



July 13, 2014

**USAID/EGYPT
ANNUAL PROGRAM STATEMENT (APS)
CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM IN EGYPT
APS-263-14-000008**

SUBJECT: QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Dear all prospective applicants:

Below are USAID's responses to the Questions regarding Annual Program Statement APS No: 263-14-000008, Cultural Heritage Tourism in Egypt dated June 16, 2014.

If you have any questions, please free to contact me via email acarrera@usaid.gov or Mervat Nakhla, Acquisition Specialist via email mnakhla@usaid.gov.

Sincerely,

\s\
Albert E. Carrera
Agreement Officer

QUESTION #1. Are all international and local partners eligible to apply?

ANSWER: Yes. All international and local partners are eligible to apply.

Q#2 May an organization be included in more than one submission with different consortiums?

ANSWER: Yes. However, it is recommended that applicants submit their strongest program application, as oppose to multiple applications, based on the evaluation criteria set forth in the APS.

Q#3. Can the grant cover the cost of construction related to preservation, protection and visitor center?

ANSWER: Yes.

Q#4. Are non-Egyptian individuals eligible to work on the project?

ANSWER: Yes. Non-Egyptian individuals eligible to work on the project, but individual are not eligible to apply for awards under this APS. All international and local partners are eligible to apply.

Q#5. Is a company registered and operating in Egypt eligible as prime and/or partner?

ANSWER: Yes. All international and local partners are eligible to apply.

Q#6. Are government institutions/ ministries eligible for partnership in the consortium?

ANSWER: Yes. The type and level of cooperation with government entities should be stated in the submitted application. Any questions about the type and/or type of cooperation with government entities will be address at the evaluation stage.

Q#7. The organization registration steps on the Grants.gov website; which includes:

STEP 1: Obtain DUNS Number
STEP 2: Register with SAM
STEP 3: Username & Password
STEP 4: AOR Authorization
STEP 5: Track AOR Status

Would the applicant need to go through those five steps?

ANSWER: Yes. Every organization applying for a grant from the U.S. Government must register in accordance with the steps above. More guidance on registration is available on the website.

Q#8. Page 2 of APS: “to the extent that US dollars are required to fund any part of a proposal, organizations should state the need in their applications and propose how they plan to convert the egp into U.S. dollars”

How should the need be stated? Ex; present estimated costs that will be paid in us dollars in a separate column in their budgets, along with a column showing conversion from dollars to egp at

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the current bank rate? What if the local currency devalues over the budget period, as this will have a negative impact on actual expenditure vs. budget.

ANSWER: Applicants may state the need for dispersment in USD and their plan to convert the EGP into USD in the appropriate line item in the “Notes” section in the Detailed Budget. In this sections, include the currency exchange rate applied. Budget template is included as an attachment to the APS.

In the case of local currency devaluation, an upward adjustment to the stated agreement price may occur subject to the availability of funding.

Q#9. Page 2 of APS: “USAID/Egypt anticipates making up to 10 grants through this APS.”

In the event that an applicant envisions several small and a few large program activities, is it correct to assume it would be best for the applicant to bundle all projects into one proposal, rather than submit separate proposals?

ANSWER: Yes. Applicants should propose project activities, large and/or small, that support an overarching program objective in line with list of priorities stated in the APS. It is recommended that applicants submit their strongest program application, as oppose to multiple applications, based on the evaluation criteria set forth in the APS.

Q#10. Page 4 of APS: “Geographical preference will be given to proposed activities in Cairo, Alexandria, Luxor and Aswan”. If the applicant has proven history in other locations in Egypt, will this have an adverse effect on proposal evaluation?

ANSWER: No, not necessarily. Other areas (outside of Cairo, Alexandria, Luxor and Aswan) will be considered. Geographic area(s) of the program should be addressed in Program Summary of the application. Among other factors, the geographic area of the program will be evaluated under appropriate evaluation criteria set forth in the APS.

Q#11. Page 9 of APS: “USAID will review applications on a rolling basis as they are received before August 15, 2014 for Round One of the APS”

Does this mean that USAID will only review – or will review and make awards for successful applications? Clarification of this phrase will determine whether it is advantageous to submit proposals well in advance of the deadline.

ANSWER: USAID will review applications as they are received up to the deadline (August 15, 2014) of Round One of the APS. Clarification questions may be asked prior to the deadline date. However, no awards will be granted before the deadline date for Round One.

Q#12. Are the amounts mentioned in the APS in US Dollars or Egyptian Pounds?

ANSWER: The funding amounts for award under this APS (see full announcement) will be in Egyptian Pounds (EGP). Subject to the availability of funds, a total of up to 165 million EGP are expected to be available to support activities under this APS. It is expected that EGP grants will range in value from 2.13 million to 63.9 million EGP. Generally, the currency for the grant will be EGP. To the extent that U.S. Dollars (USD) are required to fund any part of the proposal, organizations should state the need in their applications and proposed how they plan to convert the EGP into USD. Applicants must provide the reason and justification for USD and what it will cost for the conversion.

Q#13. Is there any adjustment for inflation allowed in the budget planning?

ANSWER: Applicants may include adjustment for inflation in their budget planning so long as it is clearly explained in the basis of estimate in the Detailed Budget and Notes.

Q#14. Can one applicant submit multiple proposals?

ANSWER: Applicants should propose project activities, large and/or small, that support an overarching program objective in line with list of priorities stated in the APS. It is recommended that applicants submit their strongest program application, as oppose to multiple applications, based on the evaluation criteria set forth in the APS.

Q#15. Under the Application Process, Step One, Program Summary, it is stated that the applicants should “Provide evidence that relevant permits and licenses can be obtained from the Ministry of Antiquities and other relevant Government of Egypt bodies”. Can you please clarify what type of evidence is expected? Do we need to identify the relevant GoE bodies, and discuss the project with them before submission?

ANSWER: Projects implemented at heritage sites will require relevant government approvals. Evidence of initial government approval can be provided in several forms. Below are examples for clarification but any other reasonable evidences will also be given serious consideration.

- Possible correspondence or communication with the relevant government body indicating anything from potential consideration of the project if an award is granted, up to granting approval or support;
- Proposing a new or additional phase of a previous intervention where government had approved or partnered in implementation, with a likelihood of supporting next phases; and/or
- Proposed project meets a declared or acknowledged government need through media or public assessment or research.

Q#16. Would religious sites fall under the purview of USAID's Cultural Heritage Tourism Project in Egypt?

ANSWER: There are no prohibitions on funding religious sites, so long as the focus of the proposed project is to address historical/cultural values that serve the entire community.

Q #17: It is noticed in the budget format attached at to the APS solicitation document, the column to the right of the one headed "Year 3 Egyptian Pounds" says "# of months Egyptian Pounds." Does the entry -- # of months - refer to the partial year if the proposed budget intends to go for the maximum of 42 months?

ANSWER: Yes.

Q#19. Will this award be made under the bilateral agreement between the US and Egypt? If not, what status will each project have? Or will each awardee be responsible for securing its own status in country?

ANSWER: This APS falls under a bilateral agreement. Each partner is responsible for determining status in country and appropriate compliance with applicable laws.

Q#20. Will expatriate staff be allowed standard expatriate allowances?

ANSWER: Depends. Expatriate staff will be afforded allowances in accordance with their organization's policies and procedures and applicable cost principles.

Q#21. The APS states it is part of the Sustainable Investment in Tourism in Egypt (SITE) project. What other components of SITE are under consideration? When does the mission anticipate releasing solicitations for other components?

ANSWER: Please refer to the USAID Business Forecast for future procurement: <http://www.usaid.gov/work-usaid/get-grant-or-contract/business-forecast>.

Q#23. How will APS recipients be expected to work with other SITE components?

ANSWER: All USAID funded projects are expected to coordinate whenever cross cutting areas are identified.

Q#24. What is the anticipated award date for successful applicants?

ANSWER: October 2014.

Q#25. What is the anticipated project start date for successful applicants?

ANSWER: November 2014.

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Q#26. Does USAID have specific international standards of conservation in mind? If yes, which one(s)?

ANSWER: No specific standards have been outlined in this solicitation.

Q#27. Is an illustrative or draft PMP due at the time of submission? If yes, may it be submitted as an Annex?

ANSWER: No. This document will be requested after the initial review of applications and applicants are selected.

Q#28. Are applicants required to submit a branding strategy and marking plan with their application? If so, may it be submitted in an Annex?

ANSWER: No. This document will be requested after the initial review of applications and applicants are selected.

Q#29. The APS states that “Individual grant PMPs must contribute to the overall APS PMP.” May applicants have a copy of the Mission’s PMP since awardees will be expected to contribute toward it?

ANSWER: The Mission PMP will be provided upon award.

Q#30 For illustrative purposes in the proposal, may applicants articulate their own intermediate results?

ANSWER: Yes, but it is not necessary.

Q#31. USAID does not provide percentage weights given to the evaluation criteria. (Section B. Step2: USAID Review of Application) How will USAID weigh the following:

- a. Technical Merit overall and the individual components: Strategic Fit; Sustainability, and Gender,
- b. Organizational and Team Capability,
- c. Past performance, and
- d. Cost effectiveness?

ANSWER: No specific percentages are given to the evaluation criteria. The three main evaluation factors to be considered are listed in descending order of importance: Technical Merit, Organizational and Team Capacity and Past Performance. Cost effectiveness is a significant factor but of less importance than the non-cost factors.

Q#32 The APS requests only one CV, for the project director or equivalent named as key personnel. Does the project director’s CV count toward the 13-page limit? May the project director’s CV be included as an Annex?

ANSWER: No, CVs for project director or equivalent named as key personnel does not count towards the page limit and may be included in an annex.

Q#33 May CVs for other proposed staff be included as an Annex? What format or page limits does USAID require for CVs, if any?

ANSWER: Yes, CVs for other proposed staff may be included in an annex. There is no format or page limit for CVs.

Q#34. The APS states that the application is “not to exceed 13 pages in total.” May the application include a title page, table of contents, and list of acronyms/abbreviations? If yes, will USAID confirm which of these may be included and that they will not count toward the 13 page limit?

ANSWER: Yes, non-substantive sections such as cover page, table of contents, and list of acronyms/abbreviations may be included in the application and will not be counted towards the page limit.

Q#35. Is there a limit to the size of files that can be transmitted? If yes, what is the limit?

ANSWER: Attachments should not be larger than 5-7mb. Emails should not be larger than 20mb. USAID does not assume any responsibility for the system rejecting emails/attachments because they are too large.

Q#36. Should the technical proposal and any annexes be submitted in PDF or WORD format or both?

ANSWER: Technical Proposal should be submitted in both MS Word and PDF format. Annexes may be submitted in PDF.

Q#37. Since there is no page limit given for PPRs, may applicants assume that PPRs may be submitted as an Annex? (A. Step 1.3)

ANSWER: Yes, past performance references (PPRs) may be submitted as an annex.

Q#38. May budget notes be included as an Annex?

ANSWER: Any explanatory information should be incorporated in the Notes section of the Budget (see template).

Q#39. The APS states “Describe your organization’s technical and administrative capabilities and past experience in conducting programs similar to the one proposed.” (Application Process A. Step One 2.) Could USAID please confirm that a narrative summary of the applicant’s past performance should be included as part of the 13-page technical application, while past performance references (PPRs) should be included as an Annex?

ANSWER: Yes, a narrative summary of applicant’s past performance should be included as part of 13-page technical application, while past performance references should be included as an annex.

Q#40. The APS states “Describe any partnership, consortium or coalition arrangements for the purposes of achieving the proposed results.” (Application Process A. Step One 2.) Could USAID please confirm that a narrative summary of the applicant’s partnership, consortium or coalition arrangements should be included as part of the 13-page technical application, while letters of commitment or PPRs may be included as an Annex?

ANSWER: Yes, a narrative summary of applicant’s partnership, consortium or coalition arrangements should be included as part of 13-page technical application, while letters of commitment or past performance references should be included as an annex.

Q#41. Is there a limit to the number of PPRs the prime may submit? If yes, how many?

ANSWER: No, but it is suggested to include past performance references (PPRs) within the past five years.

Q#42. Must the prime submit PPRs for proposed partners or subs? If yes, how many per partner or sub?

ANSWER: Yes, prime must submit past performance references for proposed partners or subs. It is suggested to include past performance references within the past five years.

Q#43. The cost proposal must be prepared in EGP; can the award be made in USD to US-based prime awardees?

ANSWER: No, awards made under this APS will be in local currency, Egyptian Pounds (EGP). Applicants may propose to convert EGP to US Dollars (USD) to fund any part of their proposal; however they must provide the reasons and justification for the USD and what it will cost for the conversion.

Q#44. Can the final award contain a fixed exchange rate from EGP to USD for the life of the award?

ANSWER: No, the award will not include a fixed exchange rate from EGP to USD for the life of the award. However, in the case of local currency devaluation, an upward adjustment to the stated agreement price may occur subject to the availability of funding.

Q#45. Can awardees with a Letter of Credit (LOC) from the USG use their LOC for payment/funding of the award?

ANSWER: No, letter of credit is not the preferred method of payment for these awards under the APS.

Q#46. If LOCs are not permitted, can invoices be submitted and paid in USD to a US-based bank account?

ANSWER: No, all disbursements will be made in local currency.

Q#47. Should the budget cover the midterm and final evaluation costs?

ANSWER: No, the midterm and final evaluation will be planned and procured by USAID.

Q#48. The APS states “The payment of any local taxes and fees shall be included as a cost share”. (B4 Cost Effectiveness) In addition, C5 Cost sharing states “where applicable include any customs duties, sales taxes, social insurance taxes or other applicable local taxes and fees paid by the applicant that are directly related to the proposed grant will be included as a cost-share for the grant.”

- a. Do these statements mean that the payment of Egyptian taxes as mandated by Egyptian law is not allowable costs under this award?

ANSWER: It means payment of any mandated Egyptian taxes will be paid by the grantee and considered part of the project "cost share".

- b. Do these statements mean that fees to non-government vendors/subcontractors are not allowable costs under this award?

ANSWER: Specific fees will need to be better defined to determine whether the cost is allowable.

- c. If not, what is the Mission’s intention vis-à-vis the statement?

ANSWER: The statement is made to encourage "cost sharing".

Q#49. In considering the two-page budget limit and the cost categories (staff, training/workshops, office rent, equipment, supplies, other) can guidance be provided about what level of detail needs to be included for each category?

ANSWER: Generally, applicants should clearly and succinctly state the methodology for calculating the estimates for each cost category in order for the evaluator to make a determination of reasonableness.