REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

A. RFP no. and Date	017/2014, September 9, 2014
B. Subject	Online Training Courses for USAID Continuing Education
C. Issuing Office/Section:	Executive Office USAID/RDMA 25th Fl, Athenee Tower 63 Wireless Road, Bangkok 10330, Thailand

C.
   Closing date for pre-award meeting registration:
 	
   Closing date for receipt of question:
 	
   Closing date for receipt of proposal:
	
	September 17, 2014 – 12pm Bangkok Time
	
	September 19, 2014 – 5pm Bangkok Time
	
	September 23, 2014 – 5pm Bangkok Time

E. Type of Award:	Fixed Price Contract
F. Basis for Award:	Soliciting competition, evaluation of quotations or offers, award and documentation (FAR Part 13.106)

Description of Requirements

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), invites qualified companies/individuals to submit technical and cost proposal of the services specified below. This is to support the operation of USAID Regional Development Mission Asia in Bangkok Thailand.

Questions regarding this Request for Proposal (RFP) and proposal submission must be via email only to **spoomtong@usaid.gov** by the time/date specified above.

The award of a contract hereunder is subject to the availability of funds. Issuance of this RFP does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the U.S. Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a proposal.

A. Purpose:

To select the best company/individual to provide support to USAID staff in Bangkok to design, produce and deliver five online training courses for internal USAID continuing education. A secondary objective is to develop the capacity of USAID staff to effectively produce and deliver such online courses after this Contract.

B. Background:

USAID's regional mission in Bangkok, Thailand operates the Asia Regional Training Center (ARTC) which hosts a number of internal USAID trainings as well as other events. Although many USAID trainings are long-standing courses with a developed curriculum implemented by an institutional contractor, USAID staff have increasingly developed more focused, innovative courses that employ a peer-to-peer horizontal learning approach. That is, deriving content from real experience and issues, USAID staff have designed, developed and delivered a number of continuing education courses and trainings for internal presentation to their peers. With the asset of the ARTC, USAID's regional mission in Bangkok has become a hub for such peer-to-peer learning events. Such training sessions range from one-hour workshops and intensive all-day or multi-day learning events to formal week-long training sessions. They cover a multitude of subject matter areas, including program design, contracting mechanisms, environmental compliance, monitoring & evaluation, accounting, working with local organizations, etc. The common element is that these courses are all designed and delivered by USAID staff. On the one hand, internally developed courses are advantageous because they emphasize the exchange of ideas, experiences, tools and resources essential to strengthen USAID's ability to do its work. On the other hand, since course designers and instructors all have "day jobs," peer-to-peer learning creates time challenges that are often difficult for USAID staff course designers and instructors to manage.

In addition to instructor-led courses offered at ARTC, USAID also offers basic online courses via its Learning Management System (LMS) platform. Most of these courses are power-point type presentations (some with voice) or sometimes interactive, game-style learning. While these courses are effective at providing simple information in a rote memory learning style, there are certain subjects, which, by their nature, require more advanced instructional delivery. Many of the complex development issues that we tackle as an Agency require discussion to fully understand the nuances and contextual specifics in real-world situations. Learners need to be able to ask questions of experts who have valuable field experience and discuss options for solutions to specific issues. There is a compelling need for courses that combine the personalized strengths of the instructor-led delivery with the flexibility of the online courses currently offered.

C. Online Training Courses:

As an initial pilot, the Contractor will be required to assist USAID to design, produce and deliver five online training courses. USAID expects each course to employ high-quality video production and interactive discussion sessions. Courses may also include voice-over presentations, quizzes, chat rooms and other features. The subject matter experts for course instruction will be provided. These subject matter experts/ instructors will also develop course content. The Contractor will work closely with the USAID subject matter experts/instructors to refine and organize content as well as guide the instructors for online delivery.

As an example, the following describes a possible structure for the online course. USAID will offer a three hour online course during a specified week. USAID staff will register for the course using USAID's continuing education enrollment system. Registered students will receive a link to an internal USAID Google site webpage. The online course will offer different components during the week: three to five video lectures (ranging from 10-20 minutes each), possibly one voice-over power point presentation, possibly interactive quizzes, a chat room ongoing all week, and a live webinar to be held for one hour during the week to facilitate interactive discussions. The Google site may also offer links to reading materials and quick reference, downloadable notes. USAID will coordinate the registration process, provide course content and the course instructor from its staff in Bangkok. The Contractor will work closely with USAID to design the course for online delivery, refine the course content as needed, produce the videos with the course instructor and guide USAID during actual course delivery.

D. Phases:

The required task consists of six phases;

1. Information Gathering – approximately two weeks from the start of this Contract: The Contractor will be required to work closely with the USAID team to gather information about USAID facilities, IT constraints, video production equipment, online workshop subjects, course design, delivery methods, facilitation of interactive discussion and other technical and pedagogic considerations.

2. Equipment Purchase – approximately two to six weeks after information gathering: The Contractor will provide USAID with a recommended list of video production equipment. Upon written approval of USAID, the Contractor will be required to purchase the equipment with a portion of the budget for this Contract, and have the equipment delivered directly to USAID.

3. Work Plan for Course Design, Production and Delivery– approximately two to six weeks after information gathering: The Contractor will be required to provide USAID with a proposed work

plan for developing at least five online workshops that involve (at a minimum) high-quality video production and interactive discussions. Upon written approval of USAID and delivery of the equipment, the Contractor will be required to assist the USAID team in the execution of the work plan.

4. Course Design and Production – approximately two to four months immediately following the approval of the work plan: In accordance with the work plan, the Contractor will be required to closely with the USAID team who will design and produce high-quality videos and other course presentation materials for the five online courses. The Contractor will be required to develop a detailed draft "how to" guide for USAID staff to produce high-quality videos in the future.

5. Course Delivery – approximately two to four months immediately following the approval of the work plan (may overlap in part with design and production): In accordance with the work plan, the Contractor will work closely with the USAID team who will deliver of the five online training courses involving live interactive discussion. The Contractor will be required to develop a detailed "how to" guide in draft to assist USAID staff to design and deliver online workshops more effectively.

6. Survey Report – approximately six to nine months from the start of this Contract: The Contractor will be required to provide USAID with a final survey report that includes a detailed "how to" guide for USAID staff to design, produce and deliver online workshops that include high-quality video production and interactive discussion.

E. Schedule:

1. Deliverables: This is a fixed-price contract. The payment will only be made upon successful completion of each deliverable. All deliverables are subject to USAID inspection, approval and acceptance. The Contractor is encouraged to discuss plans extensively with USAID and submit draft copies and proposals as appropriate.

2. Timetable: The Contractor will begin work in early October 2014 and continue to the termination date which is expected to be six to nine months from the start date, depending on the Contractor's work schedule and USAID participation.

3. Payments: The payment will be made according to the payment schedule set forth below. The Contractor will bundle reimbursement requests together and submit a maximum of five bundled requests over the course of this Contract.

Deliverable	Estimated Time	Payment
- Equipment Plan & Work Plan Approved	+ 2 weeks	10%
- Purchase of Equipment	+ 3 weeks	10%
- Delivery of Equipment	+ 4 to 8 weeks	10%
- Draft "How To" Video Production Guide	+ 15 weeks	5%
- Draft "How To" Online Course Design Guide	+ 20 weeks	5%
- Video Production	+ 10 to 20 weeks (ongoing)	25% (divided equally for each of the five training sessions−i.e. 5% for each of the five trainings)
- Online Delivery	+ 12 to 28 weeks (ongoing)	25% (divided equally for each of the five training sessions−i.e. 5% for each of the five trainings)
- Final Report	+ 28 weeks	10%

F. Assumptions:

1. The purchase of all equipment will be part of the budget for this Contract. No additional funds will be provided. For most of the equipment, the Contractor will provide USAID with at least three quotations from distributers in the United States for delivery directly to USAID in Bangkok.

2. The equipment to be purchased must include: a high-quality SRL camera suitable for professional video, appropriate camera lenses, sound equipment (including wireless microphones and an audio

adapter), lighting (such as a three point lighting kit), camera accessories (including tripod, batteries, memory cards, hard drives, headphones, camera case, lens caps, etc.), video editing software, and appropriate backdrop (such as a banner).

3. USAID will provide subject matter experts for the course content who will work with the Contractor to produce the videos and the online workshops. The Contractor should expect and plan on significantly less USAID subject matter expert availability during the following periods: December 20 to January 10 and April 1 to 30.

4. The Contractor will be required to work regularly with USAID staff at the Asia Regional Training Center (ARTC)) located at Athenee Tower, 31st Fl., 63 Wireless Rd, Lumpini, Patumwan, Bangkok. USAID will provide the Contractor with a suitable work environment during business hours at the ARTC, including public Internet access, photocopy equipment and temporary office space. The Contractor will provide all other necessary equipment and materials for the Contractor to operate effectively, including computer equipment.

5. With prior approval from USAID, the Contractor may involve subcontractors for specific services, for example, professional editing of the videos.

6. The Contractor must not purchase online course software for USAID or use online subscription services. The Contractor will have limited flexibility in terms of the type of software that may be used under this Contract. No new Learning Management System (LMS) will be used to manage the online courses. All students for the online courses will register through existing systems. The ARTC will manage the registration process. USAID has an existing a web-based seminar software platform to conduct interactive discussion sessions. USAID also uses Google sites, which will be used to host the workshops. The Contractor will be required to build a simple website on Google sites for the online workshops. Videos will be placed on a restricted access YouTube page.

7. All materials produced under this Contract are property of USAID and must not be made available to others or otherwise circulated without USAID's prior written approval.

G. Selection Criteria:

    The selection criteria will be based on the following factors;

    1. Detailed cost proposal. Proposals over $50,000 will not be considered. (20%)

    2. A brief description of the Contractor's methodology to assist USAID in designing the courses, producing the videos, delivering the online courses and promoting interactive discussion. Innovative proposals that would allow USAID to better retain the learning will be of particular interest. (40%)

3. Creative and innovative approaches to online education that promote interactive discussion but still take into account IT restrictions. (20%)

4. Experience and knowledge of adult peer-to-peer learning, online course development and video production. All interested parties must demonstrate previous works that are relevant to the required services. Letters of recommendations, appreciation or other evidence from previous customers shall be submitted for consideration as part of the proposal. (20%)

PRE-AWARD MEETING:

The pre-award meeting is scheduled on September 18, 2014 during 11am – 12pm at Asia Regional Training Center (ARTC) located at Athenee Tower, 31st Fl., 63 Wireless Rd, Lumpini, Patumwan, Bangkok. To obtain the answers and clarifications about the contract requirements and online course concept, all interested parties may attend the brief pre-award meeting by sending a request to spoomtong@usaid.gov no later than 12pm, September 17, 2014.

Online Training Pre-Bid Meeting Q&A

As provided in the Request for Proposals (RFP), USAID held a pre-bid meeting for questions from bidders on September 18 in Bangkok. Telephone conference access to the pre-bid meeting was available for this meeting. Also, written questions were accepted from interested parties. The Q&A below summarizes the discussion at the pre-bid meeting and responds to written questions. This document supplements the RFP.

Q: What's the goal of this project?
USAID has developed and conducted peer-to-peer learning courses taught in the classroom setting. The contractor will support USAID's effort to offer these courses in an online setting. That is, USAID seeks support from a contractor to convert five USAID internal continuing education courses, normally taught in classroom setting, into interactive online courses. One significant objective will be to retain the interactive aspect of live classroom trainings in the online courses.

Q: Who's the audience for the online courses?
A: USAID staff from its missions around the world. The online courses will only be available internally to USAID staff on an internal USAID-only platform.

Q: How long is each online course?
A: We expect each online course to be the equivalent of one to four hours of live in-person training. Each online course will likely be offered over a period of one work week.

Q: Who will manage the online courses?
A: USAID will manage course registration and records (see below). The contractor will work closely with USAID to develop and offer the five online training courses. This will include re-designing the existing courses for the online environment; video production for the online lectures; power point and other audio presentations; live interactive components of the course; and other materials. The contractor will then work closely with USAID to offer each course in an online setting.

Q: What learning management system does USAID employ?
A: USAID uses a custom-designed system that manages course registration and student transcripts. The contractor will not be required to develop a learning management system. USAID will handle all course registration and records aspects through the existing learning management system. The contractor will work with USAID to develop the five online training courses.

Q: Will the online courses require a grading system?
A: No. Other than a simple pass/fail, there's no grading system. The online courses are for adult continuing education internal to USAID.

Q: What does USAID provide to execute this contract?
A: The contractor and USAID will work closely together to develop the online courses. USAID will provide the contractor with working space an internet

connection. In addition, USAID will provide the instructors for each course and the course materials.

Q: What are the software constraints or limitations that potential bidders should be aware of?
A: The contractor can only use existing approved software for delivery of the online course. USAID currently uses Tibbr, Huddle and the Google suite of programs (including Google sites, Google chat and Google survey). In addition, USAID uses Adobe Connect for live interactive presentations. As discussed above, course registration and records management will be handled by USAID separately.

Q: Is Skype an option?
A: No – Skype is not an option. Only Tibbr, Huddle, Adobe Connect and the Google suite of programs may be used. The contractor is not expected to build a new platform or learning management system. Other than video editing software, only existing internal USAID platforms will be used.

Q: Who will host the websites?
A: Only internal USAID platforms will be used. The contractor will not be required to host websites or purchase domain names. USAID will be responsible for all website hosting and management costs.

Q: You mentioned use of the Google suite of programs. Is this the public version of Google?
A: USAID uses a special version of the Google suite of programs. For the most part, the USAID version of the software is comparable to the public version of Google, with a few features disabled. All the software will be hosted on USAID's internal network, and will not be available to the public.

Q: Who will manage the web content? Will there be a web administrator?
A: The contractor will work closely with USAID to design and develop the online course materials and make such materials available for online training. There will be no public website. Once established, USAID will manage all web content internally.

Q: Could you explain more about video production?
A: The contractor will work closely with USAID to develop video materials for the online course. This will include working closely with the course instructors to adapt course materials for the online setting. The contractor will work closely with the instructor to film several video lecture segments for the online course. USAID acknowledges that the contractor may need to subcontract for certain aspects of the process – for example, professional video editing services.

Q: Where does the filming take place?
A: All filming will be done at the USAID facility indoors.

Q: How will the contractor buy the video equipment?
A: The contractor will provide USAID with a proposed equipment purchase plan, which would include a minimum of three price quotations. USAID will then

purchase the equipment directly with delivery to USAID tax and duty free via diplomatic channels. USAID expects purchases to be made either from the United States or in Thailand. All equipment will belong to USAID.

Q: Does the budget set in the RFP include equipment?
A: Yes. You'll include equipment costs in your budget estimate. After the award is made, we'll look at specifics, provide three quotations for equipment, and select one to make a purchase.

Q: What does USAID expect in the report required in the RFP?
A: The contractor will draft and finalize a "how to" guide for USAID staff to produce video and develop online courses independently. The report should be based on the contractor's experience producing and offering the five online courses with USAID. It should include lessons learned and best practices.

Q: Do you have formal contract form that we need to use?
A: The contract will be a standard USAID contract that will reflect the RFP, including the milestone payment plan. USAID will review your proposals based on costs, past experiences and proposed solutions. USAID encourages bidders to submit creative and innovative approaches.

Q: Is there anything else prospect contractors should know?
A: Bidders are encouraged to register on two systems. One is the Data Universal Numbering Systems (aka DUNs number), especially if you're looking to do business with the U.S. government going forward. Another one is sam.gov for award management. USAID intends to make an award by the end of this month. Steps for registration can be requested from Khun Suwaphit Poomtong at spoomtong@usaid.gov.