



Early Childhood Education Summer Schools: Increase in scale and reach for children aged 4-6 Request for Applications

Introduction

Investment in early childhood education has been found to be one of the most cost-effective strategies for improving the long-term economic, health, and social well-being of both individuals and their broader societies. School readiness is the foundation of quality education and is gaining global support as a means to help young children reach their full developmental potential and engage in lifelong learning.

The IRC's Early Childhood Education (ECE) program provide Syrian refugee children with critical pre-literacy and pre-numeracy skills in protected, child-friendly spaces where children are close to parents and communities. Working in spaces either inside of or adjacent to refugee settlements, IRC empowers refugee communities to actively engage in children's learning processes.

Working in partnerships is a priority for the IRC, as it ensures sharing of capacity, knowledge and skills to provide together tailored and quality services for the people we support. IRC is launching this Request for Applications to scale up its ECE programs to reach additional children aged 4-6 in the academic year 2019/2020, in the Bekaa Valley and the Akkar Governorate in the north of Lebanon through summer schools activities.

Questions on this Request for Applications are due by 28 March 2019, and applications are due on or before 5 April 2019.

This Request for Applications consists of the following sections below:

- 1. Context**
- 2. Technical Approach**
- 3. Project Locations**
- 4. Project start and end dates**
- 5. Project Amount**
- 6. Eligible Applicants**
- 7. Proposal Guidelines**
- 8. Evaluation Criteria**
- 9. Process before Application (including questions)**
- 10. Address and Deadline for submission of Applications**
- 11. Process after Application**
- 12. Final Proposal Development**



Context:

The influx of Syrian refugees has created a dramatic increase in the demand for basic education. At present, the Government of Lebanon (GoL) estimates that it hosts over 1.5 million Syrian refugees. More than half of the Syrian school age refugees (244,000 children)¹ in Lebanon are out-of-school and without access to education. The factors inhibiting school enrollment and attendance are tailored to the cost of transportation and education materials, language barriers, and curriculum challenges.

Working in partnership with local and national civil society organizations and government agencies is fundamental to the IRC's mission to help people whose lives and livelihoods are shattered by conflict and disaster to survive, recover and gain control of their future. Effective local partnerships enable the IRC to pursue the strategic objectives set out in IRC 2020, resulting in more effective, responsive and durable assistance that reaches more people and produces better outcomes for the people we serve. Investing in local civil society organizations and government agencies recognizes those organizations not only as allies in achieving the IRC's core outcomes, but also as catalysts and drivers of change.

1. Technical Approach:

Under this Invitation, the International Rescue Committee encourages the following project approaches:

- Beneficiary/ community participation in project design, implementation and monitoring;
- Project design based on appropriate assessments, evidence and data;
- Appropriate use of monitoring systems to determine whether the project is successful, and allow for adjustments to the project based on the findings of the monitoring;
- Promotion of the Humanitarian Principles in project design, monitoring and implementation;
- Project design that reflects the different needs within the target population according to gender, ethnicity, age and other characteristics; and
- Appropriate coordination and collaboration with other relevant agencies.

¹Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees. Lebanon (2018)
<https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67380>



- In addition to the activities proposed by partners, IRC will train partner staff on ECE so that the project would include ECE-specific activities based on IRC curricula.

2. Project Locations:

Under this Request for Applications (RFA), IRC will support projects implemented in:

- Akkar
- Bekaa

Potential partner organizations may submit only one application. If organizations choose to apply for interventions in both Akkar and Bekaa, they must clearly distinguish in their single application which objectives and activities will be implemented in the Akkar and Bekaa. Proposal narrative and budget templates are designed to help applicants distinguish between Akkar and Bekaa interventions. Needs assessments should be specific to the applicant's proposed areas of implementation.

Following a review of applications in accordance with the evaluation criteria and available funding, the IRC may offer partial funding for one-region applications – e.g. only fund proposed Bekaa activities or only fund proposed Akkar activities or full funding for multi-region applications.

3. Project start and end dates:

IRC anticipates that any sub-grant issued under this invitation may have a start date of 01 July, 2019. Organizations may apply up to a maximum end date of 30 September, 2019.

The sub-grant agreement will be up to a maximum of 3 months in duration.

4. Project Amount:

IRC anticipates providing sub-grants for amounts between USD 75,000 and USD 150,000 per project duration under this RFA depending on the area covered and the scope of work. However, IRC may choose to make less or more awards, and may choose to make awards that are lower than this range.



5. Eligible Applicants:

IRC will accept applications from any community-based organization, non-governmental organization or foundation with an existing operational presence in Lebanon delivering humanitarian assistance. An organization needs to be legally registered in Lebanon to be eligible to apply.

The following organizations/groups are not eligible to participate in this call:

- Private businesses, for-profit entities or non-state actors;
- Organizations banned from receiving resources from major institutional donors;
- Political parties or groups whose affiliation with political parties compromises the impartiality of assistance.

Specific eligibility criteria:

- Approved *Expression of Interest* with Ministry of Education
- Proven experience in implementing recreational and educational summer programs;
- Experience with safe, child friendly, play based learning;
- Proven experience in supporting local community through education;
- Experience in educating and launching extracurricular activities with children aged 4-8;
- Geographical experience working in Akkar and/or Bekka with extensive knowledge of context;
- Proven ability to mobilize local communities and organize events in areas of implementation;
- Previous experience with international donors which reflect technical and financial reporting capacity ;
- Team capacity with relevant experience and qualifications in educations;
- *Preferred:* Previous cooperation with international UN organizations and / or international NGOs

6. Proposal Guidelines:

Each application must include the following four documents:

- Concept Note
- Budget
- Budget narrative, and
- Organization profile



Formats for each of these documents are included with this package. Please comply with those formats, and complete all sections of each document. IRC may not consider incomplete applications, at its discretion. All applications must be in English.

7. Evaluation Criteria:

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the following criteria:

Criteria	% of Score
<p>1. Intervention Logic</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Project Justification: humanitarian needs presented in the proposal are clearly defined and based on recent geographic-specific needs assessments; - Program Design: proposed project is aligned to project objectives and outlines illustrative activities; the programmatic approaches are clearly defined and technically sound as well as reflect and incorporate best practices into proposed interventions. 	35%
<p>2. Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vulnerable groups are targeted in line with the 2019 Lebanon Crisis Response Plan, including (but not limited to) hard to reach areas where there is a gap in services. 	10%
<p>3. Technical and institutional implementation capacity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demonstrated ability to deliver project objectives (past experience delivering similar projects in targeted sectors and geographic areas); - Established M&E systems and practices; - Sound financial management systems; - Adherence to humanitarian principles and child safeguarding policy aligned with international standards; - Strong field-based operational support structures in proposed implementation areas. 	30%
<p>4. Cost-effectiveness of budgets and value for money</p>	15%



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The intervention demonstrates optimal use of resources to achieve the intended objectives and the expected results justify the costs. - The proposed intervention follows the principles of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. 	
<p>5. Local experience and presence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Established presence in proposed area of operation. - Demonstrated ability to effectively build upon past experience in implementation area for the implementation of the proposed project. - Strong coordination with local leadership, authorities, and other humanitarian actors in area of operation. 	10%

8. Process before Application (including questions):

If you are interested in applying please send your interest by email before 28 March 2019 so that we can share with you all required templates to be filled. You may submit any questions you have relating to this RFA in writing by email to: Lb.Rfairc@rescue.org by no later than 28 March 2019 5pm Beirut time. IRC will respond to all questions received, and will send those responses to all organizations who have registered their interest in this RFA. Questions sent to any other IRC staff, or asked verbally to any IRC staff, will not be answered.

9. Address and Deadline for submission of Applications:

Please submit your proposal electronically to Lb.Rfairc@rescue.org. You do not need to submit hard copies. Please submit your application by 05 April 2019. IRC will not consider any application submitted after that date. IRC may choose to extend the date for applications by notice in writing to all organizations that have participated in this RFA.

Process	Timeline
Open Request for Application (Proposal and Budget stage)	22 March 2019
Final partner selection	30 April 2019
Partnership agreement signed	31 May 2019



10. Process after Application:

Your application will be considered by a review panel with a minimum of three people and a maximum of five people, including at least two technical experts, all staff from IRC. Upon receipt, your application will undergo an initial screening to verify compliance with the following conditions:

- Application is submitted on time
- Application is complete (all required documents were submitted)
- Application uses project submission templates (without alteration)
- Applicants meet the eligibility criteria
- Proposed project is within the scope of activities prioritized by the call
- Proposed project is within the geographic areas targeted by the call
- Budget is within the thresholds referenced above
- Project duration is met

Failure to meet one or more of these conditions may result in the application being excluded, subject to IRC's discretion. Once the initial screening is complete, the panel will vet all applications based on the criteria set out above. You may receive questions or comments on your application from that panel, or requests for further information. This process will result in provisional partner selection, subject to final vetting and final development of proposal and agreement on budget.

11. Final Proposal Development:

IRC will then work with provisionally selected partners to finalize the project proposal and budget. Partner selection will be followed by a thorough vetting process and the completion of a project capacity review carried out by the IRC at the partners' offices. Finally, selected partner (s) will sign a Partnership Agreement with the IRC, enabling them to receive funding for project activities in accordance with the final proposal and budget. Funding is not guaranteed until the Partnership Agreement is signed. The IRC reserves the right to fund any or none of the submitted applications.

Thank you for your interest in this Request for Applications.