

résumés, exhibits, letters of support, and the abstract are not counted towards the page limit. If an applicant exceeds the stated page limit, the review panel has the discretion to deduct 10 points.

Upon completion of negotiations, the individual signing the SF 424 on behalf of the applicant must be authorized to bind the applicant.

C. Acceptable Methods of Submission

The grant application package must be received at the designated place by the date and time specified, or it will not be considered. Applications sent by e-mail, telegram, or facsimile (FAX) will not be accepted. Applications sent by other delivery services, such as Federal Express, UPS, *etc.*, will be accepted; the applicant, however, bears the responsibility for timely submission. Applications that do not meet the conditions set forth in this notice will not be honored. No exceptions to the mailing, delivery, and hand-delivery conditions set forth in this notice will be granted.

Any application received at the Office of Procurement Services after 4:45 pm Eastern Time on Friday, August 8, 2003 will not be considered unless it is received before the award is made and:

- It was sent by registered or certified mail no later than the fifth calendar day before [Enter Date]; or
- It was sent by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail/Next Day Service from the post office to the addressee no later than 5 p.m. at the place of mailing two (2) working days (excluding weekends and Federal holidays), prior to [Enter date]; or
- It is determined by the Government that the late receipt was due solely to mishandling by the Government after receipt at the U.S. Department of Labor at the address indicated.

The only acceptable evidence to establish the date of mailing of a late application sent by registered or certified mail is the U.S. Postal Service postmark on the envelope or wrapper and on the original receipt from the U.S. Postal Service. If the postmark is not legible, an application received after the above closing time and date shall be processed as if mailed late. "Postmark" means a printed, stamped, or otherwise placed impression (not a postage meter machine impression) that is readily identifiable without further action as having been applied and affixed by an employee of the U.S. Postal Service on the date of mailing. Therefore, applicants should request that the postal clerk place a legible hand cancellation "bull's-eye" postmark on both the receipt and the envelope or wrapper.

The only acceptable evidence to establish the date of mailing of a late application sent by U.S. Postal Service Express Mail/Next Day Service from the post office to the addressee is the date entered by the Post Office receiving clerk on the "Express Mail/Next Day Service—Post Office to Addressee" label and the postmark on the envelope or wrapper on the original receipt from the U.S. Postal Service. "Postmark" has the same meaning as defined above. Therefore, applicants should request that the postal clerk place a legible hand cancellation "bull's-eye" postmark on both the receipt and the envelope or wrapper.

The only acceptable evidence to establish the time of receipt at the U.S. Department of Labor is the date/time stamp of the Procurement Service Center on the application wrapper or other documentary evidence or receipt maintained by that office.

All applicants are advised that U.S. mail delivery in the Washington DC area has been slow and erratic due to concerns involving anthrax contamination. Applicants must take this into consideration when preparing to meet the application deadline. It is recommended that you confirm receipt of your application with your delivery service.

D. Funding Levels

Up to U.S. \$700,000 is available for this project, and USDOL reserves the right to award more than one grant. USDOL may award one or more grants to one organization or several, or to a partnership of more than one organization. The award of any sub-contract will be subject to USDOL approval (*see* Section IV).

E. Program Duration

The duration of the project funded by this SGA is up to two (2) years. The start date of program activities will be negotiated upon award of the grant, which will take place no later than September 30, 2003.

III. Statement of Work

This SGA announces the availability of funds for a project to contribute to the reduction of social conflict and violence in Colombia by improving the ability of the Colombian trade union movement to: participate in the economic, political and social development of the country; protect human and worker rights; and play a positive role in the peace process. Specific project objectives are identified in Section III.C. Applicants should submit proposals for projects that demonstrate the organizations' capabilities to implement a project in

accordance with the Statement of Work and the selection criteria. USDOL encourages applicants to be creative in proposing innovative and cost-effective interventions that will produce a demonstrable impact. Funds will be provided by grant to qualifying organizations. The grant will be actively managed by USDOL/ILAB to assure achievement of the stated project objectives.

Note: Selection of an organization as a grant recipient does not constitute approval of the grant application as submitted. Before the actual grant is awarded, USDOL may enter into negotiations about such items as program components, funding levels, and administrative systems in place to support grant implementation. If the negotiations do not result in an acceptable submission, the Grant Officer reserves the right to terminate the negotiation and decline to fund the application. Award is also contingent upon signature of a letter of agreement between USDOL and relevant ministries in target countries.

A. Background and Problem Statement

Violence against trade unionists and their leaders continues to be a critical problem in Colombia. In the midst of an armed conflict between the government, guerrillas, and paramilitary forces, unions have played a key role in mobilizing civil society in support of peace negotiations. As a result, both paramilitary forces and guerilla groups have targeted union leaders. According to the State Department's annual Human Rights Report, 178 labor unionists were killed in 2002 and 1,875 have been killed since 1991. Also in 2002, an additional 189 received death threats, 26 were kidnapped, 8 disappeared, and 17 members survived physical attempts on their life. According to former Colombian Labor Minister, Angelino Garzon, "Colombia is losing an entire generation of labor leaders whose contribution to improving economic opportunities for workers through constructive dialogue with employers and government is invaluable."

Violence against trade unionists is perpetuated by a climate of impunity. According to the State Department's Human Rights Report, there were 376 criminal investigations into violations of the right to life of unionists from August 1986 to April 2003. Of these, 321 were in the preliminary stage, 24 were at the investigative stage, 3 were at the trial stage, 7 had been sent to military criminal courts, and 13 were awaiting assignment. Guilty verdicts were issued in only five cases.

Despite these major challenges, Colombia's trade unions continue to play an important role as