



Request for Proposals

University Disability Services

Study Tour

U.S.-Egypt Higher Education Initiative (HEI), Public University Scholarships
Program

RFP NUMBER: **Amideast HEI [RFP 18-0002]**

FUNDED BY: **USAID**

**Proposals must be received NO LATER THAN Sunday, June 19, 2022,
before 8 am Egypt standard time (UTC+2).**

This request for proposals is part of the U.S. - Egypt Higher Education Initiative, Public University Scholarships Program, funded by USAID and supported by the Ministry of Higher Education, administered by Amideast. The program will establish and develop a sustainable University Disability Service Center at fifteen public universities to support the full participation of students with disabilities and ensure their equal access to higher education.

Dear Potential Bidder,

Under Amideast HEI [RFP 18-0002], Amideast seeks one U.S. host institution to implement the University Disability Services Study Tour. The U.S. institution will demonstrate a capacity to host 45 participants from Egyptian public universities for a 10-day program on provision of services to students with disabilities at universities, scheduled to take place in September 2022. Interested institutions must submit a proposal for this training and study tour.

Amideast, under the HEI Public University Scholarships program is currently seeking proposals from U.S. universities to design and implement a program to strengthen the capacity of Egyptian public university staff to administer the newly established Disability Service Centers and ensure equal access to higher education for students with disabilities at their university.

Location of Program: United States

Performance Period: June to October 2022 (study tour 10 days in September)

Maximum Award: \$800,000

Application Deadline: Sunday, June 19, no later than 8 am Egypt standard time (UTC+2)

Amideast contact person: Dina Mohsen, dmohsen@amideast.org

Background

Amideast is a leading American non-profit organization engaged in international education, training and development activities in the Middle East and North Africa for over 70 years. Additional information about Amideast can be found in the Scope of Work and online at www.amideast.org

Eligibility Requirements:

Institutions seeking consideration for an award to host university staff members participating in University Disability Services Study Tour for Egypt should have a strong center for students with disabilities and are required to be:

- Registered as an institution of higher education duly organized and existing in the U.S., under the laws of the host institution's state of incorporation
- Acknowledged as an accredited institution by a U.S. Department of Education-recognized accrediting agency
- Eligible to receive federal funding, and not disbarred

Institutions should also have significant knowledge and experience:

- Designing and managing comprehensive development programs and/or study tours for international higher education faculty/staff members, preferably from the Arab world
- Administering disability services on a large university campus (e.g. supporting the universities/higher education institutions' commitment to equity and diversity; promoting awareness of disability issues, providing support for a system of access for students within the university community; providing (or supporting provision of) accommodations and access to university students with disabilities.)

Request for proposal No: **Amideast HEI [RFP 18-0002]** consists of the following documents, which are enclosed:

ANNEX I **SCOPE OF WORK**

ANNEX II **INSTRUCTIONS**

Bidders are required to address all ANNEXES as per the **SCOPE OF WORK – ANNEX I** and submit a complete proposal with all deliverables and milestones. Submission of a proposal confirms that the bidder:

- Certifies that the submitted proposal is accurate and complete
- Agrees to provide services identified in SCOPE OF WORK – ANNEX I, at the prices therein offered and summarized in the offer, in accordance with the conditions of this solicitation document. This bid is valid for a period of sixty (60) calendar days from the RFP closing date.
- Acknowledges reading all documents and is fully aware of all terms and conditions.
- Understands that upon consideration of award or during the negotiations leading to an award, bidders may be required to submit additional documentation deemed necessary for Amideast to make an award.
- Understands Amideast reserves the exclusive right to accept or reject all or any part of the proposal for any reason.

We appreciate your interest in this project and look forward to receiving your proposal.

Sincerely,

Quincy Dermody

Chief of Party, HEI Public University Scholarships Program

Amideast

ANNEX I. SCOPE OF WORK – UNIVERSITY DISABILITY SERVICES STUDY TOUR

BACKGROUND – DISABILITY IN EGYPT

For the Egyptian population of persons with disabilities generally, the estimated figure provided by the World Bank and World Health Organization in the 2011 World Report on Disability, indicates global disability prevalence is 15% of the population person with disabilities. In 2019 Egypt has an estimated 12 million people with disabilities, according to a UNDP report. The Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS) revealed in a press statement in 2019 that among Egyptians five years and up, 10.55% have disabilities ranging from “some difficulties to cannot do at all” and 2.48% have disabilities ranging from “a lot of difficulties to cannot do at all”. While disaggregated data as to disability type are even harder to come by, a 2007 WHO household survey estimated 6% prevalence of hearing loss in the population (WHO, 2007). According to WHO estimates, there are one million blind and three million visually impaired persons in Egypt.

Egypt is not distinct in needing to address barriers that make equal access to quality education difficult for students with disabilities. The Egyptian Government ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2008. There is now a special emphasis on accessibility to institutions of higher education. For the first time, although in a limited way, the adoption of the Supreme Council of University decree of September 13, 2015 facilitating access of deaf students to higher education and the Supreme Council of University decree of June 23, 2016 to improve equality of opportunity in the selection of courses for students with disabilities are examples of increased accessibility to higher education. The focus on disability was further strengthened by Egyptian President, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, declaring 2018 as the year of persons with disabilities. In February 2018 new law regarding persons with disabilities was released, guaranteeing their full rights in all aspects of life.

A number of concrete measures have been undertaken in Egypt during the past ten years to create an enabling environment to increase the accessibility of Egyptian higher education to students with disabilities, however, there are no accurate statistics regarding the number of students with disabilities in universities and technical colleges. Based on the recent report of USAID Needs Assessment of Persons with Disabilities in Egyptian Public Universities and Regional Technical Colleges (December 2018), barriers reported by students and graduates with disabilities exist in higher education; law/policy/practices (both formal and informal); attitudinal barriers; physical infrastructure/built environment and transport; and inaccessible course material for all three sub-groups of students with disabilities.

Within universities, student supports were frequently part of library services or housed in separate centers within individual faculties. Between 2018 and 2022, 5 universities established campus-wide disability service centers as part of the HEI program. According to the executive regulations of the new Egyptian law for persons with disabilities issued in December 2019, each university is now required to establish a Disability Services Center (Article 21).

The adoption of specific, concrete, and measurable steps to build on the momentum in supporting disability inclusion will contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Support for accessible higher education will also go a long way in advancing the rights of persons with disabilities to access employment, obtain an adequate standard of living, and otherwise achieve the aims set out in the 2014 Egyptian Constitution.

Background information can be found in the nation-wide assessment on the accessibility of higher education in Egypt available at the following link: https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PA00N6TT.pdf.

BACKGROUND – HEI PROGRAM

As of 2015, as part of the U.S.-Egypt Higher Education Initiative (HEI) Public University Scholarship program, Amideast has been working with five public universities to host almost 673 students, including 7% with disabilities. The HEI Public University Scholarships program, funded by USAID and supported by the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education, is a scholarship for disadvantaged high school graduates to attend excellence programs at public universities in parallel with specially-designed supplementary enhancement activities such as English, leadership training and career planning, as well as internships, community service, and study abroad. The program interweaves the private sector and practical experiences so that graduates are primed to enter and contribute to the workforce in Egypt, in sectors that are critical to the economic development of the country.

Beginning in 2018 work began to establish five sustainable, effective Disability Service Centers that serve the academic, physical, and community needs of disabled students on campus and promote equal access to higher education for those with disabilities within these five universities. These pilot disability centers are functioning and were officially inaugurated in 2021. Now, 15 additional disability centers will be established. The Disability Service Centers advocate on behalf of students with disabilities, coordinate access to disabilities services on campus (linking students with the ad hoc existing services) and provide support to students with disabilities. Activities include university partnerships to formalize the establishment/abilities of the centers, training and coaching for center staff in management and disability topics, a U.S. Study Tour to explore possibilities for disability centers and to motivate center staff, and a conference on Disability Services in Higher Education to highlight successes and identify these centers as models for other universities.

BACKGROUND – Amideast

Amideast is a leading American non-profit organization engaged in international education, training and development activities in the Middle East and North Africa. Founded in 1951, Amideast in its early years focused on promoting U.S. study to students in the MENA region and managing U.S. scholarships and exchanges such as the flagship Fulbright Foreign Student Program. While these important programs continue apace, our work has expanded significantly. Today Amideast programs and services touch the lives of half a million individuals a year – improving educational opportunities and quality, strengthening local institutions, and developing language and professional skills critical for success in the global economy.

Amideast has worked in Egypt for over 60 years, expanding educational opportunities, preparing individuals for jobs in the global economy, strengthening institutions and communities, and empowering women and youth. Amideast has supported students in higher education through scholarship programs and exchange programs, prepared unemployed graduates for employment through training programs and job matching, and offered other youth opportunities to access education and training to improve their opportunities. Since 2011, Amideast has also worked on a range of programs that support persons with disabilities in Egypt both in English language learning, and in preparation for employment.

STUDY TOUR DESCRIPTION

Study Tour Purpose:

This study tour for 45 professionals who will be working with PwD at 15 public universities (30 managers/assistant managers for 10 days and 15 university vice presidents for 5 days), will strengthen the capacity of Egyptian public university staff to provide the required services at the new Disability Service Centers at each of the 15 universities. Participants will develop their understanding of and ability to

provide support services and academic accommodations to students with disabilities and to formulate policies and procedures on accessibility for students with disabilities within their universities.

The program aims to feature the following key program goals:

- Build higher education institutions' capacity in Egypt to support and advocate for students with disabilities and ensure equal access to higher education for them and to make action plan on the idea of establishing disability service center for realizing inclusive university campuses.
- Acquire knowledge about university policies related to PWD; and the role and activities of a Disability Service Center on a university campus, with exposure to a variety of center models (ideally at more than one university)
- Acquire knowledge about higher education institutions regulations and policies for students with disabilities (admission, enrollment, and program choices for students with disabilities, accommodations)
- Build relationships between the 15 universities' disability center staff, and between each university's staff and leadership
- Exchange practices on how to promote the inclusion of PWD and address common issues for students with disabilities on university campuses, with focus on the following points:
 - How to determine appropriate accommodations to ensure access to university's programs, activities and services.
 - How to provide testing accommodations for students with disabilities (particularly for the blind and those with intellectual disabilities since this is a current issue for most universities).
 - Admissions criteria and procedures for students with disabilities to different faculties and departments.
 - Explore different types of assistive technology and adaptation accommodations (both low tech and high tech, recognizing that the universities and their students generally do not have a lot of funding for high tech solutions).

Study Tour Content:

The host institution is expected to provide a robust 10-day program (not inclusive of travel days) for 30 staff with five of those days (not inclusive of travel days) including university leaders. The program should expose participants to new ideas, develop their competencies in disability services, and support them in taking a leading role in their universities/communities and implementation for the improvement of the accessibility of students with disabilities in higher education institutions in the context of their home country. As logical, staff and leaders can attend the same trainings/activities or be divided into separate trainings/activities on the same topic from different perspectives (e.g. policy vs implementation). Topics fall into four categories and can include, but are not limited to:

A. University Policy/Advocacy

- i. Disability and academic support services in higher education in U.S.
- ii. Key legislation affecting the rights and delivery of services to PWD in higher education
- iii. Driving institutional change in inclusive practice
- iv. Promoting disability education/awareness
- v. Effective approaches to engaging faculty and staff (committees, councils, trainings, etc) in providing accommodations.

B. Disability Service Center Administration

- vi. Role, structure, and services of a university disability center
- vii. Conducting individual student assessments and deciding the needed accommodations of each student. (Noting that most students with disabilities do not come to university with prior assessments from their school years.)
- viii. Identifying and tracking (for data purposes) students with disabilities
- ix. How to best communicate center services (website, Facebook, etc.)

C. Center Activities and Trainings

- x. Curriculum Development and universal design (to include guidance on ways to create documents that are more accessible to users with disabilities)
- xi. Working effectively with faculty members and departments
- xii. Encouraging and supporting independent living and self-advocacy for persons with disabilities
- xiii. How to train others or deliver what they learned on the tour to their universities when they back to Egypt.

D. Equipment and Tools

- xiv. Reasonable accommodations and assistive technology equipment/tools to foster the inclusion of students with disabilities in all campus life
- xv. Exposure to various hardware and software programs that may meet the needs of the Egyptian university students, and an understanding of how to evaluate the pros and cons of new technologies. (Managers will be making decisions on purchasing technology for their centers.)
- xvi. Incorporating technology as a teaching platform

Program activities are expected to be interactive and participatory, including site visits and tours, training, training of trainers, problem-solving discussions. Activities should inspire the participants to design and apply activities and services at their home universities that address their specific challenges. The center staff and the university leaders can attend the same activities and trainings when relevant, but in cases where the session content is very specific to center activities, we ask that the leaders have a parallel activity relevant to their position at the university. While the deliverable of the center staff participants is their Center Action Plan, the deliverable of the university leaders is to develop an action, policy, and/or commitment statement for their university, which they will formalize and publicize upon return to Egypt.

Prior to the program, the host university will be invited to meet online with the managers of the five established pilot centers to discuss their experiences, which the host university may want to use to inform program design. The program should include pre-arrival communication with the participants to assess their knowledge and gain insights into their needs and create a refined program tailored to their needs. Participants will bring their center plans (mission and vision, activities and timelines, indicators, challenges, and questions) and will be required to improve and finalize these plans while in the U.S. Implementation of the plans will begin immediately upon the participants' return to Egypt. They will be expected to present what they have learned, and its implications for their home Disability Service Center to their colleagues in Egypt. The host institution should encourage ongoing communication between the program participants and the host institution after return to Egypt by hosting some relevant online follow-up sessions to promote continued exchange of information and feedback on implementation of the action plans.

Study Tour Logistics and Timeline:

- a) Amideast will provide participants with J-visas and health insurance for the duration of the program. Amideast will purchase participants' round trip airline tickets and manage all logistics in Egypt.
- b) The host institution should provide accommodation that is easily accessible to program activities and should provide all meals and/or a stipend for meals that are not provided, not to exceed the GSA rate. (<https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates>)
- c) The study tour will be 10 days in length (not including travel days) for 30 participants and five days in length (not including travel days) for 15 leaders, ideally in September 2022, but October is also possible. September is preferable so that the participants don't miss the academic year in Egypt *but* they get to experience an active campus in the U.S. (Egyptian universities start their year approximately September 25.)
- d) With a large group (45 participants total), we expect that the host university will divide the participants into smaller groups for many of the trainings. The host university should describe in their proposals how they will split the group for various trainings/activities to achieve the program goals and also to develop cohesiveness among all the participants, allowing them to get to know each other and facilitate relationship building and professional camaraderie.

Study Tour Participant Details:

- a) Participants will be the newly hired managers of the Disability Service Centers at the 15 universities and staff members with or without disabilities from these or other centers serving PWD on campus. Participants will be a combination of faculty and staff, and may include people with disabilities. (All participants have not yet been selected).
- b) Most participants have experience with students with disabilities already (primarily visually impaired students), but some are newer to this field.
- c) The participants will be native Arabic speakers, some of whom will also speak English. The university should arrange translation for all workshops or trainings.
- d) Four staff members from Amideast will also join the study tour and will be able to provide less formal, individual translation if needed during less formal outings and activities.

REPORTING**Narrative Reporting:**

A final narrative report will be required no more than 30 days after completion of the study tour. The narrative report should include a comprehensive description of the program delivery, program calendar and activities, lessons learned, and feedback about the program.

Financial Reporting:

Host institutions will be paid in two installments: Up to 10% of anticipated program costs can be provided prior to the commencement of activities. The second installment, for the remaining actual costs, will be disbursed following the completion of the program and receipt and approval of all reports and deliverables. Host institutions will be required to submit a detailed certified financial report and invoice within 30 days of the conclusion of the program. The report should include and delineate actual costs incurred in implementation.

ANNEX II. INSTRUCTIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Amideast invites you to send your proposal to design and implement University Disability Services Study Tour, as described in the **Request for Proposals Amideast HEI [RFP 18-0002]**. Offerors of selected proposals will enter into a Cost-Reimbursable Agreement to provide program deliverables. Please note that the following:

- a) These instructions shall not form part of the resulting agreement. They are intended to aid bidders in the preparation of their RFPs.
- b) Institutions are invited to submit their proposals, but are under no obligation to do so. Bidders will not be reimbursed for any costs incurred in connection with the preparation and submission of their bids.

2. PROPOSAL SUBMISSION DEADLINE

- a. The proposal must be submitted in electronic format in one single email. Proposal materials should be saved in two separate parts, technical and financial, and are limited to 6 MB (including attachments). Please include in the subject line of the email: **Amideast HEI [RFP 18-0002]**,
- b. The RFP must be submitted to the following address **not later than [Sunday, June 19, 2022 no later than 8 am Egypt standard time (UTC+2)]**. Late proposals will not be considered.

Dina Mohsen
dmohsen@amideast.org

3. QUESTIONS

Amideast will accept questions pertaining to the RFP in writing via email at dmohsen@amideast.org. All questions must be submitted by Sunday, May 29, by 8 am Egypt standard time (UTC+2). No oral answers will be provided. Responses to RFP related questions will be published at <https://www.amideast.org/work-with-us/solicitations-for-goods-and-services> on Monday, May 30.

4. PREPARATION OF PROPOSAL

- a. Bidders are expected to examine these instructions to bidders, the conditions of contract, and the Scope of Work contained in this Request for Proposals. Failure to do so will be at the bidder's risk.
- b. All bids submitted must be valid for a period of not less than sixty (60) calendar days from the closing date.
- c. All correspondence in connection with the bid and the resulting contract must be in English.

5. CONTENT OF PROPOSALS

Bidders are required to complete the following:

- a. Technical Proposal, including:
 - a. Narrative description of the study tour content and activities and how this will help the participants achieve the program goals (as per the Scope of Work) – Format: Microsoft Word, maximum 10 pages, size 11 Calibri font

- b. Proposed schedule of activities during the study tour
- c. Past experiences with study tours for international visitors and disability services
- b. Financial Proposal, including:
 - a. Detailed, itemized budget in excel format, broken down by major category (e.g. personnel, fringe benefits, contractual, transport, other direct costs, participant costs, indirect costs). (sample below)
 - b. Budget narrative in Microsoft Word for each budget item. This should include the estimated cost elements at a detailed level, plus a description of the basis of estimated costs. The supporting cost information should be provided with sufficient detail and rationale to allow for a reasonable analysis of the proposal.

Budget Template Sample

Category/Item	Unit Cost	Unit	Unit Name	Total Cost
Travel				
Airport Transport	\$150	2	trips	\$300

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Your proposal will be treated as a confidential document and will not be shared outside of HEI.

7. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE

All information within this RFP, regardless of the communication form, is given in absolute confidence and may not be disclosed without written permission. This RFP and the information compiled therein whether verbally communicated or in written form, contain confidential information about HEI, which are provided for proposal purposes only. Your firm shall regard and preserve as confidential this RFP and all non-public information related to the operations of Amideast and its affiliated organizations that may be obtained from any source as a result of this RFP process.

8. PROPOSAL ACCEPTANCE PERIOD

Offers must be valid for a period of (60) days from the date set for opening, bids offering less than (60) days for acceptance by Amideast from the closing date, will be considered non-responsive and will be rejected.

9. SIGNATURE OF PROPOSAL

The offer must be signed by a person duly authorized to do so.

10. LATE PROPOSALS

Bidders will be held responsible for ensuring that their offers are received in accordance with the instructions stated herein, and a late bid will not be considered, even if this was as a result of circumstances beyond the Bidder's control. A late bid will be considered only if the sole cause of it becoming a late bid was attributable to Amideast.

11. MODIFICATION OF PROPOSALS

Any Bidder has the right to withdraw, modify, or correct its proposal after it has been delivered to Amideast, provided that the request for the withdrawal, modification, or correction together with full details of the modification or correction, is received by Amideast at the address given above by letter or email before the closing date.

The original bid, as amended by such communication, will be considered as the Bidder's offer. Amideast may ask any Bidder for a clarification of its bid; nevertheless no Bidder will be permitted to alter its Bid Price or make any other material modification after bids have been opened.

However, clarifications which do not change the Bid Price may be accepted. No Bidder may withdraw its bid after the time set for opening bids has elapsed.

12. ADDENDA TO THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

If for any reason prior to the Bid Opening, it becomes necessary to modify the Bid Documents, an Addendum will be issued to, and be binding, on all Bidders. Receipt of all Addenda shall be acknowledged by Bidders. Addenda will be numbered consecutively commencing with No. 1 and Bidders are required to insert the numbers of addenda received in their bid.

13. PROPOSAL EVALUATION AND CONTRACT AWARD

- A. An award will be made to the eligible, responsible, and responsive bidder, in accordance with the following criteria. These criteria are intended to (a) serve as the standard against which all proposals will be evaluated, and (b) serve to identify the significant areas bidders should address in their proposals. The final decision will be based as follows, for a total maximum score of 100%.
 - a) Responsiveness to the scope of work goals and technical requirements, demonstrating an understanding of participant needs and providing a clear and comprehensive approach to meet those needs. (40%)
 - b) Demonstrated capacity and past performance/experience in university disability services and with implementation of programs for international participants. (30%)
 - c) Cost effectiveness (30%)
- B. A responsive bid is one which complies with all of the terms and conditions of the RFP without material modification. A material modification is one which affects the price, quantity, quality, or which limits in any way any responsibilities, duties, or liabilities of the bidder or any rights Amideast specified or defined in the RFP.

Awards are expected to be made by June 23, 2022.

Amideast RESERVES THE RIGHT TO DECLINE ANY BID NOT MEETING THESE CONDITIONS AND TERMS.