



## **REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)**

### **NO: 01**

### **Peacebuilding and Conflict Sensitivity Training, Advisory Services, and Tools**

The USAID South Caucasus Regional Tourism Program (the 'Program') is a three-year program running from September 26, 2023 to September 25, 2026 being implemented by J. E. Austin Associates, Inc. (JAA). The Program is a peacebuilding activity based on a people-to-people (P2P) approach.

JAA is issuing this Expression of Interest (EOI) to pre-qualify suitable vendors to supply peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity training, advisory services and tools.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Program aims to build durable regional cooperation among Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, contributing to cohesion and peace in the South Caucasus through the tourism sector. The Program focuses on fostering cross-border collaborations among tourism enterprises, promoting collaboration, and establishing market linkages based on shared economic interests. Given the recent history of conflict and the ongoing peace talks, fostering understanding, collaboration, and dialogue across borders is crucial to this initiative. Additionally, the Program aims to strengthen the tourism sector by addressing challenges such as inconsistent standards, limited communication, and restricted transportation linkages among the countries, ultimately supporting regional economic recovery and growth.

The Program's theory of change posits that by strengthening tourism enterprises in each South Caucasus country toward international norms and incentivizing their engagement in mutually beneficial activities with like-minded regional partners, a sense of shared purpose will contribute to region-wide economic growth, ultimately strengthening trust and reducing the risk of conflict.

To facilitate P2P peacebuilding, the Program is activating 'tourism networks', primarily private sector actors, who share a common interest in improving tourism competitiveness in the South Caucasus region.

During the first year the Program designed multiple two-country (Georgia and Armenia) technical assistance activities and offered a grant program "Collaborative Activities Aimed at Improving the Competitiveness of the Tourism Industry in the South Caucasus",

In Program Year 2 and 3, the Program is implementing three-country activities where Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijani participants will participate in P2P activities such as conferences and study tours to take place in Georgia or another international location. Georgia serves as a vital neutral ground, providing opportunities to foster dialogue, build trust, and create connections across the region.

## **PRE-QUALIFICATION OF VENDORS / CAPABILITIES NEEDED**

The Program is seeking to prequalify vendors capable of a) conducting a training to Program team members and/or Program beneficiaries, in peacebuilding and conflict sensitivity to support Program activities involving diverse stakeholders, including representatives from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia; and b) providing advisory services and/or tools to the Program and/or to the Program's beneficiaries during the implementation of different regional activities.

This Request for EOI presents the information that vendors must submit in order to be considered during this pre-qualification stage. Vendors that satisfy the requirements will be considered pre-qualified to participate in future procurement actions i.e., only pre-qualified vendors will be invited to submit quotations or technical/cost proposals for procurement opportunities anticipated by JAA during the upcoming 1.5 years. Pre-qualified vendors may be invited to respond to a solicitation, and/or multiple solicitations issued by JAA and/or its beneficiaries.

### **Training and Advisory Needs**

The purpose of this Expression of Interest (EOI) is to pre-qualify specialized vendors who have experience with USAID's P2P peacebuilding and 'Do-No-Harm' approaches and capable of supporting the following training and advisory needs:

- **Conflict sensitivity, South Caucasus region**
- **Understanding the people-to-people approach**
- **Integrating conflict mitigation and management into program implementation**
- **Integrating reconciliation and 'Do No Harm' considerations into activities**
- **Fostering the willingness to interact and strengthen the capacity to constructively engage**
- **Security considerations**

## **RESPONSE SUBMISSION DEADLINE AND COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL**

The deadline for responding to this EOI is December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 22:00 Georgian Standard Time (GMT +4)/13:00 Eastern Standard Time (GMT -5). Responses received after the deadline will not be reviewed and will be discarded by JAA, subject to the discretion of the project's management. Responses may be emailed to [info@sctourism.org](mailto:info@sctourism.org). Please address the subject of the email "Expression of Interest – Peacebuilding and Conflict Sensitivity Training, Advisory Services and Tools".

JAA will only respond to written questions regarding this EOI through the email address: [info@sctourism.org](mailto:info@sctourism.org) and any questions must be submitted by 4 December, 2024 at 22:00 Georgian Standard Time (GMT +4)/13:00 Eastern Standard Time (GMT -5).

All information provided by vendors in response to this Request for EOI will be treated confidentially. JAA will not use the information in any other context or setting and we will not reveal details to other parties.

## **OBLIGATIONS**

JAA will not reimburse respondents for the costs incurred with preparing a response, nor does issuance of this EOI obligate JAA to award a subcontract or purchase order. If a Vendor is found to have made false or misleading claims or statements, obtains confidential information, or receives improper assistance, JAA reserves the right to reject an EOI submitted by or on behalf of a vendor.

## **CLARIFICATION OF SUBMISSIONS**

JAA may require a respondent to submit additional information in order to better judge a response.

## **ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Vendors must:

- be legally organized businesses, organizations, or firms operating in the private or nongovernmental sectors e.g., research institutes, consulting and advisory firms. Individual consultants will not be considered for this EOI.
- be registered in Georgia and/or the United States.
- have been operating in the peacebuilding space for at least the last five years.

## **FACTORS FOR CONSIDERATION**

Responders are expected to write an explanation describing and demonstrating how they can address the following technical approach requirements.

### **Technical Approach:**

- expertise in the above-mentioned training and advisory needs
- experience with USAID's people-to-people peacebuilding approach
- knowledge of the South Caucasus context.
- available tools/materials aligned with USAID's P2P peacebuilding approach.
- CVs of key experts together with links of previous activities (if available).

## **PROPOSED SERVICES PRICING**

**Preliminary Price-list** – one of the purposes of the underlying EOI is market research into the prices for peacebuilding trainings and/or other off-the-shelf services/products that interested vendors provide.

## RESPONSE FORMAT

Vendors must complete their responses, in English, following the specifications outlined below. The response format consists of three sections

### Section 1: **Vendor Information/Eligibility**

Section Number	Description
1.0	Cover Letter
1.1	Vendor Information: Company Name, Address and Phone Number, Form of Incorporation (corporation, partnership, NGO, etc.), Number in Years in Business.

### Section 2: **Factors for Consideration**

2.0	Responses to each of the factors for consideration stated above. The total size of technical approach may not exceed 6 pages, while the size of submitted CVs may not exceed 2 pages per resume (the cover letter, price list and CVs are not included in the page count for technical proposal).
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### Section 3 **Proposed Services**

3.0	Include preliminary price list of all the off-shelf (if available) trainings/services that vendor provides in peacebuilding direction. If prices are not fixed, just provide the list of offered services and products with brief definitions.
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All submitted documents must adhere to following format guidelines:

- Minimum font size – 12
- Allowed Fonts: Calibri, Times New Roman, Cambria or Gill Sans MT
- Minimum page setup margins: Top: 1.3”, Bottom: 0.81”, Left: 1”, Right: 1”

## NOTIFICATION PROCESS

Upon receipt and review of proposals, JAA will notify successful vendors, if any, who have been selected for pre-qualification.

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