Project Title: Fostering an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem in Tunisia
Issuance Date: May 23, 2014
Closing Date: June 20, 2014
Closing Time: 6pm EST (Washington DC time)

Subject: Request for Application (RFA) for CEED Grants Program in Tunisia

The Center for Entrepreneurship and Executive Development (CEED) is seeking applications to fund unique, innovative, and worthwhile projects that will address the critical constraints limiting competitive performance and market linkage formation in entrepreneurial ecosystems in Tunisia, subject to the availability of funds as described in the RFA. The CEED Grants Program in Tunisia is an authorized activity by CEED and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under Cooperative Agreement No. AID-OAA-A-12-00046. Subject to the availability of funds, CEED intends to provide approximately US$ 550,000 for projects in Tunisia.

This RFA consists of this cover letter and the following sections:

1. Section I. Description of CEED Grants Program in Tunisia;
2. Section II. Award Information;
3. Section III. Eligibility Information;
4. Section IV. Application and Submission Information; and
5. Section V. Evaluation Criteria.

Response to this RFA must be received by the closing date and time indicated at the beginning of this cover letter and submitted to entrepreneurship@ceed-global.org. Questions or concerns on this RFA should also be addressed to Stephanie Siy at entrepreneurship@ceed-global.org no later than June 20, 2014.

Issuance of this RFA does not constitute an award commitment on the part of CEED, nor does it commit CEED to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application. Final award of any resulting grant(s) cannot be made until funds have been committed and disbursed by USAID. While it is anticipated that funds for the CEED Grants Program will be committed and disbursed by USAID, potential applicants are notified of these conditions for award. Applications are submitted at the risk of the applicant; should circumstances prevent award of an agreement, all preparation and submission costs are the applicant's expense.

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SECTION I. DESCRIPTION OF CEED GRANTS PROGRAM IN TUNISIA

A. Purpose

In the spirit of supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystems in Tunisia, CEED is tasked with providing grants for projects which clearly support entrepreneurs by identifying, training, connecting and sustaining, enabling policy, providing access to capital and celebrating entrepreneurs. The CEED Grants Program supports broader U.S. Government (USG) economic engagement with Tunisia and shall create synergies, when possible, with other existing USG-supported economic development activities.

B. Background

The Obama administration has placed unprecedented importance on entrepreneurship as a tool to spur economic development and improve the livelihoods of people throughout the world. In his June 2009 speech, entitled *A New Beginning*, in Cairo, Egypt, President Obama emphasized the United States' commitment to building stronger ties with the global Muslim community through scholarships and education programs, the establishment of a cadre of business volunteers, and funding for scientific and technological advancement.

In April 2010, President Obama hosted the first Presidential Summit on Entrepreneurship, drawing 275 participants from 50 Muslim-majority countries to Washington, D.C., to identify ways to deepen ties between business leaders, foundations, and social entrepreneurs in the United States and Muslim communities around the world. As a keynote speaker during the event, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton emphasized the importance of entrepreneurship in "*creat*[ing] *jobs, deliver*[ing] *services, help*[ing] *new industries get off the ground, rais*[ing] *the standard of living of direct employees, and then all who are touched by them.*"

In Tunisia, support networks for entrepreneurs that facilitate networking and the exchange of ideas are weak. As a result, promising entrepreneurs in need of mentoring and specific managerial expertise are failing to commercialize good ideas. The educational system and the prevailing culture do not encourage innovation and risk taking, resulting in a shallow talent pool. The program's objective is to catalyze and coordinate partners and resources around the provision of essential business development training for entrepreneurs to help them grow their businesses profitably and sustainably.

C. Approach

In order to transform entrepreneurial ecosystems in Tunisia, CEED developed an innovative approach, which leverages technical assistance from other organizations within the ecosystem. The most critical issue will be strategically targeting technical support and training resources in a manner which effectively drives lynchpin progress in developing the capacity of entrepreneurs and their businesses.

The CEED Grants Program will provide resources to build local technical capacity among select business associations, training institutions, individual SMEs and inter-linked value chain-specific enterprise groupings, and other relevant stakeholders to support CEED Tunisia's activities. In addition, the CEED Grants Program will also support activities expected to create a more favorable business enabling environment for growth of SMEs supported by CEED by promoting areas such as business start-up and

operation, investment attraction and protection of economic and property rights, licensing and permitting, certifications and authorizations, export facilitation, and enforcement of property rights.

CEED encourages organizations to take advantage of the CEED Grants Program to fund unique, innovative, and worthwhile projects that target real needs and meet the goals of both CEED and USAID. Finally, CEED may elect to select projects to be funded by the CEED Grants Program through an open competition to attract and identify the best possible application from among potential grantees.

D. Award Administration

CEED will be responsible for the evaluation and selection of grantees and the oversight and management of the CEED Grants Program. All communications regarding the CEED Grants Program and/or CEED Tunisia will go through CEED Global.

22 CFR 226, OMB Circulars, and the Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients will be applicable to the grantees of the CEED Grants Program. While 22 CFR 226 does not directly apply to non-US applicants, CEED is required, as the recipient of US Government Cooperative Agreement, to use the standards of 22 CFR 226 in the administration of this program.

SECTION II. AWARD INFORMATION

A. Estimate of Funds Available

Subject to the availability of funds, CEED intends to provide a total of approximately US$ 550,000 for projects implemented in Tunisia.

B. Number of Awards Contemplated

CEED intends to award at least (2) grants averaging about US$ 200,000 per proposal. The number of grants awarded will depend on the number of applications and the quality of the programs proposed.

C. Start Date and Period of Performance

The period of performance anticipated herein is one (1) year. The estimated start date is on August 1, 2014 and must be completed by August 1, 2015.

D. Type of Award

CEED will provide grants to projects with strong proposals. CEED will be closely involved with the following:

1. Approval of the grantee's annual work plans, reports, monitoring and evaluation plan, budget, and all modifications that describe the specific activities to be carried out under the project proposal; and

2. Approval of and any changes to the specified key personnel.

E. Roles and Responsibilities

The applicant shall be responsible to CEED for all matters related to the execution of the CEED Grants Program agreement. Specifically, the prospective grantee shall report to a CEED representative to be named upon the execution of the grant agreement.

SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

A. Applicants

1. Eligible Organizations

In order to be eligible for the CEED Grants Program, the applicant should meet the following requirements:

i. Legally registered non-profit and/or chartered organizations, their respective offices and branches;
ii. For membership organizations, maintaining an SME or professional membership base;
iii. Business or professional association, NGO, or legal entity with a business development and a previous track record that supports that mission;
iv. CEED-assessed associations or entities, including private companies and individuals, wherever applicable; and
v. Previous experience of success working with SEAF, CEED, USAID, and/or other organizations with a similar mission.

2. Ineligible Organizations

The following organizations will be ineligible to be awarded grants with the CEED Grants Program:

i. Government-owned and/or operated organizations; some exceptions may apply;
ii. Politically-affiliated, foreign-owned and/or religious organizations and government institutions;
iii. Organizations with missions and objectives that are not directly related to the activities supported by the CEED Tunisia Project;
iv. Organizations that advocate, promote and/or espouse anti-democratic, terrorist and/or illegal activities such as those persons designated by the United Nations Security sanctions committee;
v. Organizations with activities that violate internationally-recognized human rights;
vi. Organizations headquartered in USAID's restricted geographic areas;
vii. Organizations listed on the United States Government's Excluded Parties List System located at http://www.epls.gov/; and
viii. Organizations listed on Specially Designated Nationals List (OFAC list) http://www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/SDN-List/Pages/default.aspx.

B. Cost Share

The applicant shall propose its cost share and leveraging. If approved, it shall be included in the award agreement as part of the program budget.

SECTION IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. Point of Contact

Any questions or concerns on this RFA should be addressed to Stephanie Siy at entrepreneurship@ceed-global.org.

B. Required Forms

In addition to the grant application, the applicant must submit the following forms:

1. **Appendix A. Grant Application Form**; and
2. **Appendix B. Know-Your-Customer Form.**

C. Application Format

1. Grant Application

The grant application shall not exceed twenty (20) pages in length. Applications must be single spaced, 12 font size, and at least one-inch margins on the top, bottom, and both sides. Language used in the grant application must be English. The narrative description of the proposed activity must detail the following:

i. Proposed activities in detail and why CEED Tunisia support is needed;
ii. A list of at least three main objectives of the proposed activities;
iii. Main practical outcomes / results of the proposed activities;
iv. A description of how your proposed activities will be organized, and in doing so, stating precisely what will happen, when it will happen, and the methods you will use to achieve intended outcomes;
v. A description of what steps have been taken to plan and prepare the proposed activities;
vi. A description of where the proposed activities will take place;
vii. A description of who will benefit from the proposed activities and in doing so, indicating how many individuals / organizations will benefit and in what ways they will benefit;
viii. A description of your organization's unique ability to manage this project and what relevant resources (materials, talents, partners, etc) are available to your organization;
ix. A description of the sustainability through the proposed activities;
x. A description of how the success of your proposed activities, in accordance with the objectives of the proposed activities, can be quantitatively measured;
xi. A description of the nature of any outside advisors or consultants for project implementation, training, commodities, or other assistance that will be necessary for the success of the proposed activities and why they are required;
xii. What you believe to be innovative about the proposed activities and the potential for lessons to be learned which will be of value in enhancing the entrepreneurial ecosystem, supporting entrepreneurs directly through technical assistance, and/or connecting entrepreneurs to additional resources; and

xiii. A description, if applicable, of how the proposed activities will be useful in creating a more favorable business enabling environment for the growth of SMEs supported by CEED Tunisia.

2. Projected Grant Expenditure Schedule

The Grant Proposal must contain a total amount of expenditures anticipated for a one-month period during the grant schedule. These expenditures are based on real budget figures and represent your best effort to estimate actual costs. Milestones / benchmarks are presented. CEED understands that each funds disbursement will be done after checking attainment and completion of activities mentioned before milestones / benchmarks.

3. Proposed Activity Budget

The Grant Proposal must contain a detailed budget (see Appendix C Sample Grant Budget) for your proposed activities and include a budget summary sheet. CEED understands that the budget will be revisited quarterly and, in exceptional cases, revised if necessary (subject to further CEED approval).

Note 1. The CEED Tunisia team will carefully review the assumptions and associated costs related to your proposed activity, so please take time to prepare a thorough and complete budget. A well-prepared budget should clearly support and complement the work plan. Sufficient detail should be provided so that someone who is not familiar with your organization can easily understand how you arrived at the budgeted amounts. Keep in mind that proposals will be judged in terms of cost effectiveness, so be careful not to inflate your costs or to include items that are not necessary for the success of your project. If possible, please use the general and detailed categories listed below. All costs should be budgeted in U.S. Dollars.

Note 2. *Matching or cost-share*. All proposal budgets must include at a minimum a twenty (20) percent match (co-funding) or cost-share. This means that the organization is also supporting the proposed activities with its own or another donor's resources. Matching (co-funding) generally refers to funds used from other donors to pay for project related activities, whereas cost-share refers to either payments from the organization's own funds or the fair value of in-kind contributions, such as space, equipment, the value of volunteers or staff time, etc. Please provide details in the budget notes to support the amounts you have identified as matching or cost-share.

Note 3. *Grants budget categories.* Please group your detailed expenditures in the following general categories for the summary page of your budget. You may not need to use all of the categories listed below:

i. Personnel;
ii. Fringe Benefits;
iii. Travel and Transportation;
iv. Equipment;
v. Supplies;
vi. Contractual;
vii. Other Direct Costs;

viii. Seminars and Conferences; and
ix. Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences.

Below are detailed definitions for each suggested budget category:

Personnel: Direct salaries and wages should be proposed in accordance with the Applicant's personnel policies.

Fringe Benefits: If the Applicant has a fringe benefit that has been approved by an agency of the U.S. government, such rate should be used and evidence of its approval, such as a copy of the NICRA letter, should be provided. If a fringe benefit rate has not been approved, the application should propose a rate and explain how the rate was determined. The narrative should include a detailed breakdown comprised of all items of fringe benefits and the costs of each, expressed in U.S. Dollars and as a percentage of salaries.

Travel and Transportation: The proposed budget must indicate the number of trips, domestic and international, and the estimated costs. Specify the origin and destination for each proposed trip, duration of travel, and number of individuals travelling. Per diem must be based on the Applicant's normal travel policies.

Equipment: This includes an article of nonexpendable, tangible personal property having a useful like of more than one year and an acquisition cost which equals or exceeds US$ 5,000.

Supplies: This includes materials and supplies necessary to carry out your project. For example, office supplies, brochures, etc.

Contractual: This includes any outside advisors or consultants for project implementation, training, commodities, or other assistance that will be necessary for the success of the proposed activities. The budget narrative must indicate the reason why they are required.

Other Direct Costs: This includes communications, passports and visa fees, medical exams and inoculations, insurance (other than insurance included in the Applicant's fringe benefits), office rent abroad, etc. The narrative should provide a breakdown and support for all and each other direct costs.

Seminars and Conferences: The Applicant must indicate the subject, venue, and duration of proposed conferences and seminars, and their relationship to the objectives of the program, along with estimates of costs.

Foreign Government Delegations to International Conferences: Funds in this agreement may not be used to finance the travel, per diem, hotel expenses, meals, conference fees or other conference costs for any member of a foreign government's delegation to an international conference sponsored by a public international organization. Certain exceptions may apply. The Applicant may consult with CEED with regards to exemptions.

SECTION V. EVALUATION CRITERIA

The evaluation criteria listed below will be used to evaluate grant applications. To facilitate the review of grant applications, applicants should organize the narrative section of their application in the same order as the evaluation criteria.

A. Importance and Relevance of the Problem

The applicant must clearly and credibly identify a specific, important, and actionable competitiveness constraint facing entrepreneurs and / or their businesses.

B. Quality of Project Design

The proposed project must be reasonable, well-designed and can effectively address the identified problem. The applicant must demonstrate a well-thought out idea and model that develops the capacity of entrepreneurs and their businesses and has the potential to be sustainable. Successful proposals will clearly articulate how the proposed program is more compelling than existing ones and adds value to entrepreneurial ecosystems.

C. Degree of Impact

The proposed project must demonstrate measurable and sustained impact. Proposals should demonstrate the ability to achieve tangible and measurable results during the project's cycle. It should define relevant outcome indicators and targets such as revenue generated, direct and indirect jobs created, increased wages, lives improved through the delivery of goods and services, and others.

D. Ability of the Applicant and Cost Share Available

The applicant must demonstrate that it is reasonably capable of effectively and successfully executing the project. The following areas must be addressed in the grant application:

1. **Management Capacity**

   The applicant must demonstrate its team's capacity to successfully implement the program in the local context. Evidence will include information on team composition, relevant qualifications, and demonstrated track record of success.

2. **Leverage and Cost Share**

   Grant applications must demonstrate the ability to leverage other resources in terms of financing, expertise and networking. Applications must specify contributions of each party and indicate the value.

E. Sustainability

The applicant must include its sustainability plan for the proposed projects in Tunisia, within the context of program parameters and budget and beyond the first year of the program.

1. **Operational**

   Proposals must outline an operational strategy composed of concrete activities to be executed over the implementation period, as well as a plan for achieving operational sustainability and overcoming anticipated challenges.

2. **Financial**

   Proposals must outline a financial plan to cover financial and operational costs within the implementation period and a strategy for long-term viability. Plans must be based on realistic projections of expense and revenue streams. If break-even is not expected by the end of the funding cycle, the applicant must provide a realistic strategy to secure additional financial support beyond the life of the funding cycle.

F. Budget

The budget will be reviewed for cost realism.

APPENDIX A. GRANT APPLICATION FORM

[PRINT IN THE ORGANIZATION'S LETTERHEAD]

Grant Management Leader
CEED Tunisia
[ADD ADDRESS]
[ADD ADDRESS]

Subject: Grant Application of [ADD NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

1. **Application Date:** _____

2. **Contact Information:**

   a. Organization Name: _____
   b. Mailing Address: _____
   c. Street Address (if available): _____
      _____
   d. Phone: _____ Fax: _____ Email: _____
   e. Organization Contact Person: _____

3. **Organizational Information Related to Eligibility**

   a. Year Established: _____
   b. Type of Organization: ☐ For Profit ☐ Not for Profit
   c. Legal Status (choose only one):

      ☐ Private or Public shareholding company, whether for-profit or not-for-profit, that have company objectives that are consistent with the broad objectives of CEED Tunisia; or

      ☐ Non-Government Organizations ("NGOs"), professional organizations, research institutions, and other institutions that have organizational objectives that are consistent with the broad objectives of CEED Tunisia.

      ☐ Other (if other, use the following space to clarify):
      _____
      _____
      _____

   d. In order to determine our organization's eligibility, we have attached (choose all that apply):

      ☐ A copy of our organization's formal registration as evidence of the above-selected legal status;

☐ One or more copies of board of directors resolutions, strategic plans (overall long-range plan for Grantee's organization) or other documentation indicating our organization's managerial commitment to implementing objectives that are consistent with the broad objectives of CEED Tunisia;

☐ A memo signed by the Chairman of our board certifying all of the following:

- That our organization has received a copy of the CEED Tunisia Proposal Guidelines;
- That our organization has not received any funding from the CEED Tunisia Program for the preparation of this Application;
- That our organization has no advances from USAID or a USAID contractor, which have been outstanding and not liquidated for longer than thirty (30) days, and that our organization has no grant completion report required under a grant from USAID or a USAID contractor, which is more than thirty (30) days past due;
- That at the time of application there exists no condition within our organization or with respect to our organization's management which renders the organization ineligible for a grant directly or indirectly funded by USAID; and
- That the proposed period of funding requested un the application does not exceed the life of the CEED Tunisia and does not exceed, one hundred eighty (180) days (or a longer period as may be approved by the USAID COTR not to exceed one (1) year), whichever is applicable to this application.

4. Statistical and Other Information

a. Business related data (whichever is applicable):
   - Number of employees (separate number of women employed): _____ Total Employees _____ No. of Women Employees
   - Average profit for last five (5) years: US$ _____
   - Forecasted profitability for the next two to three (2 to 3) years: US$ _____

b. Our members (if applicable) pay dues on the following basis (chose only one):

☐ Voluntary;
☐ Mandated by law or regulation; or
☐ Other (specify): _____

c. We have an operational accounting system in place. ☐ Yes ☐ No

d. Our accounting system is computerized. ☐ Yes ☐ No

e. Our total membership (if applicable) is: _____ members

f. As of the above date of application, the number of our members (if applicable) who have fully paid their annual dues for this year is: _____ members

g. Our organization chart is attached. ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Grant Proposal

We have attached hereto the grant proposal that we have developed. We have or will have the financial resources to fully fund our contribution to the overall cost of the proposed activities. We hereby certify that in describing our proposed activities, we have:

- Specified grant benchmarks that indicate and quantify specific accomplishments or results;
- In our design of the proposed benchmarks, we have limited the risks associated with changes in the proposed activities; and
- Provided herewith adequate cost data to determine and negotiate the proposed schedule of grant disbursements.

Attached to the Grant Proposal are additional items such as [SPECIFY ADDITIONAL ITEMS].

We would appreciate your timely consideration of our application.

Sincerely,

[ADD NAME]
[ADD TITLE]

(Signed by the Managing Director or person in a similar position within the Applicant's organization.)

ATTACHMENT B. KNOW-YOUR-CUSTOMER FORM

Know-Your-Customer (KYC) Policy

In accordance with U.S. and international Know Your Customer (KYC), Anti-Money Laundering (AML) and Counter-Terrorism Finance (CFT) standards, SEAF and its sister-organization CEED collects information on prospective sub grantees or sub awardees. SEAF and CEED use this information only to verify identities and ensure that sub grantees / sub awardees are not listed on international sanctions or watch lists. SEAF and CEED will share the information collected with regulators only if suspicious activity is detected.

In accordance with SEAF and CEED's Policies, please provide the following information:

- For Corporate Entities: Please provide information for the corporate entity, the senior management team, any two members of the Board of Directors, and shareholders with 20% or more ownership;
- For Foundations: Please provide information for the foundation, the senior management team, and any two members of the Board of Directors;
- For Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): Please provide information for the organization, the senior management team, and any two members of the Board of Directors; and
- For Partnerships: Please provide information for the partnership, and partners owning or controlling 20% or more of the partnership.

Please complete and return to your contact at SEAF or CEED page 2 of this form for entities, along with other supporting documentation.

Know Your Customer (KYC) Form

Corporate Entities, Foundations, and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

1	**Legal Name:**	
2	**Legal Form:**	
3	**Principal Place of Entity's Operations:**	
4	**Mailing Address of the Entity:** *(A P.O. Box is not acceptable.)*	
5	**Telephone Number:**	
6	**Fax Number:**	
7	**Official Identification Number:** *(e.g. Tax Identification Number)*	
8	**Entity's Representative and Title:**	
9	**Certificate of Incorporation and Memorandum and Articles of Association.** *(A copy of the Certificate of Incorporation and Memorandum and Articles of Association. Partnerships should provide a copy of the Partnership Deed and confirmation of the nature of the business of the partnership. Trusts should provide a copy of the Trust Deed and Certificate of Registration. Indicate Yes / No in the next column if a copy was provided.)*	
10	**Financial Statement.** *(A copy of the latest financial statement (audited, if available). Indicate Yes / No in the next column if a copy was provided.)*	
11	**Bank Reference.** *(A bank reference or recent bank or credit card statement. Indicate Yes / No in the next column if a copy was provided.)*	
12	**Ownership Chart.** *(For complex structures and trusts, provide an ownership chart. For trusts, the chart should depict trustees, protectors, beneficiaries, and signatories. Indicate Yes / No in the next column if a copy was provided.)*	

Certification. The undersigned certifies that the information provided above is true and correct to the best of his / her knowledge.
(SEAF and CEED can only accept the form when completed and signed by an authorized person of the entity.)

Name and Title:	
Signature:	
Date:	

APPENDIX C. SAMPLE GRANT BUDGET

Organization Name: _____

Budget Category	Unit	No. of Unit	Cost Per Unit (US$)	Amount Requested (US$)	Grantee's Contribution (US$)	Other Contribution (US$)	Total (US$)
Personnel (Salaries and Wages)							
Subtotal							
Fringe Benefits							
Subtotal							
Travel and Transportation							
Subtotal							
Equipment							
Subtotal							
Supplies							
Subtotal							
Contractual							
Subtotal							
Other Direct Costs							
Subtotal							
Seminars and Conferences							
Subtotal							
GRAND TOTAL							

Note: Please ensure a detailed justification / explanation is included for each line item in the Budget Narrative.

PROJECT DIRECTOR: _____
ACCOUNTANT: _____
DATE: _____

SEAL