

CALL FOR PARTNERSHIPS (CFP)

from

Not-for-Profit Institutions

Ref: CFP No AFG25CFP001 Skills-Based Literacy Programme
(Please quote this UNESCO reference in all correspondence)

Date 10 February 2025

Closing date: **02/Mar/2025 (4:00 PM Afghanistan Time)**

Submission via email to: e.procurement@unesco.org

Inquiries via email to: e.procurement@unesco.org (technical aspects)

e.procurement@unesco.org (administrative & financial aspects)

I. BACKGROUND:

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) seeks to build peace through international cooperation in Education, the Sciences and Culture. UNESCO's programmes contribute to the achievement of the [Sustainable Development Goals in Agenda 2030](#) adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2015. This Call for Partnerships (CFP) for Implementation Partners relates to the UNESCO project:

Skills-Based Literacy (SBL) Programme

Afghanistan is one of the poorest countries in the world with around 85% of the people living under the poverty line. A key reason for this pervasive poverty is that the youth and adults who are the breadwinners of the families lack labour market-required skills. Additionally, illiteracy remains a significant challenge, further exacerbating unemployment and poverty across the country. The literacy rate in Afghanistan is estimated at 38%, with female literacy critically low at 22.6% compared to 52.1% for men. The suspension of education beyond Grade 6 for girls has caused an 89% decline in female enrolment in Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutions, indicating a severe underutilization of human potential. There is a well-established positive correlation between illiteracy, unemployment, and poverty.

For the past two decades, UNESCO has supported skills development and literacy training programmes to improve literacy skills and provide beneficiaries, especially females, with opportunities to enhance their livelihoods. These programmes integrate literacy with skills, covering topics such as vegetable farming, first aid, and entrepreneurship. Practical support is also provided through these programmes, enabling learners to engage in agricultural and livelihood activities such as poultry, goat keeping and vegetable farming, as well as to start small enterprises.

UNESCO plans to continue implementing Skills-Based Literacy (SBL) initiatives with a focus on enhancing job-related and market-relevant skills for both male and female beneficiaries in addition to helping beneficiaries acquire the ability to read, write and count. This approach aims to empower individuals by equipping them with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values necessary to become productive, healthy, and responsible citizens. The programme adopts a community-based approach, prioritising the provision of skills-based literacy for youth and adults, particularly women who have been deprived of education.

II. **OBJECTIVES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS/ DELIVERABLES:**

The objective of this Call for Proposals is to [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

1) To empower Afghan youth and adults aged 15 and above, who have previously been excluded from education, by providing them with SBL training. The programme will equip learners with essential literacy skills integrated with practical livelihood skills, fostering their ability to be productive, healthy, and responsible citizens prepared to contribute to community welfare and secure viable employment in the national labour market, particularly focusing on women and girls who face significant barriers to education and economic participation.

Detailed objectives and related outputs and deliverables are provided in the Terms of Reference – **Annex 1**

Final Beneficiaries

Eligible proposals will be those focused on Skills-based Literacy initiatives and targeting 20,955 as the direct and final beneficiaries.

II. **ELIGIBILITY:**

A UNESCO Implementation Partner is an entity with a not-for-profit status to which UNESCO has entrusted partially or fully the implementation of programmes or projects specified in a signed document, along with the assumption of full responsibility and accountability for the effective use of resources and the delivery of outputs as set forth in such a document.

Main features of a UNESCO Implementation Partners' Agreement
The partner brings added value, including monetary or in-kind contribution, to the project/activity
The partner shares in the risks and rewards of the project/activity implementation and is responsible and accountable for delivering expected results
The partner is involved at each step of the process, from detailed work plan elaboration to project/activity evaluation.
The partnership will include aspects beyond the delivery of a service to include capacity-building elements with respect to the partner and/or beneficiary

The parameters that will determine whether an entity is eligible to be considered by UNESCO will be based on the UNESCO Partner Identification form – **Annex 2**

III. **PROPOSAL:**

Proposed Methodology, Approach, Quality Assurance Plan and Implementation Plan

This section should demonstrate the entity's response to the Terms of Reference by identifying the specific components proposed, how the outputs/ delivery shall be addressed, as specified; providing a detailed description of the essential performance characteristics proposed; identifying the works/portions of the work that will be subcontracted.

Moreover the proposal should demonstrate how the proposed methodology meets or exceeds the TOR, while ensuring appropriateness of the approach to the local conditions and the rest of the project operating environment. This methodology must be laid out in an implementation timetable and a quality assurance.

Management Structure and Resource (Key Personnel)

This section should include the comprehensive description of the management structure and information regarding required resources including curriculum vitae (CVs) of key personnel that will be assigned to support the implementation of the proposed methodology, clearly defining the qualifications in areas relevant to the TOR.

IV. EVALUATION CRITERIA AND METHODOLOGY:

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- 1) Sound technical proposal that includes innovative and replicable inclusion mechanisms to maximize the value transfer to the beneficiaries.
- 2) High impact interventions directly targeting and responding to the needs established in the TOR.
- 3) Size of budget requested commensurate with the organization's proven administrative and financial management capacity.
- 4) Participatory monitoring and evaluation that will contribute to building a sense of ownership among the beneficiaries to promote the sustainability of the interventions.

OPTION 1 – Highest Total Score of Weighted Technical and Financial Criteria

Sample: Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution		
			A	B	C
1.	Eligibility and qualifications of an entity submitting proposal	250			
2.	Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan	250			
3.	Management Structure and Key Personnel	200			
Sub-total for Technical Evaluation		700			

Financial Proposal Evaluation Form

Sample: Summary of Financial Proposal		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution		
			A	B	C
	Financial Proposal	300			
Sub-total for Financial Evaluation		300			

Evaluation of the price proposals (of all Entities who have attained minimum 70 % score in the technical evaluation) will be based on the weight scoring method as follows:

1. Financial proposals are opened and list of prices is prepared, where the lowest price is ranked as the first one (receiving highest amount of points) and the most expensive as the last one (receiving the least amount of points).
2. Lowest price is given maximum points (e.g. 300), for other prices the points are assigned based on the following formula: [Amount of points = $\frac{\text{lowest price}}{\text{other price}} \times \text{total points obtainable for financial proposal}$]

An example:

3. Offeror A – lowest price ranked as 1st in the amount of USD 10,000 = a
4. Offeror B – second lowest price ranked as 2nd in the amount of USD 15,000 = b
Points assigned to A = 300 & Points assigned to B = 200 (following formula: $\frac{a}{b} \times 300$ i.e. $\frac{10,000}{15,000} \times 300 = 200$ points)

Combined Technical and Financial Evaluation`

Sample: Summary of Financial Proposal Evaluation Forms		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution			
			A	B	C	D
	Sub-total Technical Proposal	700				
	Sub-total Financial Proposal	300				

This methodology implies that all proposals have the same maximum overall price (which cannot exceed a known fixed budget amount), focusing the selection on the quality of the proposal and the proposed approach and methodology. Not-for-profit entities have to provide their best technical proposal and financial breakdown (within the budget) in one single envelope (no overheads or administrative fees are allowed). Evaluation of all technical proposals shall be carried out, in accordance with the outlined evaluation criteria, and the institution which obtains the highest technical score shall be selected (min 70% score required). Entities exceeding the established fixed budget in their financial proposals will be rejected.

Proposals have to translate institutional needs into implementable activities. Under QB-FBS, assessment focuses on maximizing transfer of value to the beneficiary within a given budget.

Sample: Summary of Technical Proposal Evaluation Forms		Points Obtainable	Name of Firm / Institution		
			A	B	C
1.	Eligibility and qualifications of an entity submitting proposal	300			
2.	Proposed Methodology, Approach and Implementation Plan	500			
3.	Management Structure and Key Personnel	200			
	Total	1000			

Detailed sub-criteria are provided in **Annex 1**

V. BUDGET SIZE AND DURATION :

The amount requested in the proposal should be commensurate with the organization's administrative and financial management capabilities. In principle, project duration will not exceed 7 months .

Regarding the budget of the technical proposal of the partner, UNESCO retains the right to elaborate the work plan and negotiate the budget with the partner, prior to signing agreement, to ensure value of money. Likewise, UNESCO will ensure that in accordance with its policies the selected Partner will be able to provide added value in terms of financial or in-kind contribution. The partner's financial or in-kind contribution will be indicated in the budget proposal. No overheads in terms of administrative or service fees are accepted (direct budgeting based on activities).

VI. SELECTION PROCESS:

UNESCO will review proposals through a five-step process: (i) determination of eligibility; (ii) technical review of eligible proposals; (iii) scoring and ranking of the eligible proposals based on the assessment criteria outlined in the previous section, to identify highest ranking proposal; (iv) round of clarification (if necessary) and work plan elaboration with the highest-scoring proposal; and, (v) Implementation Partners' Agreement (IPA) signature.

VII. SUBMISSION PROCESS:

Applicants shall bear all costs related to proposal preparation and submission.

Applicants must submit their proposals in one envelope to:

UNESCO - Office in Afghanistan

UNOCA compound, Kabul Jalalabad Road, Kabul Afghanistan

Number of copies: Two

The following documents must be submitted in order for the submission to be considered:

- 1) Proposal documents (technical and financial, including project outline)
- 3) Partners' Identification Form (duly filled in, with supporting documents)
- 5) Audited financial statements for past two years.

Only one submission per organization is allowed. Once the application is complete and submitted, revised versions of proposal documents will not be accepted.

Submission Deadline

Proposals, with supporting documents, should be submitted by 4:00 pm Afghanistan Time-Mar 02 2025.

For additional questions about the Call for Proposals Guidelines or application forms, please e-mail e.procurement@unesco.org

Note: UNESCO reserves the right not to fund any proposals arising from this Call for Partnerships. Depending on the value and context of the implementation partners agreement, the final financial report must be audited by the External Auditor of the Partner. The audit requirement will be confirmed during work plan elaboration and contract finalization.

Below is an estimated timeline for this Call for Partnerships:

Feb 10 2025: Call for Partnerships opens.

Feb 24, 2025 - 2:00 - 3:00 PM Afghanistan is the optional pre-bid meeting. Interested bidders e-mail to e.procurement@unesco.org to be invited for the meeting.

Mar 02 2025: Deadline for organizations to submit proposals under this Call.

Mar 24 2025: Assessment and selection processes will take place.

Mar 31 2025: Selected applicants will be notified.

IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

UNESCO requires that partners, bidders and their subcontractors adhere to the highest standards of moral and ethical conduct during the implementation of the partnership agreement and do not engage in corrupt and fraudulent practices.

United Nations Agencies have adopted a zero tolerance policy on gifts and, therefore, it is of overriding importance that UNESCO staff should not be placed in a position where their actions may constitute or could be reasonably perceived as reflecting favorable treatment of an individual or entity by accepting offers of gifts, hospitality or other similar favours. Partners are therefore requested not to send or offer gifts or hospitality to UNESCO personnel.

UNESCO will:

- (a) Reject a proposal to award an agreement if it determines that a partner recommended for award has engaged in fraud and/or corruption in competing for the agreement in question.
- (b) Cancel or terminate an agreement if it determines that a partner has engaged in fraud and/or corruption in competing for or in executing a UNESCO contract;
- (c) Declare a partner ineligible to become a "United Nations registered vendor", either indefinitely or for a stated period of time, if it determines at any time that the partner has engaged in fraud and/or corruption in competing for or in executing a UNESCO agreement.

This Call for Partnerships is not to be construed in any way as an offer to contract with your organization. Your proposal could, however, form the basis for a contract between your organization and UNESCO.

You are requested to acknowledge the receipt of this Call for Partnerships and to indicate whether or not you will be submitting a proposal. For this purpose, and for any requests for clarification, please contact Huhua Fan.

For and on behalf of UNESCO
Education Sector, UNESCO Kabul Office:
Ms. Patricia McPhillips, Officer-in-Charge, Afghanistan

VIII. ANNEXES:

Annex 1 - Terms of Reference

Annex 2 - UNESCO Partner Identification form

Annex 3 - Budget template

Annex 4 - Implementation Partners Agreement

Annex 5 - Application Form (to be filled by Implementing Partner)

Annex 6 - Vendor registration form

Annex 7 - Work plan Progress Template

Example of Budget template or similar:

	a	b	c	d	e	f = a *b*c*d*e		
Item Description		Total Project Costs					Partner's contribution (US\$)	UNESCO contribution (US\$)
	Duration (months / days)	Unit of measurement (month/person, lump sum, etc)	Number of Units	Unit Cost (US\$)	Percentage time worked for project	Total budget for this line		
Personnel costs e.g.								
senior team leader								
social workers....								
Subtotal personnel cost								
Activity 1 Costs e.g.								
stationary and didactic materials...								
beneficiaries transportation ...								
Subtotal Activity 1 Costs								
Activity 2 Costs e.g.								
visibility materials								
awareness campaign materials								
Subtotal Activity 2 Costs								
Activity 3 Costs								
Subtotal Activity 3 Costs								

Other Expenses e.g.								
communication costs								
contribution to office costs								
domestic travel								
Subtotal Other Expenses								
Total Costs								

Notes:

Cost breakdown must be deemed reasonable and fair in comparison in prevailing market trends, and represents value for money.

Budget financed by UNESCO should only include financial provisions for activities that are directly relevant to achievement of IPA outcomes. Indirect/overhead costs should be borne by the Partner.

Nature and breakdown of partner's contribution to be confirmed at the latest during workplan elaboration.