



**CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES
FOR A GRANT UNDER CONTRACT**

**Competitive Procurement Center
RFA # 3**

**SOUTHEAST ASIA SMART POWER PROGRAM (SPP)
United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
Regional Development Mission for Asia (RDMA)**

August 2023

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USAID Southeast Asia Smart Power Program

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1. Grant Background and Scope of Work

1.1. USAID Southeast Asia Smart Power Program (SPP)

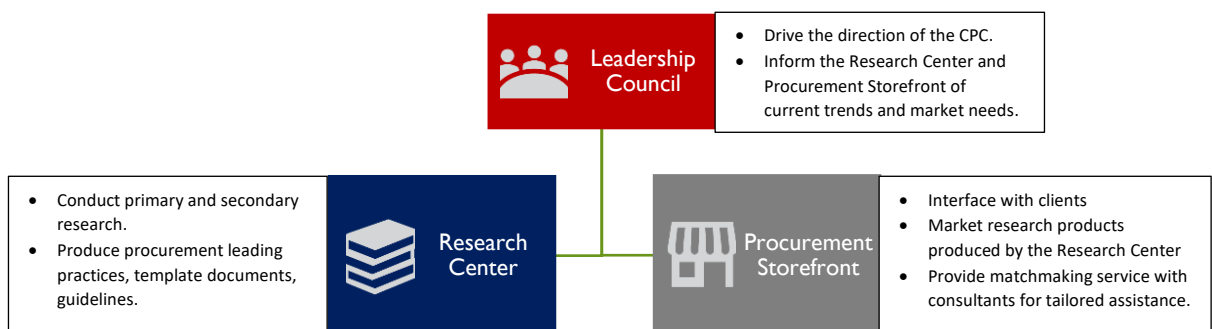
USAID SPP is a five-year regional initiative implemented by Deloitte Consulting LLP under Contract No. 7200AA19D00025, Task Order No. 72048622F00001 that works in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region to help deploy advanced energy systems, increase investment into the region's energy sector, and improve regional energy trade to ensure secure and market driven energy sectors that sustain economic growth. SPP aims to leverage partnerships, support regional initiatives, address cross-border issues, and create centers for excellence that help develop solutions for Southeast Asian countries to become self-reliant and achieve their sustainable development aspirations. SPP's primary targets are to contribute to the deployment of 2,000 megawatts of advanced energy systems, the mobilization of \$2 billion in clean energy finance, and a five percent increase in regional power trade.

1.2. Competitive Procurement Center (CPC)

USAID SPP is seeking partner organizations to establish and operate a Competitive Procurement Center (CPC), which will be a one-stop-shop for best practices and technical assistance on procurement of products and services relating to the energy transition. This could include procurement of renewable energy, energy efficiency services, smart energy software and hardware, electric vehicles, and other advanced energy technologies for decarbonization. The CPC will be based in Thailand and serve the Southeast Asia region, catering to stakeholders on both the demand and supply sides. For example, on the supply side these may be state-owned utilities issuing a tender for a novel generation technology; whereas on the demand side these may be corporate buyers looking to decarbonize their supply chains by procuring green electricity. CPC's offerings and services will depend on the market's needs and can include research, guidelines, template documents, and tailored advisory services (such as procurement planning, evaluation criteria, and technical standards).

The CPC will consist of three pillars: 1) Leadership Council, 2) Research Center, and 3) Procurement Storefront.

The Leadership Council will guide the overall direction of the CPC, while the Research Center and Procurement Storefront will work collaboratively to generate and deliver resources and services. Details of each pillar are described below.



Leadership Council

The Leadership Council will guide the direction of the CPC's research and products and services. The Leadership Council will function as the advisory board for CPC, guiding the direction of the research and informing both the Research Center and Procurement Storefront of the market's needs. The Leadership Council will comprise broad representation of power market stakeholders. The selection process, tenure,

and specific role specifications for Leadership Council members are yet to be developed, and the backgrounds of individuals represented could include electric utilities, developers, private sector buyers, research academics, and regional and international technical experts.

Research Center

Guided by the Leadership Council, the Research Center will generate primary and secondary research products that could include international leading practices, market and technical assessments, case studies of procurement models, and procurement guidelines that cater to the interests and needs of the market. It could also conduct tailored research projects for clients that come through the Procurement Storefront. The Research Center will work collaboratively with the Procurement Storefront to monitor and identify procurement support opportunities and to market research products through the Procurement Storefront.

Procurement Storefront

The Procurement Storefront will be the main avenue through which clients will deal with the CPC. It will house the research outputs of the Research Center and offer a menu of support services that could, for example, include tailored technical advisory services. It can direct research requests to be conducted by the Research Center. For other advisory service requests, the Procurement Storefront would retain a roster of expert consultants and match these requests with the appropriate experts through a consultant matchmaking mechanism. Requests for tailored assistance could be a source of revenue for the CPC that contributes to its operational sustainability.

The CPC will be hosted in a Thailand-based institution and can be jointly implemented by regional and/or U.S.-based organizations (see Section 2. Eligibility). The implementation period for the CPC is at least through June 2026, with a goal to extend its operations beyond that date with an alternative funding strategy (see Section 3. Funding Range and Duration).

1.3. SPP's Approach for Seeking CPC Host Organization(s)

SPP is adopting a localized, co-creation approach to establishing the CPC by seeking, supporting, and building capacity of local organizations to host the CPC. While the selected organization(s) will be expected to eventually design and implement a detailed plan for the pillar(s) it proposes to undertake, development of this detailed implementation plan will be conducted collaboratively, with support and facilitation from SPP.

In the first stage of the selection process, SPP invites eligible organizations to submit a concept note not exceeding ten (10) pages (excluding annexes) that proposes to implement one or more pillars of the CPC as described above.

SPP will select one or more concept notes (See Section 5. Technical Selection of Concept Notes) and invite the submitters to participate in a co-creation activity: a facilitated brainstorming process intended to develop detailed proposals that SPP funds. The detailed implementation plan for the CPC, to include the organizational structure, a detailed technical approach, management strategy, staffing and resource plan, budget, and sustainability strategy, will be developed collaboratively during this co-creation activity, based on the selected concept notes. The selected organizations will then be asked to submit a final grant application. For detailed application process.

2. Eligibility

Grantees may be Non-Government Organizations (NGOs), professional organizations, research institutions, and other not for profit entities that are legally established in the recipient's country; or private firms that are legally established. Awards to U.S. organizations are limited to \$100,000 USD. There is no

limit on award amounts to non-U.S. organizations. Individuals, political organizations, foreign owned and government institutions and religious groups are not eligible for grants. Also ineligible are private firms and Non-Governmental Organizations whose objectives are not consistent with the broad objectives of the program.

3. Funding Range and Duration

SPP will provide grant funding totaling up to **1,000,000 USD (equivalent in Thai Baht)** to one or more organizations that it selects to “co-create” and implement a strategy for establishing, launching, and operating the CPC. The implementation period for the CPC is at least through June 2026, with a goal to extend its operations beyond that date with an alternative funding strategy.

4. Application Process

The application process is in three stages: 1. Submission of a concept note; 2. Co-creation; and 3. Grant Application.

Stage 1: Submission of a concept note

Prior to developing a full grant application, potential grantees are to submit a concept note for review and feedback. The concept note is an opportunity to organize ideas which will be refined and developed into a detailed Statement of Work (SOW) during the co-creation phase. The concept note should not exceed ten (10) pages (excluding annexes).

Ideas should be clear and concise, and as shown in the outline below should include:

1. Cover Page/Introduction:

- **Name and address** of organization
- **Type of organization** (e.g., for-profit, non-profit, university)
- **Contact point** (lead contact name; relevant telephone, and e-mail information). Regional or multi-country applications should provide the name of at least one local partner for each country targeted in the program
- **Signature of authorized representative** of the Applicant

2. Technical Information:

- **Title** of CPC pillar(s) you are proposing to implement
- **Technical Approach and Management Plan:** Discussion of objectives; approach; organizational structure of the team you intend to mobilize for this task; management plan; anticipated results; and how the work will help accomplish SPP’s vision for the CPC
- **Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Assessment:** A description of how your organization is well-equipped to implement the proposed concept. Provide examples from prior or ongoing projects and testimony of past performance of your organization and prospective or existing partner(s)
- **Initial Resource Assessment:** Include an initial assessment of resources (such as staff) available in-house versus additional resources that are required to implement your concept. Suggestions for partnerships with other organizations may be included
- **Suggested Sustainability Approach:** Propose an approach for how the CPC will become financially self-sufficient after the duration of a grant

SPP will evaluate concept notes received based on 1. Technical Approach and Management Plan; 2. Organizational Capacity and Past Performance; and 3. Sustainability Approach. The breakdown of the evaluation criteria is detailed in Section 4. Technical Selection of Concept Paper.

Stage 2: Co-Creation

Those organizations whose concept notes receive scores higher than 70 points will be invited to participate in a co-creation activity with SPP. The purpose of the co-creation is to further develop the concepts submitted in the first stage in a collaborative manner, and to contextualize them within the broader vision for the CPC. Whether the CPC is implemented by a single entity, or a consortium will depend on the concept notes received. During the co-creation, SPP will facilitate the development of defined Scopes of Work (SOW) and detailed implementation plans for each selected organization, to include the organizational structure, a detailed technical approach, management strategy, staffing and resource plan, budget, and sustainability strategy.

Stage 3: Grant Application

Following the conclusion of the co-creation stage, Applicants will be asked to submit a complete Grant Application and Budget for review and approval by SPP and USAID.

5. Technical Selection of Concept Paper

The Technical Selection Committee will evaluate each concept note based upon the review criteria set forth below. A concept note can be categorized as unacceptable when it is incomplete, does not respond to the scope, or is submitted after the deadline.

The technical criteria below are presented by major category, in relative order of importance, so that Applicants will know which areas require emphasis in the preparation of their concept notes.

Technical Approach and Management Plan.	50%
Organizational Capacity and Past Performance	35%
Sustainability Approach	15%

Concept notes will be reviewed by a Technical Selection Committee for consistency with SPP objectives. If a concept note meets the 70% threshold and evidences a concept that is consistent with the objectives of SPP's vision for CPC, the Grants Manager will invite the organization to participate in a co-creation process that is intended to result in submission of a full grant Application. If a concept note evidences a concept that is not consistent with SPP or CPC objectives, the Grants Manager will communicate with the submitting organization regarding the non-approval of a concept note.

6. Submission Deadlines

Concept notes must be received at mwatanagase@deloitte.com by **September 24th, 11:59pm**, Bangkok local time.

7. Timetable

The following is an illustrative timetable for the grant process:

ACTIVITY	ILLUSTRATIVE TIMETABLE
Request for Concept Notes Issued	August 24, 2023
Concept Notes Due	September 24, 2023
Concept Notes Review	1 week from the application deadline
Grant applicants make oral presentations to clarify concept	1 week
<i>(Optional) Co-creation and Co-Development</i>	<i>1-2 months</i>
Final Selection	1 week
Grants applications received from finalists	1-2 weeks
<i>(Optional) Presentation to USAID</i>	<i>1-2 weeks</i>
USAID Approval and Grant Awarded	1-2 weeks