

SAFIR *Youth in action*

Presentation of the Call for Applications for Higher Education and Research Institutions

Safir is an ambitious project supporting youth and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 9 countries across North Africa and the Middle East. Co-funded by the European Union, it aims at creating an environment that foster socio-economic participation of young people and enables the development of entrepreneurial projects with social, cultural and environmental impact.

Safir is built around 3 pillars: **provide support to more than 1,000 young project leaders, develop a regional network of organisations supporting social entrepreneurship, and foster the creation of spaces for dialogue between youth and governmental authorities.**

Website: www.safir-eu.com

Project period: March 2020 – February 2024

Countries of intervention: Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya¹, Morocco, Palestine, Syria², Tunisia

For any specific question, candidates are invited to contact the following e-mail address: safireu@auf.org

¹ Player in Libya (subject to the agreement of the European Commission) and/or the Libyan diaspora

² Player from Syria and/or the Syrian diaspora

Framework of the call

More than 7 million young people in North Africa and the Middle East are students.

Higher education and research institutions have three priority missions: training, scientific research and service to community. To ensure these missions, it is essential that they take into account, in their activities and in their relations with local actors, the socio-economic, cultural and environmental concerns of the territory in which they are located.

The university thus has a duty to train responsible citizens capable of integrating easily into society.

However, it is confronted with a difficult regional context: on the one hand, the capacities of absorption of graduates by the national labor market are largely exceeded. On the other hand, a large number of the training courses provided are not in line with the needs and challenges of sustainable and inclusive development; entrepreneurial skills are particularly lacking.

In order to guarantee young people that their higher education diplomas are a guarantee of professional integration, universities must be supported to develop new professional skills and spread a culture of citizenship and responsibility among their students.

This is why the Safir project provides for the creation or reinforcement of 18 incubation and innovation spaces accessible to all on university campuses in the project countries. These spaces will be places of transition between the academic world and the job market. They will ensure:

- to strengthen the skills of students;
- to promote synergies between companies and universities;
- to raise public awareness of SDGs issues in order to reach as many people as possible and to foster a culture of citizenship among students and teacher-researchers.

The 18 Higher education and research institutions will be selected through two calls for applications. They will benefit from technical and financial support to strengthen their academic offer in social entrepreneurship and create incubation spaces dedicated to student-entrepreneurs. This support will be provided in 3 phases:

- a three-month diagnostic phase adapted to local needs and specificities;
- a one-year support phase focused on action training;
- a three-month evaluation phase in the second year.

Ultimately, the objective is to enable these spaces to incubate students' social entrepreneurial initiatives (they will join Safir's network of support structures for innovative entrepreneurship) and to organize awareness sessions on SDGs. They will be invited to participate in regional meetings between project beneficiaries and will have an annual program of citizen events.

Selection process

Within the framework of this first call for applications, 9 higher education and research institutions will be selected, with a geographical representation between the countries of implementation of the activities and according to the following schedule:

1. September 1 - October 31, 2020: application through the online form
2. November 1 - November 15, 2020: pre-selection by the consortium of partners
3. November 16 - November 27, 2020: online interviews
4. November 30, 2020 (at the latest): letter of acceptance or refusal
5. December 2020: signature of contracts between the AUF and the beneficiaries
6. January/February 2021: launch of activities
7. June/July 2022: end of activities

A second call for applications will be launched in 2022 for the selection of 9 other higher education and research institutions.

Mandatory document to be provided

Please submit the following documents with your online application, imperatively in French or English (if copies of the original documents are only available in Arabic, please attach a brief translation of the documents):

1. Statutes of the institution, certified by the national authorities, and a proof of accreditation of the institution by the ministry in charge of higher education in the country concerned
2. Official letter of commitment signed and stamped by the legal representative of the institution
3. Strategy of the institution
4. Financial report for fiscal year 2019 certified by an approved auditor
5. Institution's 2020 operating budget (income and expenses)
6. Estimated budget for activities carried out under the project (from [provided template](#))
7. 18-month project timeline (from [provided template](#))
8. One or more photos of your institution's incubator if you already have one (optional)

9. An official bank statement (logo and address of the bank and banking information of your establishment)

Interview: if your institution is pre-selected, a date will be set with you by email

Selection Criteria

The evaluation of the application will be based on the following criteria:

- The institution meets the pre-requisites (eliminary criterion)
- The proposed activities allow to reach the objectives set by the Safir project / 60 points
 - The adoption or strengthening of governance in terms of "University Social Responsibility" / 20 points
 - Support for the design or strengthening of training courses dedicated to social entrepreneurship and the challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) / 20 points
 - The creation or strengthening of university incubators dedicated to social entrepreneurship / 20 points
- The institution is able to implement all the activities planned under the project / 15 points
- The proposed budget is consistent with the activities to be implemented and allows to reach the objectives set by the project / 10 points
- The institution expresses its interest in the objectives of the Safir project: to promote the active civic participation of young people and contribute to their political, social and economic inclusion / 15 points

Presentation of expectations in terms of activities to be carried out within the framework of the project

1- Adopting or strengthening RSU governance

The University Social Responsibility (USR) is reflected in all the traditional activities of the University: training and orientation of students, research, but also in administration, logistics, and therefore has a significant impact on the very governance of the institution. The experts mobilized by the Safir project partners will be able to support the selected universities in developing a governance system that integrates this mission.

Methodology indicators (outputs):

- At least 5 people (faculty members, administrative staff, managers) participate in the working sessions on the drafting of a strategy integrating SDGs
- At least 5 people (faculty members, administrative staff, managers) participate in the working sessions on the drafting of a charter on USR
- At least 2 working sessions on drafting a strategy integrating SDGs
- At least 2 working sessions on the drafting of a USR charter

Impact Indicator (outcome):

The higher education and research institutions have integrated the SDGs into their establishment strategy and the USR into their governance.

2- Support for the design or strengthening of training programs dedicated to social entrepreneurship and the challenges of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

- Training of trainers for teachers on the basic principles of social entrepreneurship (economic model, regulatory framework, impact measurement, etc.);
- Awareness raising and training of teacher-researchers on SDG issues;
- Practical training time with students and visits to local ecosystem structures;
- Design of an academic module.

Methodology indicators (outputs):

At least 6 teacher-researchers sensitized/trained in social entrepreneurship and SDGs.

Impact Indicators (outcome):

Teacher-researchers sensitized/trained in social entrepreneurship and SDGs are now able to train and sensitize students in their universities and conduct research in these areas.

3- The creation or strengthening of university incubators dedicated to social entrepreneurship

- Training of university staff in the profession of entrepreneurial project accompaniment and in the running of these incubators;
- Development of awareness sessions on SDGs;
- Development of an annual program of citizen events;
- Time to put economic actors and student-entrepreneurs in contact with each other;
- Training in advocacy for student-entrepreneur status if needed.

Methodology indicators (outputs):

- At least 3 people trained in the animation of incubation spaces

- At least 1 SDGs workshop/awareness session per semester

Outcome / Impact Indicators:

- Trained personnel are now able to support young people with projects with social impact in university incubators and to run these spaces.
- The students accompanied by the incubators during the implementation period have improved their knowledge of SDGs and integrated them into their projects.

The higher education and research institutions will also collaborate with the other beneficiaries of the Safir project via:

- Integration into a regional network of incubators;
- Participation in regional events dedicated to youth and labeled by the project;
- The organization of joint meetings with civil society organizations supported by the project.

Eligible expenses

- Remuneration of experts (services and travel expenses)*;
- Purchase and rental of equipment for the creation of new training courses and for the equipment of incubation spaces*;
- Administrative costs: secretarial services, consumables, logistics, etc.;
- Staff costs: teacher-researcher or technician working time for the design of new training courses and visits to local ecosystem structures, participation in events/meetings related to the project, etc.;
- Communication costs: communication tools (paper and digital), event-related costs, etc.

* Expenses that may be managed directly by the AUF on behalf of the beneficiary university.

Grant Management Modality

The award of the European grant will be the subject of an agreement signed between the Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie and the selected university which will stipulate:

1. The part of the grant relating to administrative and personnel costs to implement the activity (**amount capped within each grant at 50%**).

The universities **will be responsible for:**

- Running the activities smoothly
- Processing the expenditures

They will be required to **justify them by means of scientific and financial implementation reports** with all the required supporting documents.

2. The grant managed directly by the universities will be paid in three instalments corresponding to the stages of implementation of the project:
 - A first instalment of **40%** at the beginning of the project;
 - A second instalment of **40%** after justification of 70% of the expenditure of the first instalment.
 - A third tranche of **20%** after receipt of the final deliverables and verification of the expenses of the second tranche.
3. The share of eligible expenditures relating to the **remuneration of experts** (services and travel expenses) and the **purchase of equipment**.

Depending on the type of management chosen, **the AUF could ensure**, on behalf of the universities and in compliance with the action plan validated by the selection committee, **the management of this second part of the expenses**.

Safir partners in charge of overseeing the implementation of activities

Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) – The Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie (AUF) is the world's leading university network with 1007 member institutions in 119 countries, and 59 locations across five continents. It was created almost 60 years ago as the operator of the Francophonie network, specialized in research and knowledge. AUF works in many fields such as training, research, digitalization, university governance, entrepreneurship and students' employability as well as sustainable development.

Lab'ess – First Tunisian social incubator and co-founder of the Social and Solidarity Economy network "Chabaka.tn", Lab'ess aims to actively contribute to the sustainable development of social innovation actors and to effectively respond to socio-economic needs in Tunisia.

Pitchworthy/AltCity Impact – Pitchworthy is a Lebanese accelerator that runs social entrepreneurship and mentorship programs and workshops and supports more than 350 social enterprises since 2015.

The Safir Project undertakes to implement the appropriate technical and organisational measures to protect your personal data against, in particular, alteration, dissemination or unauthorised access, and to preserve their total confidentiality.