USTDA Eligibility Checklist for Project Preparation Assistance

The U.S. Trade and Development Agency is the U.S. government's first mover on critical infrastructure development in emerging markets, advancing the shared strategic priorities of the United States and our overseas partners while creating opportunities to deploy trusted U.S. solutions. USTDA funds the upfront technical work that accelerates the development of infrastructure projects, helping them attract the financing they need for implementation and procurement of U.S. goods and services. USTDA accepts sole-source proposals from qualifying U.S. businesses that have partnered with eligible overseas projects sponsors. USTDA also accepts proposals directly from eligible overseas project sponsors and will support a competitive U.S. contractor selection process for projects that it has approved for funding.

Eligibility Checklist

I. Assessing Potential Projects
☐ **Is project preparation required?**
   o USTDA provides grant funding for project preparation support at the early stage of the project life cycle, primarily prior to financial close. USTDA's project preparation tools include feasibility studies, technical assistance and pilot projects.
   o USTDA grant funding supports labor, travel, and other associated costs for a U.S. contractor to carry out the scope of work of a grant agreement. USTDA does not provide project implementation financing or fund equipment purchases.

☐ **Is the project in a USTDA-eligible country?**
   o USTDA accepts proposals to support infrastructure project development in developing and middle-income countries; the availability of USTDA grant funds in a given country may be subject to limitations based on U.S. government restrictions on foreign assistance and similar policy considerations.

☐ **Is the project in a USTDA priority industry?**
   o USTDA has four priority industries: critical minerals, digital, energy and transportation infrastructure. The Agency can work outside of these industries based on U.S.. national interest.

☐ **Will the project support significant U.S. exports of goods and services?**
   o Part of USTDA's mission is to deploy trusted U.S. solutions to the infrastructure projects that it supports in emerging markets. The Agency considers projects with significant U.S. export potential that support U.S. jobs.
   o USTDA only supports the export of technologies that have been successfully commercially deployed.

- **Will the project advance the strategic priorities of the host country?**
  - As a foreign assistance agency, USTDA's activities must advance the strategic infrastructure priorities of both the United States and its partner countries.

- **What is the project's likelihood of attracting financing?**
  - USTDA evaluates proposals to determine a project's likelihood to attract implementation financing from relevant sources, including the project sponsor's internal budgetary resources, commercial banks, multilateral development banks, and U.S. government sources, including the Export-Import Bank of the United States and the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation.

- **What are the major risks and obstacles to full project implementation?**
  - Are there any major legal, regulatory, economic, technology, political or other risks to the project's successful implementation?

II. Assessing Potential Project Sponsors

- **Is the overseas project sponsor incorporated in the same country as the project?**
  - USTDA can award grants to overseas project sponsors in the public, private or public-private sectors, including special purposes vehicles and joint ventures. The project sponsor applying for the USTDA grant must be incorporated in the country in which the project will be implemented.
  - USTDA can also support regional projects in situations where the overseas project sponsor has separate legal entities established in each target country of the project.

- **What are the overseas project sponsor's capabilities?**
  - USTDA assesses the strength and track record of the project sponsor and, where applicable, the expertise of the U.S. firm proposed to perform the project preparation work, to determine competitiveness for USTDA grant funding.
  - Has the overseas project sponsor previously successfully implemented a similar large-scale infrastructure project in an emerging market? Does the overseas project sponsor possess the capability and commitment to see the project through to implementation?

III. Assessing Potential U.S. Contractors

- **What are the eligibility requirements for U.S. contractors?**
  - USTDA requires a qualified and experienced U.S. contractor to carry out the USTDA-funded project preparation work. The U.S. contractor may work with sub-contractors and local labor under the USTDA-funded grant. The Agency's Nationality, Source, and Origin Requirements, found in USTDA's Document Center, state that up to 30 percent of the USTDA grant amount can be used for local labor.
  - USTDA may withhold its approval of a U.S. contractor selected by an overseas project sponsor for a particular grant activity. The Criteria for Withholding Approval of Contractor can be found in USTDA's Document Center.

☐ **How are U.S. contractors paid?**
  o USTDA disburses grant funds directly to U.S. contractors, upon milestone approvals by the project sponsors.

☐ **For sole-sourced proposals from qualifying U.S. businesses and eligible overseas project sponsors, is the proposed U.S. contractor required to contribute a cost share and a success fee?**
  o For sole-sourced projects, USTDA seeks a cost share and/or success fee to the greatest extent practicable from the U.S. contractor.

IV. Points of Contact

For further information on USTDA requirements, please contact the relevant regional team:

Indo-Pacific: *IndoPacific@ustda.gov*

Latin America and the Caribbean: *LAC@ustda.gov*

Middle East, North Africa, Europe and Eurasia: *MENA_Europe@ustda.gov*

Sub-Saharan Africa: *Africa@ustda.gov*

V. Please visit USTDA's Document Center for more information on proposing projects to USTDA. Initial project ideas may be directly submitted to USTDA online.