



# USAID | CENTRAL ASIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**SOLICITATION NUMBER:** 05/2019  
**ISSUANCE DATE:** 02/27/2019  
**CLOSING DATE/TIME:** 03/20/2019

**SUBJECT:** Solicitation for U. S. Personal Services Contractor (US PSC)  
Communication Specialist, GS-09, USAID/Central Asia (USAID/CA),  
Dushanbe, Tajikistan

Dear Prospective Offerors:

The United States Government, represented by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking offers from qualified persons to provide personal services under contract as described in this solicitation.

Offers must be in accordance with **Attachment 1, Sections I through V** of this solicitation. Incomplete or unsigned offers will not be considered. Offerors should retain copies of all offer materials for their records.

This solicitation in no way obligates USAID to award a PSC contract, nor does it commit USAID to pay any cost incurred in the preparation and submission of the offers.

Any questions must be directed in writing to the Point of Contact specified in the attached information.

Only short-listed candidates will be contacted. No late submissions will be accepted.

Sincerely,



**James Berscheit**  
**Contracting Officer**

ATTACHMENT TO SOLICITATION NO. 05/2019

**I. GENERAL INFORMATION**

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| <b>1. SOLICITATION NO.:</b>                        | 05/2019  |
| <b>2. ISSUANCE DATE:</b>                           | 02/27/2019   |
| <b>3. CLOSING DATE/TIME FOR RECEIPT OF OFFERS:</b> | 03/20/2019 (6:00 PM Almaty time)   |
| <b>4. POSITION TITLE:</b>                          | Communication Specialist   |
| <b>5. MARKET VALUE:</b>                            | \$43,857-\$57,015 (GS-09 equivalent) Final compensation will be negotiated within the listed market value. |
| <b>6. PERIOD OF PERFORMANCE:</b>                   | Two years  |
| <b>7. PLACE OF PERFORMANCE:</b>                    | USAID/Central Asia (USAID/CA), Dushanbe, Tajikistan  |
| <b>8. SECURITY LEVEL REQUIRED:</b>                 | Facility Access  |
| <b>9. STATEMENT OF DUTIES:</b>                     |  |

**BASIC FUNCTION OF POSITION:**

The Tajikistan Communications Specialist reports to the USAID/Central Asia/Tajikistan Country Office (TCO) Director and/or his/her designee, and collaborates closely with the TCO staff, the USAID/CA Development Outreach Communications (DOC) staff, and implementing partners to implement the overall USAID/Central Asia (CA) and TCO communications strategy. The position closely collaborates with the DOC FSN staff and U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section (PAS) to ensure that Embassy personnel are properly apprised of USAID public activities and projects. The TCO portfolio includes a broad range of economic development, governance, education, and health program activities. The position supports TCO and the USAID/CA Mission in the achievement of their objectives by editing, producing and disseminating public information about USAID's programs/projects/activities in Tajikistan, and promoting a better understanding of USAID's programs. The position is responsible for collecting, investigating, managing, editing, and distributing information associated with the USAID foreign assistance program in Tajikistan, and serves as the TCO point of contact and liaison for information requests.

**MAJOR DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**

**1) Publicity Materials – 50%**

The DOC team is responsible for the production of high-quality print and electronic communications products that translate complex messages and technical information into understandable, meaningful messages that resonate with a variety of audiences, both host-country and American, and internal and external. This position serves as editorial director of all English-language public materials, including information briefers and brochures, special publications, and project success stories. The position is responsible for editing text produced by TCO staff, producing talking points, speeches and briefing documents. The Tajikistan Communications Specialist oversees and develops specialized information materials for Washington opinion leaders and audiences, in coordination with the Asia Bureau and LPA colleagues; travels to USAID sites throughout Tajikistan to interview beneficiaries and photograph and videotape events for USAID print, website and social media content and for news releases; prepares and updates informational materials that communicate USAID/CA and TCO strategic priorities and focus areas; acts as editor for key reports and documents, as assigned; and co-manages the TCO content for the U.S. Embassy and USAID websites. If necessary, the position will manage contracts for outside printing, translations and new media productions. The Tajikistan Communications Specialist performs other duties as assigned or required.

**2) Communications Management and Strategic Planning – 50%**

**1. Strategy Implementation:**

The position is responsible for contributing to policies and procedures for TCO communications and outreach that clarify roles and responsibilities within USAID with other Embassy sections and with implementing partners, including templates for various communication tools, standards for creating and finalizing materials, and guidelines for planning and managing events. The Tajikistan Communications Specialist contributes to drafting, annually updating, and implementing the USAID/CA/TCO communications strategy to include, but not limited to: assisting in identifying objectives, creating

messages, defining target audiences and disseminating products in coordination with USAID/CA and TCO managers and technical teams consistent with the Mission development strategy and the overall Embassy communications strategy. The position co-leads the design of public information products, ensuring that TCO communication products contain updated, appropriate and consistent messages that support the approved USAID/CA and TCO communications strategy; and, provides quality control on all print and electronic public information materials, such as USAID websites, social media sites, brochures and information packets, talking points, briefing memos, documents and books produced by other USAID staff.

## 2. Public Events and Visitors:

The DOC team plans and executes activities to present TCO programs to the public and to VIP visitors, using a range of communications tools. The DOC team prepares visits for high-level officials to highlight key USAID projects, strategies and priorities; and, provides or supervises advance work for trip planning, including scheduling, coordination with PAS, and overseeing the production of briefing materials for USAID VIP visits. For project site visits or events that involve the Ambassador, Deputy Chief of Mission, and/or the TCO Director, CA Mission Director or Deputy Director, the DOC team ensures that all event information (e.g., briefing memos, talking points, speeches, press releases) have been prepared and meet quality standards and time requirements. The DOC team helps to facilitate, coordinates and consults with TCO technical specialists on project events, including finalizing press releases and preparing for interviews. The DOC team attends USAID project events to take photos and videos and to write about the event for the Embassy's Official/Informal, USAID's Facebook page and other reporting opportunities.

## 3. Media Relations:

The position contributes to TCO media activities, liaising with the U.S. Embassy PAS, and working closely with Almaty-based DOC staff to generate press coverage of USAID activities in Tajikistan. The Communications Specialist tracks USAID program/project/activity milestones and events to ensure that appropriate press coverage is provided; oversees and produces media materials (including news releases, backgrounders, and fact sheets) designed to inform editors and reporters of USAID/CA/TCO's technical programs/projects/activities and their achievements; coordinates with regional technical offices in Almaty and with the Embassy PAS to produce and release timely, accurate, and useful written material for the host-country and American media, including social media; and, advises and works with the PAS to expand opportunities for coverage of USAID development efforts both internally and externally. The position helps TCO technical specialists define activities for coverage and participates in field visits to assess the newsworthiness of events and activities, and may accompany the press to interviews and site locations for filming or reporting.

**Supervision Received:** The Tajikistan Communications Specialist works under the general supervision of the TCO Director and/or his/her designee. The TCO Director sets the overall assignment objectives and explains available resources. The position, having developed expertise in carrying out the communications program, has continuing responsibility for independently planning and executing the various phases or stages of the communication plan, coordinating efforts with TCO technical program specialists and the U.S. Embassy PAS. The position works closely with the TCO Director, the DOC FSN and/or the PAS where policy has not been established. Completed work is reviewed by the TCO Director and/or his/her designee for adherence to established policy, and meeting the expected goals of the communication plan.

**Available Guidelines:** The Tajikistan Communications Specialist must remain familiar with the USAID regulations contained in the ADS, AIDAR, FAR, Handbooks, Mission Orders, USAID/Washington Bureau and LPA outreach guidance, and established TCO procedures and regulations; and, media and communications papers prepared by USAID/Washington and the Department of State.

**Exercise of Judgment:** Projects assigned to the DOC team include a variety of duties and processes requiring the exercise of extensive judgment; judgment is required in providing guidance to TCO technical staff, implementing partners, and other outside contractors on USAID policies and procedures related to the USAID/CA Mission communications strategy. The Communications Specialist, in consultation with the TCO Director, the DOC FSN and Almaty-based DOC staff, contributes to the development of the country-specific communication plan, deadlines for implementation, and the various objectives to be achieved. Independent judgment must be exercised on a broad range of communications and media issues when meeting with media representatives, Government of Tajikistan officials, NGOs, USAID implementing partners, and with other donors. The position is expected to analyze situations and develop

ways to resolve problems. The position advises superiors in the TCO and the U.S. Embassy on the implications of USAID public outreach and suggestions for improvements.

**Authority to Make Commitments:** The position may make administrative arrangements consistent with ADS guidance and Mission policy, and take action and establish priorities based on available guidelines and professional judgment. Guidance is sought when needed, and superiors informed of activity status. Within the scope of the authority delegated, the Communications Specialist negotiates outreach and communications activities with counterparts in the Mission and the U.S. Embassy.

**Nature, Level and Purpose of Contacts:** The position works closely with the TCO Director and/or his/her designee who will oversee work as it relates to USAID/CA's and the TCO's Communication Strategy. The Communications Specialist coordinates closely with USAID/CA regional and TCO technical staff, regional DOC staff, U.S. Embassy Public Affairs personnel, mid- and senior-level officials of implementing partners, beneficiaries, host-country citizens, NGOs and government officials, and with private-sector officials for the purpose of implementing the USAID/CA and TCO Communications Strategy and fulfilling TCO outreach goals. In many cases, the position will represent TCO in these discussions.

**Supervision Exercised:** A formal supervision role for the DOC is not envisioned at this time.

**AREA OF CONSIDERATION:** Eligible Family Members (All Agencies)/US Citizens Resident in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Must be able to obtain a U.S. Government "Facility Access" security clearance. Must be able to secure a medical clearance to serve in Tajikistan.

**10. PHYSICAL DEMANDS:** The work requested does not involve undue physical demands.

**11. POINT OF CONTACT:** USAID/Central Asia Human Resources Office, e-mail: [CentralAsiaJobs@usaid.gov](mailto:CentralAsiaJobs@usaid.gov) and/or [almatyhr@usaid.gov](mailto:almatyhr@usaid.gov)

## II. MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS REQUIRED FOR THIS POSITION

**Education:** A Bachelor's Degree in journalism, public relations, communications, English, or a related field is required.

**Prior Work Experience:** A minimum of three years of progressively responsible experience in communications, public relations, editing, or journalism, in an English-language work environment is required. Previous work with the USG or another international development organization is highly desirable.

**Post Entry Training:** The position will receive on-the-job training on established USAID procedures, regulations and policies governing USAID/CA and TCO interaction with the media, implementing partners, other USG agencies, etc.; the DOC will attend USAID regional Development Outreach and Communications Workshops and select training courses, subject to course offerings and the availability of funds.

**Knowledge:** The Communications Specialist must have strong writing and editing skills and have a thorough knowledge of the principles, methods, practices, and techniques of communication; skill in applying such knowledge to develop written information materials for dissemination through a variety of media; the ability to determine and effectively use the most appropriate means for transmitting information; and, the ability to evaluate the effectiveness of plans developed to communicate with targeted audiences. This includes an understanding of the use of written communication in developing news releases, feature stories, background statements, fact sheets, media spots, success stories and scripts that effectively transmit information about complex TCO programs/projects/activities. The work requires a solid understanding of websites and social media platforms; an excellent knowledge of English grammar and American word usage and spelling; a good knowledge of graphic design; and, a broad understanding of issues related to international development. Excellent computer skills, including the use of Google Docs, MS Office, MS PowerPoint, and MS Word. In addition, a basic familiarity with web design, Adobe Creative Suite, and other page-making software is highly desired.

**Language Skills:** Level V (Native) English (oral and written).

**Teamwork/Interpersonal and Communication Skills:** Work requires skill in: establishing and enhancing communication between USAID and its audiences using media tools; making oral presentations; encouraging open communication between TCO and its audiences; and, analyzing the effectiveness of communication plans once implemented and developing recommendations to change the nature of the TCO outreach program. The work requires excellent oral and written communications skills, including news and technical writing, editing, and research skills; strong organizational and project management skills; the ability to work independently, taking initiative once guidance is provided; and managing several activities simultaneously and under pressure to meet deadlines. The position must have strong interpersonal skills. The ability to establish and maintain collegial relations with press and media contacts, plus U.S. Embassy and implementing partners; and, to exercise sound judgment in representing the USG is required, along with the ability to manage interactions with high-level dignitaries and officials with maturity and confidence. The ability to travel throughout Tajikistan to organize and implement outreach events and visit project sites is a requirement of the position.

### III. EVALUATION AND SELECTION FACTORS

Applicants will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Prior Work Experience:	20 points
Knowledge:	20 points
Language skills:	25 points
Teamwork/Interpersonal and Communication Skills:	30 points
Education:	5 points
Total:	100 points

### IV. APPLYING

For an offeror to be considered for this position, s/he must adhere to the following guidelines and complete, sign and submit the following documents to [centralasiajobs@usaid.gov](mailto:centralasiajobs@usaid.gov) and [almatyhr@usaid.gov](mailto:almatyhr@usaid.gov). This will enable the evaluation committee to thoroughly and objectively review the offer against the requirements of the position.

#### 1. AID 302-3, Offeror Information for Personal Services Contract Form

Eligible offerors are required to complete and submit the offer form AID 302-3, "Offeror Information for Personal Services Contracts," available at <http://www.usaid.gov/forms>.

#### 2. Resume/Curriculum Vitae

#### 3. Reference Persons

Offerors are required to provide three (3) reference persons who are not family members or relatives, with working telephones and email contacts. The references must be able to provide substantive information about offerors past performance and abilities. Reference checks will be made only for offerors considered as finalists. If an offeror does not wish for the current employer to be contacted as a reference check, this should be stated in the offeror's AID 302-3 form and/or resume. The interviewing committee will delay such reference check pending communication with the offeror.

4. Offers must be received by the closing date and time specified in Section I, item 3, and submitted to the Point of Contact in Section I, item 11.

5. To ensure consideration of offers for the intended position, Offerors must prominently reference the Solicitation number in the offer submission.

### 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 is normally authorized the following benefits and allowances:

### **1. BENEFITS:**

- (a) Employer's FICA Contribution
- (b) Contribution toward Health & Life Insurance
- (c) Pay Comparability Adjustment
- (d) Annual Increase (pending a satisfactory performance evaluation)
- (e) Eligibility for Worker's Compensation
- (f) Annual and Sick Leave

## **VII. TAXES**

USPSCs are required to pay Federal income taxes, FICA, Medicare and applicable State Income taxes. PSCs are required to abide by local laws with regards to applicability of local income tax to their contract.

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

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

1. USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR), Appendix D, "Direct USAID Contracts with a U.S. Citizen or a U.S. Resident Alien for Personal Services Abroad," including contract clause "General Provisions," available at [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar\\_0.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf).
2. USAID Acquisition Regulation (AIDAR), Appendix J, "Direct USAID Contracts With a Cooperating Country National and with a Third Country National for Personal Services Abroad," including contract clause "General Provisions," available at [https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar\\_0.pdf](https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/aidar_0.pdf)
3. Contract Cover Page form AID 309-1 available at <https://www.usaid.gov/forms>.
4. Acquisition and Assistance Policy Directives/Contract Information Bulletins (AAPDs/CIBs) for Personal Services Contracts with Individuals available at <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/aapds-cibs>.
5. **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>