



ANNOUNCEMENT

NICRA Negotiation Improvements Coming Soon...

NICRA Simplified

What is ARTS?

The Automated Indirect Cost Rates Tracking System (ARTS) is USAID's innovative approach to simplifying and streamlining the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) process for its global network of Implementing Partners (IPs). ARTS is a web-based application that leverages cutting-edge technology to enhance USAID's interactions with IPs, ensuring a unified, well-informed strategy towards indirect cost negotiations. The overall goal of ARTS is to decrease the time it takes for USAID to negotiate NICRAs by automating the NICRA negotiation process and providing IPs with a fully automated electronic submission, signature, and tracking platform.

What can ARTS do today?

USAID successfully launched ARTS internally for USAID negotiators in February 2024. ARTS improved NICRA operations by introducing electronic workload management and e-signature capabilities for both USAID and IP use. You may experience this e-signature functionality during ongoing NICRA negotiations this year.

Which USAID IPs can use ARTS?

ARTS is currently only available to IPs whose NICRAs are negotiated and executed by the Overhead, Special Cost, and Closeout (OCC) Branch within Washington D.C.'s Office of Acquisition and Assistance (OAA). USAID anticipates ARTS access to expand to USAID Mission personnel and foreign IPs soon.

What can ARTS do in the future?

The next phase of ARTS development is anticipated to last through February 2025 and is anticipated to be fully deployed in March 2025. Over the next seven months, USAID will incrementally expand ARTS capabilities to IPs via an external portal. IP users will be able to generate, submit, and track Indirect Cost Rate Proposals (ICPs) and Incurred Cost submissions (ICs), manage organizational information, and review current indirect cost rates. The portal will streamline communications between IPs and USAID staff to efficiently manage rate negotiations resulting in a significant decrease in the time needed for USAID staff to review proposals, conduct negotiations, and execute rate agreements.

What's next?

USAID will be requesting IP feedback to help shape the development of the ARTS application and IP portal. IP participation and feedback will be crucial for the successful implementation of ARTS and will directly influence how the ARTS application is shaped and developed. USAID wants to ensure that the final product is user-friendly and helpful for all USAID IPs.

Please be on the lookout for upcoming communications from USAID's Industry Liaison at industryliaison@usaid.gov for further information.

