DFOP0018819: Egypt Annual Program Statement

Frequently Asked Questions

Notice:

The application submission deadline for this APS has been extended to August 31, 2026. All applications must now be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on August 31, 2026, in accordance with the APS submission instructions. Unsuccessful applicants for this deadline will be notified by October 15, 2026. Applications submitted after this date will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

An additional FAQ document will be posted prior to the submission deadline. All questions must be submitted to NEA-Grants@state.gov by August 10, 2026 in order to be addressed in the FAQ.

Q: Is there a possibility of extending the submission deadline? A: Yes. The application submission deadline for this APS has been extended to August 31, 2026. All applications must now be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET) on August 31, 2026, in accordance with the APS submission instructions. Applications submitted after this date will be reviewed on a rolling basis.

Q: The APS states awards have an anticipated start date of 10/1/2026 — should we expect all awards to begin on this date? A: Awards are anticipated to start as early as October 1, 2026, pending finalized negotiations, availability of funding, and approvals. Awards may also begin past this date; successful organizations will be informed of timelines.

Q: If we submit an application before the deadline and are rejected, would we be disqualified from applying again? Could we apply for more than one project? A: Applicants whose proposals are rejected may submit a revised version in a later review cycle. Applicants should clearly identify the changes made to the resubmitted proposal and demonstrate how it differs from the previous submission.

Q: Can the same institution submit a proposal for more than one Program Area? A: Applicants may submit separate proposals for more than one program area.

Q: Can we integrate two thematic areas, or must a proposal address only one? A: Proposals that integrate various program areas may be submitted for consideration. NEA reserves the right to separate components of a proposal during the review and/or negotiation phase as programmatic priorities are developed, and funding is made available for specific areas.

Q: Our technical approach spans two program areas with separate award ceilings. Can an applicant submit one proposal under two program areas within this APS? A: Proposals that integrate various program areas may be submitted for consideration. NEA reserves the right to separate components of a proposal during the review and/or negotiation phase as programmatic priorities are developed, and funding is made available for specific areas.

Q: Can an organization apply for more than one APS, or participate in more than one consortium under different thematic areas? A: Yes. An organization may apply to more than one APS and may also participate in more than one consortium under different thematic areas, provided each proposal is distinct and clearly stands on its own merits. Applicants should ensure that each submission reflects a separate scope of work, budget, and set of objectives.

Q: What does "operate legally in Egypt" mean under the Eligibility section — does it require local registration before applying, or can applicants register during the process? A: Applicants must be legally authorized to operate in Egypt in accordance with applicable Egyptian laws and regulations. Local registration is required where applicable to the applicant's legal status, but applicants are not required to have completed registration prior to submitting an application, provided they obtain all necessary registrations and legal authorizations before any award is made and prior to commencing project activities. However, because processes in Egypt can take time, applicants are strongly encouraged to have or to initiate any necessary registration as early as possible to avoid delays.

Q: We are a U.S.-based nonprofit without an office in Egypt but with a legally registered local Egyptian partner. Are we eligible to be the primary applicant? A: A U.S.-based nonprofit organization may apply as the primary applicant under this APS in partnership with a locally registered Egyptian organization, provided it meets the eligibility requirements outlined in the APS. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that all proposed activities are conducted in compliance with applicable local laws and regulations, including any legal or regulatory requirements governing operations in Egypt.

Q: Is there a preference regarding the type of lead applicant (NGO, private sector, consulting firm, industry association)? A: There is no preference for a specific type of lead applicant. Any eligible applicant type can lead a proposal, provided it demonstrates the organizational capacity, expertise, and internal controls needed to manage the award and deliver on the proposed objectives. Please see the APS for eligibility criteria.

Q: Are APSs Cooperative Agreements or Contracts? A: An Annual Program Statement (APS) is a solicitation of applications. Awards resulting from this announcement may be issued as a grant, cooperative agreement, or Fixed Amount Award (FAA), as determined by the Grants Officer.

Q: Regarding Higher Education eligibility — must proposals be affiliated with a U.S. Department of Education-accredited institution? Does this apply to the AI Workforce/EdTech concept, and can Egyptian institutions accredited by NAQAAE also be engaged? A: We welcome proposals that explore partnerships with Egyptian institutions as part of program design. For proposals that will include a higher education component, we require this to be with an accredited institution recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, but these proposals may also include other types of affiliations as needed for successful project implementation. NEA reserves the right to determine if an affiliation does not meet the required criteria during the review and negotiation phase.

Q: Are foreign governmental institutions required to obtain a UEI and complete SAM.gov registration? A: Yes. Foreign governmental institutions are required to obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI).

Q: We respectfully request an exception to the UEI and SAM.gov registration requirement, as our entity validation is pending. A: With the announced extension of the application submission deadline, applicants are expected to complete their SAM.gov registration by the proposal submission deadline. However, if circumstances arise that prevent an applicant from completing registration before submission, requests for a temporary exception will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, consistent with applicable requirements.

Q: We would like to request a waiver of the SAM.gov registration requirement. A: With the announced extension of the application submission deadline, applicants are expected to complete their SAM.gov registration by the proposal submission deadline. However, if circumstances arise that prevent an applicant from completing registration before award, requests for a temporary exception will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, consistent with applicable requirements.

Q: Are MyGrants and Grants.gov the same system? Can the Department set up my MyGrants account for me? A: Grants.gov and MyGrants are separate systems. It is the responsibility of each applicant to establish and maintain their MyGrants account in accordance with the instructions provided in the solicitation to ensure they are able to access and submit application materials. For any issues, please reach out to the ILMS Help Desk.

Q: I logged into MyGrants, but I do not see the SF-424 forms. Where can I find and submit the required forms? A: The SF-424 forms are available under "Additional Documents to be Submitted" in MyGrants and are also available to be downloaded on Grants.gov. After completing the forms, upload them under "Application Uploaded Docs" in MyGrants and select the appropriate form name from the dropdown menu for each required document. If you experience technical issues with MyGrants, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for assistance.

Q: The APS excludes charts from the page limit. May tables, figures, and diagrams embedded within the narrative exceed the narrative page limit, or are only standalone annexes excluded? A: Tables, figures, and diagrams embedded within the narrative will count towards the narrative page limit. We request that applicants ensure that any tables, figures, and diagrams submitted as annexes are referenced accordingly in the narrative. Only standalone annexes are excluded from page limits; annexes are intended for optional supplemental documentation that supports the project narrative.

Q: May the applicant propose additional key personnel beyond a Program Director and/or Program Coordinator? Are required Attachments (e.g., 1-page CVs) considered part of the four Annexes, or separate? A: Applicants may propose additional key personnel if their roles are essential to the successful implementation and management of the project. Key personnel are individuals who are considered essential to the project because of their specialized skills or responsibilities. Applicants should identify only those personnel whose participation is critical to the performance of the award. Required attachments are separate from the four Annexes. Attachments are documents specifically required by the APS, such as the 1-page CVs for key personnel, while the annexes are intended for optional supplemental documentation that supports the project narrative.

Q: The APS limits submissions to four annexes of one page each, but also calls for a 2-page Logic Model and a 3-page Security Plan. Are the Logic Model and Security Plan in addition to the four Annexes? A: The Logic Model and Security Plan should be submitted as separate documents. The limitation of up to four annexes applies only to optional supplemental documentation provided in support of the project narrative. Please review Section D of the APS for detailed submission instructions.

Q: What is the maximum budget we can apply for? A: Please refer to the APS for the applicable funding ceilings under each concept area.

Q: What is the preferred project scale? A: We are looking for projects that directly respond to the needs of the concept and take into consideration the estimated funding level noted under each program area. NEA may request that proposed projects be scaled down or up during the review and negotiation stages.

Q: What is meant by "leveraged resources" in the Budget scoring guidelines? A: Leveraged resources refer to resources already available to the applicant that can be applied to support the proposed project. These may include existing personnel, facilities, equipment, institutional capabilities, established partnerships, technical expertise, or other organizational resources that enhance project implementation and sustainability. Leveraged resources are not the same as cost sharing, which would represent a formal contribution of a portion of the project costs by the recipient rather than reimbursed by the US Government. Cost sharing is not required under this APS.

Q: For a for-profit applicant with no NICRA, can indirect costs be incorporated into Fixed Amount Award milestone pricing, with cost principles used as a guide for reasonableness? A: The Department will evaluate proposed budgets in accordance with the requirements of the APS and all applicable Federal regulations, including the CFR and FAR, as applicable. The APS identifies NICRAs and the 15 percent de minimis indirect cost rate as available options for recovering indirect costs; however, these are not the only allowable approaches. Where permitted under applicable regulations, indirect costs may also be charged on a direct allocated basis. Applicants should prepare their budgets consistent with the APS instructions and applicable Federal cost principles. The final award mechanism will be determined by the Grants Officer.

Q: If an applicant has no NICRA and does not elect the de minimis rate, but has an internally calculated indirect rate from prior federal awards, may they use that rate in their budget? A: An applicant that does not have a current NICRA and does not elect the 15% de minimis rate may not apply a self-calculated indirect rate as a lump-sum charge. Instead, identified overhead costs (e.g., electricity, accounting fees) must be broken out by individual line item and charged as direct costs on a cost-allocated basis proportional to the award's share of the organization's overall work. Note that the de minimis rate does not apply to for-profit entities, whose rates will be evaluated in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600.

Q: Can a U.S. sub-applicant without a NICRA base their indirect cost rates on independently audited financial statements? A: Audited financial statements do not establish an approved indirect cost rate under 2 CFR Part 200. If eligible, the subrecipient may elect to use the 15 percent de minimis indirect cost rate under 2 CFR § 200.414(f), budget indirect costs on a direct cost allocation basis where appropriate and allowable, or use an approved provisional or final NICRA, if one exists.

Q: Can applicants and sub-applicants submit provisional NICRA rates while negotiating final rates? Does this apply to a sub-applicant that has never negotiated a NICRA? A: Applicants and subrecipients that have a current provisional NICRA may propose indirect costs using that approved provisional rate while a new rate is under negotiation, consistent with the terms of their NICRA and applicable Federal regulations. Organizations that have never had a negotiated indirect cost rate may not propose an unapproved provisional rate. When a prime applicant has a NICRA but a subrecipient does not, the prime's negotiated rate applies only to the prime applicant's own indirect costs. Each subrecipient must budget indirect costs on their own.

Q: Our organization is a state public institution covered under a statewide Single Audit. Does this satisfy the Department's single audit requirement? A: Institutions that are audited as part of a state or other governmental entity's Single Audit under the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F) satisfy the Department of State's audit requirement. A separate institution-specific Single Audit is not required if the applicant is appropriately covered under the parent entity's risk-based audit process. Applicants should indicate, as applicable, that they are included in the parent entity's Single Audit and be prepared to provide documentation demonstrating that coverage if requested.

Q: Can our proposal include a subaward to an Egyptian university, including their purchase of equipment? A: Yes, applicants may propose subawards to foreign organizations, including an Egyptian university, if the subaward is necessary to carry out the project and is included in the proposal and budget. Equipment purchases by a subrecipient may also be allowable when they are necessary for the project, reasonable, allocable, and included in the approved budget. All proposed costs will be evaluated for allowability in accordance with the APS and applicable Federal regulations, including 2 CFR 200 and any applicable Department of State award requirements.

Q: Are livestock, poultry, agricultural inputs, and waste management procurement considered allowable costs? A: All proposed costs will be evaluated for allowability, allocability, and reasonableness in accordance with the Federal cost principles in 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E. Costs determined to be unallowable or not adequately justified based on the proposed scope of work may be addressed during the application review or award negotiation process. Certain costs may require prior written approval in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200.

Q: In terms of the Water/Agriculture Program Areas, how is "construction" defined for purposes of this APS? Does the restriction apply to lightweight/modular structures, greenhouses, net houses, or similar demonstration facilities? A: Construction should be interpreted consistent with the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200) and Department of State policy. Costs associated with construction, including the construction, alteration, or permanent improvement of buildings or other real property, are not allowable under this APS. Applicants should design projects so that demonstration, research, or training activities do not rely on construction. Portable or temporary equipment and demonstration materials that do not constitute construction may be allowable if they are necessary, reasonable, allocable, and otherwise consistent with the terms of the APS. Because the allowability of infrastructure-related costs depends on the specific scope and purpose of the proposed activity, applicants should clearly describe and justify such costs in their application and should not assume that site preparation, installation, modular structures, or agricultural demonstration facilities are allowable if they involve construction or permanent improvements to real property.

Q: What are the APS priorities or themes? A: Please refer to Section C of the APS for the program's stated goals and objectives, as well as the listed priority areas.

Q: Section A states that proposals may address sectors including energy development, but energy is not among the four priority areas. Where would an energy security project rank among the NOFO's priorities? A: New U.S. assistance projects in Egypt will advance U.S. objectives across multiple priority areas simultaneously. The Department welcomes proposals for energy security projects in Egypt.

Q: How important is innovation compared to proven implementation approaches? A: Proposals need a well-developed idea paired with a realistic, achievable delivery plan. This APS specifically seeks innovative foreign assistance programming, so we welcome creative and non-traditional approaches. The strongest proposals ground innovative ideas in a credible, proven implementation strategy rather than presenting either in isolation.

Q: Would you generally favor long-term, self-sustaining platforms over time-bound interventions? A: The Department values proposals that build durable, self-sustaining partnerships, and sustainability is a scored criterion worth 10 points. However, all projects must fit within the 12 to 36 month period of performance outlined in the APS. Proposals should describe how activities will continue to have a positive impact after the award ends, whether through institutional relationships, ongoing data sharing, or continued private sector engagement. Both long-term platforms and time-bound interventions are acceptable if they include a credible sustainability plan.

Q: What distinguishes a strong private-sector partnership? Is greater emphasis placed on financial contributions, in-kind support, technology transfer, market access, or long-term commercial commitments? A: A strong private sector partnership demonstrates existing or potential relationships with businesses that advance U.S. commercial interests while benefiting Egypt. The APS emphasizes orienting implementing partners and beneficiaries toward the American business community and fostering burden sharing, so partnerships should show a clear link to U.S. firms, products, or technology standards. Emphasis on financial contributions, in-kind support, technology transfer, market access, or long-term commercial commitments will vary depending on the specific concept area. Applicants should note that leveraged resources, such as existing relationships or technical expertise, are considered separately from formal cost sharing, which is not required under this APS. We encourage applicants to highlight all potentially available resources and benefits, as these will be considered during the review phase.

Q: What best demonstrates a strong U.S. commercial value proposition? A: The strongest commercial value propositions show a clear pathway to expanding U.S. exports and business opportunities in Egypt. This can include positioning U.S. businesses and products as the preferred choice for Egyptian partners, helping U.S. firms secure Egyptian government contracts or tenders, promoting adoption of U.S. technology standards and platforms, and engaging U.S. commercial partners directly in the project design. Proposals should clearly connect these commercial benefits to measurable outcomes for Egypt.

Q: What differentiates the strongest applications from technically compliant ones? Are there common shortcomings to avoid? A: The strongest applications go beyond technical compliance by including a realistic timeline and scope, well-justified budget, and a specific, measurable monitoring and evaluation plan rather than general statements of intent. Common shortcomings to avoid include vague partnership commitments without a clear engagement strategy, budgets that are not adequately detailed or justified, and proposals that address Egypt's needs without articulating how the project supports U.S. commercial and strategic objectives.

Q: Are concepts involving partnerships with private sector organizations focused on preparing high-growth Egyptian technology companies for institutional investment and future exits, and partnerships with e-commerce/digital trade platforms focused on expanding exports and strengthening Egypt's digital trade ecosystem, applicable under this APS? A: Partnerships along these lines could be applicable if they clearly connect to one of the APS priority areas. Applicants should explain how the proposed partnership advances the specific concept's objectives and expected results.

Q: Would it be acceptable for a proposal to address only one of the two pillars (Building an AI Workforce or Introducing EdTech in K-12 Schools), or should it address both? A: Proposals should, to the extent possible, aim to address all pillars outlined in the concept. The K-12 EdTech and AI workforce development components are designed as complementary and mutually reinforcing elements of a single human capital pipeline from foundational digital literacy to high-value technical employment. Proposals that integrate both pillars will be viewed most favorably. We recognize that applicants may have particular organizational strengths or partnership structures that lend themselves more heavily to one pillar. We will consider proposals that place greater emphasis on one pillar over the other, provided that the proposal meaningfully engages with both program areas in some capacity and articulates a clear rationale for the proposed scope. Applicants are encouraged to explore creative and partnership-driven approaches, for example, leveraging relationships with U.S. technology firms, Egyptian education authorities, or academic institutions that demonstrate how the proposed activities contribute to the broader goals of the concept, even where full coverage of both pillars is not feasible for a single implementer.

Q: Does the program include technical and vocational schools, or should it only target general education institutions? A: Proposals should primarily target the public K-12 general education system, as this is the foundational pipeline the concept is designed to strengthen. This system may encompass both the general and technical/vocational streams as students choose between these tracks upon entering grades 10–12 within the same public K-12 structure. Engagement with technical and vocational schools may therefore be considered as part of this pipeline, provided such engagement clearly fits within and reinforces the concept's core objectives of building digital literacy, STEM readiness, and pathways to high-value technical employment. Applicants should clearly explain how any proposed engagement with technical/vocational schools connects to and supports these objectives.

Q: Can we partner with the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology (MCIT) rather than the Ministry of Education (MoE) or the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MoHESR)? A: We welcome proposals that explore creative and innovative partnership approaches. Proposals should clearly explain how any ministerial partnerships, whether with MoE, MoHESR, MCIT, or a combination of these, will advance the concept's objectives and ensure effective coordination with relevant Egyptian counterparts. Proposals that demonstrate a coherent multi-stakeholder engagement strategy will be viewed favorably.

Q: What are the required or expected interactions, commitments, and alignment requirements with the Egyptian Ministry of Education? A: Specific engagement requirements with the Ministry of Education will be discussed during the negotiation and implementation stages. At this time, we are seeking proposals from partners with demonstrated knowledge of and experience working within the Egyptian education landscape. Applicants should propose an approach that reflects a realistic understanding of how to engage Egyptian government counterparts effectively and should articulate how they plan to build or leverage existing relationships with relevant ministries.

Q: Can an existing stand-alone implementer project delivery model be considered? A: We welcome a range of project delivery models and encourage applicants to propose approaches that reflect their organizational strengths and experience. Proposals should clearly articulate how the proposed delivery model will engage Egyptian government counterparts and institutional partners over the course of the project, even if those relationships are built progressively rather than prior to award issuance.

Q: Can we use existing platforms to disseminate training for teachers and administrators using U.S.-modeled instructional design practices? A: Applicants are encouraged to describe any existing platforms or tools they propose to use and explain how these align with the concept's objectives. Specific platform approvals and implementation details will be worked through during the negotiation and award process. Proposals should focus on articulating the tools, approach, and their potential impact.

Q: Do we need to use Ministry of Education platforms for communication and dissemination? Could we pilot the program first and then partner with MCIT or a university? Do we need a governmental partner early on? A: Proposals are not required to use Ministry of Education platforms for communication and dissemination. We will consider phased models that pilot activities before formalizing government partnerships. Proposals should clearly explain how government engagement will be achieved and on what timeline. Applicants who can demonstrate existing networks, relationships, or resources that would facilitate partnerships with relevant Egyptian government entities will be viewed favorably. The feasibility of the proposed partnership strategy is an important consideration in the review process.

Q: Would partnerships with selected school districts, private schools, and technical universities be required prior to development and deployment of the project? A: Formal partnerships with schools, districts, or universities are not required to be secured prior to proposal submission. However, applicants should clearly describe how they plan to establish these partnerships, including any existing relationships or networks they would leverage. As with government partnerships, proposals that demonstrate a credible and feasible strategy for securing institutional partnerships will be viewed favorably.

Q: Do we need to list and secure U.S. industry partners prior to submission of the proposal? A: U.S. industry partners do not need to be formally secured prior to proposal submission. Applicants should, however, describe their strategy for engaging U.S. commercial partners and explain how those partnerships will support the concept's goals of aligning training pipelines with U.S. private sector hiring needs and expanding the use of U.S.-origin technology platforms. Proposals that identify specific partners or demonstrate existing relationships will be viewed favorably.

Q: Can we consider one U.S. vendor for both campus and government deployment through a single platform? A: Proposals may consider a single U.S. vendor approach where it is well-justified and where the proposal demonstrates that the vendor's platform can meet the full scope of the concept's objectives across both the K-12 and workforce development pillars. Applicants should clearly explain the rationale for this approach and address how it ensures quality, scalability, and durability beyond the period of performance. The vendor will need to be reviewed and approved prior to any award issuance.

Q: Do we need to identify and choose a workforce accelerator (like career centers) at this stage for workforce placement partnerships? A: Applicants are not required to secure a specific workforce accelerator or career center partner prior to proposal submission. Proposals should, however, identify potential partners and describe the strategy for establishing labor market linkages and job placement support, consistent with the concept's emphasis on university career development centers and U.S. private sector alignment. Proposals that identify specific partners or demonstrate existing relationships in this space will be viewed favorably.

Q: Can the physical infrastructure be hosted outside of the premier Egyptian university, such as at a non-commercial/government-owned facility? A: The concept identifies a premier Egyptian university as an illustrative hosting location, but applicants are not limited to this model. We welcome proposals that make a compelling case for alternative hosting arrangements, including non-commercial or government-owned facilities, provided the proposed approach clearly advances the core objectives of the concept. Applicants should clearly justify their proposed hosting model and address any implications for security standards and institutional governance.