

Opportunity Number: SFOP0008125 Questions and Answers

**Tunisian Health Center for University Research Excellence & Sustainability (CURES)
U.S. Department of State Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs Office of Assistance Coordination**

1. We are a team of computer science researchers at public institutions of higher education in Tunisia, are we eligible to participate in this competition? How do I know I am eligible?
 - a. Yes, please refer to page 12 of the NOFO and the “eligible Applicants” section.
2. For this type of the project: can it be a framework, an application, or an idea? (Example: an intelligent system to analyze and detect a type of non-communicable disease using Artificial Intelligence techniques?)
 - a. Please refer to “Section C. Project Design” of the NOFO. The primary components and deliverables of this project are the creation of a simulation center, the establishment of research linkages with American institutions, and the commercializing of SFM research. Applicants should put forth their best proposal to deliver these objectives. It should not just be a framework or an idea.
3. For priority area 1, is it anticipated or expected for the procurement of equipment to come from local vendors in Tunisia or the MENA region?
 - a. There is a preference for domestic (US) procurements, however depending on various factors, that might not be feasible. The organization is expected to adhere to procurement regulations as detailed in 2 CFR 200.
4. For priority area 1, is there an established building or location within the university campus that will house the simulation center?
 - a. Yes. Applicants are encouraged to engage with SFM.
5. For priority area 1, will the trainings be conducted in person or remotely?
 - a. Applicants should demonstrate capacity to do both, with a preference for in-person once it is safe to do so.
6. For priority area 1, will the trainings be expected to be conducted in French, English, Arabic, or a combination of languages?
 - a. Applicants should make a determination based on the targeted beneficiaries.
7. For priority area 1, what is the anticipated or expected duration of the trainings?
 - a. Applicants should propose the length they deem best to achieve the desirable objectives.
8. For priority area 1, will the capacity building sessions be in person? If so, what is the duration for each session allowed?
 - a. See answers to Q’s 5-7 above.
9. For priority area 1, what language or languages will the curriculum need to be developed in?
 - a. See answer to Q 6.

10. For priority area 2, is there a preference for academic or public/private partnerships?
 - a. No preference.
11. For priority area 2, Are the costs for the mentorship, fellowship etc. covered within this program?
 - a. Applicants should include all projected program costs in their budget, including for mentorship and fellowship components. Though not mandatory, a cost share can be an option.
12. For priority area 3, Will partnerships with the Tunisian Patent authorities be aided to the implementer?
 - a. Applicants should demonstrate the capacity to engage with all stakeholders that they think will help with their proposal.
13. For priority area 3, Is there a preference for commercialization to be within the MENA region, or can this include a global audience?
 - a. There is a regional preference, but global reach is encouraged as well.
14. What are the typical timelines for coordinating with/ receiving feedback on deliverables with the Embassy Tunis?
 - a. NEA and the Embassy aim to provide feedback on deliverables within 1-3 weeks depending on the length of the product.
15. Will Embassy Tunis or other USG partners be involved in other aspects of the project?
 - a. Please refer to "Section IV. Substantial Involvement" of the NOFO. In addition, the US Department of State M&E personnel from NEA and Embassy Tunis will engage with the implementer on a regular basis throughout the period of performance to ensure that all performance monitoring and evaluation activity meets the necessary standards for validity and accountability.