

Funding Opportunity Title:	Call for Partnership
Announcement Type:	Annual Program Statement
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Final Closing Date:	April 24, 2023
Questions deadline:	May 31, 2022

Submit Development plans on-line:

<https://fs24.formsite.com/llSOui/mfuzthif1z/index.html>

To Interested Applicants:

The purpose of this Call for Partnership – Annual Program Statement (APS) – is to solicit Development Plans from potential partners that enhance production capacity, increase exports, and/or promote import substitution throughout the Lebanese economy. DAI, through funding by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), seeks Development Plans first and then final applications after successfully passing the initial concept review from prospective partners to implement activities that facilitate the export of Lebanese goods and services to generate foreign exchange through investments that simultaneously promote job creation, increase income generation, and improve livelihoods throughout the country. Activities are expected to: (1) increase exports of Lebanese goods and services, (2) facilitate investment leading to increased domestic investment, and (3) improve the business and investment enabling environment (BIEE).

Activities must benefit sectors and the clustering of enterprises, and improve the Business and Investment Enabling Environment in Lebanon. Funding may support eligible equipment purchases, technical assistance, BIEE reforms, and facilitate access to finance/investment for businesses and through the creation of funds.

Competition for this APS will be open for one year. A successful Development Plan will proceed to a co-creation process with the TIF team. TIF anticipates evaluating Development Plans 20 days after submission. TIF encourages interested parties to submit Development Plans as early as possible, as Development Plans will be evaluated and then approved on a rolling basis until funding is exhausted.

Questions will be received until May 31, 2022. Questions and answers will be published on the Development Plan on-line submission site for potential applicants to review throughout the year the APS remains current. Questions can only be submitted to grants@tifproject.com

The length of the proposed activities may be up to two and a half years but cannot go beyond April 30, 2025. TIF may choose to partially or fully fund selected application(s).

The number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change and TIF reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.

Partners will be expected to share evaluation results, key lessons learned and also disseminate periodic activities and outcomes with TIF and USAID. Partners who engage with other key players in their sector to improve sector competitiveness and efficiency will improve their chance of proceeding to co-creation.

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SECTION I - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

(1) Description of the Proposed Activity

Background

TIF addresses underlying economic development problems that affect four productive sectors in Lebanon: Agro-Food Processing, Manufacturing, Knowledge Economy and Services, and Tourism and Hospitality. While these sectors are significant contributors to employment, their contribution to foreign exchange and exports has deteriorated in recent years. The ongoing financial crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic have stifled trade, export, and finance/investment. Other enduring problems include: a lack of market linkages/networks outside traditional GCC markets; weak business support institutions and services; absence of an updated legal and regulatory framework; and, limited government capacity and/or willingness to respond to private sector needs.

Overall TIF Objectives

TIF's purpose is to facilitate export of Lebanese goods and services to generate foreign exchange through finance and investment that simultaneously expands job creation, increases income generation, and improves livelihoods throughout the country. TIF has three objectives: (1) increased exports of Lebanese goods and services, (2) investment facilitation leading to increased domestic investment, and (3) an improved business and investment enabling environment (BIEE).

TIF will focus on four sectors approved by USAID. These sectors include: (1) Agro-Food Processing, (2) Manufacturing, (3) Knowledge Economy and Services, and (4) Tourism and Hospitality.

Note on Knowledge Economy and Services:

- **Knowledge Economy** includes but is not limited to: Information and Communications Technologies (ICT), Media, and Creative or Business Services.
- **Media and Creative Services, as part of Knowledge Economy**, includes but is not limited to: Advertising, Digital Media, Production and Post-Production, Architecture, Design and Fashion.
- **Business Services** includes but is not limited to: Franchising, Information Technology Outsourcing (ITO), Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Knowledge Process Outsourcing (KPO) and Consulting.

(2) Selection Criteria for Development Plans

Applicants must design activities that contribute to TIF's overall objectives and sectors listed above. TIF will consider Development Plans through a cost-benefit analysis based on applicability to TIF's objectives.

Proposed activities must meet the specific selection criteria outlined below:

1-Export potential

- a. **Growth potential.** Applicants must target export or import substitution or offer domestic products/services that meet effective business-to-business (B2B) or business-to-consumer (B2C) demand (i.e. identified or potential buyers).

2-Impact

- a. *Sector Level*. Proposed Development Plans must have impact on a sector level or cluster of enterprises within a specific sector. Proposed Development Plans that supports one enterprise will not be considered (except for those addressing access to finance/investment).
- b. *Jobs*. Create new employment and economic opportunities and sustain existing jobs for Lebanese citizens, particularly women and youth.
- c. *Multiplier effect*. Generate a positive impact on supply or value chains for local producers/providers of raw materials and/or services.

3-Feasibility

- a. The applicant must generate sales growth, increase exports, and promote job creation within 12-24 months, preferably in the first 12 months.
- b. Plans must clearly support sector growth and ensure jobs will continue after TIF's support.
- c. Provide evidence that TIF's support will have a cost-efficient impact on jobs, sales, exports, and finance/investment. Under BIEE, the applicant must contribute to an effective improvement of BIEE and must take into account international standards and global trends related to TIF sectors.
- d. The applicant must have a successful business model that, historically, demonstrates profitability, employment growth and increasing market share. This criterion applies only to clustered enterprises, not syndicates, NGOs or professional associations.

4-Attribution and additionality (disqualifying criteria)

- a. TIF's support is essential for business continuity and/or expansion.
- b. TIF's support will clearly lead to significant additionality in sales, exports and job creation with examples demonstrating connectivity.

5- Entity commitment

- a. It is highly recommended that applicants co-invest.

6-Risk Assessment (disqualifying criteria)

- a. TIF-supported entities will not distort markets or engage in monopolistic behaviors.
- b. TIF-supported actions will not have or generate a negative environmental impact.

TIF will provide the following responses based on the outcome of specific selection criteria:

- Proceed to co-creation and/or collaborate with other sector partners.
- More information required about the Development Plan.
- Rejected for TIF APS funding.

TIF will provide prompt feedback to applicants post submission.

SECTION II- PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION

Types of partnership support will be assessed during the co-creation process between TIF and the potential partner. Applicants may be selected to receive assistance in the form of a grant agreement. Grants will primarily be Fixed Amount Awards (FAAs) based on performance targets and in-kind grants for procurement of equipment or services.

In addition, TIF may match applicants with access to finance tools or investment opportunities. Grants may also support fund creation, innovative financial solutions which lead to unlocking investments, research, mapping, analysis related to legal and regulatory reforms and creation and implementation of sector related guidelines and standards. TIF will also compete subcontracts and purchase orders for services and goods through separate specific requests for bids.

TIF will determine appropriate start dates upon grant award. Grants may be up to two and a half years but cannot go beyond April 30, 2025.

SECTION III- ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

TIF will only consider Development Plans that address USAID-approved priority sectors:

- Agro-Food Processing
- Manufacturing
- Knowledge Economy and Services
- Tourism and Hospitality

Furthermore, TIF requires all enterprises or entities (applicants) submitting Development Plans to confirm their willingness to confidentially share information with TIF and USAID. This APS is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested and qualified applicants have a fair, open, and transparent opportunity to submit proposals for funding.

(1) Types of Entities that May Apply

Registered private sector for-profit firms (companies, business service providers, etc.) are highly encouraged to apply. Non-government entities, universities, community-based entities, and other civil society organizations may apply. Industry groups, associations, organizational clusters, and shared platforms may also apply. Private sector firms cannot charge fees or profit to TIF. All applicants must provide a Development Plan that clearly supports at least one of TIF's selected sectors that increase exports and enhance competitiveness, leading to improved production capacity, employment generation and domestic finance/investment.

Groups of enterprises are highly encouraged to collaborate to initiate sectoral improvements, increase production capacity, propose policy reforms, etc. Collaboration to improve a sector or sectors and/or increase production capacity is highly encouraged. Where possible, TIF will request applicants to collaborate and increase impact as a result of TIF support.

(2) Partner Co-Investment

Successful proposals will mobilize private-sector contributions, including in-kind or cash. Partner contributions are intended to leverage additional resources to incentivize a partner's stake in the outcome of the activity which meet TIF's objectives. While partner contributions are not mandatory, TIF strongly encourages applicants to co-

invest in their proposed Development Plans. Applicant co-investment is listed above as selection consideration and it is highly encouraged.

SECTION IV- DEVELOPMENT PLAN SUBMISSION

TIF will select applicants using a two-stage process.

1. Applicants must answer a series of questions to confirm eligibility. If successful, applicants will next submit a concise Development Plan. See Instructions below.
2. If the proposed Development Plan meets the needs of this APS, then partners will be contacted to move forward and co-create a final application together with TIF. The number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change and TIF reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.

After TIF provides written feedback on the Development Plan, the partner will be requested to co-create a final application with TIF. Once finalized, the technical and financial applications will be submitted to USAID for concurrence.

Development Plan Instructions

The Development Plan must be submitted via the TIF online form (Formsite®).
<https://fs24.formsite.com/lISQui/mfuzthif1z/index.html>

Applicants must complete a series of questions before completing the narrative part of the Development Plan. Applicants must scroll to the bottom of the first page and check the Captcha® “I am not a robot” and proceed to the list of questions. The Development Plan submission must be confirmed by the applicant’s authorized representative.

The Development Plan or Technical Approach narrative. This section must include past performance, or business model and business history, background, statement of needs, objectives, needed support, main activities, implementation plan, list of stakeholders or partners, expected results and impact, evidence of market demand and details on a market-led approach.

SECTION V – AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

(1) Post-Selection Information

Following selection of an acceptable Development Plan by TIF and USAID, TIF will inform the successful applicant in writing about the co-creation process leading to a final application (technical and financial). The final application will be submitted to USAID for approval.

Potential partners must attend a compliance workshop with TIF before co-creating the technical and financial application. Co-creation does not guarantee that a partner will be awarded a grant. The final application will be submitted to USAID for approval. Final award is contingent on USAID approval. A grant agreement will be signed by TIF’s Chief-of-Party or his/her designee and it will become the official authorization document.

(2) Important USAID Compliance Information

Successful applicants chosen for co-creation will participate in a USAID compliance workshop with TIF staff. Rules and requirements will be explained prior to the co-creation process.

A. Branding

All USAID-sponsored assistance awards are required to adhere to branding policies and revised marking requirements for grants and cooperative agreements in accordance with ADS 320. This includes visibly displaying the USAID Standard Graphic Identity that clearly communicates assistance is “From the American People” on all activities, projects, activities, publications, public communications, and commodities provided or supported through USAID assistance awards. ADS 320 may be found at the following website:

<https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/302>

B. Environmental Procedures

The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 requires that the impact of USAID’s activities on the environment must be considered and environmental sustainability must be a central consideration when designing and implementing an activity.

C. Reporting Requirements

Activity implementation reporting will be determined based on the outcome of the final technical and financial application, which will define roles and responsibilities. An annual performance monitoring and evaluation plan using established baseline data and specific and measurable targets and indicators will also be agreed upon. Financial reporting will be in accordance with the requirements of the grant agreement.

D. List of Ineligible Goods

USAID funds are not allowed to buy from the following list of ineligible goods:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/312.pdf>

E. Prohibited Countries

The US Government does not do business with, i.e. purchase goods or services, from prohibited sources, nationalities, and origin countries. The current list of countries under comprehensive sanctions include Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria.

F. Certifications

USAID requires all successful grant applicants submit a signed copy of applicable certifications and assurances. TIF will work with the applicants during the co-creation process to explain and obtain the appropriate certifications and assurances.

(3) Administration of Grant Award

Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E, ADS 303 and USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. nongovernmental organizations. For non-U.S. organizations, USAID Standard Provisions for non-U.S. non-governmental organizations apply.

Applicants may obtain copies of the referenced material at the following websites:

2 CFR 200: <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=0a5b7fee6378930cce72564449dd8bb7&mc=true&node=sp2.1.200.d&rqn=div6>

Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303maa.pdf>

Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients:
<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/303mab.pdf>

SECTION VI- DAI PROJECT CONTACTS

The point-of-contact for this APS and any questions during the APS process is TIF Grants Team: grants@tifproject.com

Prospective applicants with specific questions about the APS requirements must request it in writing by the date listed on the cover letter to allow a reply to reach all prospective applicants before the submission of their applications.

SECTION VII - OTHER INFORMATION

Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of DAI, nor does it commit DAI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of a Development Plan and/or application.

DAI reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Further, DAI reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.