Financial Processes and Systems Review
RFP Questions and Answers
May 19, 2020

**Reminder:** Proposals are due by 5:00pm on June 4, 2020 and must be submitted to processRFP@cipe.org

1. Could you please share an organization chart of the Finance Function?
   **Answer:** See Attachment A

2. Please indicate if team members are located in headquarters or in a field office.
   **Answer:** Headquarters

3. Could you please share job descriptions for the staff within the finance Function?
   **Answer:** See Attachment B

4. Could you please provide a list (or at least the number) of the staff members outside of the finance function who interact with finance that we would interview as part of the project?
   **Answer:** Up to 25 staff outside of the finance function may be interviewed

5. Please indicate which individuals are located in headquarters vs. a field office.
   **Answer:** The majority of staff to be interviewed are located in headquarters. Up to 5 field office staff may be interviewed. Field staff interviews will be conducted remotely.

6. Would it be possible to obtain a copy of your accounting policy and procedures manual to review in advance?
   **Answer:** Procedures and manuals will be available to finalists for review

7. Could we please see a copy of your most recent monthly financial reporting package?
   **Answer:** Recent monthly reporting packages will be shared with finalists

8. How many employees are currently in the Finance and Contracts Management Group?
   **Answer:** Nine

9. Approximately how many Program staff and other internal stakeholders would we need to engage with in addition to Management and the Finance and Grants/Contracts staff?
   **Answer:** See answer to #4
10. How many high-level processes are currently in place that would need to be assessed?
   **Answer:** Six processes (see page 2 of the RFP)

11. Do the field staff follow the same processes and use the same systems as the Headquarters teams? If not:
   - Is an assessment of their processes and systems in scope?
     **Answer:** No
   - Is the intent to standardize processes worldwide?
     **Answer:** No

12. What payroll provider or system does CIPE use for US-based staff, US-paid staff (if different, e.g., expats), and field or host country national (HCN) staff?
   **Answer:** Ceridian for US based and expats. HCN’s are not paid through the payroll system.

13. When did CIPE last conduct a similar type of business process review?
   **Answer:** Approximately 13 years ago

14. In reference to providing the “estimated cost of implementation,” are high-level costs (e.g., low, medium, high) or ranges acceptable, or should the cost breakdown be specific (i.e., include the cost of technology, time, resources, training, etc.)?
   **Answer:** Yes, ranges are acceptable

15. How many parties have been invited to respond to the RFP?
   **Answer:** The RFP was shared with 11 firms. However, this is an open request published on CIPE’s website and other platforms

16. What is the estimated start date for the project?
   **Answer:** Late August or early September

17. Given the current environment, does CIPE intend for this project to be conducted remotely, or will it include on-site work?
   **Answer:** Under the current circumstances, it will likely have to be conducted remotely

18. Who is the primary stakeholder(s) at CIPE for this project?
   **Answer:** The finance, grants/compliance and program teams

19. Could you confirm / name any of the “other routine functions” that would be
deemed in scope besides those noted in the RFP:

- Budgeting
- Financial Reporting
- Cash Management
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Grant Management
- Contract Management

**Answer:** Other functions may include expense management and financial analysis

20. Does the scope of this assessment include international operations?
   **Answer:** This assessment may include a review of how field office expenses are recorded and reported to headquarters.

21. If the answer above is yes, how many field offices would be in scope and will there be named representation in each country to support the assessment?
   **Answer:** Up to 5 field offices may be included and yes there will be a named representative to support the assessment.

22. Has a core team been identified, by functional area, US, International, internal project lead, etc.?
   **Answer:** A project lead has been identified

23. To understand the current state finance operations and systems, approximately how many stakeholders should we expect to interview?
   **Answer:** see answer to #4

24. Are there any additional systems being used to those defined as in-scope within the RFP:
   - Solomon Accounting Software
   - K2 Workflow Application – payment processing
   - Legacy Java Application for Grants Management (EPIC)
   - QuickBooks – field office expense reporting
   - ISolved – time and attendance reporting and generating reports for payroll Excel – staff expense reports, budgets, cash flow management, and A/P aging reports
25. Does CIPE have any current state documentation related to processes, org. structure, and/or finance applications to share if work is awarded and in advance of the project start?

**Answer:** Yes

26. Is there a particular format in which you would prefer our response to your request to be formatted i.e. PowerPoint vs. MS Word?

**Answer:** As indicated in the Proposal Submission and Schedule of the RFP, proposals should be submitted in MS Word or PDF

27. What is your anticipated start state, given the June 4th submission timing?

**Answer:** see answer to #16

28. Are there any in-flight projects that could impact the discovery and/or outcome of this assessment?

**Answer:** No

29. Is there an expectation to optimize your current technology investments, or are you open to recommendations for new technology if necessary?

**Answer:** Our preference is to optimize current technology as much as possible, but we are open to recommendations on new technology.

30. Is it acceptable to provide a detailed pricing worksheet separately to support the proposed pricing summary?

**Answer:** Yes

31. Has CIPE undergone any similar assessments recently? What were the outputs and how long ago was/were the assessment(s) performed?

**Answer:** See answer to #13. The outputs were similar to what is requested as part of this engagement.

32. Is CIPE open to an outsourcing model for finance, accounting, and/or IT?

**Answer:** We are open to all recommendations for maximizing efficiencies and increasing productivity. Please note, the accounting function is currently outsourced.

33. In addition to an electronic copy of the proposal would you also prefer physical copies
to be overnight delivered? If so please specify the number of recipients, recipient address(es) etc.

Answer: No, physical copies are not requested

34. Our understanding of the scope is as follows:
Finance and Grant Department Operations including: Budgeting, cash management, accounts payable and receivable, payroll, financial reporting, grants and contracts management, and other routine financial transactions. Can you help to clarify if other processes may be in scope?

Answer: See answer to #19

35. Can you confirm that a PowerPoint document that has been converted to PDF format is an acceptable format for the proposal submission? We didn’t want to confuse the PDF requirement as only applying to a PDF of a Word document.

Answer: Yes, a PowerPoint converted to PDF is an acceptable format

36. Do you anticipate any travel outside of the HQ location in DC?

Answer: No

37. In addition to the requested deliverables, is there desire for a detailed documentation of process, process performer duties, internal controls and risks (Similar to a process flowchart) and associated control matrix?

Answer: Not at this time

38. Regarding the current structure of CIPE’s team, how many people are in the Finance and Grants/Contracts Dept?

Answer: See answer to #8

39. Is an Organizational Chart available to share?

Answer: See Attachment A for an organizational chart of the Finance team.

40. See attachment. Are all Finance and Grants/Contracts Dept personnel located in DC?

Answer: Yes

41. Please explain the involvement of the grant process. Is this focused on the operations side or just finance?

Answer: Finance and operations
42. How many people are on the staff of the Finance and Grants/Contracts departments?
   Answer: See answer to #8

43. How many people would be involved in the broader interviews with Management, Finance and Grants/Contracts staff, and other select stakeholders?
   Answer: See answer to #4

44. In your annual report we notice an incoming “Other Grants” category. Where are those grants sourced?
   Answer: Foreign and other non-USG Donors

45. Do you primarily receive grants from the Federal Government, private donors, and other NGOs, or are grants also provided by state and local governments?
   Answer: Awards are primarily received from the Federal Government

46. Federal Government Do foreign governments provide additional funding?
   Answer: Yes

47. When would you prefer this to be completed by?
   Answer: This decision will be based on the timelines provided in the proposals
Attachment A

Finance Team

Controller

- AP Specialist
- Finance Officer
- Junior Accountant

**There is also an outsourced Accountant**
Attachment B

Finance Team Job Descriptions

POSITION: Financial Controller

REPORTS TO: Managing Director, Operations

Position Description:
The Controller will be responsible for oversight of all financial accounting and reporting activities. The Controller will be involved in supporting presentations to the board finance and audit committee and will work closely with the Managing Director of Operations (MDO) and CIPE’s senior leadership team.

The Controller will manage all day-to-day finance accounting operations including functional responsibility over accounting, accounts payable, accounts receivable, and payroll. The Controller will ensure that CIPE has the systems and procedures in place to support effective program implementation and conduct audits. The Controller will work closely with program leaders and their staffs, not only to educate them regarding financial and accounting procedures but also to explore how the finance function can better support CIPE’s program operations.

Responsibilities

Finance and Accounting
Oversee all accounts, ledgers, and reporting systems ensuring compliance with appropriate GAAP standards and regulatory requirements.

- Oversee preparation of monthly financial statements to ensure accuracy and timely submittal to donors.
- Reconciliation of CIPE’s Balance Sheet Items.
- Maintain internal control and safeguards for receipt of revenue, costs, and program budgets and actual expenditures.
- Coordinate all audit activity.
- Coordinate / prepare schedules for Form 990 taxes.
- Consistently analyze financial data and present financial reports in an accurate and timely manner; clearly communicate monthly, quarterly, and annual financial statements; monitor progress and changes and keep the MDO and senior leadership abreast of CIPE’s financial status;
- Assist CIPE’s management in the annual budgeting and planning process; administer and review all financial plans and compare to actual results with a view to identify, explain, and correct variances as appropriate.
- Support the MDO in engaging CIPE’s audit and finance committees around issues and trends in financial operating models and delivery.
- Oversee all financial, project/program and grants accounting; ensure that expenditures are consistently aligned with grant and program budgets throughout the grant/fund period; collate financial reporting materials for government, corporate, and foundation grants.
• Manage organizational cash flow forecasting by working in partnership with the MDO. Prepare timely drawdown requests from funding agencies.
• Participate in the development of financial policies and procedures for the headquarters and field offices.
• Prepare timely and accurate quarterly FFR 425 federal cash transactions report & financial status report.
• Perform additional duties as requested as requested by the Executive Director, the Board and CIPE’s Senior Management team.

Management

• Leverage strengths of the current finance team members, help to clarify roles and responsibilities and develop and implement training programs in order to maximize and reach optimal individual and organizational goals;
• Provide leadership in strengthening internal communications with staff at all levels throughout the organization; create and promote a positive and supportive work environment.

Qualifications

• Minimum of a BA; CPA and/or MBA preferred.
• Seven to ten years of accounting and finance experience
• Demonstrated experience in accounting and audit,
• Ability to gather, analyze, present and report financial information to executive teams and key external stakeholders.
• Experience in a complex nonprofit that has multiple programs.
• Ability to manage, develop, mentor and leverage strengths of junior finance staff
• Strong written and verbal communication skills.
• A proactive, hands-on strategic thinker who will own, in partnership with the DDO and the other senior staff in the Grants and Finance department, the responsibility for finance.
• Solid experience coordinating audit activities and managing reporting, budget development and analysis, accounts payable and receivable, general ledger, payroll, and accounting for investments.
• A track record in grants management as it relates to compliance and reporting of government, corporate and foundation grants is essential.
• Having the foresight and ability to delegate accordingly
• Excellent analytic, organizational and problem solving skills which allow for strategic data interpretation
• Strong interpersonal and communication skills; experience in effectively communicating key data, including presentations to senior management, board or other outside partners.
• Ability and desire to translate complex financial concepts to individuals at all levels including finance and non-finance managers.
• Ability to work in a team and to work independently with minimum supervision.
Accounts Payable Specialist

Reports to: Controller

Scope: The Accounts Payable Specialist is a crucial part of the finance and accounting team. This position will be responsible for maintaining financial payable records and transactions. Additional responsibilities will include processing receivables and payables, account reconciliation, bank reconciliation, financial month end closing, and other financial duties.

Accountabilities:

- Process payments in compliance with financial policies and procedures, including agreed upon payment terms
- Process vendor invoices for payment in a timely manner, including reviewing invoices for accuracy, appropriate documentation, approval prior to payment, noting status of past due amounts, and coding.
- Assist with bank reconciliations
- Research and resolve invoice discrepancies and other billing issues
- Monitor vendor accounts to ensure payments are up-to-date
- Respond to staff and vendor inquiries
- Data entry and posting invoices through accounts payable to the general ledger
- Maintains and enters recurring payments, updating as needed for changes
- Filing accounts payable and general ledger reports
- Filing payment vouchers
- Develop and maintain templates to facilitate payment processing
- Develop training materials and assist in conducting new hire orientations on payment processing
- Conduct regular training sessions on EPIC and payment processing in K2
- Prepare journal entries for miscoded items
- Set up new vendors and posting manual checks in the payment system
- Prepare monthly reports including AP aging report, private donation report, etc. Making bank deposits. Process deposits (checks/cash) and preparing cash receipt report.
- Distribute and mailing staff and vendor checks
- Maintain all accounts payable reports and corporate accounts payable files
- Post monthly recurring bills and monthly journal entries
- Prepare weekly check reports for distribution
- Maintain organized accounting files
- Assist with audit preparation and with month-end closings
- Maintain confidentiality of organizational information
- Other duties as assigned by the Controller

Qualifications:

- High school diploma or equivalent
- 2-3 years of accounts payable and/or bookkeeping experience including accounts payable, accounts receivable, and general ledger
• Proficient user of Microsoft Office applications, with emphasis on Excel, Word and Internet/email access and utilization.
• Analytical; quick learner with high numeric ability and reasoning
• Strong interpersonal skills
• Independent, multitasker, and able to manage priorities
• Ability to maintain confidentiality with a positive attitude
• High degree of accuracy and attention to detail
• Strong work ethic and a customer service orientation
• Ability to follow-through timely on pending matters
• Willingness to learn
Finance Officer

Reports to: Controller

Role Summary:
The Finance Officer will be physically located in CIPEs Washington DC Home Office and is the main contact for that region’s US and overseas program and administrative staff regarding all compliance, budgetary and financial issues, requirements and information.

Primary Duties to be Performed:

General:
- Overall financial monitoring, troubleshooting and problem solving of financial issues related to programs and corresponding Field Offices;
- Participate in the program budgeting process, including the preparation of respective regional cash flow projections, burn rates and forecasts;
- Assist with the annual CIPE’s year-end audit, as needed;
- Manage appropriate program-related reclassification and correcting entries in the accounting system;
- Maintain extensive knowledge of Federal regulations, including the Uniform Guidance and familiarity with the FAR;
- Assist in developing and maintaining policies and procedures to effectively manage field office operations, grant and contracts and comply with donor requirements;
- Assist with CIPE’s partners (subgrantees) financial and compliance monitoring.

Budgeting:
- Work closely with program staff to ensure accuracy and completeness of all proposal budgets as well as compliance with donor requirements;
- Ensure that approved program budgets are timely and accurately incorporated into both the database and the accounting system;
- Manage Field Office expenditures against budget and financial obligations, taking appropriate corrective action as needed.

Financial Monitoring & Reporting:
- Process invoice verifications and other internal monitoring procedures;
- Oversight of partner grant financial monitoring ensuring compliance and necessary follow-up for outstanding reports;
• Assist project teams with monitoring project deadlines and deliverables.

**Key Qualifications:**

• 5+ years [relevant] experience,
• 4-year degree, preferably in Accounting or Finance,
• International business experience desired,
• Knowledge of / experience with Federal grant management,
• Ability and desire to work in a team-oriented environment,
• Understanding and knowledge of automated systems.
• Must be willing and able to travel internationally as needed
• Strong organizational, interpersonal and communication skills in English
• Articulate, well-organized, and is able to take the initiative and lead on small projects as needed
• Ability to handle multiple, detail-oriented tasks simultaneously with limited supervision in a fast-paced environment
• Skilled at prioritizing and completing multiple tasks
• Strong Computer skills, proficiency in MS-Office, specifically Excel and Outlook.
**Position:** Junior Accountant

**Reports To:** Controller

Scope: The Junior Accountant is responsible for assisting the Controller with maintaining and enhancing financial management systems and capabilities. This person is also responsible for maintaining the effective flow of information between the Grants / Finance Division, the Payroll Department of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Travel Management Company and assisting the Managing Director, Operations and the Controller with the financial management duties of CIPE as an organization.

**Primary Duties Performed:**

- Prepare and file periodic reports (e.g., monthly financial statements)
- Review reports including, but not limited to, liquidation reports, travel expense reports and various invoices to ensure accuracy and compliance with CIPE policies and procedures
- Monitor tuition reimbursements
- Ensure maintenance and timely submission of office timesheets, payroll and leave reports
- Submit payment request to donors
- Deposit incoming checks
- Audit invoice verifications in compliance with CIPE policies and procedures
- Assist Finance Manager with tasks including, but not limited to, the following:
  - Preparing reports for annual financial audit
  - Managing bank account balance to ensure cash on hand
  - A133 Auditing
  - Cash management process
  - Accounts Payable and General Ledger duties (for administrative / non-programmatic vendors only)
  - Monitor the compliance of the Grants finance process
- Maintaining accounting files (including the transactions files)
- Liaise with outsourced accountant as needed
- Respond to staff inquires related to specific transactions
- Reconcile staff advances
- Knowledgeable about finance and budget, specifically the accounting for complex budgets with multiple funding streams

**Qualifications:**

- Minimum 5 years of experience in related field
- BA in Accounting or equivalent relevant work experience
- Ability and desire to work in a team-oriented environment
- Understanding and knowledge of automated systems
- Detail oriented and commitment to accurate information
- Have strong customer service
- Strong interpersonal skills and problem-solving skills
• Ability to multi-task in a fast paced and demanding environment
• Ability to make good judgments and quick decisions when needed