



**International Foundation
for Electoral Systems**

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (IFES)

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) for
Organizations of Persons with Disabilities to Advance Political
Rights and Oppose Corruption in Lebanon**

RFA-23-003

February 24, 2023

1. Request for Application (RFA)

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to invite organizations of persons with disabilities to submit applications to implement a project that will conduct activities that respond to and advance the needs and challenges faced by marginalized populations in local communities of Lebanon.. The objective of this project is to build knowledge around intersectionality and to provide technical expertise to local civil society partners on disability rights and advocacy, especially for those with intersectional identities (such as women with disabilities or young people with disabilities). The RFA provides prospective organizations with the relevant operational and performance requirements. IFES anticipates issuing one fixed amount subaward under this RFA.

IFES will consider applications ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 USD. The anticipated period of performance will run from April-December 2023 (approximately 9 months), with the potential for a cost extension. IFES funds may be used only for the activities directly related to the implementation of a proposed project, outlined in the prospective applicant’s submitted technical application. IFES reserves the right to fund one, several, or none of the applications submitted.

IFES will hold a Questions and Answers (Q&A) session on Zoom on March 6, 2023 at 12:00 Beirut time. This session will enable prospective bidders to ask questions about the RFA directly to IFES. Questions may be submitted ahead of time to the email addresses in section 3.3.1 or questions may be asked during the Q&A session. All questions and responses by IFES will be recorded in writing and shared publicly via the procurement link and by email.

Zoom link to Q&A Session is here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82004967239>

1.2. RFA Schedule

IFES will conduct a competitive process to identify grantees per the tentative timeline below:

Issuance of RFA	February 24, 2023
Questions Due	March 2, 2023; by 17:00 Beirut time
Q&A Session	March 6, 2023 at 12:00 Beirut time (Zoom)
Responses from Q&A Session	March 8, 2023; by 17:00 Beirut time
RFA Closes—All Applications Due	March 20 2023; by 17:00 Beirut time
Anticipated Implementation Period	April 1-December 30, 2023, with a possible cost extension into 2024.

2. General Information

2.1. Background

IFES is an independent, non-governmental organization providing professional support to electoral democracy. IFES supports citizens’ rights to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by Providing technical assistance to election officials, Empowering the underrepresented to participate in electoral and political processes, and Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle.

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature

democracies.

3. Application Preparation Instructions

3.1. Applicant's Understanding of the RFA

In responding to this RFA, the applicant accepts full responsibility to understand the RFA in its entirety, and in detail, including making any inquiries to IFES as necessary to gain such understanding. IFES reserves the right to disqualify any applicant who demonstrates less than such understanding. Further, IFES reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether the applicant has demonstrated such understanding. Such disqualification and/or cancellation shall be at no fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to IFES.

3.2. Good Faith Statement

All information provided by IFES in this RFA is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. IFES makes no certification that any item is without error. IFES is not responsible or liable for any use of the information or for any claims asserted there from.

3.3. Communication

Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by the IFES officials identified in Section 3.3.1 of this RFA. In no case shall verbal communication govern over written communication.

3.3.1. Applicant Inquiries

Inquiries, questions, and requests for clarification related to this RFA should be submitted in writing to the representative listed below by the deadline listed in 1.2. RFA Schedule.

Hend Ghobrial
hghobrial@ifes.org

and

Kareina Bakleh
kbakleh@ifes.org

Questions/Answers and Addenda(s) related to this RFA can be found on [IFES Procurement Notices](#).

3.3.2. Formal Communications shall include, but are not limited to:

- Questions concerning this RFA
- Expressions of Interest
- Pre-award negotiations under this RFA
- Addenda to this RFA

3.3.3. Addenda

IFES will make a good-faith effort to provide written responses to the questions or requests for clarifications that require addenda by the date set in the RFA Schedule above. All questions, answers, and addenda will be shared with all interested organizations.

3.4. Eligibility

Locally registered Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Political Party Organizations or other similar not-for-profit institutions are invited to apply. If an OPD, CSO, or NGO is not locally registered, a signed letter stating the reason why must be included as part of the application.

Only organizations with Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) are eligible to **receive a subaward** under this RFA. If your organization does not have a UEI, please visit www.SAM.gov to get a Unique Entity ID only (no entity registration required).

Individuals and the following organizations are not eligible to access funding:

- Governmental and semi-governmental institutions
- International organizations
- Political parties or organizations affiliated with or engaging in partisan activities
- Organizations running on a for-profit basis

3.5. Application Instructions

All applications should include the following, in order for their application to be considered:

3.5.1. Technical Application

The Technical Application must include a written application in English describing in detail the applicant's (a) Technical Approach, (b) implementation timeline, and (c) results framework to implement the Program Description as described in Article 4 of this RFA. The evaluation criteria can be found in Article 3.7. Applicants should use the technical narrative template in Attachment A.

3.5.2. Cost Application – Budget & Budget Narrative

- The Budget should reflect costs associated with the technical activities and deliverables. All applicants must use the budget template provided in Attachment B and submit it in Excel format as part of their application. The Budget should be presented in **USD**, with applicable taxes/charges clearly identified. Unit costs are required and, in the case of discrepancies between unit costs and total costs, the unit cost will be taken as the reference basis in the evaluation.
- The applicant must agree to keep these costs valid for a minimum of 90 calendar days.
- The Cost Application should include a Budget Narrative that describes each cost element of the Budget (see column H of Attachment B).

3.5.3. A brief outline of the applicant's organization and experience.

Organizations should describe their current and previous work, mentioning any previous donors (if applicable), and especially the communities they serve and their capacity to operate outside of Beirut.

3.5.4. Additional documentation

- When available, a copy of the organization's most recent final, signed audits/financial statements
- Proof of organization's registration or a signed letter indicating why the organization is not registered.
- CVs or Biographical paragraphs describing key personnel including the organization's Director and anticipated program manager
- Any other supporting document that will strengthen the application

3.6. Application Submission

Applicants must send final applications in electronic copy by e-mail to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1 on or prior to the closing date and time shown in the *Schedule of Events*.

3.7. Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of each response to this RFA will be based on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, and organization. The purpose of this RFA is to identify those organizations that have the interest, capability, and financial strength to implement the project as described in Article 4 of this RFA.

1. Technical Approach, Implementation Timeline, Results Framework 40 points

- Demonstrated understanding of the challenges marginalized groups face in Lebanon, particularly regarding access to rights.
 - Demonstrated capacity to reach and engage CSOs both inside and outside Beirut.
 - Demonstrated understanding of the RFA and of IFES' requirements
 - Soundness and feasibility of technical approach
 - Reasonable implementation timeline and results framework
- 2. Competitive Budget with efficient and reasonable cost structure** **25 points**
- Cost realism in response to RFA requirements
 - Clear budget presentation of necessary, allocable and reasonable costs
 - Appropriate balance of budget between operational/personnel costs and activity costs
- 3. Past Performance and Organizational Capacity** **25 points**
- Demonstrated capacity to organize, manage and implement full range of activities required to achieve program goals and objectives
 - Past experience implementing programs that address rights for marginalized populations.
 - Past experience working on advocacy initiatives with marginalized groups.
 - Demonstrated flexibility to adjust implementation in response to changing environments
 - Demonstrated presence and/or networks across Lebanon.
 - Ability to receive wire transfer from US bank account in USD.
- 4. Monitoring and Evaluation** **10 points**
- The performance monitoring plan clearly defines indicators to measure the impact of the coalition's activities. Monitoring and evaluation will be assessed on:
- How well the identified indicators capture impact of the proposed activities, including relevant disaggregations; and
 - Feasibility of the indicator targets.

3.8. Selection and Notification

Applicants determined by IFES that possess the capacity to compete for this project will be selected to move into the negotiation phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to these applicants via e-mail. Those applicants not selected for the negotiation phase will also be notified.

4. Scope of Work

Women, people with disabilities, young people, ethnic minorities and the LGBTQI+ community face discrimination, political exclusion and underrepresentation in every country in the world. People who identify with more than one of these identities, such as women with disabilities or young refugees, have unique needs and experiences that are often not considered in the design and implementation of political rights and anti-corruption activities. Intersectionality, or the interconnected nature of different social identities and the resulting compounding discrimination or privilege, has a profound impact on understanding the dynamics of political inclusion.

To address barriers to meaningful participation and make marginalized voices heard, IFES is currently implementing the project *Lebanon: Political Advocacy for Inclusive Reform (LePAIR)*. IFES is looking for an OPD partner who will connect to the existing network of partners (Path Coalition) established under

IFES' *Identify, Interpret and Respond (IIR)* program and implement initiatives according to the following:

1. Design and lead activities that enhance collective advocacy efforts, focusing on intersectionality and addressing either political participation or anti-corruption;
2. Collaborate with other grantees on the LePAIR project (including regional-based partners) to bring together intersectional Lebanese advocates on political participation and anti-corruption issues that will incorporate perspectives of diverse marginalized groups (i.e. not just one specific group but many groups);
3. Provide experience, knowledge exchange or training to other Path Coalition members, especially lending expertise and advice on accessibility and key disability rights perspectives;
4. Identify windows of opportunity to support Lebanese civil society engagement in international and regional fora related to the goals of this program;
5. Assist in the expansion of the Path Coalition to include CSOs based outside of Beirut;
6. Contribute to the development of lessons learned, success stories from the project, or tools/materials to assist project partners and grantees;
7. Help form connections with private sector, syndicates or other influential leaders for advocacy purposes.

In addition to conducting project activities, the subgrantee will be responsible for capturing monitoring and evaluation data and, wherever possible, any participant recommendations that can be delivered to decision makers. Such recommendations will be made available for public distribution and may be combined into joint-advocacy proposals under the project's small grants initiative at a later stage.

All deliverables must be submitted in English.

5. Functional Requirements

5.1. Timeline:

Applicants must submit a detailed timeline in their Application showing the time required to implement the services requested. IFES requires all deliverables and milestones to be completed not later than December 30, 2023, unless a cost extension is granted by the donor.

5.2. Monitoring & Evaluation

- As part of its due diligence, IFES conducts pre-award surveys on all potential grantees to assess capacity and inform the appropriate grant mechanism. In addition, applicants expected to expend \$750,000 or more in U.S. funded awards during their fiscal year must have an audit conducted in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F—Audit Requirements. If Applicable, applicants must ensure that funds are included in the grant budget for an audit.
- IFES will issue a fixed amount subaward designed around completing milestones or deliverables.
- IFES will provide continuous mentorship, training and oversight to ensure grant management practices are in line with anti-corruption principles as well as to build capacity of local grantees to fully manage and implement their programs in adherence to donor regulations and with a view towards sustainability.

5.3. Deliverables:

Specific deliverables and reporting will be determined based on the grant activities proposed and negotiated during the negotiation phase.

6. Additional Terms & Conditions

6.1. Non-Disclosure Agreement

IFES reserves the right to require any applicant to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

6.2. Zero Tolerance for Fraud

IFES has zero tolerance for fraud. Fraud is any act or omission that intentionally misleads, or attempts to mislead, to obtain a benefit or to avoid an obligation. If you have concerns about potential fraud in any way related to IFES projects, contracts, or activities, please contact IFES' Compliance Hotline at compliance@ifes.org or at +1 202-350-6791.

6.3. Intellectual Property

Applicants should not use any intellectual property of IFES including, but not limited to, all logos, registered trademarks, or trade names of IFES, at any time, without the prior written approval of IFES, as appropriate.

6.4. Applications

All accepted applications shall become the property of IFES and will not be returned.

6.5. Governing Law

This RFA and the applicants' applications shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, USA.

6.6. Partial Awarding

IFES reserves the right to accept all or part of the application when awarding the grant. IFES also reserves the right to issue multiple awards and procure only items or services from selected applicants.

6.7. No Liability

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute a commitment on the part of IFES to make an award nor does it commit IFES to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any application in response to this RFA. Further, IFES reserves the right to reject any or all applications received or stop solicitation process at any time, without assigning any reason or liability.

IFES shall not be liable to any applicant, person, or entity for any losses, expenses, costs, claims, or damages of any kind:

- Arising out of, by reason of, or attributable to, the applicant responding to this RFA; or
- As a result of the use of any information, error, or omission contained in this RFA document or provided during the RFA process.

6.8. Entire RFA

This RFA, any addenda to it, and any attached schedules, constitute the entire RFA.

6.9. Attachments

Attachment A: Technical Narrative Template
 Attachment B: Budget Template
 Attachment C: Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Template

End of RFA

ATTACHMENT A
Technical Narrative Template

I. General Information

Complete Legal Name of Applicant Organization

Office Address

Legal Mailing Address (if different)

Office Telephone Number(s)

E-Mail Address(es)

Director of Organization

Project Manager/Contact Person

Project Dates (month/year – month/year)

Project Title

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) – If you do not have a UEI number, **if** your organization does not have a UEI, please visit www.SAM.gov to get a Unique Entity ID only (no entity registration required).

PAN Number

II. Technical Approach:

Please include the following components in in a maximum of 5 pages

- A. Project Summary:** describe your project in one paragraph, including objectives, issue, target audience, and geographic coverage.
- B. Need for the project:** identify the problem your project would help to solve. Why is this project important?
- C. Project’s Goal and Objectives:** what is the specific goal of your effort? Does it comply with the goals and objectives of the competition?
- D. Target Audience and Stakeholders:** what is your main target audience? What groups of stakeholders will the project primarily serve?
- E. Activities:** identify and describe in detail each activity to be undertaken to produce results, justifying the choice of activities.
- F. Expected Deliverables:** identify specific deliverables that you expect to develop within your project (research/analytical reports; specific strategies; public policy recommendations; etc.).

III. Implementation Timeline

Please use the following format to provide an implementation timeline.

Project Month	Activity	Expected Result	Involved Stakeholders

IV. Results Framework

Please identify specific results that you expect to realize upon completion of your project and the quantitative and qualitative criteria for the project’s success. How will you determine that the project goals have been accomplished? The framework should include:

- A list of results you expect to accomplish throughout the project
- 1-4 performance indicators for each result including a detailed definition for each
- The source, method, frequency and schedule of data collection,
- Staff responsible for collecting data.
- How the performance data will be collected
- How data will be reviewed, analyzed and reported

ATTACHMENT B
Budget Template

[CLICK HERE](#) to visit IFES Procurement Notices page and download the budget template

**ATTACHMENT C
Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Template**

I. Summary

Briefly present your organization’s mission, its core activities, and why it is best suited for this project

II. Human Resources

- A. *Please provide full legal name of organization’s Director and / or Chief Executive Officer.*
- B. *Please provide CVs or biographical paragraph of the core technical members of the team that will work on this project (the director of the organization, training or curriculum experts, project manager etc.).*
- C. *Please provide hiring plan for full and part-time positions the organization including a list of positions and recruitment plan or cost-share with existing positions, if applicable.*

III. Past Performance

- A. *Briefly describe how your organization’s previous experience prepares it to successfully implement the proposed project; highlight the organization’s relationship and work experience with lawmakers, political parties or government officials if applicable.*
- B. *Please specify previous work in the relevant field.*
- C. *Please list the organization’s major projects from the past five years in the following format:*

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Project Activities</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Award Amount</i>	<i>Period of Award</i>

IV. References:

If applicable, contact information for three references from donor funded projects similar in scope.