

**Progress with Education
Notice of Funding Opportunity
Call for Expressions of Interest (EOI)
No. PcE-EOI-2024-02**

Title of the call	First call Internet access, equipment and installation
Call number	PcE-EOI-2024-02
Date of issue of the call	Friday, August 9, 2024
Closing date of the call	Monday, September 9, 2024
Application Submission Dates	Monday, September 9, 2024
Estimated award dates to selected implementing partner(s)	Oct/Nov 2024

Send your EOI in PDF version, with a total file size not exceeding 25 MB and with the subject of the email "Expression of interest/ Name of your organization" to the Progres con Educación program via email to subvenciones@hn-progres.rti.org to the Grants Management. EOIs received after the deadline will be disqualified.

Application Process

The application process will take place in two phases as described below:

1. **Stage One: Submission of Expression of Interest**
 - a. The proposer must submit an expression of interest (EOI) using the template shown in Exhibit B below with a maximum of 4 pages, following the instructions contained herein. Progres will acknowledge receipt of the submission of the EOIs within three (3) business days.
 - b. Progres will review EOIs according to the merit review criteria detailed below. The results will be sent to each applicant within ten (10) business days of the meeting of the Grant Evaluation (TEC) technical committee
 - c. Proposers who fail to meet objectives, minimum eligibility requirements, or receive an inadequate grade will be rejected.

2. **Stage Two: Full Proposal (RFA)**
 - a. Selected Stage One proponents will be invited to a co-creation and proposal formulation workshop that will be facilitated by relevant technical advisors. The proposal formulation workshop will provide applicants with support to address the challenges of the Progresses with Education. A technical advisor will support the proposer in developing a complete RFP.
 - b. Proposers will submit a grant request in response to a Request for Proposals (RFA). Applications will be evaluated based on the technical factors detailed in the RFA.

Progres con Educación reserves the right to award subsidies without discussing it with any proponent. Progres con Educación may reject any or all of the EOIs or cancel the

contest, if the submissions do not sufficiently demonstrate the ability to meet the objectives of the initiative established.

Annexes to the EOI

- 1.- Annex A: Statement of Work
- 2.- Annex B: Narrative Outline of the Expression of Interest
- 3.- Annex C: List of Basic Schools

"All proposers are responsible for carefully reviewing each attachment and following instructions that may be relevant to this call"

ANNEX A

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY OVERVIEW

I. Program Description

The Progresá with Education Program is funded by USAID for a period of five years (December 2022 – December 2027), Progresá is implemented by the Research Triangle Institute (RTI International) in partnership with Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the National Foundation for the Development of Honduras (FUNADEH), the Honduran Foundation for Corporate Social Responsibility (FUNDAHRSE), and the Zamora Terán Foundation (FZT). Together, this team brings critical contributions in Honduras and experience with education system reform, student assessment and evidence-based instruction, violence prevention, civil society capacity building, private sector engagement, digital transformation, and positive youth development.

It aims to increase access to and participation in safe, relevant, and high-quality basic education for 300,000 children and youth, ensuring that they have the knowledge, skills, and motivation to engage as productive citizens and contribute to building a prosperous Honduras. This objective will be achieved through work along three general outcomes:

Outcome 1: Improved governance of the education system for efficiency, transparency and responsiveness to contingencies.

Outcome 2: Increased access to and retention in inclusive and quality education, particularly for the most disadvantaged students.

Outcome 3: Improved safety in and around schools.

Progresá con Educación will work in 40 municipalities in Honduras, anticipating coverage of 4,000 schools. The Program will engage all stakeholders, including youth, families, the Ministry of Education, the private sector, and civil society to establish a common agenda to reintegrate students who have left school, improve learning and education pathways for students in grades 6-9, and build a culture of school safety.

II. Objective

The purpose of this call is to provide, potential bidders, a fair opportunity to develop and submit competitive expressions of interest (EOIs) that they can implement through the grant mechanism "**Internet Access, Equipment and Installation**". To 450 Basic Education Centers (CEB), prioritized by Progresá con Educación.

Proponents can be: educational institutions, research institutions, cooperatives, faith-based organizations, private sector companies, non-governmental organizations, and non-profit organizations with special emphasis on those local organizations led by women of all ages and indigenous people, as well as youth and as defined by USAID's New Partnerships Initiative¹.

All proposers must:

- a. Be formally constituted at the time the subsidy is granted.
- b. Be a legally recognized and registered organization in Honduras. Valid and updated registration documents and statutes must be submitted. Local organizations (APF, CED, Patronatos and similar) with operational support from the Local Government, with a limit on funds and restricted to the option of subsidizing in kind, may qualify.
- c. Comply with the laws and regulations of the Republic of Honduras (present a certificate of tax compliance).
- d. Demonstrate that the organization has been active for the past 12 months.
- e. Be directly responsible for the preparation and management of the project, i.e. you are not acting as an intermediary or consultant.
- f. Not be affiliated with a political party or participate in any political activity.

The proposer must provide their UEI (or Unique Entity ID) at the time of submission. If the proposer already has the UEI, it must be included in the Application and Grant Form – Annex B. Otherwise, the proposer is expected to obtain the UEI before the subsidy is formalized. See the Application and Grant Form for instructions on how to apply for a UEI.

The proponent must demonstrate sound management in the form of financial, administrative, and technical policies and procedures and present a system of internal controls that safeguards assets, protects against fraud, waste, and abuse, and supports the achievement of program goals and objectives. Progresa will evaluate this capacity before awarding a grant. Any falsification of proposal information may result in rejection/cancellation of the grant.

This call encourages established local civil society organizations to submit their expressions of interest. We recommend that you read this call in its entirety and ensure that your response addresses all the elements listed in the technical application instructions and evaluation criteria, included in Annex B.

III. Background and Purpose of the Progresa con Educación Program.

The program will be implemented in the facilities of the Basic Education Centers (CEB) E previously defined by Progresa con Educación and will aim to support the NNJ within the school system in general. Internet for All promotes attention to the needs of *inclusion in education*, it will also help students to improve performance within their educational environment away from social risks and insecurity by having greater opportunities to achieve dreams and expectations and thus prevent the bad environment from attracting them

Within the framework of this call, the Grant Program expects to receive proposals that contribute to the achievement of the overall result of the Project which specifies that

"This activity will aim to increase access to and participation in safe, relevant and high-quality basic education for 300,000 children and young people, ensuring that they have the knowledge, the skills and motivation to participate as productive citizens and contribute to the construction of a prosperous Honduras.

Specifically, it seeks to contribute to the intermediate results and their respective related indicators, which are:

- IR2.1. Support activities to increase access to inclusive and quality education, particularly for the most marginalized learners. Specifically, but not exclusively:
 - IR2.1.1 Support activities that identify the main barriers to access for out-of-school children and youth; and monitoring changes over time, especially the formation of a working group on Alternative Education and data collection and dissemination activities.
 - IR2.1.2 Support activities that convene community groups to review barriers and enact local solutions with a specific focus on expanding access to technology and distance learning.
 - IR2.1.3. Lead activities that provide hardware and satellite internet access to schools and municipal public spaces, in particular:
 - Prepare and carry out the selection process for 1,000 schools
 - Design of the implementation plan
 - Prepare and carry out sensitization and approval of school selection and deployment plan with government officials
 - Design and develop user training and materials
 - Train, test, and review materials and plans for satellite connectivity in a first set of schools
 - Lead the installation, training, and implementation of satellite connectivity in the remaining schools
 - Monitor and evaluate progress and provide customer service and technical support to site users (call center)

IV. Bottom

The total fund available for this call will depend on the reasonableness of the costs associated with the technical proposal received and consistent with the technical criteria established in this application, which must be aligned with the proposed scope of work.

The grant(s) will be awarded and implemented in accordance with the regulations of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States Government, as well as the Program's grant management policies and procedures. Please refer to the detailed description of the application requirements in "Section VIII – Application Evaluation Criteria". The activities of the grant(s) will be carried out for the municipalities in Honduras prioritized by Progresá.

The issuance of this call does not constitute an award commitment by the Progresá Program nor does it commit the Program to pay the costs incurred in the preparation

and presentation of an EOI by the interested organizations. In addition, the Program reserves the right to reject any or all of the applications received. Similarly, an invitation to clarify your proposal is not a commitment to fund that request, nor to reimburse the costs incurred during the preparation of the request.

The grant review and approval process will be conducted by a multidisciplinary committee with the goal of eliminating the possibility of any unilateral decision towards EOI proposals. Program staff as well as applicant organizations will not solicit and are prohibited from offering money, fees, commissions, credits, gifts, gratuities, valuables, or compensation of any kind to obtain or reward inappropriate favorable treatment with respect to this request. Any inappropriate action by an employee of the Program must be reported to the email ethics@rti.org

V. Approach and activities to consider in the proposal

Progresia will award grants to support the programming and implementation of initiatives aimed at improving opportunities for access and quality of formal and non-formal education for children and youth in the 40 targeted municipalities. The expectation is to award grants to organizations that have experience and can provide the services described below in the geographic area of intervention.

In this call for subsidies, it provides for the connection in up to 450 Basic School Centers. Applicants' proposals for intervention in this component should focus on:

Service A: Provision of Internet Access

Technical requirements:

- 1. Coverage:** The proposal must indicate how many and which of the list of 450 Basic Schools (list is attached – Annex C) may benefit from the services and how (cable, Internet, others).
- 2. Speed and Bandwidth:**
 - **Minimum speeds:** The proposal must offer a minimum speed of 25 Mbps for both downloads and uploads. Proposals that offer asymmetrical speeds are also welcome, but they must specify guaranteed minimum upload speeds alongside download speeds.
 - **Speed improvements:** The proposal should describe requirements or options to easily upgrade the speed if the need arises during the grant agreement period without the need to fully renegotiate the terms.
 - **Scalability:** Internet services must be scalable to accommodate future increases in demand without substantial infrastructure modifications.
 - **Traffic prioritization and management:** The ability to manage and prioritize traffic to ensure critical educational applications are prioritized during high network usage will be valued. Although not a mandatory requirement, proposals that



include advanced traffic management and prioritization capabilities are recommended, which will be considered advantageous in the evaluation process.

- **Redundancy and failover:** Although not a mandatory requirement, it is preferable to include redundancy measures to maintain service continuity in the event of an outage.
- **Quality of Service (QoS) Assurances:** Detailed quality of service assurances should be included, with specific targets for latency, jitter, and packet loss.
- **Data caps:** The proposal should clearly state that there are no data usage limits. Proposers must ensure that all internet service plans offered are unlimited, with no data usage restrictions.
- **Cybersecurity compliance and security protocols:** Although not strictly required, proposals must show robust cybersecurity measures aligned with industry standards for network security will be highly valued.
- **Real-time monitoring and reporting:** The proposal is expected to provide access to real-time monitoring tools or dashboards for proactive management of network performance to the successful installation and support company to work together. Dedicated external IP address for each school/provision for remote monitoring. Real-time speed monitoring system to monitor the Quality of Service of each deployed node.
- **Reliability:** A minimum network uptime of 99% is required. The proposer must notify the Basic Education Centers (CEBs) in advance of any planned interruptions and provide updates during unforeseen interruptions. In addition, the proposal must specify the minimum and maximum time needed to attend to and repair any service interruptions, ensuring a quick response and minimal downtime.

3. Service Level Agreement (SLA):

The proposer must submit a detailed service level agreement with its proposal, outlining its commitments to service quality, uptime and response times to deal with service interruptions, as well as penalties for downtime.

4. Settlement Costs: The proposer must provide a breakdown of the individual monthly and non-recurring costs for each site, along with an overall total cost to provide internet access to all proposed sites.

- **Long-term costs:** Proposals should include costs for an initial two-year agreement once each school is connected, with options for an additional one-year extension.
- **Cost reduction strategy:** The proposer is expected to provide a clear cost reduction strategy after the first and second years of service. This should reflect any efficiency improvements and technological advances that can reduce service costs.

- **Cost adjustments at the end of the agreement:** Any cost savings identified at the end of the period, which were not initially anticipated, should be passed on to the installation and support company that will manage all services (see Service B below).

Service B: Internet Equipment Installation, Activation, Student Devices, and Support Services

The expected quality of installation and support services must meet the following global parameters:

Supply of equipment: The proposal must include the supply of all the necessary Internet access equipment adapted to the specific needs of each Basic Education Center (CEB). This includes routers, access points, and any necessary remote management systems. For planning and proposal purposes, the Programme is currently assuming that it will be possible to connect via fibre optic cable and/or satellite Internet access. The provision of equipment should also include 5 devices for each Basic Education Center (CEB) for educational use by students, preferably Chromebooks, that make optimal use of Internet service, have a long lifespan and are easy to manage remotely even at scale. Each proposal should clearly specify the types and models of equipment to be provided. Equipment must comply with USAID regulations and restrictions, specifically Section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (NDAA). <https://www.usaid.gov/basic-page/section-889-partner-information>; <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2020/07/14/2020-15293/federal-acquisition-regulation-prohibition-on-contracting-with-entities-using-certain>

- **Minimum Hardware Specifications**

ChromeBook

Monitor	15 inches
Operating system	Windows 11 Home or ChromeOS
Processor	Up to 12th Intel® Core™ i7 processor
Memory	Up to 16GB DDR4 memory
Storage	Up to 1TB of SSD storage
Guarantee	3 years

Access Point/Firewall Access Point (with web filtering)

Firewall Hardware Specifications
Management interface: Ethernet, Bluetooth
Network Interface: LAN: (1) RJ45 GbE port, WAN: (1) RJ45 GbE port
Max. transmit power: 2.4 GHz 22 dBm, 5 GHz 25 dBm
MIMO: 2.4 GHz 2 x 2 (DL/UL MU-MIMO), 5 GHz 2 x 2 (DL/UL MU-MIMO)

Performance Speed: 2.4 GHz 573.5 Mbps, 5 GHz 2.4 Gbps
Antennas: (2) 2.4G/5G WiFi Dual-Band Internal Antenna, (1) 2.4G Single-Band Internal BT Antenna
Gateway Features
Performance: Internet quality and outage reports
Next-generation security: application-aware firewall rules, content, country, domain, and ad filtering, VLAN/subnet-based traffic targeting, full-state firewall
Advanced Networking: Unlicensed SD-WAN, WireGuard, L2TP and OpenVPN Server, Site-to-Site OpenVPN, OpenVPN, and IPsec Client, One-Click Teleport VPN, Policy-Based WAN and VPN Routing, DHCP Relay, Customizable DHCP Server, IGMP Proxy, IPv6 ISP Support
Software
WiFi Standards: 802.11a/b/g/n/ac/ax
Wireless Security: WPA-PSK, WPA-Enterprise (WPA/WPA2/WPA3)
BSSID: Console Mode: 3 per band, Standard AP: 8 per band
VLAN: 802.1Q
Advanced QoS: Per-user rate limiting
Guest Traffic Isolation: Supported
Concurrent Clients: 50+*, *Performance may be degraded with advanced gateway features (e.g., traffic identification).
Supported data rates: 802.11a: 6, 9, 12, 18, 24, 36, 48, 54 Mbps, 802.11b: 1, 2, 5.5, 11 Mbps, 802.11g: 6, 9, 12, 18, 24, 36, 48, 54 Mbps, 802.11n (WiFi 4): 6.5 Mbps to 300 Mbps (MCS0 - MCS15, HT 20/40), 802.11ac (WiFi 5): 6.5 Mbps to 1.7 Gbps (MCS0 - MCS9 NSS1/2, VHT 20/40/80/160), 802.11ax (WiFi 6): 7.3 Mbps to 2.4 Gbps (MCS0 - MCS11 NSS1/2, HE 20/40/80/160)

Turnkey Installation Services: The applicant must provide complete turnkey installation services. This includes physical installation of equipment, initial system setup, and activation. The proposal should detail the process of integrating firewall and content blocking services to ensure secure and controlled access to the Internet in schools. Unified cloud-based network provisioning and monitoring solution with the following features: Rapid deployment of Wi-Fi access; Captive portal with quality of service and multiple control functions.

Ongoing Support Services: The applicant must offer ongoing support services that include proactive monitoring of network performance, firewall functionality, and content blocking systems. Assistance should also include the ability to adjust network protocols and settings based on the changing needs of the Program. It is critical that the proposer has a system in place to promptly notify sites of anticipated service interruptions, provide relevant updates, and manage communications effectively during unforeseen outages.

Monitoring and Reporting: The proposal should include access to a robust monitoring dashboard or service that allows both the proposer and Program administrators to

monitor Internet usage, track downtime incidents, and assess the overall health of the network in real-time. The system shall facilitate the preparation of detailed reports that contribute to the effective resolution of problems and the optimization of network performance.

Cost Structure: A breakdown of the detailed costs for each Basic School Center (CEB) should be provided, including the monthly and non-recurring costs associated with the initial installation and ongoing support services. The total cost of services provided to all awardee schools should be clearly indicated. The proposal should also indicate the costs for an initial two-year period of Internet access service per school, with the option of a one-year extension of the Internet service provided with project funding, detailing any changes in costs or conditions of service in the extension period.

For young people there would be the opportunity to live together; It will also include opportunities for children and youth to acquire new skills such as coding or public speaking, socio-emotional learning

VI. Deployment Location

The proponent will plan its services in the geographical area detailed below, defining its target groups in the following municipalities (see Annex C for more details):

Region/ Cluster Headquarters	Departments	Targeted municipalities
Atlantic Coast	Atlántida, Colón and Yoro (Olanchito only)	Jutiapa, La Ceiba, La Másica, Tela, Sonaguera, Tocoa, Trujillo, Olanchito.
North	Cortés and Yoro	San Pedro Sula, Choloma, Puerto Cortés, Omoa, Villanueva, La Lima, Santa Cruz de Yojoa, El Progreso, El Negrito, Morazán, Yoro
Occident	Santa Barbara, Copán, Lempira and Ocotepeque	Macuelizo, Santa Rosa de Copán, Santa Rita, Nueva Arcadia, Florida, Copán Ruinas, Lepaera, Gracias, Ocotepeque, San Marcos
Central West	Comayagua, Intibucá, La Paz and Santa Bárbara	Comayagua, San Jerónimo, La Libertad, Siguatepeque, La Esperanza, La Paz, Santa Bárbara
Central East	El Paraíso, Francisco Morazán and Olancho	Tegucigalpa, Danlí, Catacamas, Juticalpa

VII. Evaluation criteria of the call

EOIs will be reviewed by a technical evaluation committee (TEC) which may include external evaluators from relevant government agencies and other organizations, if necessary.

Please note that the criteria are for EOI only. Additional criteria will be distributed as part of a completed Request for Proposals for Phase 2 applicants. All EOIs will be reviewed according to the following criteria.

Technical element	Definition
Relevance of the product demanded	The proposer must provide a description of the solution or product demanded and its justification for its supply
Feasibility of technical approach	The proponent must provide a digital transformation plan that seeks to establish mechanisms to improve access to education and academic performance of students that clearly defines how the Internet access service will be provided to the 450 prioritized educational centers.
Sustainability	The proponent should provide an approach that identifies strategies to sustain the submitted proposal beyond the support of Progresá with USAID/RTI Education
Institutional capacity	The proposer must provide and demonstrate the capacity and experience in the implementation of the proposed activities.

Progresá will assess the level of confidence that the proposer will successfully perform based on the technical evaluation criteria listed above. In doing so, Progresá con Educación will select and invite to a co-creation process (Phase 2) all those proponents who achieve a minimum of 2.4 points in the evaluation of the Technical Evaluation Committee, based on the following classification:

Classification	Definition
2.40 to 3 points	Progresá has high confidence that the proposer understands the requirement, proposes a robust approach, and will succeed in performing with little or no intervention.
1.5 to 2.39 points	Progresá has some confidence that the proponent understands the requirement, proposes a solid approach and will succeed in carrying out some intervention.
Less than 1.5 points	Progresá has little confidence that the proposer will understand the requirement, propose a robust approach, or will succeed in operating even with intervention.

ANNEX B

(This annex should not exceed 4 pages at the time of submission, leave no blank spaces)

Expression of Interest Narrative Outline

Section I. Description of the organization	
Organization Name:	
Date of Presentation:	
Proposed budget (Lempiras):	
Proposed performance period (in months):	
Name of the proposing project:	
Name of the head of the Organization:	
Email address:	
Contact Phone No.:	
Address of the organization:	
UEI number (or unique entity ID)	
Status of the organization:	
Section II Background of the Organization	
Describe existing organizational capacity and in carrying out similar capacity building activities.	
Section III Description of the activities proposed for this call	
General Objective:	
Specific Objectives:	



Organizational Structure:

Proposed activities



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Monitoring and Evaluation

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Location and facilities where services will be provided:

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Funding mechanisms:

Describe existing and/or planned strategies to sustain operations; It may include a brief discussion of how the Progres award budget can be used during the time it proposes in the call.

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Proposed timeline for proposed operations and activities, include a budget column:

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ANNEX C
See attached list in Excel