



Lebanon Civic Action Accelerator Program
(LEB-CAAP)

*Strengthening Financial Sustainability of Civil Society
Organizations Through Social Entrepreneurship Models (RFA)*

Questions and Answers – February 6, 2024

This document provides information on a variety of topics that potential grant applicants should be aware of. These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) arose during the RFA solicitation workshop and written requests for clarification which were submitted via Microsoft forms using the following link <https://forms.office.com/r/PxfkCAFdFA> . These consolidated questions and answers will be posted on the RFA page on Daleel Madani <https://daleel-madani.org/civil-society-directory/fhi-360/calls/request-applications-strengthening-financial-sustainability-civil-society-organizations-through> and on LEB-CAAP's linktree account <https://linktr.ee/lebcaap> .

Phone calls to LEB-CAAP staff and visits to the LEB-CAAP office are not permitted and may be regarded as grounds for disqualification.

Answers to frequently asked questions are organized by topic as follows:

- A. Technical Questions / Statement of Work – Page 2
- B. Eligibility Criteria and Budget – Page 5

Section A. Technical Questions / Statement of Work

Q 1: Is the program specific to a certain geographic area, or should it be implemented on a national level?

A 1: The program will have a national reach and the Intermediary Support Organization (ISO) should be able to reach all regions across the country. And as stated on page 2 of the RFA, the selected “ISO partner will be responsible for **(a)** outreach, selection, design and delivery of a three-day bootcamp for up to 20 CSOs from across Lebanon...”

Q 2: What is the award amount for the Civil Society Organization (CSO) grant and is it budgeted for all CSOs together or for each institution? And what is the role of the ISO in grant management in comparison to LEB-CAAP's role?

A 2: The amount of the award estimated for the ISO for the management and implementation of the capacity strengthening program is up to \$150,000. Additionally, LEB-CAAP will be providing financial assistance to the 8 CSOs that will be selected in phase 4 of the project. The amount of this financial assistance will be up to \$ 20,000 per CSO depending on the assessment results identified by the ISO and LEB-CAAP. The financial assistance can take the form of individual grants, in-kind support or other forms based on the priority needs identified among CSOs by the ISO and in coordination with LEB-CAAP.

LEB-CAAP will engage the ISO in all aspects of the grant competition and selection, noting however that LEB-CAAP will be managing the overall competition and selection with the ISO providing inputs on the design of the RFA, reviewing the applications and participating on the grant evaluation committee. For subaward monitoring, LEB-CAAP will work closely with the ISO to define clear roles and responsibilities such as following up on the implementation of grantee action plans, among other tasks as stated in the RFA page 5.

In addition to that, the CSO grants will be administered and contractually managed by LEB-CAAP to ensure compliance with FHI 360 and USAID rules and regulations. The ISO will provide ongoing technical assistance and monitoring to successfully implement the business plan priorities and guide the CSOs on organizational development topics and systems strengthening to advance the CSO sustainability plans.

Q 3: During the business development phase, do you expect the process to be fully participatory? Do you expect the ISO to be handholding each CSO throughout the process?

A 3: The ISO is expected to allocate a business development expert for each CSO based on required expertise and sector of activity. The expert along with the CSO will work together to develop a business plan that will help the CSO increase revenue generation and expand social impact. This support will be provided by the ISO while ensuring a quality service is delivered to each CSO.

Q 4: At the end of phase 3 (development of CSO business plans), how would we be able to measure the impact of the business support provided considering the timeframe of the project is too short?

A 4: The impact of the capacity building provided might not be fully captured at the end of phase 3 given that business plans will continue to be implemented over a longer period of time and the impact of the actions might not fully materialize in this limited period. However, the ISO will be working with LEB-CAAP team to set indicators and measure the impact and success of the support provided, during the timeframe of the program. The ISO will be accountable for these specific indicators to ensure the objectives of the capacity building activities have been successfully met.

Q 5: As an ISO, can we suggest the selection criteria for the CSOs?

A 5: Yes, interested applicants must submit a preliminary list of selection criteria for each phase of the RFA program as part of the technical application to this RFA, specifically answering the following questions stated in the Attachment II Technical Application C1 section page 2:

- Describe how you would select the 20 CSOs for the first phase of the program and how you would transition to 12 CSOs for technical support, and for 8 CSOs for funding.
- Define the evaluation criteria you would use to determine the selection of grantees for each phase of the program.

The design of the final CSOs selection criteria at each phase of the RFA program will be the responsibility of the ISO who will present them to LEB-CAAP for approval during implementation throughout the project lifecycle.

Q 6: Will the ISO decide on the amount of money the CSO will receive? What will the grant to the CSOs include?

A 6: The financial assistance could consist of (1) individual grants to cover the cost of main activities in the business plan (up to \$20,000) and/or (2) a pool of shared services or other in-kind support based on the needs identified. The form and details of the financial assistance will be co-designed with the ISO and LEB-CAAP to respond to the results of the business plans and best answer the common and specific needs of CSOs with the available resources as stated in the RFA page 5.

Q 7: Once we design the customized business plan with tangible action plans, should we be alongside them hand in hand to implement? What if organizations drop out and show a lack of commitment?

A 7: The business plans will be the result of the business development support provided to each CSO over the first period of the project and will reflect priorities and action items that the CSO has identified with the ISO expert that are important to revenue generation and social impact. At the end of phase 3, a competition will be designed by LEB-CAAP to assess the feasibility of these business plans and evaluate the commitment and readiness of the CSO to implement.

During implementation of the selected CSOs grants, the ISO and/or its expert will be responsible for following up with the selected CSOs in the implementation of

their business plans, providing technical guidance and/or oversight as required. The ISO will work closely with LEB-CAAP to address any performance or compliance issues of the selected CSOs.

Q 8: Are we expected to physically incubate the CSOs?

A 8: No physical incubation is expected in this program. However, for efficient business coaching, we expect business experts to be able to conduct most sessions in-person.

Q 9: Can we apply under the agriculture sector?

A 9: The ISO is expected to provide capacity strengthening programs to CSOs in multiple sectors including but not limited to agriculture. The ISO should have a variety of business expertise to be able to fulfil the needs of CSOs integrating social enterprises models in different sectors and fields.

Q 10: Is there a specific sector of activity for the CSOs to be considered in the program?

A 10: The RFA does not specify at this stage any sector of activity. The ISO should be able to support CSOs across all sectors, leveraging the expertise available among their own staff members or network of experts and partners. As stated on page 4 of the RFA, “In collaboration with LEB-CAAP, the successful ISO partner will target CSOs that have already started to integrate social entrepreneurship models into their organizations and help them expand their own revenue generation streams to support their social impact activities, specifically those CSOs whose mission is to advance the rights of marginalized groups.”

Section B. Eligibility of activities

Q 11: Should the ISO be an individual organization, or can it be a consortium?

A 11: Both options are applicable and eligible as stated in the RFA on page 7.

Q 12: If we are submitting an application as a consortium, is it possible to include a co-applicant?

A 12: The consortium must designate **one** lead organization that will serve as the fiscal agent responsible for the award. Financial and technical accountability will rest with this Lead applicant, and that organization must have the capacity to effectively manage the consortium, ensure results, and ensure sound financial management of the award as stated in the RFA page 7.

Q 13: Can an organization apply under multiple consortiums if it is not the lead applicant?

A 13: Yes, an organization can participate as a consortium member with more than one lead applicant under this RFA.

Q 14: Can we select CSOs that are not registered or in the registration process?

A 14: CSOs targeted for capacity strengthening support must be registered organizations at the time of selection.

Q 15: Can the lead applicant have multiple grant mechanisms (cost reimbursable and Fixed Amount Award) under the same RFA program; depending on the different phases of the project?

A 15: LEB-CAAP anticipates utilizing one mechanism for the whole grant period (Fixed Amount Award or Cost Reimbursable) depending on the organization capacity and the pre-award assessment and due diligence phase results.

Q 16: Do you have specific rates for consultants/experts?

A 16: No, however LEB-CAAP will assess cost reasonableness for the proposed costs based on a number of factors, including but not limited to established rate and/or market rate for comparable positions commensurate with experience. In addition, LEB-CAAP will require supporting documentation to verify the rates proposed by the ISO, including but not limited to previous contracts between the ISO and the consultant stating the daily rate/fee that consultant was paid or fees paid to a different consultant doing the same type of work, in addition to profile or CV of the consultants.

Q 17: Is cost sharing required?

A 17: Cost sharing is not required under this RFA.

Q 18: Regarding logistics costs of on-site activities, like venue rental and f&b costs, can these be covered by LEB-CAAP outside of the foreseen budget?

A 18: All costs related to the proposed project activities should be budgeted under the award budget related to the ISO.

Q 19: Do you require financial statements?

A 19: Yes, financial statements are required from the lead applicant / ISO at the Due Diligence phase.