



Hands Along the Nile Development Services (HANDS)

is pleased to announce an invitation for applications for

The Professional Fellows Program between Egypt, Tunisia, and the U.S.

This program is funded by

The US Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Exchanges

Funded by the US Department of State's Legislative Fellows Initiative, this program seeks applicants for **a two-way exchange program that will focus on studying the legislative mechanisms that support and foster the participation and inclusion of people with disabilities in all areas of society.** Selected participants will take part in a US-based exchange program from **October 9 – November 9, 2013** in Chicago IL. They will also attend the three-day Legislative Fellows Congress in **Washington, DC**, where they will be able to meet fellow participants from around the world. After the completion of the US-based program, participants will continue their involvement with an **exchange program in Egypt and Tunisia in winter 2014**, when they and their organizations will work with American exchange participants to build on activities conducted and continue collaborating on initiatives begun during the US based program.

HANDS invites **qualified professionals from Egypt and Tunisia either currently working to or in the position to promote participation of the disabled through legislative processes** to apply. **This includes professionals in non-governmental, governmental, academic or private institutions.**

During the US-based exchange, selected applicants will participate in:

1. **Fellowship posts** with a counterpart organization in Chicago in order to collaborate with American colleagues and learn about their areas of activity;
2. **Seminars and training** to strengthen participants' leadership capacity and to develop their understanding of American legislative processes and how they have been used to promote the participation of the disabled;
3. **Visits and networking opportunities** with relevant organizations and institutions;
4. **Participation in the Professional Fellows Congress in Washington, DC** at the end of the fellowship, which will provide opportunities to meet other professional exchange program participants sponsored by the Department of State and network with potential partners and counterpart institutions and individuals;
5. **Cultural experiences** that will build positive relationships between Egyptians, Tunisians, and Americans, including opportunities for sightseeing and touring.

All travel, accommodation and food costs for participants will be covered by the program, as well as local transportation costs and fees for educational and cultural visits. The program will also provide participants with **health insurance and a J-1 visa** to travel to the US.

Program Schedule

October 9 – November 5, 2013: Exchange program in Chicago, IL.

November 6 – 9, 2013: Professional Fellows Congress in Washington, DC.

January, 2014: Exchange programs in Egypt and Tunisia.

Eligibility Criteria

This program aims to strengthen the leadership capacity and skills of mid-level professionals from Tunisia and Egypt who are working to promote the full participation of the disabled in their societies. As such, we seek candidates who have the potential to or are currently promoting legislative activity advancing the inclusion of the disabled, and would benefit in a professional capacity from an extended fellowship with a relevant American nonprofit, educational or government organization working on similar issues.

Although there are no age restrictions, the program encourages prospective participants between the ages of **25 and 40** to apply. Applicants must also meet the following criteria:

1. **Education:** Candidates should have completed university level education.
2. **English language:** English proficiency is mandatory. Participants should have very strong English reading, writing, and speaking skills. The application and interview will be in English and applicants' language ability will be assessed accordingly.
3. **Professional experience:** Prospective participants should have at least **three years of demonstrated involvement with activity promoting the full inclusion and participation of the disabled in their societies, as well as an interest in employing legislative mechanisms to advance such work.**
4. **Dedication to and soundness of plans for the future:** Candidates must demonstrate long-term thoughtfulness about the inclusion and participation of the disabled in their societies. The application will ask candidates to submit an essay showing their understanding of the importance of legislative activity in securing the participation of the disabled, their own plans for addressing this issue after the exchange, and an awareness of the current challenges of promoting such participation, as well as the replicable successes already achieved either in their home country.
5. **Long-term commitment** to the program that extends beyond the official end-date.
6. **Recommendations:** Applicants must be able to supply **two letters of recommendation.**
7. **Ability of live and travel independently and without assistance.**

The deadline to apply is **June 10, 2013.**

Interested candidates can download the application form from HANDS' website at www.handsalongthenile.org.

For additional questions please contact:

In **Egypt:** Ms. Sara Nagy at (2) 2622 425/6/7/8

In **Tunisia:** Dr. Imed Abdeljaoued at 70 523-533

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HANDS is a US-based non-governmental organization dedicated to building bridges of partnership and cooperation between America and the Middle East. For more information about HANDS, please visit our website at www.handsalongthenile.org.