



**International Foundation
for Electoral Systems**

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR ELECTORAL SYSTEMS (IFES)

**REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA) for the Advancing Building
Capacity for Disability Advocacy (ABCD) Program for
Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPD) in Pakistan**

RFA-24-023

Issued August 15, 2024

1. Request for Application (RFA)

1.1. Purpose

The purpose of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to invite civil society organization(s) to submit applications to implement a project that will build capacity among organizations of persons with disabilities (OPDs) in Pakistan. The objective of this project is to increase OPDs' capacity to engage in advocacy for the rights of persons with disabilities. The RFA provides prospective organizations with the relevant operational and performance requirements. IFES anticipates issuing multiple awards under this RFA.

1.2. RFA Schedule

IFES will conduct a competitive process to identify grantees per the tentative timeline below:

Issuance of RFA	August 15, 2024
Questions Due	August 22, 2024; by 17:00 Washington DC (EST)
Response from IFES	August 29, 2024, 2024
RFA Closes—All Applications Due	September 12, 2024; by 17:00 Washington DC (EST)
Anticipated Implementation Period	October 2024-September 2025

2. General Information

2.1. Background

IFES is an independent, non-governmental organization providing professional support to electoral democracy. IFES supports citizens' rights to participate in free and fair elections. Our independent expertise strengthens electoral systems and builds local capacity to deliver sustainable solutions.

As the global leader in democracy promotion, we advance good governance and democratic rights by Providing technical assistance to election officials, Empowering the underrepresented to participate in electoral and political processes, and Applying field-based research to improve the electoral cycle.

Since 1987, IFES has worked in over 145 countries – from developing democracies, to mature democracies.

3. Application Preparation Instructions

3.1. Applicant's Understanding of the RFA

In responding to this RFA, the applicant accepts full responsibility to understand the RFA in its entirety, and in detail, including making any inquiries to IFES as necessary to gain such understanding. IFES reserves the right to disqualify any applicant who demonstrates less than such understanding. Further, IFES reserves the right to determine, at its sole discretion, whether the applicant has demonstrated such understanding. Such disqualification and/or cancellation shall be at no fault, cost, or liability whatsoever to IFES.

3.2. Good Faith Statement

All information provided by IFES in this RFA is offered in good faith. Individual items are subject to change at any time. IFES makes no certification that any item is without error. IFES is not responsible or liable for any use of the information or for any claims asserted there from.

3.3. Communication

Verbal communication shall not be effective unless formally confirmed in writing by the IFES officials identified in Section 3.5 of this RFA. In no case shall verbal communication govern over

written communication.

3.3.1. Applicant Inquiries

Inquiries, questions, and requests for clarification related to this RFA should be submitted in writing to the representative listed below by the deadline listed in 1.2. RFA Schedule.

Name: Cayla Vega
cvega@ifes.org

and

Name:
asiapacificprocurement@ifes.org

Questions/Answers and Addenda(s) related to this RFA can be found on [IFES Procurement Notices](#).

3.3.2. Formal Communications shall include, but are not limited to:

- Questions concerning this RFA
- Expressions of Interest
- Pre-award negotiations under this RFA
- Addenda to this RFA

3.3.3. Addenda

IFES will make a good-faith effort to provide written responses to the questions or requests for clarifications that require addenda by the date set in the RFA Schedule above. All questions, answers, and addenda will be shared with all interested organizations.

3.4. Eligibility

Locally registered Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Political Party Organizations or other similar not-for-profit institutions are invited to apply. If a OPD, CSO, or NGO is not locally registered, a signed letter stating the reason why must be included as part of the application.

Individuals and the following organizations are **not eligible** to access funding:

- Governmental and semi-governmental institutions
- International organizations
- Political parties or organizations affiliated with or engaging in partisan activities
- Organizations running on a for-profit basis

3.5. Application Instructions

All applications should include the following, in order for their application to be considered:

3.5.1. Technical Application

The Technical Application must include a written application in English describing in detail the applicant's (a) Technical Approach, (b) implementation timeline, and (c) results framework to implement the Program Description as described in Article 4 of this RFA. The evaluation criteria can be found in Article 3.6. Applicants should use the technical narrative template in Attachment A.

3.5.2. Cost Application – Budget & Budget Narrative

- The Budget should reflect costs associated with the technical activities and deliverables. All applicants must use the budget template provided in Attachment B and submit it in Excel format as part of their application. The Budget should be presented in **USD**, with applicable taxes/charges clearly identified. Unit costs are required and, in the case of discrepancies between unit costs and total costs, the unit cost will be taken as the reference basis in the evaluation.

- The applicant must agree to keep these costs valid for a minimum of 90 calendar days.
- The Cost Application should include a Budget Narrative that describes each cost element of the Budget (see column H of Attachment B).

3.5.3. A brief outline of the applicant's organization and experience.

Organizations should demonstrate prior experience working with OPDs from a wide range of states and regions, particularly rural areas, facilitating training programs, and should itself be an OPD working on programming related to advocacy on rights of persons with disabilities.

3.5.4. Additional documentation

- When available, a copy of the organization's most recent final, signed audits/financial statements
- Proof of organization's registration or a signed letter indicating why the organization is not registered.
- CVs of key personnel including the organization's Director and anticipated program manager
- Any other supporting document that will strengthen the application

3.6. Application Submission

Applicants must send final applications in electronic copy via e-mail to the point of contact identified in 3.3.1 on or prior to the closing date and time shown in the *Schedule of Events*.

3.7. Criteria for Selection

The evaluation of each response to this RFA will be based on its demonstrated competence, compliance, format, and organization. The purpose of this RFA is to identify those organizations that have the interest, capability, and financial strength to implement the project as described in Article 4 of this RFA.

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|--|------------------|
| 1. Technical Approach, Implementation Timeline, Results Framework | 40 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrated understanding of the RFA and of IFES' requirements • Soundness and feasibility of technical approach • Reasonable implementation timeline and results framework | |
| 2. Competitive Budget with efficient and reasonable cost structure | 30 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost realism in response to RFA requirements • Clear budget presentation of necessary, allocable and reasonable costs • Appropriate balance of budget between operational/personnel costs and activity costs | |
| 3. Past Performance and Organizational Capacity | 30 points |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which proposed personnel have relevant qualifications and experience • Demonstrated capacity to organize, manage and implement full range of activities required to achieve program goals and objectives • Demonstrated flexibility to adjust implementation in response to changing environments • Demonstrated strong past performance in implementing programs of similar size, scope and complexity • Demonstrated presence and/or networks in the proposed target districts | |

3.8. Selection and Notification

Applicants determined by IFES that possess the capacity to compete for this project will be selected to move into the negotiation phase of this process. Written notification will be sent to

these applicants via e-mail. Those applicants not selected for the negotiation phase will also be notified.

4. Scope of Work

IFES is implementing ACCOUNT – The Active Citizens Organize & Unite for Inclusion and Transparency program with funding support from the United States Department of State’s Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL). This program’s objective to engage with women, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups by strengthening and advancing democratic rights for advocating right-based legislative reforms and governmental accountability for addressing obstacles to comprehensive and fair democratic participation.

Under ACCOUNT, IFES will engage the local partners to implement the IFES’ disability rights-focused ABCD program to advance disability rights in Sindh and Punjab provinces and promote national-level dialogue in collaboration with Islamabad-based stakeholders by bringing together organizations for people with disabilities (OPDs) and emerging disability rights advocates. They will be responsible for developing platforms for advocacy and advancing legislation at the provincial and national levels to influence policy, decision-making and implement their disability rights-focused advocacy assignments. These advocacy initiatives will capitalize on momentum from a 2020 Supreme Court ruling mandating that federal and provincial governments take steps to fully realize equal participation of people with disabilities in all spheres of life.

IFES is looking for local CSOs for implementation of the ABCD program in the selected districts of Sindh and Punjab, as well as Islamabad, as detailed in the following table:

Provinces	Districts	Target
Punjab	Silakot, Hafizabad, Lahore	6 OPDs
Sindh	Larkana, Khairpur, Karachi	7 OPDs
	Islamabad / ICT	2 OPDs
	Total	15 OPDs

* Please note that each organization will submit separate bids for each province, i.e. Sindh and Punjab. However, the organizations submitting bids for Punjab will also include implementation in ICT. Organizations may submit bids for one province only. The Planned intervention will be implemented in one year.

Following are the details of activities for implementation.

Conduct of OPD Capacity Building Program

- Develop selection criteria and select OPDs in consultation with IFES - 15 OPDs for the program
- Engage Mentors/trainers (Go-to-Person) for OPDs Capacity Building Program throughout the project life and Attend the Training of trainers (ToT), IFES will develop the curriculums and bear all related costs for the ToT.

- Conduct at least three capacity building and organizational management trainings of 15 OPDs by engaging the relevant staff throughout the life of the project – IFES will develop the curriculum and bear all ToT expenses.
- Conduct an advocacy training bootcamp of modular trainings including one 3-day beginner, one 2-day advanced and two 1-day add-on trainings for 40-50 OPDs representatives (2-3 member from each selected OPD). Through modular trainings OPDs will be able to identify gaps and formulate recommendations for disabilities rights protection laws and will develop their policy platform and advocacy strategies to contribute in advancing legislation at the provincial and national levels.
 - After the Beginner module, trained participants will design and implement action plans by identifying and supporting the persons with disabilities in acquiring their disability certificates, special NICs, getting services/facilities from the public sector such as education, health, BISP, Social Welfare and others.
 - After the Advanced module, participants will design and implement advocacy assignments focused on influencing local leaders (municipal councils, tehsils, etc.), provincial leaders, and relevant government departments on changes needed to strengthen disability rights policies or improve existing policy implementation.
 - Devise a system to provide micro-grants to OPDs to implement action plans and run advocacy campaigns around identified policy priorities after both modules.
 - Implementing partner shall follow IFES' Do-no-Harm approach ensuring safety of project staff and any of the direct beneficiaries.
- Develop a recording and reporting system, with IFES's consultation, ensuring that the implementation process is well documented. This should include a focus on tracking OPDs representatives' performance including development and implementation of their respective action plans and means of verification for all stages of implementation are available.
- Design, print and disseminate relevant IEC materials for the general public awareness online & community-based campaigns - Each material should be converted into braille and sign language to make it more inclusive
- Link the alumnae to the existing Gender and Disability Working Group to build momentum for disability rights campaigns among a wider group of advocates.
- Arrange lessons learned workshop for participants for showcasing and experience sharing.

Establishment of Community of Practice (CoP)

- Develop a selection criterion and for the selection of 25 CoP members including top performers from IMPACT program - in consultation with IFES
- Develop TORs and establish a Community of Practice (CoP) at district level consisting of 25 star performers from disability rights advocates and OPDs representatives.

Policy Platforms and Legislative Reforms for Persons with Disabilities by engaging OPDs and disability rights advocates

IFES' implementing partners will bring together emerging Disability Rights Advocates and OPDs of the IMPACT program to develop platforms for policy and legislative reforms by implementing the following activities:

- Hold three policy dialogues to present gaps and propose recommendations for disability rights protection laws in Sindh, Punjab and ICT.
- Organize a project closeout event/conduct lesson learned workshop with the best of the OPD performers.

Reporting and Monitoring

- Develop a recording and reporting system, with IFES's consultation, ensuring that the whole implementation process is well documented with a special focus that each OPDs performance is trackable including development and implementation of their respective action plans and means of verification for all stages of implementation are available.
- Provide IFES with participant lists, photographs of trainings, monitoring and evaluation data and training reports for each training.
- Submit program progress, event reports, M&E reports and final report - on weekly, monthly and quarterly basis or as and when required by IFES.
- Conduct monitoring and evaluation in formats agreed to with IFES – throughout the program to measure progress and impact.
- Participate regularly in project coordination/progress review meetings arranged by IFES (online or in-person).

5. Functional Requirements

5.1. Timeline:

Applicants must submit a detailed timeline in their Application showing the time required to implement the services requested. IFES requires all deliverables to be completed not later than September 1, 2025.

5.2. Monitoring & Evaluation

- As part of its due diligence, IFES conducts pre-award surveys on all potential grantees to assess capacity and inform the appropriate grant mechanism. In addition, applicants expected to expend \$750,000 or more in U.S. funded awards during their fiscal year must have an audit conducted in accordance with 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F—Audit Requirements. If Applicable, applicants must ensure that funds are included in the grant budget for an audit.
- IFES will issue the appropriate grant mechanism depending on the nature of the work, the capacity of the grantee, the duration of the grant, and the overall value of the grant.
- IFES will provide continuous mentorship, training and oversight to ensure grant management practices are in line with anti-corruption principles as well as to build capacity of local grantees to fully manage and implement their programs in adherence to donor regulations and with a view towards sustainability.

5.3. Deliverables:

Specific deliverables and reporting will be determined based on the grant activities proposed and negotiated during the negotiation phase.

6. Additional Terms & Conditions

6.1. Non-Disclosure Agreement

IFES reserves the right to require any applicant to enter into a non-disclosure agreement.

6.2. Zero Tolerance for Fraud

IFES has zero tolerance for fraud. Fraud is any act or omission that intentionally misleads, or attempts to mislead, to obtain a benefit or to avoid an obligation. If you have concerns about potential fraud in any way related to IFES projects, contracts, or activities, please contact IFES' Compliance Hotline at compliance@ifes.org or at +1 202-350-6791.

6.3. Intellectual Property

Applicants should not use any intellectual property of IFES including, but not limited to, all logos, registered trademarks, or trade names of IFES, at any time, without the prior written approval of IFES, as appropriate.

6.4. Applications

All accepted applications shall become the property of IFES and will not be returned.

6.5. Governing Law

This RFA and the applicants' applications shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, USA.

6.6. Partial Awarding

IFES reserves the right to accept all or part of the application when awarding the grant. IFES also reserves the right to issue multiple awards and procure only items or services from selected applicants.

6.7. No Liability

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute a commitment on the part of IFES to make an award nor does it commit IFES to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of any application in response to this RFA. Further, IFES reserves the right to reject any or all applications received or stop solicitation process at any time, without assigning any reason or liability.

IFES shall not be liable to any applicant, person, or entity for any losses, expenses, costs, claims, or damages of any kind:

- Arising out of, by reason of, or attributable to, the applicant responding to this RFA; or
- As a result of the use of any information, error, or omission contained in this RFA document or provided during the RFA process.

6.8. Entire RFA

This RFA, any addenda to it, and any attached schedules, constitute the entire RFA.

6.9. Attachments

Attachment A: Technical Narrative Template
Attachment B: Budget Template
Attachment C: Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Template

End of RFA

ATTACHMENT A
Technical Narrative Template

I. General Information

Complete Legal Name of Applicant Organization

Office Address

Legal Mailing Address (if different)

Office Telephone Number(s)

E-Mail Address(es)

Director of Organization

Project Manager/Contact Person

Project Dates (month/year – month/year)

Project Title

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)¹

PAN Number

¹ Only organizations with Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) are eligible to receive a subaward under this RFA. If your organization does not have a UEI, please visit www.SAM.gov to get a Unique Entity ID only (no entity registration required).

II. Technical Approach:

Please include the following components in in a maximum of **5 pages**

- A. Project Summary:** describe your project in one paragraph, including objectives, issue, target audience, and geographic coverage.
- B. Need for the project:** identify the problem your project would help to solve. Why is this project important?
- C. Project's Goal and Objectives:** what is the specific goal of your effort? Does it comply with the goals and objectives of the competition?
- D. Target Audience and Stakeholders:** what is your main target audience? What groups of stakeholders will the project primarily serve?
- E. Activities:** identify and describe in detail each activity to be undertaken to produce results, justifying the choice of activities.
- F. Expected Deliverables:** identify specific deliverables that you expect to develop within your project (research/analytical reports; specific strategies; public policy recommendations; etc.).

III. Implementation Timeline

Please use the following format to provide an implementation timeline

Project Month	Activity	Expected Result	Involved Stakeholders

IV. Results Framework

Please identify specific results that you expect to realize upon completion of your project and the quantitative and qualitative criteria for the project's success. How will you determine that the project goals have been accomplished? The framework should include:

- A list of results you expect to accomplish throughout the project
- 1-4 performance indicators for each result including a detailed definition for each
- The source, method, frequency and schedule of data collection,
- Staff responsible for collecting data.
- How the performance data will be collected
- How data will be reviewed, analyzed and reported

ATTACHMENT B
Budget Template

[CLICK HERE](#) to visit IFES Procurement Notices page and download the budget template.

ATTACHMENT C
Organizational Capacity and Past Performance Template

I. Summary

Briefly present your organization's mission, its core activities, and why it is best suited for this project

II. Human Resources

- A. *Please provide full legal name of organization's Director and / or Chief Executive Officer.*
- B. *Please provide CVs for the core technical members of the team (the director of the organization training or curriculum experts, project manager etc.).*
- C. *Please provide hiring plan for full and part-time positions the organization including a list of positions and recruitment plan or cost-share with existing positions.*

III. Past Performance

- A. *Briefly describe how your organization's previous experience prepares it to successfully implement the proposed project; highlight the organization's relationship and work experience with lawmakers, political parties or government officials if applicable.*
- B. *Please specify previous work in the relevant field.*
- C. *Please list the organization's major projects from the past five years in the following format:*

<i>Project Name</i>	<i>Project Activities</i>	<i>Donor</i>	<i>Award Amount</i>	<i>Period of Award</i>

IV. References:

If applicable, contact information for three references from donor funded projects similar in scope.