



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

Funding Opportunity Title:	Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Businesses Activity (ACEBA)
Announcement Type:	Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number:	APS-ACEBA-KBL-001
Issuance Date:	May 28, 2020
Questions for First Round of Evaluations Due By:	N/A
Deadline for Submission of Concept Papers:	Rolling up to Final Closing Date
Final Closing Date:	One Year from Date of Issuance
Submit Concept Papers to:	GRANTACEBA@dai.com

To Interested Applicants:

The purpose of this Annual Program Statement (APS) is to solicit applications for funding. DAI through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), is seeking concept papers first and then full applications from prospective partners to implement activities that will enhance the competitiveness of Afghan export-oriented businesses and create sustainable economic growth in targeted value chains. These activities will contribute to expanding export revenue and to job creation. The geographic focus under consideration is Afghanistan, nation-wide.

DAI on behalf of USAID anticipates awarding approximately 80 grants to fund successful applications submitted in response to this APS. Competition for this APS will be open for one year. Concept Papers will be received and reviewed on a rolling basis until ACEBA grant funds are fully obligated.

The length of the awards will typically be up to one (1) year; funding beyond one year is subject to grantee performance and funding availability. The total amount of funding currently available for this APS is approximately USD 6 million (approximately 456,000,000 AFA) for a period of up to one (1) year. DAI may choose to fully fund or incrementally fund the selected application(s). **The targeted product value chains are natural stone (including marble and granite, onyx, and travertine), gemstones and jewelry, carpets, cashmere, and saffron.** Applications may focus on one or multiple



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

value chains. The number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change and DAI reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.

This APS is seeking applicants to propose creative and effective approaches to enhance the competitiveness Afghan export-oriented businesses in specific value chains, as outlined in the Overview section. Applicants may choose among a range of initiatives or scale up small projects that have demonstrated success. Awardees will be expected to share evaluation results and key lessons, and disseminate periodic activities and outcomes with the broader community.

Applications supporting export-oriented businesses from outside the geographic focus will not be considered. Applicants must demonstrate success in managing cultural and political considerations in Afghanistan as well as success in addressing DAI's development objectives.



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

TABLE OF CONTENTS

SECTION I - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

SECTION II - AWARD INFORMATION

SECTION III - ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

SECTION IV - APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

SECTION V - CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW INFORMATION

SECTION VI - DAI PROJECT CONTACTS

SECTION VII - OTHER INFORMATION



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

SECTION I - FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

(1) Description of the Proposed Program

Background

USAID'S Afghanistan Competitiveness of Export-Oriented Businesses Activity (ACEBA) project works to increase the competitiveness of export-oriented businesses, through a combination of key value chain support activities and export acceleration facilities designed to promote sustainable nationwide economic growth.

ACEBA will help Afghan businesses increase the sales-worthiness of their products in international markets, by working to improve production processes, increase productivity, and export products that meet international demand at competitive prices. **The targeted product value chains are natural stone (including marble and granite, onyx, and travertine), gemstones and jewelry, carpets, cashmere, and saffron.** ACEBA will operate through "regional export accelerators" in the country's main urban economic centers.

Overall Program Objectives

The program's primary objectives are to: (1) increase volume of exports in targeted value chains; (2) Increase sales in targeted value chains; and (3) Create new jobs in targeted value chains.

The following types of assistance may be funded by ACEBA's grants program:

- **Export performance** grants to exporters and micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to de-risk and incentivize investments in upgrading production, processing, and marketing capacity (including equipment acquisition or the attainment of internationally recognized certifications).
- **Investment-readiness** grants to moderately and highly sophisticated exporters with high-potential production capacity, for technical assistance or equipment purchases required by identified capital investors.
- **Value chain improvement** grants to assist exporters in providing stewardship to MSMEs in their supply chains to improve inputs and intermediary products and "de-bottleneck" supply chains. This may also include assistance to enterprises and non-government organizations (NGOs) to advocate for business environment reforms essential to value chain growth.



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

- **Workforce development** grants directly tied to expanding export transactions and primarily targeting skills development and preparation of youth and women for jobs. May include apprenticeship programs, vocational and technical training, and certification of skilled workers.

(2) Administration of Award

Awards to U.S. organizations will be administered in accordance with 2 CFR 200 Subpart E, ADS 303 and USAID Standard Provisions for U.S. nongovernmental organizations. For non-U.S. organizations, USAID Standard Provisions for non-U.S. nongovernmental organizations would apply.

Applicants may obtain copies of the referenced material at the following websites:

2 CFR 200: <http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-id?SID=0a5b7fee6378930cce72564449dd8bb7&mc=true&node=sp2.1.200.d&rgn=div6>

Standard Provisions for U.S. Nongovernmental Recipients:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1864/303maa.pdf>

Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Nongovernmental Recipients:

<https://www.usaid.gov/sites/default/files/documents/1868/303mab.pdf>

SECTION II- AWARD INFORMATION

(1) Estimated Funding Level

The total amount of funding currently available for this APS is approximately USD 6 million (approximately 456,000,000 AFA) for a period of up to one (1) year; funding beyond one year is subject to grantee performance and funding availability. DAI may choose to fully fund or incrementally fund the chosen Application(s). DAI expects to award up to 80 agreements. The number of awards and amount of available funding is subject to change.

Awards to US organizations may not exceed \$100,000. This threshold does not apply to non-US organizations.

(2) Anticipated Start Date of this Award and Performance Period



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

DAI anticipates the start date upon award with a performance period of up to one (1) year; funding beyond one year is subject to grantee performance and funding availability.

(3) Award Type

DAI anticipates awarding approximately up to 80 grants (hereafter called Agreement) to fund successful applications submitted in response to this APS. Award types include in-kind grants, fixed amount awards (FAAs), simplified grants and standard grants.

SECTION III- ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

(1) Types of Entities that May Apply

This APS is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested and eligible organizations have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding. To be eligible for grant awards, the organization:

- Must be a non-governmental, non-profit, or profit-making organization (restrictions on costs paid under grants to profit-making organizations apply).
- Local organizations must be legally registered in accordance with the laws of the Government of Afghanistan.
- Must have sound operating or business practices and must not engage in child labor.
- Must support outcomes and results consistent with and linked to ACEBA and its objectives.

DAI will not award grants to the following entities:

- Any governmental organization;
- Faith-based organizations whose objectives are discriminatory;
- Organizations from foreign policy restricted countries (Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan and Syria);
- Any U.S. entity which is a "Private Voluntary Organization" (PVO) but has not registered as such with USAID;
- Any "Public International Organization" (PIO);
- Organizations included in the List of Parties Excluded from Federal Procurements and Non-Procurement Programs. In addition, organizations are



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

not eligible for awards if they have members who appear in the U.S. Department of Treasury's List of Specially Designated Nationals (OFAC's Sanctions List) and Blocked Persons or who have been designated by the United Nations Security (UNSC) sanctions committee established under UNSC Resolution 1267 (1999) (the 1267 Committee) as an individual or organization linked to terrorism;

- Any entity affiliated with DAI and DAI subcontractors or any of its directors, officers, or employees; and
- Individuals.

(2) Potential New Partners

DAI strongly encourages applications from potential new partners.

(3) Cost Share

All applications should contain evidence of a significant cost-share commitment. Applicants are encouraged to contribute resources from their own private or local sources for the implementation of this program where feasible. Grants benefiting for-profit firms will require a minimum 25% cost share. Cost-share is not required for grants to non-profit entities.

SECTION IV- APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

(1) General Application Process

DAI will review proposals using a two-stage process. Applicants must first submit a concept paper of no more than eight (8) pages, including annexes, directly to ACEBA Grants Department. Concept papers must meet the identified needs of this solicitation. If your proposed project meets the needs of this APS, you will be invited to submit a full application. The invitation will include instructions for preparing a full application, submission instructions, application review information, and award/administration information.

Do not submit a full proposal unless requested by DAI. Only upon receipt of positive DAI feedback on the concept paper is the Applicant requested to put together a full proposal for DAI consideration.

The concept paper must be prepared in accordance with the requirements and submission instructions in this section.

Questions: Any questions or requests for clarification concerning this APS can be submitted by e-mail to GRANTACEBA@dai.com



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

Questions received will be answered in a phased manner but not less than twice a month. All questions and answers will be posted on <https://www.afghanbids.com/> which will be updated twice a month.

Any prospective Applicant desiring an explanation or interpretation of this APS must request it in writing. Oral explanations or instructions given will not be binding. Any information given to a prospective Applicant concerning this APS will be furnished promptly on <https://www.afghanbids.com/>, if that information is necessary in submitting concept papers or if the lack of it would be prejudicial to any other prospective Applicants.

Applicants should check <https://www.afghanbids.com/> regularly for clarifications on questions.

(2) Concept Paper Requirements

In the first stage, all applicants are required to submit a short technical concept paper no longer than 8 pages (including annexes) that is specific, complete and concise. The concept paper should demonstrate the Applicant's capabilities and expertise with respect to achieving the goals of this program.

The concept paper must be submitted using DAI's Grant Concept Paper Template. The Concept Paper Template is available for download on AfghanBids.com or by request from GRANTACEBA@dai.com

(3) Concept Paper Submission Instructions

All materials must be in English.

The concept paper must be submitted by email to: GRANTACEBA@dai.com no later than the deadline on the cover page of this APS or subsequently announced deadlines if additional reviews are announced. All correspondence must include the relevant APS number and title. Please submit your concept paper in Word (.doc or docx) format to facilitate commenting. You may also submit an additional copy in PDF if you wish. **Concept papers over eight (8) pages, including annexes, may not be considered for evaluation.**

AfghanBids Website Registration

Applicants who wish to track questions and answers through the AfghanBids website can register on www.afghanbids.com and add the 'project' on their watch list. **If you have difficulty registering, please call AfghanBids help desk at +93 (0) 788 481 158.** Afghan Bids is not part of the ACEBA grants team and the technical person answering this number can only help you with registration problems or with problems uploading files. This is an IT person, and they do not know anything about the APS. Please do not call them to ask questions about the grant application process. Questions about the APS should be posted on the opportunity discussion board on the AfghanBids website. Applicants who do not register on AfghanBids will not be able to see and track the questions and answers.



Shaping a more livable world.

ACEBA Annual Program Statement

SECTION V – CONCEPT PAPER REVIEW INFORMATION

(1) Eligible Organizations

Refer to Section III of the APS for eligibility information.

(2) Evaluation Criteria for Concept Paper

Concept papers will be reviewed in terms of responsiveness to the APS, appropriateness of subject matter, and creativity. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how their proposed work will contribute to increasing exports, sales or jobs in the targeted value chain in Afghanistan.

SECTION VI- DAI PROJECT CONTACTS

Any questions or requests for clarification concerning this APS can be submitted by e-mail to GRANTACEBA@dai.com. Refer to Section IV for additional guidance.

SECTION VII - OTHER INFORMATION

Issuance of this APS does not constitute an award or commitment on the part of DAI, nor does it commit DAI to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

DAI reserves the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted. Further, DAI reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.