and maintain the currency of standard information packages on the USAID program in Kyrgyzstan for briefings and for distribution to the public and the media.
- Oversee the writing, editing, and distribution of press releases through close coordination with our PAS colleagues. Coordinate interviews, media tours, and press queries with members of the media, PAS, and LPA as appropriate/requested.
- Compile, edit, and disseminate the Mission's Weekly Report to key Washington stakeholders.
- Identify and oversee procurement or development of outreach gifts (wrist bands, t-shirts, pens, notepads, key chains, thumb drives, etc.).
- Develop informational materials, including the monthly newsletter, to further the understanding of USAID programming, priorities, and impact among key stakeholders.
- Respond to inquiries from the general public, media, and other sources about USAID programs and projects.

Oversight for Public Events and Media Opportunities **30%**

- Draft, edit, or otherwise coordinate the production of background documents and content for media events, including press releases, speeches, talking points, briefing documents, scene setters, etc.
- Oversee the maintenance of a calendar of upcoming USAID outreach events, and its weekly distribution to the broader USAID Mission, PAS, the Embassy Front Office, and other internal consumers.
- Maintain a diverse list of potential site visit locations appropriate for a variety of visitors to the Kyrgyz Republic, coordinating closely with partners in advance.
- Coordinate site visits by external staff and VIPs, serving as control officer as necessary. Coordinate with the Embassy on schedules and logistics and attend

countdown meetings as requested. Lead the preparation of briefing materials, scene setters, and other informational products and processes to support these visits.

- Plan and oversee implementation of media campaigns to disseminate information about USAID programs to local, regional, and international audiences. These may include the selective use of radio, television, newspapers, magazines, public service announcements, advertisements, billboards, public events, and media tours.
- Collaborate with PAS to expand opportunities to keep media abreast of USAID programs. This may include arranging interviews, press briefings, media tours of USAID projects, etc.
- Organize and coordinate site visits, press events, and other public functions, including conferences, openings, ribbon-cuttings, and other ceremonies. As needed, provide background briefings for media; compile and distribute press packets; organize protocol, site selection, staging, and logistics; identify and schedule speakers; liaise with U.S. and local government officials; and, provide on-site coordination of media.
- Serve as an interlocutor between high level Kyrgyz Republic government officials (up to the Minister level), U.S. Government (USG) officials (regularly involving the Ambassador, Deputy Chief of Mission, and USAID Mission Director), and the media. These events necessitate a nuanced understanding of diplomatic engagement and the USGs role in the region.

III. Other important information:

Supervision Received: Work is performed under administrative direction from the USDH Supervisory Program Officer.

Available Guidelines: The work requested does not involve undue physical demands. Must be available and willing to work additional hours beyond the established 40-hour workweek and outside established Monday-Friday workweek, as may be required or necessary; and Must be willing to travel throughout the Kyrgyz Republic and occasionally to other countries in Central Asia and internationally for trainings and/or conferences.

Physical Demands: The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

Point of Contact: For any additional questions you may contact USAID/CA Human Resources, almatyhr@usaid.gov and centralasiajobs@usaid.gov

IV. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

Education: A Bachelor's degree in a relevant field is required. Relevant fields include, but are not limited to, journalism, marketing, communications, public relations or affairs, international development, and public administration.

Work Experience:

- The candidate must have at least 5 years of relevant experience – including a minimum of two years in a developing country. Relevant experience is defined as work in journalism, communications, public relations or affairs, international

relations, international development, public administration, development/area studies, and social studies.

- Extensive writing and editing experience, including preparation of press releases, briefing materials, talking points, speeches, brochures, program summaries, and other materials for publication.
- Demonstrated excellence in analysis and presentation; strong ability to organize factual material from a variety of sources succinctly and present meaningful conclusions to high-level officials, and to write clearly under tight deadlines.
- Broad operational/strategic planning experience, demonstrating analytical ability, and the capacity to convert planning concepts into firm plans which are responsive to a variety of contingencies and stakeholders.
- Demonstrated success in designing and implementing effective public relations/communications campaigns targeted at specific audiences as well as the general public.
- Previous experience with USAID or other international development donor organization in an overseas context (preferably in Central Asia) is highly desirable.
- Previous experience in working with the media (TV, radio, and print), including creative development, planning and coordinating press events, and media buying is desirable.
- Familiarity with U.S. Government assistance efforts in Kyrgyzstan desired.
- Familiarity with U.S. Government organization and business practices preferred.
- Flexibility and the ability to prioritize competing demands are a must.

Technical Knowledge/Skills and Abilities:

- Mastery within the communications field, particularly as it pertains to crafting public outreach messages and promoting them to target audiences using a combination of traditional, new, and emerging media platforms and formats (preferably within a post-Soviet context).
- Evidence of broad understanding of issues related to international development.
- Demonstrated success in using websites and social media to enhance communication with target audiences.
- Ability to work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural team.
- Initiative and proactive collaborative engagement with colleagues to complete assigned tasks in accordance with agreed timetables.
- Ability to work independently, and as part of a team, managing and prioritizing several activities at once and under pressure to meet tight deadlines.
- Evidence of outstanding coordination and organizational skills.
- Extensive experience with Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Microsoft Excel; familiarity with the graphic design, photo and video editing suites is highly desirable; experience with Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and other social media platforms; and experience maintaining websites.

Writing Skills: Applicants must provide two writing samples with their application. The samples should be 350 to 1,500 words (preferably 750-1,000 words). They can be excerpts from larger articles or papers, and do not have to be written specifically for this solicitation. The samples should demonstrate the applicant's ability to clearly and succinctly communicate complex ideas to the various audiences a USAID mission must

address. The samples must be written by the applicant- co-written articles are not acceptable.

Language Skills: Fluent (Level IV) English (oral and written). Proficiency in Russian and/or Kyrgyz is highly desired.

Other: Consideration and selection will be based on a panel evaluation of the Evaluation Factors (Section V). Please note that not all candidates will be interviewed or contacted.

USAID will not pay for any expenses associated with the interviews unless expenses are preauthorized. Reference checks may be conducted on those candidates selected for an interview. The candidate's references must be able to provide substantive information about his/her past performance and abilities.

V. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

The Government may award a contract without discussions with offerors in accordance with FAR 52.215-1. The CO reserves the right at any point in the evaluation process to establish a competitive range of offerors with whom negotiations will be conducted pursuant to FAR 15.306(c). In accordance with FAR 52.215-1, if the CO determines that the number of offers that would otherwise be in the competitive range exceeds the number at which an efficient competition can be conducted, the CO may limit the number of offerors in the competitive range to the greatest number that will permit an efficient competition among the most highly rated offers. FAR provisions of this solicitation are available at https://www.acquisition.gov/browse/index/far.

Applicants who meet the Education/Experience requirements and Selection Factors will be further evaluated. Applications that do not meet the required minimum qualifications will not be scored. Candidates meeting the above required qualifications for the position will be evaluated based on information presented in the application.

After meeting the minimum qualifications, consideration and selection will be based on a panel evaluation of the Evaluation Criteria. Additionally, USAID may request writing samples and/or a writing skills exercise, and an interview from the top-scoring candidates. Top-scoring candidates will also be asked to provide three professional references. Please note that not all applicants will be interviewed or contacted. USAID will not pay for any expenses associated with the interviews unless the expenses are pre-authorized. Reference checks may be conducted on candidates selected for an interview.

Applicants must not appear as an excluded party in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

1. Education (10 points)
2. Language (10 points)
3. Work Experience (30 points)
4. Technical Knowledge / Skill and Abilities (25 points)
5. Writing Skills (25 points)

Total = 100 points

TERM OF PERFORMANCE

The base term of the contract will be for a period of two years, which may be extended upon mutual agreement and subject to, continued need, satisfactory performance and availability of funds. This position has been classified as equivalent to a GS-13 position in the US Civil Service. The actual salary of the successful candidate will be negotiated depending on qualifications and previous salary history. In addition to the basic salary, differentials and other benefits in effect at the time and which are applicable and subject to change on a similar basis as for direct-hire USG employees will be added.

SECURITY AND MEDICAL CLEARANCE

The USPSC will be required to complete a full physical examination (including relevant immunizations) from his/her own physician and then obtain a medical clearance from State M/MED prior to service overseas. Also, USAID/Central Asia must initiate a security clearance prior to the Contractor's travel to post of duty. Until a temporary or final adjudication of a security clearance is received, the contract shall not be signed.

If a candidate fails to obtain a security clearance (temporary or full) within six months, the offer may be retracted.

VI. SUBMITTING AN OFFER

Submission of a résumé alone IS NOT a complete application. This position requires the completion of additional forms and/or supplemental materials as described in this section. Failure to provide the required information and/or materials will result in your not being considered for employment. All application packages are to be submitted via email to: centralasiajobs@usaid.gov and/or almatyhr@usaid.gov,citing the Solicitation number and the Position title.

Interested individuals meeting the Minimum Qualifications above are required to submit the following:

1. Complete and submit the offer form **AID 309-2**, "Offeror Information for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals," available at http://www.usaid.gov/forms.

2. Offers must be received by the closing date and time specified in **Section I, item 3,** and submitted to the Point of Contact in **Section I**.

3. Offeror submissions must clearly reference the number of this Solicitation to ensure the offer is for the position in this Solicitation.

4. Cover letter and current résumé/curriculum vitae (CV). The CV/résumé must contain sufficient relevant information to evaluate the application in accordance with the stated evaluation criteria. Broad general statements that are vague or lacking specificity will not be considered as effectively addressing. Ensure the application covers the evaluation and selection criteria, as outlined in Section III of this solicitation.

5. Applicants must provide a minimum of three references within the last five years from

the applicant's professional life, namely individuals who are not family members or relatives. Ideally, references should be from direct supervisors who can provide information regarding the applicant's work knowledge and professional experience. Applicants must provide e-mail addresses and/or working telephone numbers for all references.

6. To ensure consideration of offers for the intended position. Offerors must prominently reference the Solicitation number in the offer submission.

VII. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSC HIRES

Once the Contracting Officer (CO) informs the successful applicant about being selected for a contract award, the CO will provide the successful applicant instructions about how to complete and submit the following forms:
Forms outlined below can found at: http://www.usaid.gov/forms

1. Medical History and Examination form (DS-6561)
2. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions (for National Security) (SF-86), or Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85)
3. Finger Print Card (FD-258)
4. Declaration for Federal Employment (OF-306)

The above listed forms shall only be completed upon the advice of the Contracting Officer that an applicant is the successful candidate for the job.

VIII. BENEFITS

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a USPSC is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

1. **BENEFITS:**

(a) Employer's FICA Contribution
(b) Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
(c) Pay Comparability Adjustment
(d) Annual Increase (pending a satisfactory performance evaluation)
(e) Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
(f) Annual and Sick Leave

IX. TAXES

It is the responsibility of the selected candidate to abide by the tax regulations. USPSCs are required to pay Federal income taxes, FICA, Medicare and applicable State Income taxes.

X. USAID REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND CONTRACT CLAUSES PERTAINING TO PSCs

USAID regulations and policies governing USPSC awards are available at these sources:

1. **USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR), Appendix D,** "Direct USAID Contracts with a U.S. Citizen or a U.S. Resident Alien for Personal Services Abroad," including **contract clause "General Provisions,"** available at https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf .

2. **Contract Cover Page** form **AID 309-1** available at https://www.usaid.gov/forms .

3. Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives/Contract Information Bulletins (**AAPDs/CIBs**) for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals available at http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs .

[The CO must check http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs to determine which AAPDs/CIBs apply and insert the relevant AIDAR deviation or other policy text as applicable by the type of USPSC.]

4. **Ethical Conduct.** By the acceptance of a USAID personal services contract as an individual, the contractor will be acknowledging receipt of the "**Standards of Ethical Conduct for Employees of the Executive Branch,**" available from the U.S. Office of Government Ethics, in accordance with **General Provision 2** and **5 CFR 2635**. See https://www.oge.gov/web/oge.nsf/OGE%20Regulations .