



**WATER** and  
**ENERGY**  
for **FOOD**



## **MENA Regional Innovation Hub Call for Innovation Webinar – Q&As**

### **1. Could you please list us implementable countries?**

They are stated in the Call for Innovations. The eligible countries are Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Lebanon, Morocco, The Palestinian Territories, Tunisia, Sudan, Yemen.

### **2. If we are in local NGO in Eastern Africa, especially Somalia, is it possible to apply to the program?**

If you want to implement your project in Somalia, then no, you are not eligible to apply for the MENA region, please wait until the East Africa Regional Innovation Hub releases a call. Please subscribe the WE4F newsletter to receive regular updates and follow our social media channels. If you would like to implement your solution in any of the targeted countries of the call, you are welcome to apply.

### **3. The deadline extremely short. Could we ask you kindly to extend the project for ten days or two weeks?**

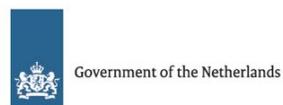
No, the deadline cannot be extended beyond December 15th, 2020. If you are running out of time, you can still apply for the second Call of Innovation which is scheduled for the 4th quarter of 2021.

### **4. How many calls for innovation do you expect to be released by the MENA hub?**

At least two Calls for Innovations are planned. The first one is already running, and its application period is open until December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020. The second Call for Innovations is planned for the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of 2021. There might be further calls depending on the quality of the incoming applications. Please subscribe the WE4F newsletter to receive regular updates and follow our social media channels.

### **5. Can an organization apply for both the MENA and the SSE Asia calls for innovations?**

Yes, you can apply for both calls at the same time.



**6. How many innovations may I apply for under the same call?**

Applicants may submit up to 3 applications.

**7. If any, can we see the granted projects under WE4F in previous years?**

WE4F is in its first year, so there are no examples of WE4F-supported projects yet. However, there were proceeding programs before WE4F, namely [Powering Agriculture: An Energy Grand Challenge for Development \(PAEGC\)](#) and [Securing Water for Food \(SWFF\) Grand Challenge](#). Many examples of supported projects can be found on the respective websites. Please note that the previous programs had slightly different criteria and goals.

**8. I applied last year, could I apply again?**

Yes, applicants from the previous programs (PAEGC and SWFF) can apply again.

**9. Am I eligible to apply as an individual?**

No. Only registered organizations that are not government entities can apply.

**10. Can you confirm the contracting authority in any successful bids would be USAID, rather than one of the other donors in the fund?**

Yes, the program is administered by USAID on behalf of all partners. If you are successful, your contract will be with the Berytech consortium, that has a contract with USAID.

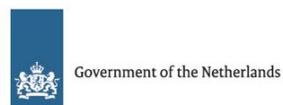
**11. Could the innovation we are adopting in the MENA region be proven in another region by another company? In both being proven and having the minimum number of direct customers?**

The innovation must be proven in the MENA region or have a very strong local partner leading the application consortium to apply for this call. In general, applicants from outside of the MENA region will face significant barriers to wide-scale adoption in the 2-3 year time-frame of the WE4F award.

**12. Is it required that applicant be the proprietary owner of the "innovation" or can the innovation be coming from a European company and the applicant wants to import and promote this innovation in MENA region?**

The applicant must be the proprietary owner or be in a consortium with the proprietary owner.

**13. I want to ask is this project cover aquaponic farming and/or full smart farm projects? Do you support such projects, or do you only provide support to technology products used in farming and water?**



Yes, both could be potentially supported if they are innovative, scalable solutions with a clear growth plan that are in line with the WE4F program's goals.

**14. Could we use innovations that have gained certificates in international shows?**

Using a certified innovation will certainly not be a disadvantage. However, WE4F does not consider gaining certification as sufficient validation that the technology or innovation is market-proven (which is a precondition to participate in the WE4F program).

**15. If my company started in 2020 but already have the required client base, can I apply?**

Yes, you can apply. Please note you have to demonstrate that your company is a stable entity with stable and functioning operations and already has consistent sales and a client base of more than 5000 customers for a product / service that costs less than \$100 and 1000 customers for a product / service that costs more than \$100.

**16. 1000 customers or end users are to be achieved?**

The number of 1000 refers to the end users. So, it depends on your business model. If you are selling to farmers or food to final consumers, then your customers are at the same time the end users. If you are upstream in the value chain and selling, for example, smart agriculture components to companies that sell irrigation systems to farmers, then those farmers will be the end users that count.

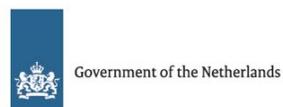
**17. You are asking innovators to have a lot of customers (1000 to 5000), but many innovative solutions are now more 100 to 500 users or 10 B2B large accounts representing thousands of hectares.**

Please note that WE4F is supporting mature innovations, rather than early stage innovations. We welcome all innovators to apply that can prove they have reached 1000 end users (for innovations above \$100) or 5000 end users (for innovations below \$100). In B2B business models, the end-users profiting from an innovation might be much larger than your actual clients. Please also refer to the answer to the question above.

**18. Is it 5.000/1.000 customers reached in total, or for the particular product?**

If you are a company with multiple products and you want to apply with one of them for WE4F, you need to demonstrate the total number of your current client base related to WE4F and the potential to scale it up to a bigger customer base for this particular innovation.

**19. Do you expect that the beneficiaries of the project will be youth and/or women refugees?**



Not exclusively. But we want to see a direct or very clear indirect benefit for women, youth, and the poor resulting from your innovation.

**20. Does the impact have to be for the poor, women, and the environment, or impacting one of them is sufficient?**

You will not be excluded if you cannot claim an impact in all of the mentioned areas. However, the more cumulative impact you can claim related to poor, women and the environment, the better. Your innovation must use less water and/or more sustainable energy resources, introduce no barriers for women and/or poor accessing the food and markets, and have at least no negative impact on the environment that correspond with the regulation in the local context you operate in.

**21. Are innovations target to biodiversity conservation, eligible or it has to be a production system?**

If your innovation is only targeting biodiversity conservation without a financially sustainable business model, it is not eligible to apply. All applications submitted for WE4F Call for Innovation have to fulfil the criteria described in the official Call for Innovations document.

**22. How should a company deal with ESG (environmental, social, and governance) criteria?**

You should demonstrate a basic understanding of ESG issues, and you should showcase a strong commitment to ESG integration into your business model. WE4F does not expect that the applicants have, for example, an ISO certification or a full governance system managing environmental and social impact in place yet. However, if you are selected, a tailored plan will be prepared to achieve these targets. For the Call for Innovations, you have to demonstrate that your company reflects these principles in their operations, such as having a clear separation and identification of roles in teams, or elaborating ideas and activities that can improve the company's social and environmental impact. Please refer to the WE4F ESG guidelines for additional information.

**23. Are SMEs eligible that are fully owned by a larger holding company (large for the region medium enterprise for EU standards)?**

SMEs are encouraged to apply if they meet all of the eligibility criteria and is financially independent with a separate governance from the holding company. WE4F is not designed to support large companies whose technologies are already used throughout the eligible countries and who have their own means and financial resources to scale their innovations.

**24. Can an NGO apply?**



Yes, NGOs can apply if they can prove that they are market-oriented, and that their innovation is scalable and has a sustainable revenue model. Traditional development projects of NGOs that are only seeking grant funding and do not have clients to purchase the innovation will not be supported.

**25. Can INGOs apply to this, or it is planned to support local innovators and start-ups?**

INGOs as well as local innovators can apply for this call, as long as they have a market-proven, financially sustainable business model related to the innovation they want to apply with. The call is targeting mid- to later stage enterprises and not start-ups.

**26. My question is educational institution such as university and polytechnic eligible to submit a proposal or not?**

Yes, registered educational institutions are eligible to apply for this call as long as they have a market proven, financially sustainable business model related to the innovation they want to apply with.

**27. How do you want a university to have a recurring revenue over a solution?**

A university can apply for this call if it has recurring revenues from the sales of the innovation. For example, a university entity (e.g. a spin-off owned by the university) can generate revenue by providing and acquiring money from selling a specific product or service, have a contained and clear finances, and is not depending on receiving funding from the university.

**28. Can governmental university be a partner of the group?**

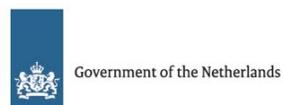
Government entities are not eligible to apply for this call. However, a publicly funded university can take part as partner of the group/consortium (though not the lead institution).

**29. Can a researcher from University apply for this call?**

No, an individual researcher from a university cannot apply for this call. You need to be a registered organization to apply for this call.

**30. The total of years of the project is like 4 years. What if you do not reach the targets set in the first year (based on estimation) will it be the end? you do not go to year 2? Or will it be taken to lessons learned in year 2?**

The maximum duration for a project is 3 years. When an applicant is selected, a clear transformation and acceleration plan including clear qualitative and quantitative milestones will be co-developed and put in place. Based on the progress in meeting the milestones, the funds from the grant will be disbursed, fully or progressively.



**31. What is the structure for the grants? For example, is there a main grantee and sub grantee or is it going to be direct relation between the grantee and beneficiaries?**

The contractual structure will be direct; i.e. there will be a direct contractual relationship one between the grantor and the beneficiary, without any intermediaries.

**32. Do you expect cost-share from the organizations involved?**

Yes. The aim of the WE4F program is to unlock external funds from other sources than WE4F. These funds can come from external investors, donors or from the organization itself. It will be an asset if you have already secured funding from third parties when you apply for this call.

**33. What is the range acceptable for matching funds?**

This is not fixed in the call and will be looked at case-by-case. However, a high percentage of matching funds that is already secured or in negotiation will be an asset and will increase your chances to be selected for the WE4F program.

**34. What is the minimum required turnover for a given innovative solution to be eligible?**

This criterion has been kept undefined in the Call for Innovations as it will be looked at on a case-by-case basis. However, as applying companies should have reached at least 5000 (for innovations below \$100) or 1000 (for innovations above \$100) customers or end users, the revenue from the sales of this product/service should also be reflected in the financial statements of the applying organization.

**35. Should financial statements be provided in English or can they also be provided in Arabic?**

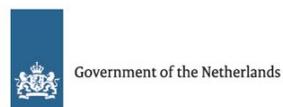
Applicants can submit all parts of the application either in English, Arabic or French.

**36. Can a social enterprise company registered outside the country of implementation but have a subsidiary limited company in the country of implementation apply?**

Yes.

**37. As I work in the whole MENA region can I apply for this Grant with Jordanian partners as well as with partners in Tunisia and Algeria with the same idea?**

Yes. We will be looking at evidence that you can deploy this technology with partners successfully. If you understand these markets and have the right partners, we encourage you to deploy your innovation in several countries eligible for this call. However, the max. grant provided by WE4F per innovation is US \$300'000, irrespectively of the number of countries you will be working in.



**38. Can a Joint Venture of two companies/SMEs apply together to meet application criteria?**

Yes, you can apply as a joint venture led by one lead applicant by demonstrating true partnership, clear roles definition, and complementary aspects towards a certain product and innovation.

**39. If my company will partner with another company that will sponsor my idea, shall I submit financial statements for my company or of my partner. I am asking this because I started my company in 2018 and we did not get enough beneficiaries yet.**

The lead applicant should be company who is the main driver behind the implemented technology or innovation. Please note that the partners have to demonstrate true partnership, clear roles definition, and complementary aspects towards that particular product or innovation.

**40. Could we The Union of Arabian Academics (TUOAA) in Jordan join you as partner?**

Yes, if you want to partner, you can get in touch with us to explore partnership avenues via [we4f@berytech.org](mailto:we4f@berytech.org).

**41. Will slides and the recordings of this meeting be available after this meeting?**

Yes. The slides are available together with the recordings on [we4f.org](http://we4f.org).

**42. Will there be an even selection of innovators in the first round according to the target countries?**

No. The applications will be selected based on how well applicants meet the set criteria. Although we would welcome an even distribution of applications across all targeted countries, it might be that there might be several successful applications from one specific country while there will be several countries with no selected innovators at all.

**43. We are individual innovators who have new and patented product and want to establish a company to produce and market this innovation, knowing that the product achieves the objectives of this program. Are we able to get your support in order to transform from an individual to a registered company?**

Please note that WE4F program is NOT a startup program. Your solution/service needs to be proven with a valid business model, running production, an existing customer base, and recurring sales under the umbrella of a registered organization. If you cannot fulfil these criteria, we cannot support you under the framework of the WE4F program. However, please note that the individual partners (Berytech, Chemonics Egypt, cewas, IWMI) of the implementing consortium of the WE4F program in the MENA region offer a wide range of programs catering for early(er) stage enterprises themselves and are connected to respective incubators and accelerators that may be able to help you. So, if you are not eligible to apply now, please check out the regional incubation and acceleration programs offered in various countries in the MENA



region and re-apply for WE4F once you have a registered your organization and fulfil the WE4F criteria.

**44. We have an innovative productive project with established team and steady numbers that demonstrate the project's success, but we are not registered as a company. Can we apply? Or do we have to register before the end of the submission period?**

As mentioned before, you need to be a registered organization to be able to apply for this program.

