SUBJECT: Solicitation for Resident-Hire U.S Citizen Personal Services Contractor (USPSC) – Development Assistance Coordinator, Laos Country Office

To All Interested Applicants:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking an application from U.S. citizens interested in providing the PSC services described in the attachment.

Submissions shall be in accordance with the instructions to applicants provided in the attachment and delivered to the undersigned by the time specified. Interested applicants must submit all the materials required by the solicitation and should retain for their records copies of all enclosures which accompany their applications. Only short listed candidates will be contacted.

Email submissions shall be sent to Ms. Suthicha Chussananalin, Acquisition Specialist, via email at schussananalin@usaid.gov with a copy to Ms. Taniece Baldwin, Contracting Officer, at t baldwin@usaid.gov. To ensure delivery by the due date it is recommended that applications be sent in as email attachments. Applications that are received without a signature or incomplete applications will not be considered for the position.

Permanent residence status and/or requisite visas and work permits for Laos are required. USAID will not provide any kind of assistance in obtaining visas and work permits.

This solicitation does not represent a commitment on behalf of USAID and the U.S. Government is not obligated to make an award or to pay for any costs associated with the preparation and submission of a proposal in response to this solicitation. USAID reserves the right to award all or none of the contracts contemplated herein, subject to availability of funds.

Applicants should retain for their record copies of all enclosures which accompany their applications.

Sincerely,

Taniece Baldwin
Regional Contracting Officer
USAID/Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA)
Bangkok, Thailand
ATTACHMENT 1:

I. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. SOLICITATION NUMBER: RFP no. SOL-486-17-000011

2. ISSUANCE DATE: July 11, 2017

3. CLOSING DATE/TIME SPECIFIED FOR RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: August 10, 2017 at 4.00 pm Bangkok Time

4. POSITION TITLE: Resident-Hire USPSC Development Assistance Coordinator, Laos Country Office

5. MARKET VALUE OF POSITION (Base Pay): GS-11 equivalent ($52,329 - $68,025)
   Salary to be paid within this grade will depend on experience, qualifications, and salary history. The standard compensation package also includes a contribution for life and health insurance and a contribution to Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA).

6. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE: To start as soon as possible for a period of two years from the date of award with the possibility of extensions depending on the need for continuation of such services, availability of funds, and satisfactory performance and the needs of the USAID Mission.

7. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE: Vientiane, Laos

8. SECURITY ACCESS: Facility Access

9. WORK HOURS: 40 hours/week

10. STATEMENT OF DUTIES:

A. SUPERVISION:

   The position is directly supervised by General Development Advisor in the Laos Country Office.

B. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND:

USAID is seeking an officer to serve as a part of a growing USAID team at the US Embassy in Vientiane to coordinate programs that address development challenges facing Laos.

USAID provides assistance in the health, environment, trade and economic growth, education, and governance/vulnerable population sectors. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, there were 35 active USAID activities with total annual budgeted funding of nearly $14 million, inclusive of bilateral, regional and Washington-based funding sources. While the Embassy has several bilaterally funded USAID projects, the majority of projects receive funding from either the regional office (USAID/RDMA) or from USAID Bureaus in Washington. A synopsis of assistance to each of these sectors is presented below.

Global and Trans-boundary Health

There are 15 health sector activities with total annual funding of more than $6 million. The health portfolio primarily addresses nutrition and maternal/child survival in addition to the control of infectious diseases which have a trans-boundary impact, such as HIV/AIDS, emerging pandemic threats, malaria, tuberculosis, and neglected tropical diseases.

High infant, child, and maternal mortality are the most serious health problems in Laos. Malnutrition is associated with more than half of all child deaths (under five years old) in Laos; 44% of children are stunted and 27% are underweight, levels that rival those seen in the Asian subcontinent and sub-Saharan Africa. USAID launched a three-year $5.6 million child nutrition program in January 2016.
The Embassy, through USAID, plays an active role in the Global Fund to combat AIDS, TB, and Malaria through our participation as a member of the Country Coordinating Mechanism and Resource Mobilization Committee for Laos. Global Fund is the largest donor to the health sector at $15 million/year, and the US government (USG) contribution comprises 32% of the Global Fund budget.

**Education**

New educational programming was announced by President Obama during his historic visit to Laos in September 2016. Programming aims to improve Basic Education through gains in early grade reading.

$2 million in funding for basic education was appropriated in FY 2016 under Laos’ bilateral program; $3 million has been requested for FY 2017.

**Environment and Global Climate Change**

The objective of the USAID environment portfolio is to mitigate the adverse effects of rapid economic growth on the environment. There are 10 active projects in the environment portfolio with more than $1 million budgeted for Laos in FY 2016. All funding is provided through regional projects managed by USAID/RDMA.

Programming includes capacity building projects to reduce the environmental impact of hydropower development through the Smart Infrastructure for the Mekong (SIM) program that utilizes technical expertise from across the US government, but in particular from the Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior.

Clean Power Asia, a new five-year project aims to catalyze diverse sources of clean energy investment and increase the supply of grid-connected renewable energy in ASEAN. The project focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helps countries set targets integrated into their national power development plans.

The newly awarded USAID Wildlife Asia will start implementation in Laos, utilizing the newly formed Embassy Vientiane Counter Wildlife Trafficking strategy as a roadmap.

**Economic Growth and Trade**

While the Lao economy has been growing rapidly in recent years, it remains relatively undiversified and heavily dependent on external demand for its natural resources, particularly mining, hydropower and forestry. Laos’ growth has not been broadly shared among the population, and the economy remains susceptible to external shocks. Regulatory capacity and knowledge of market economics within the Lao government is limited and threatens future sustainable growth.

Through the LUNA II project and investments into the World Bank Trade Development Facility, USAID is working to improve the legal and regulatory environment for trade and investment in Laos and supports the country’s efforts to transition to open and free markets. USAID is guiding the draft of a broad range of key trade-related laws and regulations, while also providing assistance to support their implementation. In addition, USAID-funded workshops raise public awareness of commitments by the government to comply with international economic obligations. The workshops also encourage active participation in ASEAN, the WTO and other organizations by Lao government ministries, the National Assembly as well as the private sector through the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The ASEAN-focused ASEAN Connectivity to Trade and Investment (ACTI) project and Connecting the Maekhong through Education and Training (COMET) projects improve Lao PDR’s economic integration and competitiveness through human resource development.

**Governance and Vulnerable Populations**

USAID is working to develop the capacity of the sector that supports people with disabilities through its TEAM and Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE) projects. The multi-country TEAM project focuses on empowering people with disabilities through the provision of support to 15 local and international non-government organizations (NGOs) that enable people with disabilities to attain and...
maintain independence. Each project addresses at least one component of TEAM: Training, Economic empowerment, Assistive technology, Medical and physical rehabilitation, in a comprehensive, socially-focused approach that aims to improve services and have a positive effect on quality of life and social inclusion for People with Disabilities (PWD).

The Cooperative Orthotic and Prosthetic Enterprise (COPE) activity helps support women, men, girls and boys with physical disabilities in Lao PDR to gain access to prosthetics, orthotics, and physical therapy - including people disabled from unexploded ordnance. COPE works in partnership with the Government’s Centre for Medical Rehabilitation, and was visited by both Secretary of State Clinton in 2012 and President Obama in 2016.

C. MAJOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

In the context of Laos, the incumbent will perform the following functions: a) provide programmatic support to USAID programs b) support planning/reporting on U.S. government foreign assistance activities, and c) engage as a key member of the USAID Laos and Embassy/Vientiane teams. The specific duties of this position will include the following:

- **Provide Programmatic Support to USAID Programs in Laos (50%)**
  There are over 30 USAID projects currently being implemented in Laos, funded through RDMA or USAID/Washington
  - Coordinate with USAID Laos Country Office Director on priority program areas in which to provide program backstop support
  - Coordinate incoming USAID team trips to ensure smooth implementation of work and proper briefings with the Front Office
  - Liaise with the Government of Laos (GOL) on behalf of USAID projects in consultation with Contracting/Agreement Officer Representative (CORs/AORs) as appropriate
  - Coordinate with Embassy Environment, Science, Technology and Health (ESTH) officer and other Embassy political/economic staff to share information and to brief visitors on key focus issues in Laos
  - Attend donor and government led Sector Working Group meetings and other meetings related to the portfolio.

- **Coordinate the Foreign Assistance Planning, Budgeting and Reporting Process for US Embassy Vientiane (30%)**
  The reports include the Integrated Country Strategy, the Mission Resource Request, Operational Plan, Performance Management and Report and the Congressional Budget Justification.
  - In coordination with the USAID/RDMA Program Office, and the Embassy Front Office, work with relevant sections within the Embassy to compile and draft the various reports within the timeline.

- **Manage the Official Development Assistance Aid Management Platform (ODA/AMP) on behalf of the U.S. Embassy (10%)**
  The ODA/AMP is a database maintained by the Ministry of Planning and Investment (MPI) to which all development partners contribute updated data. All embassies and development agencies providing development assistance to Laos must report annual and quarterly planned and actual expenditures to the MPI. In this regard the position must:
  - Maintain a data base of all USG funded donor assistance projects in Laos from all USG agencies that provide development assistance, i.e. USAID, DATT (Defense), STATE, International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). These six agencies provide assistance through approximately 60 projects. There are approximately 20 data items that must be provided for each project
  - Report to MPI on an annual basis all projects, total commitments and planned disbursements.

- **Engage as a Member of the USAID Country Office Team and Embassy/Vientiane Team (10%)**
As needed, assist in organizing site visits and prepare orientation materials for delegations from USAID, the State Department, Congress, White House, and other USG agencies.

D. **EXERCISE OF JUDGMENT:**

In instances not clearly covered by written guidelines, the incumbent will use his/her own personal, well-informed judgment in devising innovative approaches to resolving technical, administrative, managerial and/or policy problems. Excellent (balanced) judgment must be exercised in setting priorities. The use of initiative, discretion and patience is expected from the incumbent in dealing with RDMA personnel, other U.S. government personnel as well as representatives from public and private corporations and other donor organizations to resolve problems that arise during the course of work for which there is often no clear or immediate solution.

E. **SUPERVISION RECEIVED:**

The incumbent will report directly to the General Development Advisor in the Laos Country Office. The candidate must have the ability to work independently, relate to a wide range of contacts at the senior level (Ambassador, Deputy Assistant Administrator, senior Government of Laos Ministry officials; and, high-ranking representatives of other donor organizations); lead effective meetings, take initiative; follow-through on ideas; identify roles and responsibilities of potential partners in alliances; write succinctly and completely; speak to interested groups and represent the U.S. Government at meetings, conferences and other forums.

F. **AVAILABLE GUIDELINES:**

The incumbent is required to quickly grasp Mission and Agency-specific policies and procedures which govern project design and activity management in addition to the USAID/RDMA’s established administrative operating procedures, policies and formats. When provided, guidance from the supervisor is primarily with regard to policy, priorities, results to be achieved, basic approaches to be followed, and in the case of assembling report, the nature and basic content of reports are provided. Oral guidance from the immediate supervisor and specific detailed instructions will be given (when necessary) for carrying out unique assignments.

G. **NATURE, LEVEL AND PURPOSE OF CONTACTS:**

The incumbent will be required to maintain solid working relationships with RDMA personnel to function effectively. The incumbent will be required to work closely with: Government of Laos, private sector representatives, other USAID Missions, DATT (Defense), STATE, INL, CDC, USDA, foundations, NGOs, other foreign donor institutions and other local and international groups.

H. **AUTHORITY TO MAKE COMMITMENTS:**

The incumbent will have no independent authority to commit U.S. Government funds on behalf of the U.S. Government.

I. **SUPERVISION/OVERSIGHT OVER OTHERS:**

This position does not have any direct supervisory responsibility.

J. **LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY:**

Level V, strong written and oral proficiency in English is required; a working knowledge of one of the languages in the South East Asia/Asia region is desirable. Given the nature of the position, effective written and oral communications are absolutely critical to perform successfully in this position.

K. **PHYSICAL CONDITION:**

The successful candidate will be required to pass a physical certification exam, paid for by the U.S. Government. USAID prohibits discrimination in hiring and employment on the basis of physical or mental...
impairment. USAID promotes, with reasonable accommodation, the full realization of equal employment opportunities for the disabled in recruitment, promotion, assignment, and training.

L. WORK ENVIRONMENT:

The work environment involves everyday risks or discomforts that require normal safety precautions typical of such places as offices, training rooms, and libraries. The work area is adequately lighted, heated, and ventilated.

M. OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

The incumbent must be:

1. A US citizen;
2. In possession of, or able to obtain, a facility access level security clearance. The successful applicant must be able to receive a USAID security clearance that involves an applicant's comprehensive background investigation performed by a US Government Agency.
3. In possession of, or able to obtain, a medical clearance. The successful applicant must receive medical clearance for serving in Laos. Details of how to obtain US Department of State medical clearance will be provided.
4. Must already have appropriate visa and/or permit to work in Laos PDR.

II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

Education: A Bachelor’s degree in a relevant international development assistance field such as international development, environmental studies, sustainable energy, international relations, political science, business administration, law or other closely related field required. A Master’s degree is preferred.

Experience: At least 5 years of practical professional experience in relevant areas related to international assistance, environmental or energy policy, interagency cooperation and program planning, analysis or management, as well as the ability to function in complex, frequently changing political and economic conditions required; previous US Government experience is highly desired.

Language Proficiency: Strong written and oral proficiency in English is required. Given the nature of the position, effective written and oral communications are critical.

III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

The following factors will be the basis for the evaluation of all applications. All applications will be evaluated based on the documentation submitted with the application. In addition to the forms required, applicants should provide a cover letter and a current resume/curriculum vitae (CV) addressing how they meet the requirements of each criterion. Candidates will be evaluated and ranked based on the following selection criteria:

1. Prior Work Experience (50 Points)

The incumbent should show a level of demonstrated knowledge of and experience in program management, working as a part of a team; and developing briefing or presentation documents. S/He must also show the ability to interpret and implement administrative operating procedures and policies.

Demonstrated ability to coordinate effectively among different stakeholders or groups is required.

Experience in program design, management, and monitoring and evaluation is desirable.

The incumbent will also have the following:

- Strong understanding of international relations and economic and political issues affecting less-developed countries as well as an ability to utilize this knowledge is required. Knowledge in this area (international relations, economic and political issues) related specifically to Laos desired.
- High level of energy, sound judgment, and good initiative.
- Effective communication and administrative skills to assist in the planning, budgeting, and reporting process. Familiarity with USG/USAID regulations and reporting requirements is highly desirable.
- Ability to work under minimal supervision and demonstrate the capacity to take initiative and problem solve.

2. **Teamwork and Interpersonal Skills** (25 points)

The incumbent must be able to demonstrate the ability to work effectively in a multi-cultural setting and navigate and manage politically sensitive issues.

The incumbent should demonstrate the ability to work effectively with a broad range of USG personnel and development partners at various levels. Excellent verbal communication skills, tact and diplomacy are required to establish and develop sustainable working relationships with USG colleagues, Government of Laos counterparts, and other donor organizations.

The incumbent should demonstrate the ability to work both independently and in a team environment to achieve consensus on policy, program, and administrative matters.

3. **Language, Communication, and Computer Skills** (25 points)

Excellent communication and negotiation skills are essential, including excellent writing, reporting, drafting, and editing skills. Excellent written communication skills are required to prepare regular and ad hoc reports, activity documentation and briefing papers as well as well-developed presentation and briefing skills required.

The incumbent should be able to communicate technical information quickly, clearly, and concisely to a wide range of stakeholders, including colleagues, USG officials, Government of Laos counterparts, and other donors. This includes well-developed presentation and briefing skills.

Knowledge of Lao not required but desirable.

**IV. APPLYING**

Interested individuals are requested to submit following:

2. Offers must be received by the closing date and time specified on the cover page.
3. To ensure consideration of offers for the intended position, Offerors must prominently reference the Solicitation number in the offer submission.
4. A current resume or curriculum vitae (CV)
5. A minimum of three and a maximum of five references, including two references which must be from direct supervisors who can provide information regarding the applicant’s knowledge.
6. **Proof of required residency permit and/or visa.**

NOTE: Submission of a resume 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.

After the closing date for receipt of applications, a committee will be convened to review applications and evaluate them in accord with the evaluation criteria. Applications from candidates which do not meet the required selection criteria will not be scored. As part of the selection process, finalist candidates may be interviewed either in person or by telephone at USAID’s discretion. Reference checks will be made only for applicants considered as finalists. If an applicant does not wish USAID to contact a current employer for a
reference check, this should be stated in the applicant’s cover letter, and USAID will delay such reference check pending communication with the applicant. Only finalists will be contacted by USAID with respect to their applications.

V. LIST OF REQUIRED FORMS FOR PSC HIRES

Once the CO informs the successful Offeror about being selected for a contract award, the CO will provide the successful Offeror instructions about how to complete and submit the following forms.

1. Medical History and Examination Form (Department of State Forms)
2. Questionnaire for Sensitive Positions for National Security (SF-86), or
3. Questionnaire for Non-Sensitive Positions (SF-85)
4. Finger Print Card (FD-258)

VI. BENEFITS/ALLOWANCES

As a matter of policy, and as appropriate, a PSC recruited is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

BENEFITS:

- Base Salary
- Employer’s FICA and Medicare Contribution*
- Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
- Pay Comparability and Adjustment
- Annual Salary Increase
- Eligibility for Worker’s Compensation Annual & Sick Leave

VII. TAXES

USPSCs are required to pay Federal income taxes, FICA, Medicare and applicable State Income taxes.

VIII. USAID REGULATIONS, POLICIES AND CONTRACT CLAUSES PERTAINING TO PSCs

USAID regulations and policies governing USPSC awards are available at these sources:

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.

- End of solicitation -