

**U.S. Department of State
U.S. Embassy Cairo
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: The English Access Microscholarship Program 2023-2025.

Deadline for Applications: August 24, 2023

Total Amount Available: \$474,500

Regional English Language Office
Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy
8 Kamal El Din Salah Street, Garden City
Cairo, Egypt
Email: CairoEnglishAccess@state.gov

A. Program Description

The Regional English Language Office (RELO) in the Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Cairo, on behalf of the U.S. Department of State's Office of English Language Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, invites proposals from qualified organizations to administer the next English Access Microscholarship (Access) Program in Egypt, "Access 14." The Access Program is a two-year after-school program that provides critical thinking, leadership, and life skills to economically disadvantaged and underserved youth through American-style English classes, enhancement activities, and intensive sessions while introducing the students to American culture and values and promoting multicultural understanding.

B. Project Overview

Selected providers will be expected to provide groups of students with a two-year program consisting of after-school English language instruction, enhancement activities, intensive sessions. English language instruction should provide a meaningful, interactive language learning experience centered on the learner. Project-based and task-based approaches should be employed to help the learners use English to understand, discuss, and resolve authentic local and global challenges. Off-site enhancement and intensive sessions should serve to extend the language learning experience beyond the classroom. Classes should include a focus on real-world applications and U.S. values, such as democratic values, personal development, service learning, digital literacy, diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA), critical thinking, and leadership.

Access classrooms can serve as a strong educational model for a community. Programs should, where possible, share new and relevant practices with English teachers in other schools, especially those from which the Access students and teachers are selected. The participants' parents should be made aware of what and how the students are learning and included in encouraging students' personal development.

A more detailed overview of Access can be found in the **English Access Microscholarship Program Handbook for Providers** and will be shared with selected organizations.

Student Criteria:

The Access Program in Egypt is designed for economically disadvantaged and underserved youth. The U.S. Embassy in Cairo offers Access Programs for two groups: preparatory school and vocational school students. Student recruitment must be an open process in the communities in which the Access classes will be held. All Access programs must have gender parity.

The U.S. Embassy welcomes proposals for Access classes that support students with disabilities. Providers interested in submitting proposals for these audiences should include a detailed plan identifying how students with disabilities would be included and supported in the classes, both in terms of considerations for learning and for accessibility.

Preparatory school student participants must:

- Be 13 or 14 years old at the beginning of the program;
- Be from an economically disadvantaged background;
- Be highly motivated and able to commit to a two-year after-school program;
- Be enrolled in a public, non-English medium preparatory school; and
- Demonstrate academic and personal potential.

Vocational school student participants must:

- Be 15 or 16 years old at the beginning of the program;
- Be from an economically disadvantaged background;
- Be highly motivated and able to commit to a two-year after-school program;
- Be enrolled in a public, non-English medium vocational school; and
- Demonstrate academic and personal potential.

Access Program Components:

After-School/Weekend Instruction

The Access Program must deliver a minimum of 360 hours of instruction. Classes should be held at least twice per week, and as often as four times per week. Classes typically last from two to three hours. The Access Program cycle is 24 months with classes typically beginning in February and finishing in February after two years. It is the responsibility of the Provider to consider students' schedules, especially during the initial recruitment phase, to ensure that Access classes do not interfere with students' regular school schedule.

Classroom size is a balance between language class quality and overall cost. There should be no more than 20 students in one class.

Enhancement Activities

Enhancement activities are educational events and activities that are scheduled in addition to the students' standard after-school/weekend instruction and foster Egypt-U.S. cross-cultural understanding, as well as develop leadership, life skills, critical thinking, and global citizenship skills. Enhancement activities should not be isolated activities or events. Enhancement activities should be integrated thematically with the after-school/weekend instruction as opportunities for educators and students to practice creativity and to extend the learning experience beyond the classroom while improving their English language and personal skills. Enhancement activities can cover topics, such as:

- U.S. Culture and Democratic Values
- Personal Development
- Service Learning
- Digital Literacy

There must be a minimum of one enhancement activity every three months. The hours used for such activities will be counted as part of the total number of hours of instruction. Providers must submit monthly highlights (see "Functional Requirements" below); the most successful enhancement activities are often the best highlights.

Intensive Sessions

Near the end of an Access academic calendar, a two to five day off-site immersive and intensive experience should be included in the program. These intensive sessions can occur on weekends, at the end of the regular school year, or during school breaks. As with enhancement activities, these hours – generally eight per day – are counted toward the

total number of instruction hours. The goal of these intensive sessions is to provide students with an immersive English experience outside of the classroom. A typical day consists of a variety of team building activities, problem solving challenges, and creative activities in English that promote self-confidence, develop life skills and critical thinking, and improve fluency in English.

Staffing off-site intensive sessions requires an all-hands-on-deck approach that includes the active participation of all Access teachers, as well as the Provider's Access coordinator and administrative staff. Providers may organize and implement intensive sessions led by Access teachers and staff with the support of outside individuals, such as contractors or Access alumni. Alternatively, Providers may identify partners to implement the intensive sessions. There are several organizations in Egypt with extensive experience running "summer camps" and other educational off-site programs that could be considered as potential sub-grantees. All intensive sessions must be conducted entirely in English.

Community Outreach

The Access Program site should serve as a model classroom for the community. Regular efforts should be made to perform outreach within the community, including to parents, English teachers, as well as teachers of other subjects, administrators, and alumni of U.S. Embassy programs, including Access alumni, where appropriate. Outreach efforts should not interrupt instructional hours. Providers should develop a plan to reach out to key groups several times during the Access program to share information about the Access program. Examples can include workshops for parents on how to support a child learning English, conducting a workshop for future teachers at a nearby English language teaching department or for current teachers at the schools from which Access students have been recruited, and meeting with administrators to explain how to create stronger foreign language programs in their schools.

In-Country Educational Service Provider: Roles and Responsibilities

Proposal Eligibility Requirements:

Proposals may be submitted by an established non-profit institution or a non-governmental organization (NGO) with at least 5 years of experience in administering educational programs and/or teaching English, preferably to the target age group. Organizations with previous experience and a capacity of working with educational institutions will be given priority. New organizations are encouraged to apply.

Number of Providers:

The U.S. Embassy reserves the right to split the project between two or more Providers.

Program Implementation Locations:

The U.S. Embassy will accept proposals to implement the Access classes in the following locations: Alexandria, Assuit, Aswan (Kom Ombo and/or Nubia), Cairo, El Sharqia, Fayoum, Hurghada, Kafr El-Sheikh, Luxor, Menofia (Shibin El-Kom), Qena (Nagaa Hammadi), and Suez. Proposals should identify sites where the Provider can procure clean, safe, and appropriately equipped classroom space that is centrally located for the student population and that the students can easily access by public transportation. Providers must also identify qualified administrative and teaching staff for the duration of the program. Providers may apply for up to two classes of up to 20 students per class at each site. Proposals will be accepted to implement Access classes in a minimum of one and a maximum of six locations, based on the Provider's capacity.

The Provider should consider the Embassy's goals of extending the Access program to as diverse an audience as possible and justify the selection of a specific site and group of students. While the largest two cities in Egypt (Cairo and Alexandria) are possible hosts, it is preferable to include as many options as possible in medium-sized and small-sized cities in as varied a geographic range as possible.

The final number of classes and locations approved for each Provider will be decided by the U.S. Embassy in consultation with the Provider.

Program Calendar:

Proposals should include a planning calendar of no longer than 24 months in duration. The contractual agreement with Providers is expected to begin in November 2023, but will depend on the length of the negotiation and contract finalization. Providers must be prepared to be flexible regarding start dates.

Technical and infrastructure requirements:

The Provider must specify the location(s) of the Access program and space that will be used for the classes and activities. The Provider must either provide verification that the space belongs to the grantee or a written agreement with the owner of the space to be used for Access classes throughout the period of the program. The space must have seating for up to 20 students, a whiteboard, power outlets, air conditioning, and meet sanitary requirements. The space should also have access to computers with internet capability or the grantee can provide for this separately. Providers are encouraged to identify in their proposals any other unique learning spaces on the premises that are accessible to the program that add to the overall experience, such as theaters, gardens, sports facilities, etc.

Functional requirements in collaboration with, and approval of, the RELO:

- a) The Provider is responsible for hiring an Access coordinator who is dedicated to managing the Access classes and liaising with the U.S. Embassy. Providers with classes in more than two locations must have full-time Access coordinators;
- b) The Provider is responsible for promoting the program within the appropriate communities and recruiting, interviewing, and selecting economically disadvantaged youth to participate in the program;
- c) The Provider is responsible for identifying, recruiting, interviewing, and selecting highly qualified Access teachers through an open competition;
- d) The Provider is responsible for developing the curriculum;
- e) The Provider is required to submit quarterly program and financial reports, in addition to a substantial final performance report;
- f) The Provider is required to monitor and evaluate students' attendance and performance, and provide interventions to support struggling students and increase student success;
- g) The Provider will submit 1-3 paragraph highlights with photos for an internal U.S. Department of State audience on a quarterly basis. Further guidance will be provided by the RELO;
- h) The Provider will maintain records on program graduates that will be shared with the U.S. Embassy;
- i) The Provider will review the Access Handbook which will be shared with selected Providers. Providers must review and complete all interactives in the Access Handbook;
- j) The Provider will ensure that students are given the same English language proficiency test at the beginning and end of the program to show overall progress in English in the four skills;
- k) The Provider acknowledges a minimum passing grade and minimum attendance of 70%;
- l) The Provider will keep a list of alternate students and, if there is any attrition in the first three months, the Provider will fill the open slots with students from the list of alternates.

Application Review Criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below:

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 20 points: The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out in between one to six locations, depending on the Provider's capacity, infrastructure, and geographic spread. The proposal must identify the location(s) and venue(s) that will be used for this program and include a plan for recruiting students and teachers, developing the curriculum, and implementing the program.

The Provider's instructors for this program should have a minimum of five years teaching full-time in any institution, preferably at the preparatory and/or high school level (grades 7 – 12). Instructors should be comfortable and fluent in English, with at least a C1 level on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR), and have some cross-cultural experience, preferably with U.S. culture. Familiarity with the intercultural experience is

prioritized over having visited the United States. Instructors should be well-versed with and employ current teaching methodology that focuses on interactive, learning-centered approaches to accomplish tasks and projects. Instructors should be adept at integrating modern technology into the classroom, and at creating a comfortable and safe learning environment that encourages students to learn in a secure, comfortable, and nurturing environment. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points: The organization has expertise in administering educational programs and/or teaching English, preferably to the target age group and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account. Organizations with previous experience and a capacity of working with educational institutions on a national level will be given priority. New organizations with the same or higher level of capacity are also encouraged to apply.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget – 10 points: The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the number of classes and sites, proposed activities, and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities. The budget per student should be no higher than \$1,500. This includes administrative costs, tuition, materials, student transportation, enhancement activities, outreach activities, and an off-site immersion experience. The U.S. Embassy encourages interested Providers to identify creative ways to extend the quality and quantity of learning experiences for this amount as opposed to competing based on a low cost per student. All possible costs for tuition, overhead, teachers' salaries, administration, materials, enhancement activities, off-site immersion sessions and transportation for the students should be covered. Providers are expected to keep administration costs to a minimum. Providers are encouraged to consider cost-sharing.

Monitoring and evaluation plan – 15 points: Applicant demonstrates the ability to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability – 10 points: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

Support of Equity and Underserved Communities – 10 points: Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation. If applicable, proposals should clearly demonstrate how classes would successfully accommodate and integrate learners with disabilities in all components of the Access program.

Submission information:

Proposals should be submitted to the Regional English Language Office, U.S. Embassy Cairo electronically to CairoEnglishAccess@state.gov **The deadline for submission is Thursday August 24, 2023 by midnight.** Interested organizations should send an email to CairoEnglishAccess@state.gov to receive the proposal templates. The Embassy does not provide feedback on unselected proposals but will provide notification of proposal selection status.

Format of the proposal:

- (A) **Narrative:** A narrative document, no longer than 20 pages, that describes the program in detail. This document should include a description of:
- 1) the grantee organization, including relevant resumes of key figures and previous experience with similar projects;
 - 2) Access program location(s) and venue(s)
 - 3) the type of Access program (preparatory or vocational);
 - 4) a plan for including students with disabilities, if applicable,
 - 5) the afterschool/weekend classes, enhancement activities, off-site intensive sessions, and community outreach plan;

- 6) student and teacher recruitment and selection plan;
- 7) a student retention plan;
- 8) materials to be used and a brief explanation of how the materials support the exploration of U.S.-Egyptian cultures;
- 9) a monitoring plan;
- 10) teacher profiles; and
- 11) a professional development plan for teachers.

(B) Budget:

The budget spreadsheet should include all program costs. Categories include a breakdown of costs for the two-year program (e.g., instruction, books/materials, transportation, administration, enhancement activities, and off-site immersion sessions), the total number of students to be enrolled, the start and end dates for instruction, the number of hours of instruction students will receive per week and year, and the type of program (e.g. after-school, weekend, full-time, or English language intensive sessions). A breakdown of any cost-sharing by the grantee should be included.

Additional information:

For additional information or clarification please contact the U.S. Embassy's Regional English Language Office by writing to CairoEnglishAccess@state.gov or at +2-02-2797-3250.