SOLICITATION NUMBER: 20/2022
ISSUANCE DATE: 06/21/2022
CLOSING DATE: 07/19/2022 (6:00 pm Bishkek local time)

SUBJECT: Solicitation for Personal Services Contractor (USPSC) No. 20/2022 Development Outreach & Communications Specialist, USAID/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 attachment 1.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. No late submissions will be accepted.

Sincerely,

Michael Teske
USAID/Central Asia Contracting Officer
I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. SOLICITATION NO.: 20/2022

2. ISSUANCE DATE: 06/21/2022

3. CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS: 07/19/2022 (6:00 PM Bishkek local time)

4. POINT OF CONTACT: USAID/Central Asia Human Resources, e-mail: almatyhr@usaid.gov and centralasiajobs@usaid.gov (with autoreply)

5. POSITION TITLE: Development Outreach & Communications Specialist

6. MARKET VALUE: $68,299-$88,792 per annum (equivalent to GS-12). 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 three years extension)

8. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: The duty post for this contract is Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic. While the selected candidate is expected to work eight hours per day during the core working hours of the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic, less than eight hours daily will also be considered.

9. ELIGIBLE OFFERORS: U.S. Citizens Residents in the Kyrgyz Republic and U.S. Embassy Eligible Family Members (All Agencies)

10. SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED: Facility Access

II. STATEMENT OF DUTIES

1. Basic Function of the Position

The Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) Specialist, in collaboration with the USAID Media Specialist, oversees 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 or his/her designee and works closely with mission leadership, staff, and USAID implementing partners.

The DOC also liaises with the U.S. Embassy interagency and particularly with the U.S. Embassy’s Public Affairs Section (PAS) to ensure consistent 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) in Washington, D.C. The range of responsibilities and functions are outlined below.
2. Major Duties and Responsibilities
Strategic Leadership and Coordination

- Develop and update a Communications and Outreach Strategy and a related Action Plan.
- Monitor effectiveness of the Strategy and its Action Plan through planning, procuring, and managing public polling services and through analyzing public opinion polling data.
- Provide briefings and training to USAID/Kyrgyz Republic technical staff and implementing partners on implementing the Strategy and Action Plan.
- Ensure the integration of outreach and communications requirements and best practices into project designs and monitoring, including through the review of statements of work, proposals, work plans, and branding and marking plans.
- Serve as an expert on USAID branding and style guidelines for the mission and its implementing partners, ensuring regulations are followed and applied as outlined in guidance including ADS 320 and the Agency’s Graphic Standards Manual.
- Prepare and track budgets of outreach and communication resources and expenditures.
- Build and maintain a network of contacts with other communication specialists – including within USAID, among the USG Interagency and implementing partners, with media outlets, and with international organizations.
- Other duties as assigned, for example, related to strategic leadership and coordination, Agency and Administration priorities, and mission processes.

Preparation and Dissemination of Public Information and Publicity Materials

- Develop communications and outreach materials for specific audiences and stakeholders including for U.S. audiences, local Kyrgyz audiences, and USG policymakers.
- 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, press releases, briefing books, talking points and speeches.
- Provide quality control, including proofreading, on print, electronic and social media materials.
- Coordinate information dissemination among the USAID Mission and the broader Embassy, including with management, technical staff, and implementing partners.
- Create content and oversee quality control of mission external-facing and internal-facing websites.
- Respond, or coordinate responses, to information requests and data calls.
- Travel to USAID activity sites throughout the Kyrgyz Republic and capture stories, photographs, and videos that demonstrate development impact.
- Plan, procure, and manage contracted services related to mission communications and outreach, including written and audio-visual content and press tours.
- Oversee development, curation and management of visual content including geographic information systems, infographics and video content.
- Create content for social media, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.
- Prepare and maintain information packages on the USAID program in Kyrgyzstan for briefings and for distribution to the public and the media.
- Respond to inquiries from the public, media, and other sources about USAID activities.
- Other duties as assigned related to Preparation and Dissemination of Public Information and Publicity Materials

Oversight for Public Events and Media Opportunities 25%

- Develop content for USAID and other inter-agency events, including conferences, internal USAID presentations, and other needs for the U.S. and Kyrgyz public.
- Organize and coordinate site visits, press events, and other public functions, including conferences, openings, ribbon-cuttings, and other ceremonies. Related, serve as control officer as necessary. Prepare materials as needed.
- Draft, edit, or otherwise coordinate the production of background documents and content for media events and campaigns.
- 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.
- Collaborate with PAS to expand opportunities to keep media abreast of USAID programs.
- 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.
- Other duties as assigned related to Public Events and Media Opportunities
- DOC is willing to travel throughout the Kyrgyz Republic and occasionally to other countries as required for Major Duties and Responsibilities noted above. Travel time is not expected to exceed 10% of duty

III. Other important information:

- Supervision Received: The Communications Specialist works under administrative direction of the Supervisory Program Officer (SPO) Director or his/her designee. The SPO Director sets overall assignment objectives and clarifies available resources. The position has continuing responsibility to independently planning and executing phases and of the mission’s communication strategy and plan in coordination with USAID/Kyrgyz Republic technical program offices and the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Office (PAS).

- The position works closely with the SPO Director and Media Specialist. The SPO Director and/or Media Specialist reviews completed work for adherence to established policy and meeting of expected goals of the mission’s communication strategy and plan.

- Available Guidelines: The Communications Specialist must remain familiar with USAID regulations contained in the ADS, AIDAR, FAR, Handbooks, Mission Orders, USAID/Washington Bureau and LPA outreach guidance, and established USAID/Kyrgyz Republic procedures and regulations; and media and communications papers prepared by USAID/Washington and the Department of State.

- Exercise of Judgment: Projects assigned to the DOC Specialist include a variety of duties and processes requiring the exercise of extensive judgment to USAID/Kyrgyz Republic technical staff, implementing partners, and outside contractors on USAID policies and procedures related to the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic Mission communications strategy and plan. The Communications Specialist, in consultation with the SPO Director and Media Coordinator, contributes to the development of the country-specific communication strategy and plan, deadlines for implementation, and the various objectives to be achieved. Independent judgment must be exercised on a broad range of communications and media issues when meeting with media representatives, Government of USAID/Kyrgyz Republic officials, NGOs, USAID implementing partners, and with other donors. The position is
expected to analyze situations and develop ways to resolve problems. The position advises superiors in the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic and the U.S. Embassy on the implications of USAID public outreach and suggestions for improvements.

- **Authority to Make Commitments:** The position may make administrative arrangements consistent with ADS guidance and Mission policy and take action and establish priorities based on available guidelines and professional judgment. Guidance is sought when needed, and superiors informed of activity status. Within the scope of the authority delegated, the Communications Specialist negotiates outreach and communications activities with counterparts in the mission and the U.S. Embassy.

- **Nature, Level and Purpose of Contacts:** The position works closely with the SPO Director and/or Media Coordinator who will oversee work as it relates to USAID/Kyrgyz Republic. The Communications Specialist coordinates closely with USAID/Kyrgyz Republic technical staff, regional DOC staff related to regional awards, U.S. Embassy Public Affairs personnel, mid- and senior-level officials of implementing partners, beneficiaries, host-country citizens, NGOs and government officials, and with private-sector officials for the purpose of implementing the USAID/Kyrgyz Republic communications strategy and fulfilling USAID/Kyrgyz Republic’s outreach goals. In many cases, the position will represent USAID/Kyrgyz Republic in these discussions.

- **Supervision Exercised:** A formal supervision role for the Communications Specialist is not envisioned at this time.

- **Post Entry Training:** The position will receive on-the-job training on established USAID procedures, regulations and policies governing USAID/Kyrgyz Republic's interaction with the media, implementing partners, and other USG agencies. The Communications Specialist will attend USAID regional Development Outreach and Communications Workshops and select training courses, subject to course offerings and the availability of funds.

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

### 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, communications, international development, journalism, business (communications), public administration, law, and humanities.

**Prior Work Experience:**
At least five years of progressively responsible experience in one or more of the following areas: public relations, communications and outreach, international development, and/or community advocacy -- preferably working in a developing country context.

At least three years of project management experience in a team environment.

Demonstrated success in designing and implementing effective public relations/communications campaigns targeted at specific audiences.

At least three years developing and implementing communications and outreach strategies, including converting strategy into action plans and monitoring results of action plans.

Previous experience with a US or other international development donor organization in an overseas context (preferably in Central Asia), and familiarity with U.S. Government assistance efforts and business practices not required but looked upon favorably.
Technical Knowledge/Skills and Abilities:

Drafting and managing communications and outreach strategies.

Producing communications and outreach content in English including public relations materials, press releases, speeches, talking points, social media content, and websites.

Quality control of content in English including proofreading. Planning visits by organizational executives or officials with production of briefing materials.

Crafting visual content including geographic information systems, infographics, and videos. Demonstrated success in using websites and social media.

Demonstrated ability to work effectively as a member of a multi-disciplinary, multi-cultural team.

Ability to work independently managing and prioritizing several activities concurrently and under pressure to meet tight deadlines.

Extensive experience with Microsoft Word, Microsoft PowerPoint, and Microsoft Excel. Skills in creating visual media including graphic design, photo and video editing suites.

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.

Written Test: Final applicants will be given a test, monitored by USAID, that demonstrates an ability to write clearly and succinctly on a particular topic under a time limit.

Language Skills: Level V (Native) English (oral and written). Native or superior level of professional English and proven ability to communicate diplomatically/professionally, clearly, and concisely, both orally and in writing, especially complex technical information for a non-technical audience. Excellent English language editing skills are critical. Russian or Kyrgyz language experience not required but looked upon favorably.

Teamwork/Interpersonal and Communication Skills:
Establishing and enhancing communication between USAID and its audiences using media tools; making oral presentations; delivering training; encouraging open communication between the Mission and its audiences; analyzing the effectiveness of communication plans once implemented; and developing recommendations to change the nature of the Mission public affairs program. Excellent oral and written communications skills, including news and technical writing and editing skills; strong organizational and project management skills.

The ability to work independently, taking initiative once guidance is provided; and managing several activities simultaneously and under pressure to meet deadlines. Strong interpersonal skills and the ability to establish and maintain collegial relations with press and media contacts, U.S. Embassy colleagues, and implementing partners. The ability to exercise sound judgment in representing the USG is required, along with the ability to manage interactions with high-level dignitaries and officials with maturity and confidence.
The ability to travel throughout The Kyrgyz Republic to organize and implement outreach events and visit project sites is a requirement of the position.

**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 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).

a. **Education**: 10 points
b. **Prior Work Experience**: 20 points
c. **Knowledge**: 25 points
d. **Language Skills**: 20 points
e. **Teamwork/Interpersonal and Communication 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-09 position in the USG 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:


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 be 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)

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:


[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.