Promoting Fintech Sector in MENA NOFO Questions
Opportunity Number: SFOP0005694

1. When forming partnerships between Fintech start-ups and the US private sector objective, some of the proposed ideas involve travel of start-ups to the US or travel of US private sector to Egypt. Would these travel costs under these activities be allowed under this NOFO?
   ANSWER: Applicants may propose costs that could involve providing travel of start-ups to the U.S. or travel of U.S. private sector as long as they are necessary and reasonable for the activities proposed to achieve the objectives detailed in this NOFO. Please note that exchange activities with other countries or territories however are not allowed under this NOFO. Please review the "Eligible Countries and Territories" section on page 2 of the NOFO to ensure a location proposed is eligible for participation.

2. Some of the proposed activities would involve technical support/solutions or equipment for Fintech start-ups; would costs under these activities be allowed under this NOFO?
   ANSWER: Applicants may propose costs that would involve technical support/solutions or equipment as long as they are necessary and reasonable for the activities proposed to achieve the objectives detailed in this NOFO.

3. If the proposed technical assistance involves providing seed funding for the startups, would seed funding be an allowed cost under this NOFO?
   ANSWER: Applicants may propose costs that could involve providing seed funding for startups as long as they are necessary and reasonable for the activities proposed to achieve the objectives detailed in this NOFO.

4. Could you please clarify the definitions of and limitations for costs associated with activities on an existing project?
   ANSWER: Applicants may propose costs within the ceiling and floor amounts as long as they are necessary and reasonable for the activities proposed to achieve the objectives detailed in this NOFO. Please note the activities and costs not allowed as detailed on page 7 of the NOFO. Applicants can find additional guidance for developing the budget under the "Budget Guidelines" of the budget template appendix posted with this NOFO.

5. What percentage of cost share is preferred or recommended?
   ANSWER: As detailed on page 8 of the NOFO, cost-share or matching is required for applications in response to this NOFO and is a component of the evaluation criteria.

6. Could you please elaborate on what is defined as U.S. private sector engagement (or what an example of U.S. private sector engagement might be)?
   ANSWER: For the purposes of this NOFO, U.S. private sector engagement could include U.S. private sector investments and/or partnerships with local/regional entities in the Fintech sector in the MENA region.

7. What is the total maximum grant offered? According to the document: "Contingent on the availability of funds, approximately $1,000,000 in Economic Support Funds for approximately one to two (1-2) awards will be awarded through this announcement." Does this mean that the total maximum funding offered is $1M or $2M?
   ANSWER: The total potential ceiling for one award is $1,000,000. Potentially two awards could be recommended for $500,000 each.

8. Following on to the first question, according to the NOFO document, it is stated that you would like to see a plan for 5 years with "plan for potential out-years of non-competing continuations" What does potential out-years of non-competing continuations mean? We would appreciate it if you can describe this in more detail.
   ANSWER: The NOFO states on page 8 that "…an applicant will be awarded funds for up to two and a half (2.5) years…" and further indicates a possible non-competing continuation. In terms of the non-competing continuation, out-years is the time beyond the initial award period, with a maximum timeframe of up to five years total, including the initial award period plus the potential non-competing continuation time period.

9. To confirm, both the primary applicant and our local offices will require SAM and UEI registrations at the time of the application deadline (May 20th, 2019)?
   ANSWER: The organization applying for funding will need a UEI and SAM.gov registration by the deadline of May 23, 2019 (note version 2 of the NOFO) which has revised dates for the Q&A as well as the application deadline. If the local offices will be implementing components of the project but will not be sub-awardees, they will not need to have a UEI nor SAM.gov registration. If the local offices will be locally registered entities and are proposed as sub-awardees in an application, pages 20-21 of the NOFO details that "Proposed sub-awardees are not required to have a UEI number prior to the submission of an application but must have one prior to a sub-award being issued." Therefore, the UEI registration is not required for proposed sub-awardees at the time of application but must be active prior to a sub-award being issued.

10. Is it be possible to obtain UEI and SAM registrations for our future offices once they have successfully launched and not before the application deadline?
    ANSWER: If the local offices will be locally registered entities and are proposed as sub-awardees in an application, pages 20-21 of the NOFO details that "Proposed sub-awardees are not required to have a UEI number prior to the submission of an application but must have one prior to a sub-award being issued."

11. Is Lebanon the only country we would need to submit a DS Form 4184 in the case that we were successful in our application?
    ANSWER: To date, yes, Lebanon is the only country of the eligible locations for project activities in which a DS-4184 would be required, if the applicant organization is recommended and selected for an award.

12. Although it is necessary to show the US flag with each instance of online/or marketing material that is used in conjunction with this specific program, it is not necessary to show the US flag with any mention of our other programs, is this correct?
ANSWER: Correct, only materials produced under the award agreement and with project funds (federal or cost-share) will need to be branded with the U.S. flag, unless a branding waiver is requested and approved.

13. When I tried to create a profile and add my organization on Grants.gov website, it asks for our DUNS number which we don't have such. Please advise how to handle?
ANSWER: If your organization does not have a DUNS/UEI, you will need to register for one prior to being able to create a profile and add your organization on grants.gov. Please refer to the "Registration Requirements" section on pages 10-11 for the steps needed to register for both a UEI (DUNS) as well as a SAM.gov account.

14. Can I contact NEA/AC by phone with questions or concerns?
ANSWER: NEA/AC does not take questions or concerns regarding a NOFO via phone. Instead, all questions or concerns should be submitted to NEA-Grants@state.gov. NEA/AC will compile all questions, provide responses, and post the Q&As with the NOFO so that all interested applicants have access to the same information.

15. Does the project need to take place in more than one country in the region from the start?
ANSWER: No.

16. Do we need to begin the project connected with a Fintech company in the United States?
ANSWER: No.