

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
Office of Assistance Coordination**

Assistance Listings Number: 19.600

Facilitating Social and Economic Inclusion for Repatriated Tunisians

Opportunity Number: [DFOP0016645]

Key Information:

Announcement Type:	New
Date Opened:	June 5, 2023
Deadline for Questions	June 22, 2024
Application Deadline:	July 11, 2024
Expected Date of Notification:	September 30, 2024
Federal Agency Contact:	NEA-Grants@state.gov

Funding Opportunity Synopsis

The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' Office of Assistance Coordination (NEA/AC) and Embassy Tunis Assistance Unit seek proposals to address the social and economic hurdles facing repatriated Tunisian migrants voluntarily or forcibly returning to their home country. The proposals should focus on women and youth who encounter barriers to education, social support systems, and employment. The proposals should address barriers to social inclusion, recognizing that the exclusion of repatriated Tunisian migrants from full participation in economic, social, and civic life as a result of the stigma attached to a perceived "failed attempt" at migration impedes equity, while fueling corruption, economic migration, and distrust. Proposals should aim to break the cycle of social and economic marginalization and exclusion among repatriated Tunisian migrants through targeted interventions and initiatives that create pathways to equity, inclusion, resilience, and opportunity.

All applications must be submitted in English. Complete information on how applicants can submit proposals for this opportunity can be found in Section VI below.

Applicants should read this NOFO in its entirety before writing their proposal and should refer to the full Evaluation Criteria provided in Section VII while drafting all materials.

Eligible Countries and Territories

In this announcement, we seek to support projects in Tunisia. Please note: Applications that focus on activities in countries and territories other than Tunisia will NOT be considered.

Background Information about NEA/AC

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of Assistance Coordination (NEA/AC) offers Federal assistance to groups and

individuals striving to bring about positive change in the Middle East-North Africa region. NEA/AC works in 19 countries and territories, partnering with governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), community leaders, youth and women activists and private sector groups to advance their efforts. Competitively selected projects aim to foster participatory governance, economic reform, and educational advancement in response to local interest and needs. NEA/AC is committed to advancing equity and support for disadvantaged and marginalized populations. All programs should consider strategies for expanding the pool of individuals/ organizations/ participants to afford opportunities for as diverse and inclusive a population as is feasible to bring perspectives based on religion, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, national origin, and age to implementation of the program.

Background Information about the U.S. Embassy in Tunisia

Since 2011, the United States, through the United States Embassy in Tunisia (Embassy Tunis) has supported Tunisia with economic, security, and governance assistance. The U.S. Embassy's Assistance Unit (AU) provides programming that responds to the needs of the Tunisian people to accelerate economic development and strengthen democracy. The AU works in coordination with other U.S. government agencies as well as the international community to advance Tunisian economic and governance reforms. The AU manages projects funded through Bilateral Funds, Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) local grants, and three MEPI leadership programs. To learn more about the AU, you can visit the following webpage: [Foreign Assistance Unit | U.S. Embassy in Tunisia \(usembassy.gov\)](https://usembassy.gov/foreign-assistance-unit/)

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APPENDICES (Posted with NOFO)**APPENDIX 1— Budget Sample Template and Budget Narrative Guidance****APPENDIX 2— Logic Model Template****APPENDIX 3— Application Guidance****APPENDIX 4— Results Monitoring Plan Template****APPENDIX 5 – Gender Analysis Guiding Questions**

I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

The Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs' Office of Assistance Coordination (NEA/AC) and Embassy Tunis Assistance Unit seek proposals to address the social and economic hurdles facing repatriated Tunisian migrants. Proposals should address barriers to social inclusion, recognizing that the exclusion of this stigmatized community from full participation in economic, social, and civic life impedes equity, while fueling desperation that can lead to distrust, criminal behavior, and/or economic migration. Proposals should aim to break the cycle of social and economic exclusion among this population through targeted interventions and initiatives that create pathways to equity, inclusion, resilience, and opportunity.

Proposals should contribute to the following overarching objectives from Tunisia's Integrated Country Strategy:

MISSION GOAL 1: Tunisia strengthens democratic institutions and increases citizen confidence in government responsiveness.

- Mission Objective 1.1: Tunisian government institutions uphold human rights, strengthen the rule of law, and expose and prosecute corruption.
- Mission Objective 1.2: Tunisian citizens and civil society understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities in a democratic system. (USAID CDCS)
- Mission Objective 1.3: Tunisian citizens, particularly youth, women, and other geographically marginalized populations, have equal access to government services and fully benefit from economic development.

A. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Tunisia, like many other countries, grapples with a range of social and economic hurdles that disproportionately affect its most vulnerable populations. Repatriated Tunisian migrants, encounter barriers to accessing education, employment, and social support systems, which perpetuate

cycles of social and economic marginalization and exclusion. Discrimination, limited opportunities, inadequate social services, and insufficient legal frameworks further compound their difficulties, fueling disenfranchisement which leads to desperate actions like irregular migration, crime, and in extreme cases, radicalization, and terrorism.

Repatriated Tunisian migrants face stigma and bias that impede their successful reintegration into society. Many of these migrants face significant challenges upon their return, including social stigma, difficulty in reintegration, and the same economic hardships that catalyzed their migration. The lack of adequate support mechanisms for repatriated Tunisian migrants exacerbates these challenges.

The inability to secure adequate housing, quality education, and access to vocational training programs hampers returning Tunisian migrants' capacity to gain the necessary skills to acquire and sustain employment. The lack of data to inform appropriate interventions to cater to their needs and absence of robust social support systems, including physical health and mental health services, rehabilitation programs, and welfare initiatives, leaves repatriated Tunisians without adequate assistance to address their unique needs. The combination of these factors exacerbates their vulnerability and perpetuates cycles of poverty.

B. ACHIEVABLE OBJECTIVES

A successful project must include, but does not need to be limited to:

1. Research and learning material that fills information gaps and leads to evidence-based project design and implementation, as evidenced by:
 - a. A needs assessment, including data collection and analysis on the beneficiary population characteristics, background, skills, ambitions, and needs, as well as the donor landscape and gaps in programming to meet the specific needs of this population
 - b. A project risk assessment that includes a feasibility study for working with the targeted population and ensuring protection

for vulnerable groups (e.g., children, unaccompanied minors, and survivors of violence)

- c. Resources developed and shared with key stakeholders to scale up advocacy efforts to promote inclusivity, equal rights, and opportunities for vulnerable populations
2. Beneficiaries improve their wellbeing, gain access to essential services (e.g., physical and mental health services, education, or vocational training, and skills development), and increase future employability and financial autonomy through:
- a. Inclusive educational and vocational training opportunities to mitigate the risk of involvement in illicit activities
 - b. Establishment of a psychological and psychotherapeutic support system
 - c. Increased awareness among participants of available services provided by shelter and community centers
 - d. Training for beneficiaries on the legal framework outlining legal pathways, rights, legal risks, and deterrent measures related to migration

Improved capacity of the Tunisian government to respond to the identified needs related to each community, as evidenced by:

- a. Leveraged governmental institutional resources to build the capacity and educate Tunisians on the needs of target population
- b. Robust coordination between governmental institutions, beneficiaries, and service providers to facilitate access to social services, education, vocational training, and economic participation initiatives
- c. Improved practices among government or organizational staff to manage the needs of repatriated Tunisian migrants
- d. Improved access to healthcare services through sensitization and improved coordination among institutional stakeholders

- e. Enhanced shelter capacity and resources to expand access to and cater to the immediate lodging needs of repatriated migrants

C. PROJECT DESIGN

This solicitation invites applications in support of increasing resilience of repatriated migrants and creating more sustainable solutions to their physical and psychological needs upon return to Tunisia. It also tackles the social and economic hurdles facing repatriated Tunisian migrants in terms of their need for vocational training, capacity building, and tailored economic approaches that address their unique capacities generating a more inclusive employment market.

Funds are available for a project that supports: 1) effective interventions that assist repatriated Tunisian migrants in reintegrating into their communities through both social and economic inclusion activities; 2) mitigation of the social and psychological impact of the failed journeys of repatriated Tunisian migrants and addresses initial reasons for migration attempts, facilitating reintegration into Tunisian society and the economic system; and 3) improves the social and economic resilience of repatriated Tunisian migrants.

Project activities must include:

1. A needs assessment responding to participants unique set of skills, ambitions, background, and needs within the Tunisian legal framework and government priorities
2. Mechanisms to improve social and economic integration, community bonds, and mental health including through partnerships and support networks
3. Mapping areas of intervention
4. Geographical assessment to identify priority regions for implementing pilot projects that are replicable, scalable, and sustainable
5. A system to ensure the viability and sustainability of economic opportunities that the project will support

Project beneficiaries must include:

1. Repatriated Tunisian migrants forcibly or voluntarily returning to their home country
2. Where possible, a majority of participants should be women and/or youth

The following activities and costs are **NOT ALLOWED** under this announcement:

- Exchange activities with other countries or territories;
- Paying to complete activities begun with other funds;
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns;
- Academic or analytical research (if not necessary as part of a larger project);
- One-time events, such as stand-alone conferences and one-off round tables;
- Medical and psychological research and clinical studies;
- Projects of a commercial or profit-making nature;
- Cultural presentations, cultural research, cultural clubs, or festivals, etc.; and
- Entertainment costs (e.g., receptions, social activities, ceremonies, alcoholic beverages, guided tours).

NOTE: Applications that include any of these activities or costs above may be eliminated at the Technical Eligibility Review stage and will not advance to the Merit Review Panel.

D. GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION INTEGRATION

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis require that all activities fully address intersectional gender and inclusion considerations, ensuring that individuals

of all genders, and diverse backgrounds¹ of benefit from support to the extent feasible, and that gender and inclusion awareness is a built-in component of project activities. This should be documented through gender and social inclusion analysis in the project narrative that identifies any relevant gender and inclusion gaps and ways the proposed activities will address those gaps. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing relevant gender and inclusion gaps will enhance the project's goals and objectives. Applicants who are unfamiliar with integrating gender in foreign assistance programing should view the training video located here:

https://encompassworld.com/elearningfiles/DOS/DOS_Gender_Integration_E-Course/story_html5.html

E. DEFINITIONS

The following are **definitions**² of activities accepted under this announcement:

Diversity:

The practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of a community.

Inclusion:

The active involvement and participation of individuals from diverse backgrounds within social, economic, and civic spheres. It involves creating an environment that values and respects the contributions of all individuals.

Social inclusion:

The process of ensuring that all individuals have equal access to opportunities, resources, and services, regardless of their background or circumstances. It aims to eliminate discrimination, promote equal participation, and create a sense of belonging for individuals from diverse backgrounds within society.

¹ Consideration of diversity of race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status.

² [Key Migration Terms, Migration Glossary | IOM, UN Migration](#)

Reintegration:

The process which enables individuals to re-establish the economic, social, and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood, and dignity and inclusion in civic life.

Equity:

The consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as ethnic minorities, and indigenous persons, members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Resilience:

The capacity of individuals and communities to withstand, adapt to, and recover from shocks, stresses, or challenges. Building resilience among marginalized communities involves implementing initiatives and interventions such as providing support systems, training programs, and resources to help them bounce back from adversity and ensure future independence.

Underserved communities:

Populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the preceding definition of “equity”.

Vulnerability:

The limited capacity to avoid, resist, cope with, or recover from harm. This limited capacity is the result of the unique interaction of individual, household, community, and structural characteristics and conditions.

Repatriated Tunisian Migrants:

Individuals who are Tunisian citizens who left Tunisia to another country

without the necessary authorization or documents required by immigration regulation and were sent back to Tunisia.

II. MEASUREMENT OF RESULTS

Applicants shall provide a Logic Model and a Theory of Change statement to demonstrate how the proposed project (including activities, the project design, and the surrounding context) will achieve the stated objectives, with particular attention to how your approach will reach individuals of diverse backgrounds relevant to your specific context. The Logic Model and Theory of Change statements can be generated using the template in **Appendix 2**. Please see Section VI below for more information.

Applicants may also provide an illustrative Results Monitoring Plan (RMP) to describe how the proposed project will capture and measure data that demonstrates progress toward achieving the specific objectives of the proposed project. This includes any disaggregation of indicators relevant to the specific sub-populations you intend to serve. The RMP may also include project-specific sub-objectives. **Please see Appendix 4** for the RMP template.

Successful applicants will work with the NEA/AC Program and Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning (MEL) and Embassy Tunis teams to create a RMP based on the proposed Logic Model to measure qualitative and quantitative indicators as part of the award negotiations process. The successful applicants will be responsible for collecting data against these indicators – which will be monitored throughout the period of performance of the award to gauge necessary modifications to the project’s design – and assess the results of the project’s success in meeting expected outcomes. A MEL Plan outlining the data collection plan and timeline will be required 90 days after issuance of award for review, feedback, and approval.

All projects funded as a result of this NOFO will be required to complete a mid-term and a final evaluation of the project at the end of the period of performance with support from the NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis M&E teams.

Below is a list of U.S. Department of State standard development indicators for foreign assistance that are commonly used for measuring and reporting program results. Not all indicators below will be applicable to the proposed project, though the applicant is encouraged to use them where relevant, in addition to customized indicators, in the development of the Logic Model and associated RMP. NEA/AC's and Embassy Tunis MEL teams will work with the successful applicant on finalizing indicators as part of a RMP that will be utilized for the negotiated award. The complete list of Foreign Assistance Standard Indicators, including the indicator reference sheets, is at the following link: <https://www.state.gov/foreign-assistance-resource-library/>

- EG.6-12: Percentage of individuals with new employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs
- EG.6-13: Percentage of individuals with improved soft skills following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs
- EG.6-14: Percent of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs
- EG.6-15: Percent of individuals with better employment following participation in USG-assisted workforce development programs
- EG.6-3: Number of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs.
- DR.6.3-1: Number of individuals from low income or marginalized communities who received legal aid or victim's assistance with USG support (see reference sheet for important guidance)
- ES.1-46: Percentage of individuals who transition to further education or training following participation in USG-assisted programs
- ES.4-1: Number of vulnerable persons benefiting from USG-supported social services
- ES.4-2: Number of service providers trained who serve vulnerable persons

- ES.4-3: Number of USG-assisted organizations and/or service delivery systems that serve vulnerable persons strengthened
- RESIL-1: Number of host government or community-derived risk management plans formally proposed, adopted, implemented or institutionalized with USG assistance
- RESIL-2: Percent of participants receiving USG assistance who feel their households are able to recover from shocks and stresses
- GNDR-2: Percentage of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)
- YOUTH-1: Number of youth trained in soft skills/life skills through USG assisted programs
- YOUTH-3: Percentage of participants who are youth (15-29) in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources
- YOUTH-5: Percentage of youth who participate in civic engagement activities following soft skills/life skills training or initiatives from USG assisted programs

III. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism Type: Cooperative Agreement

Estimated Number of Awards: 1

Estimated Total Program Funding:

Estimated Award Ceiling: \$3,220,000

Estimated Award Floor: \$3,000,000

Cost-Sharing or Matching: Encouraged; NOT Required

Estimated Length of Project Period: 3 Years

Contingent on the availability of funds, approximately \$3,220,000 in Economic Support Funds for approximately 1 award will be awarded through this announcement. If selected to receive an award, an applicant will be awarded funds for up to **3 Years**, depending on the activities and countries proposed. The estimated start date for this project is **October 1, 2024**.

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis reserve the right to award more or less than the estimated program funding and reserve the right to award funding under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date.

This request for full applications **does not** constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. government to make any awards, **nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.**

Non-Competing Continuation

Continuation grants funded under these awards, beyond the initial budget period, will be contingent upon the availability of funds; grantee's progress in meeting grant requirements, including timely submission of required reports and compliance with all terms and conditions of the award; timely submission of a request for additional funding; and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Department of State.

Pending successful implementation of this project for the initial estimated length of time as indicated above, and pending the availability of funds, NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis may extend this grant for additional time, not to exceed a five-year total project period. Please note that this NOFO requires that applicants submit additional budget materials to plan for potential out-years of non-competing continuations. See Section VI Application and Submission Information for more details.

IV. SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

Activities in which NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis Assistance Unit will be substantially involved include:

- *Approval of the project's partners;*
- *Approval of the mid-term and final evaluations;*
- *Review and approval of the annual M&E plan with an annual DQA;*
- *Approval of the selected participants;*
- *Approval of selected governorates;*
- *Approval of self-employed entrepreneurial initiatives;*
- *Approval of any public advocacy and awareness campaign strategy;*
- *Approval of the project's annual workplan with periodic reviews and performance assessments; and*
- *Review and approval of the M&E plan no later than 90 days after the project's launch with semiannual reviews, if deemed necessary.*

V. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

All applicants will be screened by NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis to determine whether they meet all of the program eligibility requirements detailed below.

NOTE: Applications that do not demonstrate that they meet all of the eligibility requirements in Section A and Section B will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage and may be deemed ineligible for funding under this announcement. Nothing can be added to an application once the competition deadline has passed.

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include:

- U.S. or foreign
 - Non-profit organizations;

- For-profit organizations;
- Private institutions of higher education;
- Public or state institutions of higher education;
- Public international organizations;
- Small businesses with function and regional experience in the areas of:
 - Economic governance, organization strengthening, and entrepreneurship in the MENA region.

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis are committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its programs and activities. NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis welcome applications irrespective of an applicants' race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. We encourage applications from organizations working with underserved communities, including women, people with disabilities, and youth.

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis strongly encourage applications from organizations headquartered in the Middle East and North Africa region with a presence in Tunisia. International non-governmental organizations with principal bases of operations outside the Middle East and North Africa are also encouraged to apply, but the percentage of total budget spent in the region through local partners may be among the elements of evaluation for this competition.

A.1. Prime Applicant

To be considered for funding under this opportunity, applicants SHALL:

- Have demonstrable previous experience working in the MENA region. This should be addressed within the project narrative section of your application.
- Have demonstrable previous experience working with inclusive and diverse populations. This should be addressed within the project narrative section of your application
- Demonstrate the ability to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) through a project team inclusive of Tunisian

nationals with previous experience managing Tunisia programming in the region reflected at all levels of project management

- Demonstrate the ability to engage the Government of Tunisia
- Demonstrate experience working on similar projects focused on economic empowerment and reintegration
- Meet ALL of the registration requirements listed below
- Meet any requirements listed as MANDATORY in *Additional Eligibility Considerations*, below.

A.2. Local Partners

Applicants are REQUIRED to include partnerships with local organizations as part of their project design for this NOFO. **Applicants who do not incorporate local partners in their proposal will be deemed ineligible and will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage.** Applicants should propose partners that would work together on specific programmatic objectives or priorities and that utilize local expertise. Partnerships may, but are not required to, take the form of sub-grants. The Prime should partner with organization(s) with previous local experience working with each of the three beneficiary groups.

B. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

To apply for NEA/AC (Federal) funding, organizations, whether based in or outside the U.S., must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and an active account with the System for Award Management (SAM). Applicants who do not meet all registration requirements are NOT eligible for funding under the opportunity.

UEI Number

All applicants must have a Unique Entity Identification (UEI) number.

Entities must register in SAM.gov and will be assigned their Unique Entity ID (SAM) within SAM.gov. Entities will no longer obtain or use a UEI (DUNS) for entity registration or reporting.

To obtain a UEI number, please follow the steps below:

Go to <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp>.

Select the country or territory where your organization is physically located.

Complete and submit the form. Organizations will need to provide basic information, including physical and mailing addresses, name and title of the chief executive, primary Standard Industrial Code (SIC)

(https://www.osha.gov/pls/imis/sic_manual.html), and annual revenue.

System for Award Management (SAM)

SAM is a U.S. government wide registry of vendors doing business with the Federal government and requires annual renewal. The system centralizes information about grant applicants/recipients and provides a central location for grant applicants/recipients to change organizational information.

Further, each applicant must maintain an active account, with current information, while its application is under consideration for funding. To keep an active SAM.gov account, an applicant must renew it at least once each year. **If an organization's account expires, the organization cannot submit a grant application until it is renewed.**

To create a new SAM account, go to <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

For help with SAM.gov, please visit their support page at <https://www.fsd.gov> or contact them at: 866-606-8220 (U.S.) or +1-334-206-7828 (international).

Note: Obtaining an active SAM.gov registration may take **12 - 15 business days** to complete the process of creating an account in the system.

C. ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

Cost-Sharing or Matching

There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, NEA/AC encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

All cost share or matching must be included in detail in the line-item budget and noted in the budget narrative. Proposals offering potential, yet-to-be-determined cost share sourcing will NOT be considered to have met this requirement, and will be deemed ineligible. When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, recipients must maintain written records to support all costs that are claimed as their contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB 2 CFR 200.306 – Cost Sharing and Matching.

VI. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

All applications must include the application components detailed below.

All application documents must be submitted in English. Applicants may submit only 1 application. Please refer to Section B below for additional submissions guidance and requirements.

We welcome applications that take a phased approach to implementation (e.g., beginning with an evaluation period and starting implementation with one or two beneficiary groups while preparing to scale to the other beneficiary group(s)).

NOTE: Applications that do not include all the required documentation described in Section 1 below will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage. Further, applications that exceed the allowable page limits will not be reviewed by the review panel. **Applicants may not add any materials to an application once it has been submitted and the competition deadline has passed.**

A.1. Required Documents

Federal Assistance Application Forms (SF-424 and SF424a)

Applicants must complete each of these forms online to be considered for funding.

Guidance on how to complete the SF-424 and SF424a is provided in Appendix 3. NOTE: In addition to following all guidance outlined below regarding application materials, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Application Evaluation Criteria section of this NOFO closely as they prepare their proposal. The Evaluation Criteria section is the rubric by which each application will be scored.

Project Narrative

The Project Narrative describes the efforts the applicant will undertake to address the priorities and goals of this announcement. It may **be no longer than 20 pages**. More details on preparing the Project Narrative are provided in Appendix 3. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Appendix 3 before preparing their Narrative.**

Budget & Budget Narrative Submission

Applicants must provide the following three elements as part of their budget submission:

- Summary Budget
- Detailed Line-Item Budget

- Budget Narrative

There is no page limit for this section of an application. A sample fillable template can be found in Appendix 1. This template includes three tabs: The first tab includes written guidance on preparing the **Budget Narrative**. Applicants are strongly encouraged to create their Budget Narrative in Word and submit as either a Word Doc or PDF file. Please note that the Budget Narrative should include designations of who is considered Key Personnel for this project. As defined in the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions (for assistance awards, Key Personnel means, “...*key professional and supervisory personnel; i.e., the members of the professional staff in a program supervisory position engaged for or assigned to duties under the award*”). The second tab has the template for the **Summary Budget**. This tab will auto-fill as you complete the Detailed Line-Item Budget, which can be found on the third tab. The third tab is where you can fill in the template for the **Detailed Line-Item Budget** as stated above. **NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as provided in the template, and to submit summary and detailed line-item budgets in Excel form, and the Budget Narrative as either a PDF or Word file.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample. The template, which includes more detailed instructions, can be found in Appendix 1. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Appendix 1 before preparing their Budget and Budget Narrative.**

Logic Model and Theory of Change

Applicants shall provide a Logic Model and Theory of Change to demonstrate how the proposed project (including activities, the project design, and the surrounding context) will achieve the stated objectives, with particular attention to how your approach will reach individuals of diverse backgrounds relevant to your specific context. A Theory of Change describes how and why a program is expected to achieve its stated outcomes using if-then-because language. If submitted, findings from the Gender & Inclusion Analysis (see A.2. Optional Documents) should be clearly

addressed in the program design and Logic Model. The Logic Model and Theory of Change can be generated using the template in **Appendix 2**.

NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample. If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample. This section **may be no longer than 3 pages**.

Results Monitoring Plan (RMP)

Applicants shall provide an illustrative Results Monitoring Plan (RMP). The RMP can be generated using the template in Appendix 4. **NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample. The RMP shall be submitted as a **separate document and has no page limit**.

Gender and Social Inclusion Analysis

The gender and social inclusion analysis (not to exceed three (3) pages, preferably as a Word Document) provides a concise analysis of relevant gender norms, equity and equality for underserved communities and marginalized populations, power relations, and conflict dynamics in target countries. Potential domains of analysis include institutional practices and barriers, cultural norms, gender roles, access to and control over assets and resources, and patterns of decision-making. Applicants should briefly explain how they have integrated findings from their analysis into project design and/or other proposal documents, including a plan for regularly reviewing and updating the gender and social inclusion analysis with local partners/ participants, and making any necessary adjustments to program implementation. A set of guiding questions can be found in Appendix 5.

Project Timeline

Applicants must provide an overall breakdown of the order and timeframe in which all project activities will take place. This item should provide a macro snapshot of what will take place from beginning to end of the project.

Applicants must ensure that the timeline of activities/events corresponds with details provided in the Project Narrative and Logic Model / Theory of Change. This section **may not exceed 2 pages**.

Sustainability Plan

Applicants must provide a sustainability plan outlining how the proposed project will be sustained beyond the initial award period. More information on preparing the Sustainability Plan is provided in **Appendix 3**. Sustainability Plans may not exceed **2 pages**.

Security, Risk Mitigation, & Contingency Planning Summary: This item should provide detail regarding the applicant's intended due diligence to assess and mitigate risks, and put in place adequate security measures to ensure the safety and well-being of project staff, participants, and partners, if applicable. This should include specific actions by the applicant to ensure risks are adequately and routinely assessed, and that security measures are commensurate with operational concerns specific to the locale. The applicant should also include a contingency plan that highlights potential challenges and limitations to project implementation in the operating environment and propose contingency plans should program activities be impacted. Please note that this section should not be limited to physical security and risk but should cover any applicable factors relevant to the given operating environment. This section **may not exceed 5 pages**

Letters of Agreement or Letters of Intent: Applicants proposing partner organizations and/or government bodies should include Letters of Intent or Letters of Agreement from their proposed partners.

Job Descriptions / Biographical Info for Key Personnel Positions

For each position designated as key personnel for this project, applicants must provide the following:

1. If the position is already filled: Provide brief biographical information summarizing the person's qualifications, as well as a brief description of the roles or responsibilities pertaining to this project.

OR

2. If the person to fill a key position has not yet been hired: Provide a brief summary of the job description, which should include a description of the roles and responsibilities pertaining to this project, as well as a description of qualifications of eligible candidates.

NOTE: If an applicant is proposing sub grant partner(s) as part of their project design, **Key Personnel/Positions of the sub grantee must also be included.** This section of the application **may not exceed 5 pages.**

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

Applicants proposing indirect costs in the Budget greater than a 10% de minimis rate must provide a copy of their Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). This item will not be counted toward any page limits.

A.2. Optional Documents

Applicants may submit additional documents for consideration with their application. These documents are not required and there is a 10-page limit for this section of the application. Below are examples of some additional documents an applicant may wish to submit.

1. **Organizational Chart:** The organizational chart outlines the clear lines of responsibility and authority in the applicant organization to include budgeted level of effort listed by each person.

NOTE: Applicants must adhere to all maximum allowed page counts. Applications that exceed any of the allowable page limits will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage.

B. APPLICATION FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

The required font is 15-point, Calibri. All application documents must be single spaced, with all margins (left, right, top, and bottom) of at least one inch each. These settings do not apply if using provided templates.

Applicants should ensure all pages in the application package are numbered consecutively and meet the page limit requirements outlined in Section VI above. **The Standard Forms 424 (SF-424 and SF-424a) are excluded from the page numbering.**

It is strongly recommended that applicants submit grant applications using Microsoft Office. If applicants do not have access to Microsoft Office products, Adobe PDF files may be submitted.

C. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applicants must submit their application electronically using MyGrants. Applications will **NOT** be accepted from grants.gov. MyGrants requires that the applying organization have an account with the system and both require a UEI number and SAM.gov account as detailed in Section V. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they have an active account and will be able to submit its application.** There are no exceptions to these requirements.

The application process is not complete until the applicant receives notification that its application has been validated and forwarded to the granting agency (NEA/AC). Please allow sufficient time for entering the application into these systems. It is the responsibility of the applicant to monitor its application to ensure that it is successfully received and validated.

MyGrants

MyGrants is a comprehensive grants management system that allows applicants to apply for, manage, and report on the use of U.S. government

funds for multiple programs, accessed online at <https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com/mygrants> .

To create an account, go

to <https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com/mygrants> , and click the “Create An Account” hyperlink, located below the new user prompt, then click the "Create a MyGrants Applicant/Grantee Account" button. Users will be directed to a page entitled “User Registration Request”; complete the online form and click the “Submit” button. Users will receive an activation email entitled “Verify Your Grants Account Registration”; click the activation link within the email to receive a username and password.

MyGrants has resources available to educate users about the system. These documents can be found on the Support tab upon logging into the system.

For questions regarding creating an account or using MyGrants to submit an application, contact the ILMS Help Desk. The Help Desk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding Federal holidays. The ILMS Help Desk utilizes a user-facing ticketing interface that allows users to submit and monitor their MyGrants tickets. The ILMS Self Service Portal can be accessed by going to <https://afsitsm.servicenowservices.com/ilms/>.

ILMS Help Desk

(888) 313-ILMS (4567)

<https://afsitsm.servicenowservices.com/ilms/>

D. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Applications must be time stamped before 17:00:00 eastern time (ET) on [July 11, 2024](#) There will be no grace period, and any application not received by the application deadline will be deemed ineligible and will not advance to be reviewed. **Each applicant is encouraged to submit an application far enough in advance of the deadline so that the applicant can alert NEA/AC (nea-grants@state.gov) of any technical difficulties and allow sufficient time to resolve difficulties before the deadline.** Although

NEA/AC will work with applicants to resolve technical issues, there are no exceptions to the submission requirements outlined in this announcement.

VII. FUNDING LIMITATIONS, RESTRICTIONS, AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A. AWARDS TO COMMERCIAL FIRMS OR FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Department of State prohibits profit under its assistance awards to commercial organizations. No funds will be paid as profit to any recipient that is a commercial organization. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR Part 31. Program income earned by the recipient may be:

- added to the total of the amount of this award, including the required cost sharing or matching, and use it to further eligible project objectives;
- used to meet the Recipient's cost sharing or matching requirement;
- OR deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

B. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

Domestic and foreign organizations that expend \$750,000 or more in a fiscal year in federal assistance must perform an independent, recipient-contracted Single Audit or Program Specific Audit. (**Program-specific Audit** means an audit of one Federal award program. **Single Audit** means an audit which includes both the entity's financial statements and the Federal Awards to be conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). The audits must be

independently and professionally executed in accordance with GAGAS either prescribed by a government's Supreme Audit Institution with auditing standards approved by the Comptroller General of the United States, or the host country's laws or adopted by the host country's public accountants or associations of public accountants, together with generally accepted international auditing standards. However, foreign entity audits consistent with International Standards for Auditing or other auditing standards are acceptable with the Grants Officer's approval. More information can be found at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693136.pdf>

For sub-non-Federal entities expending \$750,000 or more in Department of State award funding during their fiscal year, Department of State standard audit provisions require that Prime non-Federal entities certify that audits of sub-non-Federal entities are performed annually and according to the standards described above. The cost of audits required under this policy may be charged either as an allowable direct cost to the award OR included in the organizations established indirect costs in the award's detailed budget.

C. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL FUNDING REGULATIONS AND DOS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Payment of funds awarded under this Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be disbursed until the DOS has been assured that the Recipient's financial management system will provide effective control over and accountability for all Federal funds in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600 as applicable. Awards issued under this NOFO are subject to the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions (<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/U.S.-Department-of-State-Standard-Terms-and-Conditions-10-21-2020-508.pdf>) and 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600 as applicable.

VIII. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Each application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below. The criteria are designed to assess the quality of the application and to determine the likelihood of its success and impact. The criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Applications will be reviewed on the basis of their fullness, coherence, clarity, and attention to detail. Points are awarded only to applications that are responsive within the context of this program announcement.

A. APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Achievable Objectives (30 points)

Each of the project objectives listed above (in Section I) are clearly addressed.

- Impact and Effectiveness: The applicant describes the project's potential contribution to solving the problem addressed in the problem statement and achieving results.
- Timeframe: The applicant describes realistic results to be accomplished within the timeframe of the proposed award.
- Beneficiaries: The applicant clearly identifies the anticipated beneficiaries and explains how the project's objectives will positively affect them.
- Milestones: The applicant provides realistic milestones to indicate progress toward goals and objectives as described in the program announcement.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning: The applicant explains how monitoring and evaluation activities will be carried out throughout the award's period of performance and who will be responsible for them.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning: The applicant explains how monitoring and evaluation activities will be carried out throughout the award's period of performance and who will be responsible for them. The applicant includes a final evaluation of the project at the completion of the award.

- Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning: The applicant includes a midline evaluation of the project to inform the use of option years.
- Monitoring, Evaluation, & Learning: The applicant includes an endline evaluation of the project at the completion of the award.

Project Design (40 points)

The applicant clearly describes how each proposed project activity will address each of the objectives outlined in the requested priority area above (Section I).

- Responsiveness to NOFO: Explain how the proposed activities respond to the objectives listed in the NOFO.
- Rationale: To justify how the proposed activities will achieve the above objectives in this context.
- Project Management: Clear description of how the project will be managed in terms of initiation, planning, implementation and closing.
- Partnerships and Buy-ins: The applicant addresses how the project will engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders and identifies any local partners.
- Feasibility: The applicant proposes activities that are feasible, and are also practical, and/or experiential in nature to encourage innovation.
- Beneficiary Selection Criteria and Process: The applicant explains how beneficiaries will be selected (e.g., criteria for selection, selection process).
- Duplication: The applicant acknowledges if activities similar to those proposed are already taking, or have taken place previously, and provides an explanation as to how proposed new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing/recent activities.
- Contingency Plan: The applicant articulates programming assumptions and potential challenges to project implementation and proposes contingency plans.
- Division of Labor: The application describes the division of labor among the applicant and any partners.

- **Marginalized Populations:** The applicant identifies and addresses support for marginalized populations in all proposed activities and objectives and provides specific means for their inclusion.
- **Gender and Inclusion Considerations:** The applicant includes gender and inclusion analysis in the project narrative that identifies relevant gender and inclusion gaps and ways the proposed activities will address those gaps. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing relevant gender and inclusion gaps will enhance the program's goals and objectives and how the project will benefit individuals of all genders and diverse backgrounds.
- **Logic Model and Theory of Change:** The applicant details how the proposed Logic Model and Theory of Change/Program Logic statement clearly links project activities, outputs, and outcomes to objectives. If applicable, findings from the Gender and Inclusion Analysis are clearly addressed within the program design.
- **Results Monitoring Plan (RMP):** The applicant details how they intend to monitor project progress towards outputs, outcomes, and objectives. Indicators include relevant disaggregation to monitor program implementation for diverse populations.

Organizational Capacity (20 points)

- The applicant demonstrates experience (e.g., has previously worked and/or has established contacts/partners) in Tunisia.
- The applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successful programs in the content area proposed (social and economic issues faced by marginalized communities).
- The applicant demonstrates experience working equitably with individuals of all genders and diverse backgrounds.
- The applicant demonstrates capacity for responsible fiscal management of donor funding (e.g., successful management of a previous sub-award or grant).
- The applicant demonstrates the ability to meet monitoring and evaluation requirements.

- The applicant has adequate staffing and demonstrates the capacity to manage the proposed project.
- The applicant includes letters of intent/commitment/agreement from any proposed partners.
- The applicant understands the legal framework and policies that govern work with the target populations in Tunisia and/or includes partnerships with organizations who do.

Staff and Position Specifications (10 points)

- Pre-identified key staff members, including volunteers, demonstrate experience working in the country/territory/region proposed, in the proposed content area, and with participants from that area (e.g., language skills, cultural understanding).
- A description of the roles of each person or position on the project – whether staff, partner, consultant, or volunteer – demonstrating that the project will be sufficiently staffed but will avoid redundancy or duplication of effort.
- A job description, including hiring criteria, is provided for each open key position.
- Applicant and/or partner staff have relevant language competencies.
- The applicant convincingly details how it will incorporate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles in its approach to staffing.

Budget & Budget Narrative (Acceptable or Not Acceptable)

- The costs proposed are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results, which are clearly explained in the budget narrative.
- The budget provides details of calculations, including estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated.
- The preponderance of the budget is spent on supporting the project

participants/activities in country.

- The budget includes costs dedicated to management, monitoring, and evaluation, and any costs needed for further gender analysis and for addressing gender gaps.
- Adequate travel costs are proposed.
- The budget demonstrates a reasonable cost per participant.
- The budget accounts for monitoring and evaluation costs.

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis are committed to ensuring a competitive and standardized process for awarding funding. Applications will be screened initially in a Technical Eligibility Review stage to determine whether applicants meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section V and have submitted all required documents outlined in Section VI. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not advance beyond the Technical Eligibility Review stage and will be deemed ineligible for funding under this NOFO.

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis reserve the right to have all applications deemed to be technically eligible undergo a Subject Matter Expert (SME) review prior to the Merit Review Panel. Applications that do not pass SME review will not proceed to the Merit Review Panel.

All applications that proceed to the Merit Review Panel will be evaluated by U.S. government and non-governmental subject matter and/or country-specific experts and will be rated on a 100-point scale. Point values for individual elements of the application are presented in Section VIII. Panel Reviewers' ratings, and any resulting recommendations, are advisory.

Final award decisions will be influenced by whether the application meets NEA/AC's programmatic goals and objectives, how it supports the Department's overarching foreign policy priorities, and the geographic distribution of the top-ranking applications.

IX. ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

Applicants who do not advance beyond the Technical Eligibility Review stage will be notified 30 business days after the closing of the announcement. The authorized representative and program point of contact listed on the SF-424 will receive the notification via email. If an applicant does not receive such a notification, their submission was put forward for review.

NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis expect to notify applicants who proceeded past the Technical Eligibility Review stage about the status of their application by September 30, 2024. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application. NEA/AC reserves the right to award funding to applicants under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date.

B. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reporting is critical to effective program management and oversight. Reports are required as a means of evaluating the recipient's progress and utilization of resources. They are divided between a performance progress report and a financial status report.

Recipients will, at a minimum, be required to submit Quarterly Performance Reports (QPR) and a Quarterly Financial Report (QFR). The QPRs will compare actual to planned performance and indicates the progress made in accomplishing each assistance award tasks/goals noted in the grant agreement and will contain analysis and summary of findings, both quantitative and qualitative, for key indicators. The QFRs provide a means of monitoring expenditures and comparing costs incurred with progress.

Recipients must report ***immediately*** when a program faces unplanned delays in implementation, fails to meet program targets or milestones, or costs increase. Any changes or revisions to the approved budget require prior approval from the NEA/AC Grants Officer.

Recipients are required to report program and beneficiary achievements on a quarterly basis (or provide written confirmation that there is no related news for the given quarter) beginning with second quarter's program report.

C. TRAVEL NOTIFICATIONS

Successful applicants will be required to provide prior notification of all international travel as a requirement of their agreement. This includes travel which is already included in the approved budget and Scope of Work. The purpose of this notification is to enable NEA/AC to inform the relevant U.S. Embassy or post of the recipient's intent to travel. The recipient must notify the Grants Officer at least three (3) business days prior to any travel. The Grants Officer reserves the right to advise against specific travel arrangements for security-related reasons.

D. APPLICANT VETTING AS A CONDITION OF AWARD

N/A

E. BRANDING AND MARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTEES

Grantees awarded under this announcement will be required to make all materials produced under the award with the standard U.S. flag in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity.

Materials are defined as but not limited to: training materials, materials for recipients, or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under this award, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, event backdrops, podium signs, etc. In addition, sub-recipients or sub-awardees are subject to the marking requirements and the grantee shall include a provision in the sub-recipient or sub-awardee's agreement indicating that the standard, rectangular U.S. flag is a requirement. Exceptions to this requirement can be discussed with NEA/AC and Embassy Tunis Assistance Unit when negotiating an award.

F. UEI NUMBER REQUIREMENT FOR SUB AWARDEES

All sub-awardees are required to have a UEI number. For information on obtaining a UEI number, please see Section V. B. **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.**

G. SUB AWARDEE REPORTING REQUIREMENT

Grantees awarded under this announcement will be required to report all sub-awardees receiving funds of \$25,000 or more to <http://www.fsrs.gov>. More information about this requirement can be found at this site.

X. AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this funding opportunity including: completing an application, financial and grants management issues, or technical matters, contact:

nea-grants@state.gov

All questions must be submitted in writing to nea-grants@state.gov by **June 22, 2024** at 17:00:00 eastern time (ET). NEA/AC will create a document of the submitted questions along with the answers and post it on Grants.gov only. Questions submitted after the deadline will not be addressed.

For questions regarding creating an account or using MyGrants to submit an application, contact the ILMS Help Desk. The Help Desk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding Federal holidays. The ILMS Help Desk utilizes a user-facing ticketing interface that allows users to submit and monitor their SAMS Domestic tickets. The ILMS Self Service Portal can be accessed by going to <https://afsism.servicenowservices.com/ilms/>.

ILMS Help Desk

(888) 313-ILMS (4567)

<https://afsism.servicenowservices.com/ilms/>

XI. DISCLAIMER

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the bureau that contradicts public language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements listed in this NOFO.