

## **QUESTIONS AND AMANAT ANSWERS (Q&A)**

Annual Program Statement (APS)

APS.01-02-03

December 12, 2019

### **APS (I)**

**Q1:** Which are the key stakeholder government institutions identified by AMANAT APS and if any study/research, policy paper, or strategy paper published by these institutions exists that may have been used to design AMANAT APS and may be of benefit for our concept paper developers if studied.

Under the APS scope, there are no specific key stakeholders. They can be any of the government public service offices, such as health, education, water and sanitation, departments for driver's licenses and building permits, etc. You may use any data, tools, or resources that can help you develop creative approaches.

**Q2:** Can outreach activities consisting of the house to house visits for community mobilization to participate in public initiatives to control corruption in civil service institutions be recommended for AMANAT APS?

Any approach you think is unique and innovative will be evaluated by MSI's Grants team. At this moment, MSI cannot recommend an approach.

**Q3:** Can the local community or village shuras, district council, provincial council, parliament, and senate be considered as civil societies in the AMANAT APS perspective? Can we include them as partners for AMANAT APS?

- I. Any legally registered Afghan civil society, media, business organization or association, are eligible to submit applications under this APS.
- II. Individuals and government entities and political parties or organizations are not eligible. You can search the names mentioned above under the definition of eligible and ineligible.

**Q4:** Is there any information session at zone levels like Herat, Mazar, Kandahar, and Nangarhar? Or MSI plans to conduct any information session for provincial and regional CSOs in the future?

MSI Grants team has the plan to conduct provincial sessions in the future, which will depend upon the number of interested applicants.

**Q5:** What is the requirement, or what documents are necessary for reservation of seats for MSI information sessions in Kabul? Can provincial CSOs participate in these sessions?

Yes, CSOs from other provinces are welcome to participate. Please provide the following information to register.

1. Name (Participant)
2. National ID/Tazkira Number
3. Position/Title
4. Organization Full Name and Acronym
5. Organization Type
5. Phone#
6. Email ID
7. Organization Location

**Q6:** How can we participate in the information session, and what are the dates for an information session in provinces?

The first APS information session will take place in Kabul at 10:00 AM on July 12, 2018. You or a representative from your organization can participate. In the future, the MSI grants team plans to hold sessions in other provinces as well, but that will depend on the number of applicants.

**Q7:** Can we put forward the questions through email to find out about the concerns?

Yes, please send your questions to [AMANAT.GRANTS@msiworldwide.com](mailto:AMANAT.GRANTS@msiworldwide.com). The compiled list of questions and answers can be accessed through the link in the APS document, and on ACBAR and Afghantenders websites.

**Q8:** Do MSI provide the Concept note and budget format after the information session in Doc and xlsx format, or we should use our format?

Please use the concept note and budget formats that we have uploaded on the ACBAR and Afghantenders websites. You may also use your own template for the budget section only.

**Q9:** When is the start date for submitting concept note along with the budget.

It is due from the date of the APS announcement.

**Q10:** It is outlined in the APS that information sessions will be held in Kabul, how can we participate in these information sessions, is there any option like skype or video calls to participate in these information sessions?

The next session is planned to take place in Kabul. At the moment, we cannot accommodate a Skype or Video call. However, applicants' questions are being answered regularly and the compiled list of questions and answers can be found through the link in the APS document and on ACBAR and Afghantenders websites.

**Q11:** As of the APS, we have found that organizations with experience in the field of mitigation/elimination of corruption are encouraged to apply for the mentioned solicitation. What is the chance for the newly established organizations with limited or no experience in the field, are they eligible to come up with innovative ideas and apply for the grant?

Past performance is one of the evaluation criteria for selection, while newly established organizations with the best innovative approaches are encouraged to apply.

**Q12:** In the APS it is drafted that numbers of the award will be made for Kabul and other provinces, what is the total number of awards that will be made through this APS? In percentage what several projects will be disbursed to provinces other than Kabul.

The province does not specify the number of awards. The best and most creative approach will receive a grant award if that is relevant to the scope of the project and key areas of interest.

**Q13:** Which provinces are especially encouraged to apply?

## All provinces.

**Q14:** Although it's very soon to ask this question, would you please kindly inform us of the common mistake that is made through the applications by applicants, that lead to disqualification and ineligibility of applicants?

It is the first APS, and MSI has not received applications yet. Any concept notes or application that fails to meet the APS terms and conditions will be disqualified.

**Q15:** Where we can get concept paper form, annex 2 (organizational profile form), and annex 3 (required certifications) in MS. Word format?

APS supporting documents are accessible via links below:

<http://www.acbar.org/rfq/5932.jsp>

<http://www.afghantenders.com/>

**Q16:** As the applicants are required to develop their concept notes using AMANAT's provided Concept Note Template and applicants can't use their templates, but as the section 10 "WHAT IS THE PROPOSED INTERVENTION?" is limited to 500 CHARACTERS which seemed to be very less to describe any project along with goal as requested by MSI while the concept note pages' limit is eight pages. We want to know if a limitation of 500 CHARACTERS is left mistakenly or a mandatory requirement for this section? If it is mandatory, how can we describe our project, its activities and goal in such a short space?

Concept note 500 characters means 500 words and that is not mandatory. To be easy for everyone, we have changed, and now it is read 500 words.

**Q17:** Can the applicant implement a project in one province or multiple provinces be preferred? And, Is Kabul province mandatory/preferred for AMANAT's project or all provinces are equal?

It depends on the applicant's capabilities and approaches; it can be for a province or multiple provinces.

**Q18:** How many concept notes per organization are accepted? In other words, Is an organization limited to submit one concept note or can submit multiple concept notes?

It also depends on the organizational capacity, how many good concept notes can be developed and submitted, meeting the APS objectives there is no limitation.

**Q19:** Interventions targeting one section/department (Education, Health, Election, Courts/Justice departments, etc.) are preferred or programs that improve transparency and accountability and counter corruption in general?

The scope of the project is defined in APS; concept note must be developed in line with the AMANAT objectives and key interested areas.

**Q20:** Is there any process in place that the AMANAT project will provide written reasons for unsuccessfully concept paper?

Yes, the AMANAT Grants team will inform unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the concept paper was not selected for further consideration.

**Q21:** What the AMANAT grants team will consider review approach for a submitted concept paper?

AMANAT will review concept papers on a rolling basis, where a successful application will propose a program or project that is responsive to the stated purpose of this APS and is evaluated favorably against the evaluation factors.

**Q22:** Our CDC validation license certificate that was provided/issued by MoRRD rights it's expired, and for renewal of our CDC license, we need lots of documents; so, should we submit our concept paper under AMANAT APS?

All valid license/certificate CSO, CBO, Media consultancy, Universities, etc. eligible to submit their concept paper under AMANAT- APS and the AMANAT grants team will disqualify those organizations which have expired business license/certificate.

**Q23:** some of provincial CSOs, CBO, University, consultancy, media does not make sure that AMANAT APS will cover or provide the fund for the grassroots organization, so under existing APS, are there any opportunities for grassroots CSO to obtain funds for them expect activities?

The existing AMANAT project APS will be implemented in Kabul and across country provinces throughout Afghanistan, and grants and technical teams will do a similar pre-application session at the provincial level, but it will depend on interested applicants.

**Q24:** At times, beaming if one of the organizations submitted a concept paper application and resulted disqualified by AMANAT technical team, so some organizations eligible to submit different concept papers under existing APS?

Yes, the organization is eligible, and we courage all of you to submitted more than one concept paper under existing APS.

**Q25:** Our organization has implementing partner in provincial and we located in Kabul as Home Office, so should we work jointly if we working together in this case we need to increase our financial expense so should we cross the AMANAT APS limited budget (US\$100,000 per grant award) for our joint paper?

AMANAT expected to fund for chosen concept paper under existing APS, Between US\$10,000 to US\$100,000 per grants awarded, and we will not fund any expense more than that amount, and we will accept only one concept paper for any joint functioning.

**Q26:** Should we develop our budget template for our activities that we expected to implement under our concept paper?

Yes, all organizations encourage to develop their template for the budget for their sub-goings-on, but core activities, the organization should use the template provided by AMANAT.

**Q27:** We implemented large numbers of projects funded by international donor agencies and international NGOs across the country, unfortunately recently we heard their office in Afghanistan closed and as well their expertise staffs no longer in Afghanistan, and as per our understanding the previous experience reference (experience verification) is mandated for all organization, in case if we not able to provide such capability what will be further flexibility for us?

AMANAT keeps mandate prior experience verification (reference), and we sure the home office of International NGOs and donor agencies will have such information.

**Q28:** What does it mean by relevant experience? It depends on what the organization wants. Most often, it is work experience.

For instance, if you apply for a project, the relevant experience would mean whether you had taught before or completed similar projects in the same field or scope.

**Q29:** What's the implementation timeline (period) for each concept paper that will satisfactory under existing AMANAT project APS?

Usually, it depends on activities that will be provided with each of the interest organizations, but we expected to be conducted on each activity within 12 months or shorter.

**Q30:** What is the deadline for submission of concept papers, and is there any possibility of extending the deadline for APS?

Subject to the availability of funds, this deadline may be extended to a later date to be determined and advertised amending this APS.

**Q31:** Can we apply from Nuristan province?

Yes, you can.

**Q32:** Can we link two provinces in one project?

Yes, you can.

**Q33:** You have written in APS that all documentation should be in word, but the application needs to be signed; therefore, it should be in PDF if we send it in the word it will remain unsigned?

You can use a digital signature or submit in either format; the signed concept paper will prevail.

**Q34:** Refer to your announcement USAID Contract Number AID-306-H-17-00003; MSI Ref 611500.01) AMANAT. The project interventions indicated Education, Health, Water & Sanitation, driving license and Building permits, now I would like to know can we apply for all mentioned interventions in one proposal or should be separate. In case we apply for each section separately, then can we apply for more than one objective at the same time?

Please kindly elaborate on the issue.

Review and consider your organization's past performances and see the fields your organization excels; AMANAT Grants team recommends that you should submit a concept for specific intervention.

**Q35:** Can an organization submit a new concept paper when its first concept paper is disqualified by AMANAT technical team?

Yes, the organization is eligible to submit a new concept paper and participate in the Pre-Application workshop again.

**Q36:** Can an organization budget more than \$100,000 in one proposal?

No.

**Q37:** Is there any process in place that the AMANAT project will provide written reasons for an unsuccessful concept paper?

Yes, the AMANAT Grants team will inform unsuccessful applicants in writing, explaining briefly why the concept paper was not selected for further consideration.

**Q38:** Can an organization that doesn't have the experience, submit a proposal?

Yes, but their past performance score will be zero.

**Q39:** Is there any limitation in submitting different concept papers?

No, there is no limitation.

**Q40:** Can CSO submit a concept for the project that has been early completed and closed, but the need for future continuation is vital?

Yes, if that is line with AMANAT objectives.

**Q41:** Can MSI help to secure MoU signing with ministries?

MSI can only confirm the award and agreement with CSO; it is CSO's responsibility to get engaged with the ministry to secure MoU.

**Q42:** Is there any possibility that one organization receive more than one grant?

Yes, it depends on the capacity of the organization.

**Q43:** can newly established NGOs apply for grants?

Yes, they can apply; however, the past performance score and rating won't be given to the proposal.

**Q44:** If a grant proposal is submitted, and it comes with questions and comments, can we ask the AMANAT grants team to give us face to the face meeting time to give clarifications?

Yes, but the actual answers need to be in writing that would be part of the proposal and can be part of the agreement too.

**Q45:** What is EBD form?

EBD form is employee bio-data form, USAID official employee biodata form where NGO and CSO will need to submit to AMANAT project for salary verification.

**Q46:** Should the proposals be developed based on the suggested activities in the concept notes submitted?

Yes, the technical proposal and detailed budget will be developed according to the accepted and approved concept note submitted earlier, therefor grants team recommend that you should invite your technical and financial team members to work together to have a quality scope of work and also a reasonable budget meeting USAID cost principles.

**Q47:** Should we pay more attention to sections 2-5 of the application?

Yes, according to the AMANAT grants management team, section 2-5 of the grant's application is an important part of the proposal, where you should focus more on developing the comprehensive technical approach.

**Q48:** What currency should we use in the budget? AFN or USD?

Either currency you can propose in budget or use for financial proposal, however, the payment will be made in AFN.

**Q49:** Under the In-Kind Grant who is responsible for procuring equipment?

AMANAT procurement team to purchase the equipment and deliver it to CSOs.

**Q50:** How the equipment will be dealt with after the project is ended?

Equipment will be officially disposed of by USAID to beneficiaries.

**Q51:** Some CSOs have been worked with USAID funded projects but later, the project is closed and only have private emails from the references, in case of a reference check can we provide personal emails?

Yes, the CSO can provide their emails to the AMANAT if the reference does not have an official email

**Q52:** If CSO wants to hire staff under the AMANAT grants program, what salary scale will be acceptable?

The CSO should give the salary according to the NTA salary scale.

### **APS (2)**

**Q53:** Is there any possibility that one organization receive more than one grant?

Yes, it depends on the capacity of the organization.

**Q54:** can newly established NGOs apply for grants?

Yes, they can apply; however, the past performance score and rating won't be given to the proposal.

**Q54:** What currency should we use in the budget? AFN or USD?

Either currency, you can propose in budget or use for financial proposal. However, the payment will be made in AFN.

**Q55:** Can one organization submit the same concept, not for different locations?

Yes, first, they need to submit for one place and see if there are no comments and not rejected, then they can submit for the second location.

**Q56:** can AMANAT an official letter to the public service entity of the government to accept our work and they let us work together.

No, this is COS's responsibility to work as an active member of society and work together with government entities according to their mandates and build positive relationships with the entities to implement the activity. However, this is our suggestion that the CSO should get the government entity involved whenever identifying the problem.

**Q57.** What do you mean by gender mainstreaming or beneficiaries?

Gender balance and active role of gender in decision making, implementation of the activity and as beneficiaries, AMANAT aims that female is more vulnerable to the corruption and that idea or concept should focus on addressing mainly the issues that really can benefit female as well, activity should be balanced its self and that should have positive impact in the life of female as well.

**Q58:** How we can charge or budget the admin cost or overhead cost in grants budget, what is different between for-profit and non-for-profit organization budget?

Overhead cost and admin costs are budgeted based on the level of efforts of your staff involved in the implementation of the proposed activity. Also, another direct cost that is required for the activity implementation should meet the cost principles and that is required to be supported with narratives. Non-for-profit organizations cannot charge any benefit under grants since their structure and mandate are not established for profit same applies to for-profit organizations. If they are applying, they much not charged separate line items as a profit under the grant.

**Q59:** Can AMANAT provide the sort of help to get registered with SAM/CAGE or DUNS?

Yes, in case you have faced with a problem and AMANAT team only can provide advice to move forward with, while registration in USG sites is one of the compliance responsibilities of the organization applying for grants and proposing more than \$25K budget.

**Q60:** How CSO can make implement projects in very insecure and remote areas?

That can be through establishing coalitions, groups and activate the small local groups of associations in the remote areas, while the ultimate operations and functions will be under the umbrella of registered CSO, because AMANAT will only work with the organization whose background is supported with legal documents, registered and the reliable.

**Q61:** Can we use the APS.18.001 templates and other associated documents?

No, you must use APS.18.002 documents effective from October 1, 2018, it can be accessed via the link below:

<http://www.acbar.org/user/rfqadd/7134.jsp>

**Q62:** How many projects will AMANAT award per province?

There is no limit for the projects in any province, while AMANAT is looking to accept unique and innovative approaches that could reduce or eliminate corruption in public service delivery, please note that the grant system works in rolling basis – if there is already a project approved earlier another project with the same approach, scope, target and location won't proceed.

**Q63:** Can we submit more than one concept?

Yes, you may submit multiple concept papers - while our experience recommends that you should first try with one concept to see the outcome and the comments from AMANAT technical team that can help you to develop the second concept paper better.



### **APS (3)**

**Q64:** We can not find concept paper in AMANAT advertisement?

APS 3 process is direct proposals submission; this is because of the lengthy process has been now shortened to evaluate and conclude the proposal submission process.

**Q65:** Can we purchase equipment under FAA grants?

Yes, you can do, but that needs to meet the USAID source, origin and geographic conditions – also if the unit cost of the item is more than \$5,000 that need official USAID approval and disposition; while unit cost of more than \$500 will be recorded in the inventory and that needs to be disposed as well.

**Q66:** What is new in APS 3?

The concept submission process has been eliminated. All the applicants can submit the proposal directly, the amount threshold is now increased to \$250,000 and also the timeline of the grant award can be three years, while that needs to be within the AMANAT contract period.

**Q67:** What are AMANAT plans for solicitations?

Different requests for applications (RFAs) are being announced for targeted activities, also for the transparency purposes AMANAT launch online submission system for applications called GRUMP, that can ensure transparency and help the applicants to know exactly what is happening with their applications.

**Q68:** Why AMANAT asking for quotes and market research under the grant budget for over \$500 items?

Because FAA budget needs to be fixed and can be allocated directly to the program, therefore it is required each item is verified and can be charged directly to the program tasks, reasonable prices are proposed and verifiable from the market, the initial source of verification for items unit cost over \$500 is three sources.