



# APPROACHES TO FINDING AND MOBILIZING USAID FUNDING

Networking session  
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# OUTLINE OF PRESENTATION

To give you a better idea of what it takes to get USAID funding and how to pursue it, if you determine it is worthwhile, I will describe:

- I. USAID basics
- II. How to find out about funding opportunities
- III. Recommended approaches to USAID
- IV. How to maximize your chances

# USAID IS A POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCE

- USAID awards most U.S. Government (USG) development assistance
- More than 2/3 of funding goes to U.S. entities, but funding also goes to non-U.S. entities
- Securing USAID funds is not simple or easy for U.S. entities
- It is even harder for non-U.S. entities
- USAID reforms aim to enlarge participation of local entities in USAID development activities

# USAID'S PURPOSE

USAID is the main conduit for USG development assistance, providing financing and technical assistance supporting:

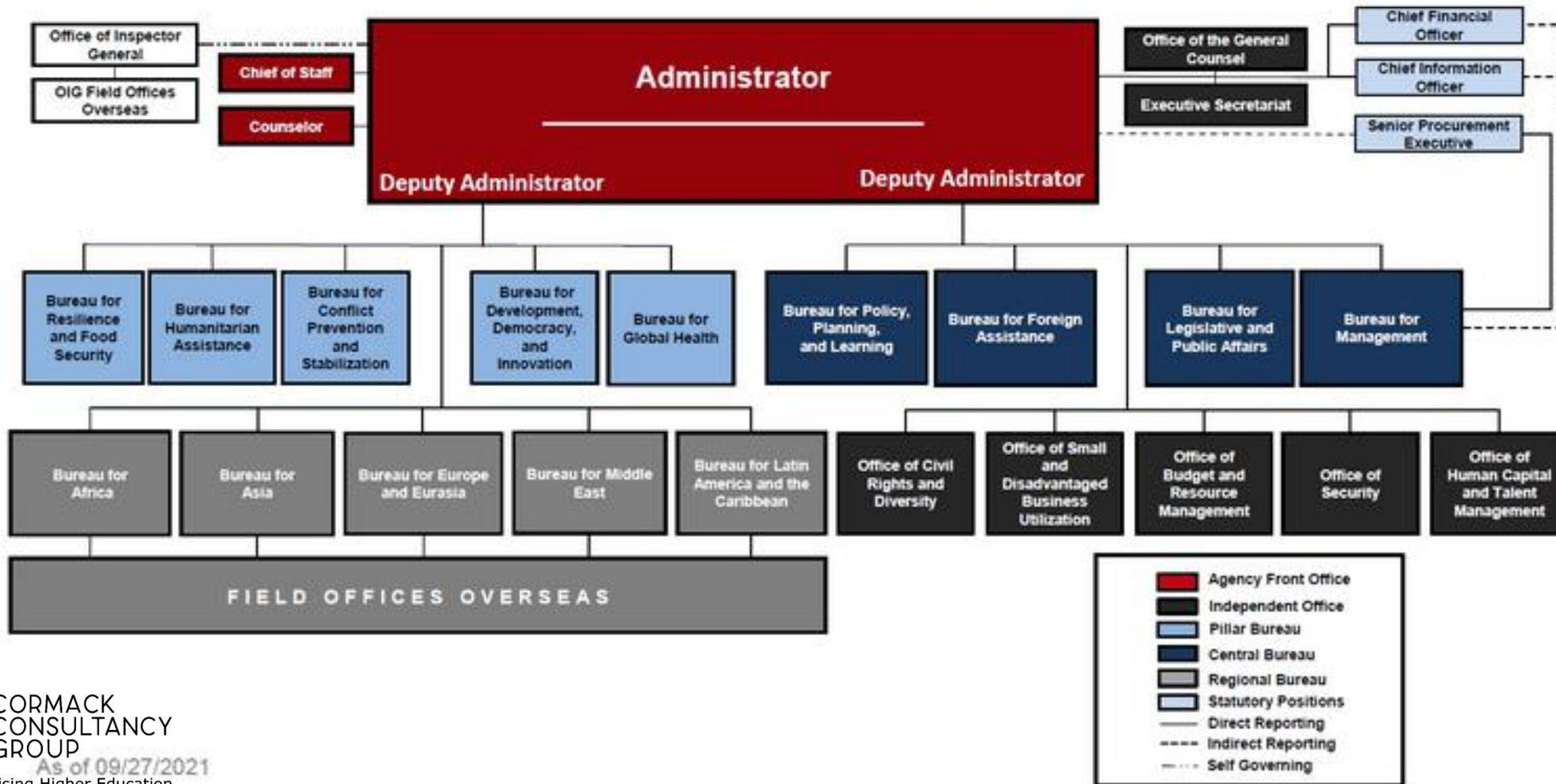
- Economic development
- Global health
- Education
- Democracy and governance
- Humanitarian and disaster relief

# USAID'S OVERALL VISION AND PRIORITIES

- **Policy Framework** sets out overall vision and priorities
- **Country Development Cooperation Strategy** (or regional strategy) sets out specific priorities for USAID-supported countries

# USAID'S STRUCTURE

## US AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRUCTURE



# USAID'S STRUCTURE

**Geographic Bureaus** (e.g., Bureau for Asia, Bureau for Europe & Eurasia)

**Technical Bureaus** (e.g., Bureau for Global Health, Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance)

**Hubs & Centers** (new units in Bureau for Development, Democracy & Innovation)

**Field offices or “missions”**

# USAID FUNDS ARE SUBJECT TO COMPLEX RULES REGULATING THE FOLLOWING:

Contracting and procurement: competitive application processes, complex negotiation process, wide variety of contract vehicles

Complex purchasing rules that award recipients of USAID contracts/grants must follow

USG travel regulations

Financial management and audit

Branding/marketing



# BUREAUCRATIC COMPLEXITY LIMITS NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS MANAGING USAID PROJECTS

Expensive and difficult to develop expertise and administrative systems to meet USAID requirements

Complexity of process makes it difficult for agreement officers to disburse funds

*Result:* A relatively small number of contractors / implementing partners capture most USAID funds (In FY17, 60% went to top 25 contractors; 80% to top 75)

# SOME OF THE BIGGEST USAID CONTRACTORS IN EDUCATION AND HEALTH

## For-Profit

Chemonics International

DAI Global

Abt Associates

ICF International

Creative Associates International

## Not-For-Profit

RTI International

FHI 360

Johns Hopkins University

JHPIEGO

IREX

# FORMS OF DIRECT FUNDING

USAID has many different funding vehicles. The main types relevant to universities are:

- **Cooperative agreements** (where USAID anticipates substantial involvement in management of the project)
- **Grants** (where USAID does not anticipate substantial involvement)

# OTHER FUNDING MECHANISMS TO KNOW

## **Indefinite Delivery, Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) Contracts**

Usually five-year contracts

May be focused on a specific country, regional, or global

## **Competitive funding opportunities based on an Annual Program Statement**

Higher Education for Leadership, Innovation & Exchange (HELIX)

Science, Technology, Innovation & Partnership (STIP)

# WHY THE CURRENT SITUATION MAY BE FAVORABLE

USAID has long considered universities as critical drivers in the success of development programs

USAID has put mechanisms in place (e.g., the New Partnership Initiative) to make it easier to work with them

1. Field offices (missions) now have more responsibility for shaping programs
2. New policies are meant to involve a broader range of organizations, especially local organizations, in USAID activities

# HOW TO FIND OUT ABOUT CURRENT AND FUTURE FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

## **Grants.gov**

- Covers all USG agencies
- Includes current and past Notices of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) and pipeline notices

## **SAM.gov** (system for award management)

- Covers all USG agencies and all types of awards
- Also provides other services, such as required registrations (DUNS, NCAGE/CAGE, SAM)

## **Business Forecast** ([www.usaid.gov/business-forecast/search](http://www.usaid.gov/business-forecast/search))

- USAID-specific
- A way to get involved in the procurement process early, while the project is still in preparation

# USAID WEBSITES AND SOCIAL MEDIA

- **workwithusaid.gov**: “A resource hub designed for new, current, and future local and international partners to navigate how to work with USAID.”

Related LinkedIn group: [www.linkedin.com/groups/12491152/](http://www.linkedin.com/groups/12491152/)

- Leading Through Learning Global Platform: **edu-links.org**

EducationLinks is a resource for all education practitioners to learn and share knowledge to create and implement successful, effective education and skills development programs.

Higher Education Learning Network (HELN): [www.linkedin.com/company/usaid-higher-education-learning-network/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/usaid-higher-education-learning-network/)

➤ **www.usaid.gov**

# IN-PERSON CONNECTIONS ARE ALWAYS USEFUL

## *In-person connections can:*

- Make your institution's capabilities known to USAID
- Get you involved in “co-creation processes” or other project design discussions
- Help you better understand USAID priorities
- Give you insight into which major USAID contractors are assembling a team of partners to bid on a specific project



# WHERE THE IN-PERSON CONNECTION IS DIFFICULT, YOU CAN CONNECT THROUGH INTERMEDIARIES

If you cannot make in-person visits, you can explore working through partners, such as:

- An intermediary organization (e.g., Cormack Consultancy)
- Partner universities
- USAID contractors

In regard to specific upcoming projects, there are also USAID webinars/conference calls for potential bidders

# WAYS TO APPROACH USAID

Respond to a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), Request for Information (RFI), Addendum to an Annual Program Statement (APS)

Cultivating direct relationships may give you an advantage:

- Builds awareness of your university's capabilities
- Improves your understanding of specific activities that USAID intends to support
- Potentially puts you into the conversation *as projects are being developed*

*Ideal:* approach USAID from two directions—HQ and missions

# COME PREPARED

Know their priorities: review country development cooperation strategy, the mission's website, the USAID Policy Framework

Don't just describe your university: be ready to explain how your university might be able to contribute to USAID's development priorities

# WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR CHANCES

Follow good practices: this will at the same time improve your chances with other donors

- Strategic planning: Your university should think carefully about where it has its greatest strengths in regard to development priorities (or possibly identify areas where USAID might be interested in assisting your university)
- Opening channels with one donor can lead to relationships with other funders as well

# A FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPING A FEASIBLE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

## The "4 P's":

**Purpose:** what goal(s) does your institution have in common with USAID (and potentially other donors)?

**People:** What human resources does your university have that could lead and implement a project aimed at the larger purpose? Are the faculty, administration, and students you have in mind ready to undertake this?

**Partners:** What other organizations would be essential to planning, implementing, and managing a successful project?

**Project:** What set of specific activities do you and your partners agree to undertake to achieve the overarching purpose and to develop long-lasting capability at your institution?

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