

GEORGIA INTEGRATION GRANTS FACILITY

Total estimated budget:	\$4,000,000 (2023 – 2026)
Grants facility dates:	all awards must end before December 15, 2026.
Subaward duration:	Up to 18 months.
Indicative ceiling:	\$ 120,000 *
Eligibility:	CSOs, media, academia, businesses, startups, others.
Grant instruments used:	Fixed Amount Awards, Grant Agreements, Cost-Share Grants
Deadlines:	This is an open-door opportunity.
Issued under:	USAID Unity Through Diversity Program, 72011422CA00003

The USAID Unity Through Diversity Program is seeking applications from qualified public and private entities that best meet the objectives of this funding opportunity. Eligible parties interested in applying are encouraged to read this RFA thoroughly to understand the type of projects sought, application submission requirements, and selection process. This funding opportunity is posted on www.una.ge and may be amended. It is the responsibility of the applicant to regularly check the website to ensure they have the latest information pertaining to this notice of funding opportunity and to ensure that the RFA has been received in its entirety. Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment at any stage of the application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

All inquiries shall be submitted electronically to una@una.ge (subject line must read "Georgia Integration Grants Facility"). Online information sessions will be organized at least twice a year, and the information will be made available through UNA-Georgia's web and social media channels.

The first information online session will take place on May 31, 2023 – at 12:00 pm, at the following link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85499491396>; Meeting ID: 854 9949 1396.

All email inquiries must include full contact information, inclusive of return email, contact person, phone number, and address.

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REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

USAID Unity Through Diversity Program is pleased to announce the Request for Applications for the Georgia Integration Grants Facility to support the activities that will contribute to the inclusive civic and economic development of Georgia. All awards under the IGF shall work towards promoting diversity, equality, equity, multiculturalism, nation-building, social cohesion, private sector engagement, minority social and economic integration, and inclusion.

The details of the grant modalities, including eligibility criteria, sub-priorities, the application process, reporting requirements, and monitoring and evaluation, can be found in the following chapters of this RFA. UNA-Georgia reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Any award and subsequent incremental funding will be subject to the availability of funds and continued relevance to programming under the prime award.

Issuance of this funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of UNA-Georgia or USAID, nor does it commit to pay for any costs incurred in preparation or submission of questions or an application. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant. All preparation and submission costs are at the applicant's expense.

BACKGROUND

Georgia Integration Grants Facility is made available under the USAID Unity Through Diversity Program. Launched in July 2022, USAID Unity Through Diversity is a USD 20 million program that supports the Government of Georgia, civil society, and the private sector to create a comprehensive national framework for addressing political, social, and societal resilience to malign influence by involving Georgia's ethnic and religious minorities in national and local policy development and by strengthening mutually beneficial social, civic, and economic linkages between minority and majority populations. Ultimately, the program aims to broaden Georgian identity to allow for and celebrate the inclusion of diverse ethnic and religious affiliations.

The USAID Unity Through Diversity Project expects to achieve this purpose by creating a broad coalition of civic, public, and private actors, providing funding instruments to empower Georgia's minorities, and assisting all state and non-state actors in building the resilient infrastructure of national integration. The project works through two integrated and mutually reinforcing objectives:

- **Increase participation of ethnic and religious minorities in government policies and services** - support minority participation in policy-shaping by establishing effective consultative mechanisms on central and local levels triggering minority-to-majority dialogue; advocating for minority rights and supporting strategic litigations; creating

sectoral knowledge products on the country development agenda affecting minorities and addressing challenges to the participation of minorities in social, economic, and cultural life.

- **Expand and strengthen mutually beneficial socio-economic linkages between majority and minority communities** – support the economic integration of minorities by connecting the communities with high linkage potential and incentivizing private sector actors and major market players to design specific market-based solutions to minority integration; co-creating and co-funding solutions with them to expand operations in minority regions; connect value chains, equip minority population (including minority youth) with marketable skills, and facilitating meaningful connections between young people nationwide.

The USAID Unity Through Diversity works nationwide with specific target on these following regions, municipalities, and surrounding rural areas:

Region	Municipality
Kvemo Kartli	Ninotsminda, Tsalka, Bolnisi, Gardabani, Dmanisi, Marneuli
Samtskhe – Javakheti	Akhalkalaki, Akhaltsikhe, Ninotsminda
Mountainous Adjara	Shuakhevi, Keda, Khulo
Kakheti	Akhmeta, Pankisi, Sagarejo, Kvareli, Lagodekhi

The Project is implemented by the United Nations Association of Georgia (UNA-Georgia, www.una.ge) - a local nonprofit that has worked since 1995 to encourage, support, and safeguard the democratic aspirations of the people of Georgia. UNAG works to protect human rights, promote freedom of speech, advance good governance, and stimulate informed national discussions by encouraging citizen participation in the processes and decisions that affect their lives.

FUNDING OBJECTIVES

National unity is a two-way process with society and government facilitating the integration efforts of individuals as well as promoting mainstream public support for diversity, so that all citizens, regardless of their origin, can effectively contribute to the country's economic, social, and democratic development. The purpose of the Integration Grants Facility (IGF) is to invite a broader group of public and private stakeholders in co-creating a more conducive environment for the social cohesion and acceptance of diversity necessary for Georgia's democracy to function.

The USAID Unity Through Diversity invites local civil society organizations, think-tanks, industry associations, academia, media entities, private sector entities, and other

stakeholders to submit applications that will contribute to achieving one or more of the following objectives:

- State language and access to quality education for integration: promote the state language proficiency among Georgia's minority groups, including through supporting the existing or new language education opportunities, increasing the quality of training and education opportunities, and expanding access to quality education across a wide range of educational settings.
- Equality, civic and political participation: support Georgia's Euro-Atlantic integration, including through strengthening an equality-based environment, media access, civic, political, and public participation to foster the development of civic attitudes and political views, uphold principles of equality and promote awareness on Euro-Atlantic values in a multiethnic society.
- Social and economic integration: improve the socio-economic ecosystem in ethnic minority regions and support ethnic and religious minorities' access to public services by promoting entrepreneurship and business development in ethnic regions, improving access to finance and basic services to reduce disparities, and ensure that ethnic and religious minorities can fully participate in social and economic life.
- Inter-cultural dialogue: support cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue by promoting social cohesion and fostering greater understanding and respect between different communities, aiming at building inclusive societies that value and respect the differences and similarities between different cultures and traditions.

OPERATIONAL PRIORITIES

The specific objective of the Integration Grants Facility (IGF) is to support existing or new activities, services, and opportunities that will contribute to the following operational priorities:

- **Lot 1 - Policy, Participation, Advocacy Grants:** Civic integration and inclusion through active participation of minorities in state building and public services, supporting equality and protection of human rights.

Indicative sub-themes under the funding priority:

- Enhancing access to quality education for ethnic and religious minorities across all levels, including preschool, general, higher, and vocational education, as well as informal and non-formal learning opportunities.
- Ensuring the meaningful engagement and representation of ethnic and religious minorities in political processes, public consultations, and policy decision-making at both central and local levels.

- Promoting equal opportunities, eliminating discrimination and unequal treatment based on ethnicity and religion, and protecting the civil and political rights of ethnic and religious minorities to foster a more inclusive society.
- Promoting the inclusion of ethnic and religious minorities in sectoral public policies and legislation, including healthcare, social protection, public services, and infrastructure.
- Improving minority access to healthcare, social protection, housing, and other essential public services, such as civil and business registry services, local community development and welfare services, public transportation, and local infrastructure.
- Encouraging minority-to-majority dialogue and participatory approaches at both central and local levels to promote social cohesion and understanding.
- Fostering diversity and inclusion in communities and institutions, including educational institutions, businesses, and state bodies, to build a more inclusive and tolerant society.
- Supporting intercultural dialogue and expanding the socio-cultural linkages between the majority and minority groups, with a particular focus on youth and women.
- Encouraging positive media discourses that reflect diverse perspectives and present a positive image of minority groups to counter negative stereotypes and prejudices and supporting resilience to Anti-western propaganda.
- Supporting other processes, services, and activities that contribute to the policy objectives and themes of the funding opportunity.

Illustrative types of activities

- *Advocacy, policy dialogues and consultations on central and local levels; capacity building and training; research, monitoring, and evaluation; policy and institutional support; strategic litigation; information campaigns and awareness building; co-creation, innovation, and knowledge-building; engagement and empowerment of members of minority communities; media programming; other activities that support the policy, participation, and advocacy objectives.*
- **Lot 2 - Growth, Employment, Linkages Grants:** Economic integration through supporting national and local business actors to develop their businesses in the minority regions and make their resources, expertise, supply chain infrastructure, market linkages, skills, jobs, and youth opportunities, available for economic integration.

Indicative sub-themes under the funding priority:

- Targeted financial and technical assistance to micro, small, and medium enterprises in ethnically diverse regions and entrepreneurial communities, boosting economic growth and employment of minorities, supporting forming, or strengthening value chains, and promoting diversity and inclusivity in the entrepreneurial ecosystem in the minority regions.

- Co-financing of the micro, small and medium businesses (MSMEs) interested in "going regional" and entering the minority regions stimulating regional economic growth - enhancing value and supply chains, increasing national market linkages, upgrading trade infrastructure, creating new job openings and opportunities for ethnic minorities, especially youth, and women.
- Awareness raising, advocacy, and consultancy (business potential diagnostics, assistance in generating business ideas, developing business plans, budgeting, guiding in the application process, etc) of ethnic minorities to enhance access to MSME-supportive state programs and services (Enterprise Georgia; RDA; GITA)
- Tailored support for regional SMEs to accelerate business startup opportunities (e.g. pre-acceleration and acceleration programs, business incubators);
- Building business development skills and financial literacy for existing and potential ethnic minority entrepreneurs.
- Building awareness and encouraging ethnic minorities to enroll in the VET system.
- Support of VET institutions to meet and accommodate the needs of ethnic minority students and improve support mechanisms for their participation in VET.
- Introducing consultative platforms with private businesses and business associations in the VET system of the targeted regions.
- Support the introduction of short and long-term programs in vocational education based on the regional labor market demands.
- Mentorship, networking, and peering targeted opportunities for minority entrepreneurs with access to experienced business leaders and resources to help them develop and grow their businesses.
- Support the establishment of industry and sectoral industry associations in minority regions benefiting both the local economy and the minority community.
- Creating linkages and trade opportunities with majority and minority regions, providing support and resources to businesses in the area, and creating opportunities for minority-owned businesses to connect and collaborate with same-industry operators, connecting value chains.

Illustrative types of activities

- *Startups and local co-investments; Expansion of capital and business operations in the targeted regions; Awareness raising and consulting of minorities on access to finance and entrepreneurship support state programs and services; Co-creation and co-funding solutions with the private, public, and civic sectors; Expanding and introducing industry associations in minority regions, etc.; Vocational Education and training activities for the ethnic minority jobseekers; Mentoring and networking.*

ESTIMATE OF FUNDS

The total estimated funding for the Integration Grants Facility is \$ 4,000,000 and all awards will be made and concluded before **December 15, 2026**. Individual awards shall vary from **USD 2,500 – USD 120,000** in budget. UNA-Georgia retains the right to allow the higher funding ceiling, where applicable. UNA-Georgia contemplates awarding an estimated 75 awards under the Integration Grants Facility.

The awards requested under the IGF shall not exceed the organization-wide financial turnover of the award recipient during the last calendar year, as of the date of submission of the concept note or full proposal¹. The requirement does not apply to awards with a budget of \$10,000 or less.

The grant funding amounts in the grant agreements will be fixed in U.S. Dollars (USD). Disbursements will be made in the local currency, Georgian Lari (GEL), according to the disbursement schedule established in the grant agreement. Advance payments will be authorized for a maximum of three months.

A 10% de minimis indirect rate on Modified Total Direct Costs can be applied to local non-profit organizations, which have never received a negotiated indirect cost rate.

AWARD INSTRUMENTS

The following award instruments shall be applied: **fixed amount award, grant agreement, and cost-share grants (with private enterprises and entities)**. The selection of the type of grant will be made based on three primary factors: (a) project duration and budget, (b) proposed project structure and goals; and (c) the capacity of the organization to manage the funds and to deliver the stated project results.

- Fixed amount awards (FAA) will be applied if the project structure and activities allow detailed planning (milestones are easily discernible), if high accuracy can be achieved in cost determination, if the project duration is less than 12 months, and if the project budget is \$10,000 or less, altogether.
- Standard grant agreement and cost-share grant agreement (with private sector partners) will be used in all other scenarios.

English shall be the official language of all award documents (agreements).

¹ In the event that the applicant requests USD 60,000 in funding under IGF, the applicant organization must have a minimum of USD 60,000 in organization-wide turnover in the last calendar year.

COST-SHARE

Cost-share of 50% is required under the cost-share grant agreements only (applications from private sector entities). Cash contributions, loans, and co-financing by other sources (including Enterprise Georgia, RDA, GITA, etc.) will be encouraged. In-kind contributions will not be accepted as cost-share.

In the case of ethnic and religious minorities, youth, women-owned startups, or other priority cases, UNA-Georgia reserves the right to reduce the cost-share requirement, accept in-kind contributions, or waive the cost-share requirement altogether.

Cost-share is not required and is optional for all other awards under the IGF.

SUBAWARDS

Subawards are not permitted under the IGF, except for the joint proposals of two or more organizations, where the lead applicant will be sub-awarding the award funds to the co-applicant(s). UNA-Georgia will assess and verify the capacity and responsibility of all co-applicants prior to the award. The lead applicant shall be the final responsible party for the implementation, delivery, reporting, monitoring and evaluation, and financial compliance of the award.

PERFORMANCE DATES

The maximum duration for all awards made under the IGF is **18 months**. Recipients will be eligible to apply for continuation funding, if and as applicable, and based on the success of the program. Eligibility does not constitute a guarantee that the continuation funding will be awarded.

Project activities can only begin upon the signature of the agreement between the applicant and UNA-Georgia. Costs incurred before the award agreement is fully executed will not be reimbursed unless approved by UNA-Georgia in prior and in writing.

All awards must be concluded before December 15, 2026.

PLACE OF PERFORMANCE

USAID Unity Through Diversity views the target beneficiaries as ethnic and religious minorities, but the program needs to work with value chains and majority populations nationwide in order to achieve its objectives. While all awards will be expected to focus on expanding and strengthening socio-economic linkages between minority communities in Kvemo Kartli, Samtskhe-Javakheti, Kakheti (Pankisi Valley), and Muslim minority areas of Adjara with wider Georgia, significant aspects of the awarded projects may work nationwide.

Potential applicants are advised to additionally refer to the priority geography of the prime award, as indicated in the RFA.

ELIGIBILITY

Funds may be awarded to civil society partners, private-sector, SMEs, financial institutions, associations, government-registered and private-sector organizations, non-government organizations (international, national, and local), and educational institutions. Organizations must be registered with the applicable local authorities and eligible to receive the funding.

Specifically, the USAID Unity Through Diversity will encourage applications from:

- Non-profit organizations, civil society platforms, and informal movements
- Community-based organizations and grassroots organizations
- Higher education institutions and other educators
- Startups, social enterprises, micro, small, and medium enterprises
- Financial institutions and other large businesses
- Media outlets, communication agencies
- Industry sector associations

Applicants must have established financial management, monitoring and evaluation processes, internal control systems, and applicable policies and procedures. In the case of startups and newly established organizations, who are encouraged to apply, UNA-Georgia may provide capacity-building and coaching support.

Additionally, UNA-Georgia may determine the need for a pre-award survey to conduct an examination that will determine whether the prospective recipient has the necessary organization, experience, accounting and operational controls, and technical skills – or ability to obtain them – to achieve the objectives of the program and comply with the terms and conditions of the award.

INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Funding will not be provided to the following organizations:

- Any entity that has been found to have misused grant funds in the past.
- Political parties, including their subsidiaries and affiliates.
- Organizations that advocate or promote anti-democratic policies or illegal activities.
- Any entity included in any supplementary information concerning prohibited individuals or entities that may be provided by the US Government.
- Any entity whose name appears in the System of Award Management (SAM), on the Specially Designated Nationals (SDN) and Blocked Persons List maintained by the U.S.

Treasury for the Office of Foreign Assets Control, sometimes referred to as the “OFAC List” and in the United Nations Security designation list with an active exclusion; and

- An organization that refuses to sign all required certifications and assurances.

All costs under the IGF awards must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable. IGF funds cannot be used for the following:

- Private ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or "representation" expenses.
- Purchases of restricted goods, such as certain agricultural commodities, motor vehicles (including motorcycles), pharmaceuticals and contraceptive items, pesticides, used equipment, U.S. government excess property, and fertilizers without the previous approval by the USAID CO.
- Prohibited goods under USAID regulations, including but not limited to military and surveillance equipment, police or law enforcement equipment, abortion equipment and services, weather modification equipment, luxury goods, and gambling equipment.
- Purchases of goods or services restricted or prohibited under the prevailing USAID source/nationality regulations (applicable regulations will be supplied by UNA-Georgia).
- Any purchases or activities deemed unnecessary to accomplish grant purposes as determined by UNA-Georgia, including any grantee headquarters expenses that are not directly linked to the implementation of the proposed program.
- Previous obligations and/or bad debts.
- Fines and/or penalties.
- Creation of endowments.
- Other costs unallowable under USAID and/or federal regulations, such as alcoholic beverages.
- Indirect costs such as but not limited to overhead or indirect fringe unless the applicant has documented proof of such rates through audits or NICRA.

If critical to program implementation, the potential applicant/award recipient may request the waiver and written approval from UNA-Georgia to procure any of the following commodities:

- Agricultural commodities, motor vehicles, pharmaceuticals, pesticides, used equipment, and fertilizers.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Grants Review Team (GRF) will conduct a two-stage evaluation process for applications, which includes an initial review to assess eligibility, clarity, relevance, and capacity of the applicant to implement the proposed project. If the applications meet the minimum requirements, applicants will be asked to submit full application forms annexed (Annex 1.2)

to the RFA in the second stage. Details of the submitting requirements for both stages and both Lots are given above in this RFA.

All applications will be evaluated on a rolling basis, and while some may be rejected due to eligibility issues, applications lacking sufficient methodology or information may be requested to provide additional details. In certain cases, the applicant may be invited to make a presentation to clarify goals and answer any potential questions. The GRF reserves the right to provide financing for projects subject to certain conditions or to issue recommendations regarding both the content and financial aspects of the project.

All applications on both evaluation stages will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

Feasibility of the approach and relevance to funding priorities - 25 points	The application clearly presents the idea with a detailed description of the methodology. The application demonstrates an understanding of what it takes to undertake the proposed venture.
Potential to generate sustainable impact on target populations - 25 points	The extent to which the proposed activity corresponds to the needs and challenges the target group/population (ethnic and religious minorities) experience in civil and economic integration; contributes to the improved access of minorities to social-economic and public participation; considers how the proposed methodology of application delivery ensures increased access and inclusion of the Program priority population.
Past performance and organizational capacity - 20 points	The Applicant must demonstrate technical resources and expertise. Specifically, this should include a discussion of the ability to scale up activities and the capacity to manage resources of similar scopes and to meet the applicable reporting, monitoring, and evaluation requirements, as well as the capacity to responsibly absorb financial resources and expend them in a reasonable amount of time.
Added value for priority target groups - 20 points	The project has the potential to create a sustainable impact on ethnic minority youth, women, people with disabilities, or other vulnerable groups.

The budget is reasonable and clearly defined – 5 points	The budget seems reasonable and realistic to implement the activity.
Sustainability of the proposed idea - 5 points	The extent to which the funded activity will result in building and strengthening the capacity of the grantee(s) and if the activity itself is sustainable or will become sustainable by completion of the given grant project because of upscaling.

The application should pass the minimum required threshold of 70 points to be accepted to the next stage selection process. First-stage selected applicants will be given 3 weeks to submit the full application and budget (Annex 1.2; Annex 1.2.1).

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applications will be received and reviewed on a rolling basis. Potential applicants are encouraged to apply through two stages:

- Concept note (maximum 5 pages, excluding attachments)
- Full proposal (maximum 15 pages, excluding attachments)

Applicants that will submit the concept notes with budgets of \$10,000 or less may be selected for funding without requiring the full proposal. Applicants are also allowed to apply in Georgian language for projects with \$10,000 in budget or less.

Only selected concept notes will be invited for the full proposal. Requesting a full proposal from the applicant does not guarantee funding. **All project proposals over \$ 10,000 in budget must be submitted in English.**

Submission requirements and procedures for the concept note:

Applicants may use their own formats for the concept notes, but must cover the following at a minimum:

- Cover page: must include the name of the applicant and co-applicants, project title, descriptive title (optional), project dates, requested budget, and contact information. The cover page does not count towards the page limit.
- Summary page: a general summary of the proposed project.
- Problem identification: what is the concrete problem that you are trying to address?
- Goals and objectives: general purpose and specific objectives of the project.
- Proposed activity: what are the specific activities you propose to undertake?

- Target groups: who are the target groups/beneficiaries of the project?
- Impact: what specific changes can the program lead toward the target groups?
- Capacity: what capacity do you have to successfully carry out proposed activities?
- Inclusion: how does the project address the inclusion of women and youth?
- Timeline: what is the timeline for the proposed activities?
- Expected results: if funded, what results do you hope to achieve?
- Budget and budget notes: submitted as an attachment in MS Excel format (Annex 1.2.1), with all cells and formulas unlocked. All line items must have a narrative description as a separate column.

All **concept notes** must be under 5 pages (A4, 11 font size, 2 cm margins) exclusive of the cover page, budget, and required attachments, and must be submitted in PDF format at una@una.ge. **Project proposals in other file formats (MS Word, others) will not be reviewed.**

Following are the required attachments for the concept notes (where applicable):

- Organizational audit reports from the past 3 fiscal years (if such audits were conducted).
- Organizational chart and constitution.
- Copy of the registration certificate (from the National Agency of Public Registry available at www.napr.gov.ge)
- 2 reference support letters from the donors'/partners' experience.
- Organizational manuals (human resources, financial management, procurements, and other internal control manuals; the manuals will be accepted both in Georgian and English languages).
- Past performance references describing the dollar value, mission, donor, target groups, and main achievements of the projects implemented by the applicant (maximum 5 projects from the past 3 calendar years, if such exists).
- Other documents that the applicant will deem necessary to demonstrate the capacity of the organization to manage the grant funds (newspaper clippings reporting on the organization's activities, brochures, or other promotional materials). Additional attachments should not exceed 5 pages.

The template for the concept note is attached to this RFA as guidance (Annex 1.1).

Requirements for the full proposal:

Applicants may use their own formats for full proposals, but the proposal must be under 15 pages and exhaustively cover the following at a minimum:

- Cover page (1 page): must include the name and UEI of the applicant and co-applicants, project title, descriptive title (optional), project dates, requested budget, and contact information. The cover page does not count towards the page limit.
- Executive summary (2 pages): a general summary of the proposed project. The executive summary does not count towards the page limit.
- Project background (4 pages):
 - Program Description: Give a brief overview of the program, including the problem or opportunity it addresses, the methods used, and the expected outcomes.
 - Objectives: Identify the specific goals and objectives of the program. What do you hope to achieve through this program?
 - Scope: Describe the scope of the program, including the intended audience or target group, the geographic location, and any limitations or restrictions.
 - Methodology: Briefly describe the methods and techniques that will be used to achieve the goals and objectives of the program.
 - Deliverables: Identify the key deliverables that will be produced as part of the program.
 - Timeline: Provide an overview of the project timeline, including key milestones and deadlines.
- Technical approach (7 pages):
 - Activities: Describe specific activities you propose to undertake under specific goals of the project.
 - Expected Results: Describe specific results anticipated to be achieved by the project. Please elaborate the effect of the results on the target groups.
 - Project Management: Describe how the project will be managed and who will be responsible for what aspects of the project.
 - Stakeholder Engagement: Describe how stakeholders will be engaged throughout the project.
 - Inclusion of women and youth: Describe specific approaches or activities addressing the issues of women and youth.
 - Monitoring and Evaluation: Describe specific approaches/tools for the program's monitoring and evaluation and data analysis.
 - Sustainability: Describe specific steps ensuring that the project's outcomes are sustained beyond the program's completion. How will the project be scaled up or replicated if successful?
 - Communication and Dissemination: Describe how the project's findings and outcomes will be communicated to relevant stakeholders and the wider

community. What channels and formats will be used to disseminate information about the project?

- Organizational capacity and key personnel (4 pages):
 - Brief history of the organization, including founding date and key milestones
 - Brief overview of the organization's mission and goals
 - Brief overview of the organization's programs and services
 - Brief Overview of the organization's governance structure and leadership team
 - Brief description showcasing organization capacity of same-level funded program implementation.
 - Brief overview of organizational key personnel (2-3 CVs can be attached to the application).
- Budget:
 - Detailed budget – must be submitted in an Excel file, with all cells and formulas unlocked. Applicants may use their own format for the budget, but the template is attached as guidance (Annex 1.2.1).
 - Budget narrative – must provide a detailed narrative description of all budget lines and line items. Budget notes must be supplied as a separate document and must describe the logic and rationale behind all cost estimations.

All project applications (concept notes and/or full proposals with applicable attachments) must be submitted electronically to una@una.ge (subject line must read “Georgia Integration Grants Facility: Lot # and Lot Title”). The size limit for e-mail submissions is 25MB.

CAPACITY BUILDING

UNA-Georgia is committed to promoting capacity building among potential grantees. To achieve this goal, UNA-Georgia will hold seminars and workshops on grant writing, financial management, internal control, grant management, compliance, monitoring & evaluation, and other relevant areas at least twice a year. **The dates and agendas of these events will be published on UNA-Georgia’s website (www.una.ge) and will be freely available to all interested parties.**

Additionally, UNA-Georgia and the implementing partners of the prime award will provide coaching support to competitively selected applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal. This coaching may include advice on drafting the proposal, developing a business plan, securing co-financing from public and private sources (required in most cases), and other forms of assistance as needed.

UNA-Georgia will hold mandatory compliance sessions with all award recipients bi-annually.

JOINT APPLICATIONS

Applicants may act in partnership with other entities (public or private) and may submit joint applications. Co-applicants must meet the eligibility criteria applicable to the lead applicant.

Funding requests are limited by an applicant's financial turnover in the previous calendar year (for requested awards above \$10,000). However, should two organizations submit a joint project proposal, they will be allowed to combine their financial turnovers and request a higher maximum ceiling for grant funding than they would be able to as separate applicants.

The lead applicant may submit only one application at a time and may not join another application as a co-applicant while the lead applicant's proposal is in review.

UNIQUE ENTITY IDENTIFIER

All potential applicants are required to submit UEI by the full proposal. The registration process may take several weeks to complete. Therefore, applicants are encouraged to begin registration (or update the registered entity) early in the process.

AWARD TIMELINE

Grants Review Team shall review and evaluate the submitted project proposals (concept notes and full proposals) on a rolling basis and based on the RFA's evaluation criteria. UNA-Georgia shall screen the project proposals to ensure the submitted applications meet the minimum requirements before they are submitted for evaluation to the Grants Review Team.

- **Concept Note (estimated 4 weeks):** UNA-Georgia will screen and forward the applications that meet the minimum requirements for further evaluation to the Grants Review Team (GRF) within two weeks from the receipt of the proposal. GRF will have an estimated 2 weeks to score the proposals and to return the funding recommendations. Project proposals with a budget of \$10,000 or less may be approved and processed and awarded within 4 weeks of submission.
- **Full proposal (estimated 4 weeks):** if the Grants Review Team recommends the concept note for the full proposal, UNA-Georgia will engage the potential partner and negotiate a timeline for the full proposal (estimated at a maximum of 4 weeks in most cases; UNA-Georgia will accommodate longer estimates for private sector entities to secure co-financing from public and private sources). Selection for the full proposal does not obligate UNA-Georgia to award funding and is fully at the risk of the potential applicant.

- **Final award decision (estimated 2 weeks):** For an award to be made, UNA-Georgia must make an affirmative determination that the applicant is “responsible.” A positive responsibility determination means that the applicant possesses or has the ability to obtain the necessary management and technical competence to plan and carry out the program to be funded and that the applicant will practice mutually agreed-upon methods of accountability for funds and other assets. UNA-Georgia estimates 2 calendar weeks for pre-award assessments, where such assessments shall be deemed necessary.

GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

The integration of ethnic minorities, particularly ethnic women, persons with disabilities, socially vulnerable, and young people is hindered by significant challenges, including their limited opportunities and various barriers to social, economic, and public life. To address these constraints and promote ethnic minorities' (particularly ethnic women, PWDs, and youth) access to public services, high-value economic and entrepreneurial opportunities, and ensure their equitable participation, grant applicants must consider how their proposed activities will alleviate these issues and promote engagement of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Within the applications, they should consider the provision of equal access by supporting ethnic minorities or other disadvantaged groups in overcoming language, financial, social, or other similar challenges. Applicants should account for all potential costs related to gender and social inclusion in their grant budget.

SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

UNA-Georgia will be substantially involved in the implementation of all awards made under the IGF. Substantial involvement will include, but will not be limited to:

- Review and Approval of Recipient's Work Plans and Monitoring and Evaluation for Learning Plan (MEL).
- UNA-Georgia monitoring to permit specific kinds of direction or redirection of the work because of the interrelationships with other projects or activities or due to GoG priorities and guidance.
- The ability to immediately halt an activity if the recipient does not achieve the specified results and/or targets specified in the Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning Plan or otherwise fails to comply with the terms and conditions in the award agreement.

UNA-Georgia staff will monitor all awards under the IGF in terms of both programmatic and financial aspects. Award recipients will be expected to comply with monitoring requirements by collecting and producing relevant information in compliance with USAID Unity through Diversity Program's Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning frameworks.

The types and schedules will depend on the grant type and project duration. Reporting forms will be provided to grant recipients. Types of reporting may include the following:

- Quarterly report to be submitted during project implementation. This report will include a description of project activities and progress toward meeting the project goal; problems in project implementation; actions taken to overcome them; and plans on how the next phase of the project will be implemented.
- Final program report will describe how the project objectives and goals were reached, the results of the project, and problems and solutions during implementation.
- Financial reports will be submitted to UNA-Georgia according to a schedule described in the grant agreements. Types of financial reports will depend on the type of grant, length of the project, and amount of grant funding. Financial reports will be required before subsequent grant installments are disbursed.
- Upon the responsibility and risk determinations made through the pre-award assessment, UNA-Georgia may impose additional reporting requirements on the recipient, including the submission of daily transaction ledgers, supporting documentation, and other financial verifications.
- Additionally, UNA-Georgia reserves the right to conduct financial reviews or audits, and to otherwise ensure the adequate accountability of organizations expending the grant funds. All recipients will be fully notified of the subject and rationale behind such decisions.

OTHER INFORMATION

1. To ensure updated information reaches all interested parties, UNA-Georgia will implement a range of outreach activities targeted to reach potential applicants. Outreach may include quarterly announcements, quarterly workshops, and information sessions. All information related to this RFA, including all revisions, will be published on UNA-Georgia's official website. It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure they are using the latest versions of the RFA and relevant templates (if applicable).
2. All award recipients shall be required to follow all established and applicable standards, laws, and regulations of Georgia and the U.S. Government. UNA-Georgia shall provide detailed guidance, where and as needed.
3. Potential applicants must refer to the standard grant agreement template (part of this RFA) for all applicable rules and regulations, which shall apply to all awards regardless of the grant instrument used.
4. In support of the IGF's interest in fostering a larger assistance base and expanding the number and sustainability of development partners in promoting diversity and national unity in Georgia, UNA-Georgia encourages applications from potential new partners.