

# STRENGTHENING CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA SYSTEMS (SAWT) ACTIVITY

## Annual Program Statement (APS)

July 1, 2024

### **SAWT CIVIL SOCIETY AND MEDIA SUPPORT FUND APS**

for

Advocacy, Public Policy, and Media Content Production

Sawt-APS-002

#### IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- First round due date for applications: September 30, 2024 @ 5:00 PM Amman Time
- Applications must be submitted to the following email:

[jo-sawt-grants@internews.org](mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org)

- First Pre-application workshop: Thursday July 25, 2024
- Questions must be submitted to the following email:

[jo-sawt-grants@internews.org](mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org)

*The content of this Annual Program Statement (APS) is the responsibility of Internews and does not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the Government of the United States.*

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## Acronyms and Abbreviations

<b>ADS</b>	Automated Directives System
<b>APS</b>	Annual Program Statement
<b>CFR</b>	Code of Federal Regulations
<b>CSOs</b>	Civil Society Organizations
<b>FAA</b>	Fixed Amount Awards
<b>GEC</b>	Grants Evaluation Committee
<b>GESI</b>	Gender, Equality, and Social Inclusion
<b>GST</b>	General Sales Tax
<b>ICNL</b>	International Center for Non-Profit Law
<b>MC</b>	Mercy Corps
<b>MTDC</b>	Modified Total Direct Costs
<b>NICRA</b>	Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
<b>PwDs</b>	Persons with Disabilities
<b>Sawt</b>	Strengthening Civil Society and Media Systems (Sawt) Activity
<b>UEI</b>	Unique Entity Identifier
<b>USAID</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>VAT</b>	Value Added Tax

## Annual Program Statement

Funding Opportunity Title:	<b>Sawt Civil Society and Media Support Fund</b>
Announcement Type:	Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number:	Sawt-APS-002
Publication Date:	July 1, 2024
Deadline for Submission of Applications:	See Table 1 below
Deadline for Questions:	See Table 2 below
Final Closing Date:	June 30, 2025 @ 5:00 pm
Submit Applications to:	<a href="mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org">jo-sawt-grants@internews.org</a>

Application submission deadlines:	
<b>Round one deadline:</b>	<b>30 September 2024 @ 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Round two deadline:</b>	<b>31 December 2024 @ 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Round three deadline:</b>	<b>31 March 2025 @ 5:00 pm</b>
<b>Round four deadline:</b>	<b>30 June 2025 @ 5:00 pm</b>

Table 1: Application submission deadlines

The purpose of this Annual Program Statement (APS) is to solicit applications for the **Sawt Civil Society and Media Support Fund**, initiatives that will be implemented in Jordan under the Strengthening Civil Society and Media Systems (Sawt) Activity implemented by Internews in partnership with Mercy Corp (MC) and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). Sawt is announcing this APS to select successful applications to implement initiatives that contribute to sustained civic engagement and a healthy information ecosystem in Jordan.

The Sawt Activity seeks to support advocacy and public policy initiatives and media content production by providing grants that support issue-based advocacy initiatives and contributions to forming and informing public policies efforts led by Jordanian organizations in collaboration with digital media platforms. These organizations may include for-profit companies, not-for-profit companies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Government organizations (NGOs), and media platforms that are legally registered in Jordan. Selected organizations for the advocacy grants are encouraged to collaborate with other organizations, the media, and other stakeholders to ensure wider participation and impactful civic engagement.

Sawt anticipates awarding grants to successful applications submitted in response to this APS. Competition for this APS will be open for **twelve (12) months** on a rolling basis. Applications received by September

30, 2024, will be reviewed during the **first round of evaluation** (please see Table 1: Application submission deadline).

The proposed initiatives can run for a period of **up to 18 months**. The number of awards and amount of available funding is determined by the Grants Evaluation Committee (GEC). **Sawt reserves the right to make no awards as a result of this APS.** Changes in the APS will be announced through this link <https://internews.org/sawt-advocacy-and-public-policy-grants-fund/> where this APS has been posted.

### **Pre-Application Workshop(s)**

Sawt will hold the first pre-application workshop on **Thursday July 25, 2024** in Amman. The workshop will be held in-person and online and will provide an opportunity to interested organizations to inquire about the APS and receive guidance on how to complete the application package. Interested organizations that meet the eligibility requirements **defined below** and wish to attend the workshop must register through this link <https://forms.office.com/r/dpY9aPsX9Y> no later than **July 18, 2023**. Time and venue of the first in-person workshop and the links to the online workshop will be shared with registered organizations.

Sawt will be holding additional online pre-application workshops as listed in Table 2: Pre-application Workshop Schedule below.

Note: While attending the pre-application workshops is recommended to all interested organizations, it is not a requirement for submitting applications under this APS

To obtain a copy of the Annual Program Statement (APS) and the Annexes, please click on the following link: <https://internews.org/sawt-advocacy-and-public-policy-grants-fund/>

Thank you for your interest.

Sincerely,

Dima Jweihan

Chief of Party

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

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

## Section I – Project Background and Scope of Work

### Summary Data

- **Funder (Prime Funder):** Internews
- **Funder Project Name:** Strengthening Civil Society and Media Systems (Sawt) Activity
- **Announcement Type:** Annual Program Statement (APS)
- **APS Number:** Sawt-APS-002
- **CFDA Number:** 98.001
- **Application Submission Deadline:** Please see submission deadlines listed below.

### Background

The Sawt Activity is a five-year (2022-2027) cooperative agreement funded by USAID and implemented by Internews in partnership with Mercy Corps and the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law (ICNL). Sawt will create a Virtuous Cycle of Civic Engagement through two objectives: (1) **Good, trusted knowledge-building resource:** improve community knowledge on their rights and relevant issues through access to fact-based, trusted, and reliable content from digital media, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), and other civic spaces, and (2) **Participation and Advocacy:** increasing opportunities for citizens to participate in regular constructive civic dialogue through building CSO and citizen advocacy capacity to increase trust and government accountability. The Activity will work on building the resilience of partners to operate in a challenging political and legal environment. Furthermore, Sawt will ensure underrepresented voices are included, heard, represented fairly, and can safely access and use resources.

Sawt will design and implement activities under two main pillars:

- **Advocacy:** Civil society amplifies citizens' voices through digital media and national / local advocacy initiatives.
- **Public Policy:** Civil society and digital media have a trusted collective role in the public policy-making processes.

### Sawt Civil Society and Media Support Fund APS

This APS includes **three** sub-funds as follows:

**Sub-fund 1: Advocacy Grants:** Advocacy Grants to support organizations<sup>1</sup> to conduct advocacy initiatives at the national or local levels.

**Sub-fund 2: Public Policy Grants:** Public Policy Grants to support organizations' roles in public policy formation and reform at the national or local levels.

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<sup>1</sup> Organizations include for-profit companies, not-for-profit companies, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Non-Government organizations (NGOs) that are legally registered in Jordan.

**Sub-fund 3: Media Content Production:** Grants to support media platforms to produce media content that promotes, discusses, and provides flow of healthy information on key issues, and information needs identified as public priorities.

**For sub-fund 1, sub-fund 2 and sub-fund 3, the following serve as guiding principles for Initiatives funded under this APS:**

- The proposed initiative should reflect a consultative design process with local actors and target groups to ensure that the initiative is evidence-based, considers relevant research, data, and best practices, address the specific needs and challenges identified by the target groups and properly responds to their needs, and follows a participatory and human rights-based approach. Proposed initiatives should be based on universal values and best practices such as equity, justice, and mutual respect.
- Applications under the Advocacy sub-fund must address an identified priority taking into consideration Jordan's current political, social, economic, legal, environmental, and development context, and advocacy windows and opportunities.
- Applications under the Public Policy sub-fund should demonstrate efforts to capitalize on a policy reform opportunity and ability to influence it through current positioning and decision-making engagement.
- Applications under the content production sub-fund should aim to support advocacy or public policy efforts. The content produced should be relevant, fact-checked, and tailored to target audiences.
- Proposed initiative should be driven by collective action and collaboration among various actors (e.g., CSOs, private sector, decision-makers, media organizations, key opinion, community, thought leaders, and so on). In general, proposals reflecting collaboration with Sawt's Digital First media partners will be deemed more competitive. Please refer to the APS announcement on the following website <https://internews.org/sawt-advocacy-and-public-policy-grants-fund/> to access an up-to-date list of Digital First Media Partners.
- Target groups should be engaged meaningfully in all phases of the initiative, from problem identification through design, implementation, and evaluation. Mainstreaming gender equality and social inclusion principles within the grant proposal should be ensured.
- Applications should exhibit innovative approaches and methods in tackling and implementing advocacy, public policy, and content production initiatives. Applications should also aim to foster sustained civic engagement, each with its unique set of objectives.
- Applications tackling the following thematic areas are encouraged:
  - Civic space, including freedoms of association, assembly, expression, public participation and academic freedoms.
  - Environment and climate change.
  - Support to marginalized groups focusing on women, youth, and persons with disabilities (PWDs).
  - Community development.



The following figure provides a brief definition of each sub-fund:

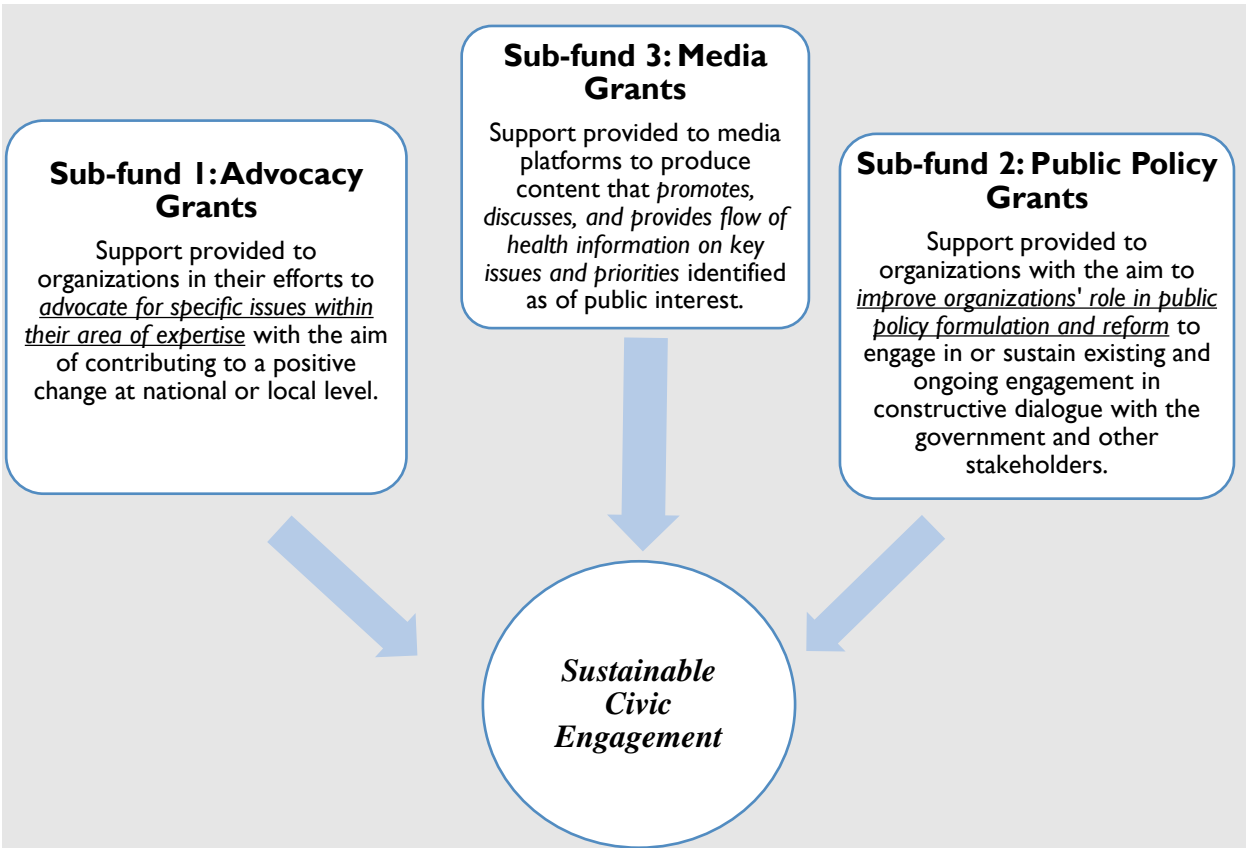


Figure I: Definition of each sub-fund

## Sub fund I: Advocacy Grants

Advocacy are defined as support provided to an organization to advocate for specific issues within its area of expertise, in collaboration with the media, fostering dialogue and engagement with decision and policy makers, and implementing evidence-based initiatives that employ multiple advocacy tactics and activities including raising awareness, research, capacity building and social behavioral change (SBC) resulting in positive change to laws, policies, services, or practices. The advocacy grants can be implemented at the national level, i.e. tackling an issue with the aim for achieving positive change impacting people across Jordan, or at the local level, i.e. tackling an issue with the aim for achieving a positive change within specific geographical area or within a single governorate /multiple governorate(s) within a single region impacting people within those areas. Sawt will collaborate with selected applicants and provide them with tailored technical assistance, allowing them to optimize the impact of their advocacy work.

Grants will support efforts to create solutions and influence change to issues related to human rights and governance, economic development and reform, education, energy and water sources, environment and climate change, health, gender equality and social inclusion, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and marginalized groups and community development in Jordan responding to citizens' need.

Applications for this sub-fund are expected to identify evidence-based priorities and design initiatives and strategies that collaboratively and effectively address such priorities, as well as demonstrate how collaboration will be fostered with media, and digital media specifically, to encourage and secure their contribution and support to the advocacy process. Applications should also include proposed actions to engage with government and other stakeholders to influence the aimed change.

### **Illustrative examples for support of Advocacy initiatives:**

- Advocacy initiatives that aim to improve the legal and policy environment for civic space in Jordan, such as improving the foreign funding mechanism, fundraising instructions, improving public participation, enhancing media freedoms and freedoms of expression including access to information, cybercrime laws, Societies Law through engagement with decision makers.
- Advocacy efforts that aim to mobilize communities and engage with decision makers to achieve improvement of public services impacting citizens across Jordan. Applications that foster and enhance the participation of PWDs are encouraged.
- Advocacy efforts that aim at enhanced information, digital safety and security, media literacy, and related positive practices including initiatives to highlight and decrease gendered disinformation and hate speech.
- Advocacy initiatives that aim at creating a positive shift in climate action and environment social practices and public policies including campaigns to enhance youth action and integration in climate governance using digital media and other innovative tools.
- Advocacy efforts that aim to influence health disparities and health equity include initiatives to mobilize local communities to decrease mental illness stigma and increase mental health services.
- Advocacy efforts and initiatives that aim at advancing human rights and expanding civil society's role in oversight and accountability and ensuring the implementation of the UPR recommendations via the created national action plan or other proposed tools.

## Sub fund 2: Public Policy Grants

Public Policy is defined as the support provided to an organization with the aim to *improve its existing and ongoing role in public policy formation and reform* by engaging in constructive dialogue with the government and other stakeholders. By combining this approach with representative consultation with stakeholders and contributing best practices, the public policy grants aim to ensure that priorities are addressed effectively, and the impact of interventions is sustained. This could include but not limited to conducting consultations, surveys, research, dialogue sessions, etc. to provide input that represents a wider group of stakeholders and contributes best practices and comparative examples. Applicants to this sub-fund possess established engagement in policy making processes. The Public Policy Grants can be implemented at the national level, i.e. working on a national policy impacting people across Jordan, or at the local level, i.e. working on a policy that impact people within a specific geographical area, governorate /multiple governorate(s) within the same region.

Sawt encourages organizations to meaningfully engage with media platforms in the formation of public policy. To that aim, it is anticipated that the organization would suggest creative and innovative strategies to increase the collaborative role of civil society and the media, in an inclusive and respectful conversation about public policy formation.

### **Illustrative examples for support to public policy initiatives:**

- Initiatives that aim at supporting the performance of CSOs that are already engaged in forming and monitoring national reform plans such as the economic modernization vision, the political reform vision, and open government partnership among others.
- Initiatives that support CSOs' role in providing technical support as part of their engagement in policy influencing through national committees, expert panels, among other platforms for topics with pertinent policy opportunities for reform and change
- Initiatives that aim to support involved CSOs in reforming laws and regulations related to freedoms of expression (including media freedoms), association, and assembly and media regulations through facilitation of collective action and creation of influencing tools that aim at policy change.
- Initiatives that aim to strengthen the existing connections and constructive dialogue between the government and civil society organizations to develop national strategies related to media and information literacy (MIL) as well as digital literacy, safety, and security.

## Evaluation Criteria for Sub-fund 1 & 2 Advocacy and Public Policy Grants:

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth below. Awards will be granted to applications that offer the best technical and financial value to Sawt. Applicants should note that these criteria: **(1) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters that applicants should address in their applications.**

#	Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Points
1	<b>RELEVANCE</b> Past Performance & Relevant Experience	<p>Relevant organizational past performance and experience as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Previous experience in successfully managing activities or projects of similar size and scope of work, [<i>public policy proposal demonstrates efforts in policy influencing and relevant existing policy positioning</i>] (10 points).</li> <li>• Organizational competency relevant to the scope of the APS including experience working on promoting civic engagement in a manner that supports Sawt’s objectives of (1) Good and trusted knowledge-building resources, and (2) Participation and Advocacy. (5 Points)</li> </ul>	15 points
2	<b>Approach</b> Technical Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the technical proposal addresses all parts of the proposed initiative clearly outlining evidence basis for the problem, ensuring community consultation at the design and implementation phases, strategic technique and advocacy tools employed to achieve objectives, and policy contribution opportunity for the public policy grants applications. (5 points).</li> <li>• The extent to which the technical proposal demonstrates how the application will achieve the APS requirements and demonstrates no deficiencies. (5 points)</li> <li>• The extent to which the technical proposal outlines activities that demonstrate how the initiative’s goal and objectives will be achieved. Activities should all feed into the objectives proposed as per a clear logical model, [<i>public policy proposals demonstrate how the proposed policy change will be achieved</i>]. (10 points).</li> <li>• The extent to which the technical proposal suggests innovative approaches in addressing the issue of concern, and meeting the guiding principles outlined in the APS document. (5 points).</li> <li>• Engaging with relevant stakeholders to support the proposed initiative and capitalizing on existing platforms with influencing potential. The Initiative effectively engages targeted communities from targeted geographical areas and demonstrates how collaboration will be fostered with media platforms (10 points).</li> <li>• Proposed initiative uses a rights-based approach, and inclusion principles and demonstrates engagement and representation of</li> </ul>	40 points

		diverse groups including youth, women, PWD and other marginalized groups. (5 points).	
3	<b>Sustainability &amp; MEL</b> Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed initiative has a comprehensive MEL and sustainability plan to monitor and track the success of activities and overall performance. The general approach to MEL and key outcome indicators is listed. (10 points).</li> <li>The proposed project identified major risks and has outlined risk response measures as appropriate. (5 points).</li> </ul>	15 points
4	<b>Impact</b> Measuring activities results and its linkage to achieve Sawt ultimate goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed initiative should align with the ultimate goal of Sawt Activity of promoting and sustaining civic engagement in Jordan, and should clearly describe the expected results, outcomes, impact of the intervention (10 points).</li> </ul>	10 points
5	<b>EFFICIENCY</b> Management Capacity, Staffing Plan and Proposed Personnel Qualifications, Cost Effectiveness of Proposed Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualifications of the proposed management team and technical staff to execute the proposed project activities, under budget and on schedule, while meeting the objectives of the initiative. (5 points).</li> <li>The projected expenses (budget) reflect the organization's skill and understanding in financial planning for the project, as well as their familiarity with the cost of activities. Costs must be allowable, allocable, and fair in accordance with USAID's cost guidelines. (5 points).</li> <li>The applicant organization is a participant in Sawt's Advocacy Partners Program and has demonstrated commitment. (10 points).</li> </ul>	20 points

### **Co-Creation Session**

Selected grantees under the same thematic areas will be invited to a co-creation session facilitated by Sawt which will bring organizations together to foster a collaborative environment where grantees can align their efforts and leverage each other's strengths. This is a pivotal step in ensuring that grantees can create more robust solutions that address the root causes of the issues they aim to tackle, thereby significantly increasing the likelihood of achieving the intended positive change.

Furthermore, this approach ensures that selected initiatives are refined to complement and support one another, identify synergies, and maximize impact. Additionally, through these joint, Sawt aims to build strong networks, motivate collaborative work, encourage cooperative atmosphere and enhance creativity and innovation that foster a sense of shared purpose among grantees and ensure the long-term viability of their initiatives.

### Sub-fund 3: Media Content Production Grants

Media Content Production Grants aim to support Jordanian media platforms with the production of independent, high quality, evidence-based, innovative, and engaging media content with the aim to increase citizens access to fact-based, respectful, inclusive, and trusted information on key issues and challenges facing the Jordanian society at large. Additionally, this Sub-fund is a support tool to advance quality journalism and media sustainability and diversity that contribute to citizens levels of knowledge and awareness on key issues. Such an effort also aims to support providing a conducive and enabling environment for effective advocacy and advancement of public policy reform.

For the purposes of this Sub-fund, an independent media platform is defined as follows:

- Registered and operating in accordance with Jordanian laws, as well as media initiatives and pages on social media that are active in producing content digitally and are associated with an institution, CSO or company.
- Finances its activities, especially editorial, with non-public resources appropriated by the government, or has a clear institutional policy that separates funding and revenues from editorial work (editorial integrity).
- Publishes digitally in Arabic or in other languages, especially English, and focus their content on Jordan and target Jordanian audiences or speakers of languages other than Arabic residing in Jordan.

Organizations are encouraged to submit an application that covers one of the topics elaborated below. While these topics have been identified as priorities, the list is not exhaustive. Sawt is open to alternate proposals as long as they highlight solutions or actions proposed by governments, civil society, individuals, or groups of actors to address challenges facing the Jordanian society and align with the Sawt's objective of Good Trusted Information: Citizens and civil society build knowledge through access to and ability to engage critically with accurate and fact-based information.

- Environment and climate change, including raising awareness regarding Jordan's water crisis and mobilizing Jordanian communities towards climate action.
- Information integrity, including promoting Media and Information Literacy (MIL), factchecking, and discerning good information from mis- dis- and mal-information, in addition to increasing knowledge and awareness related to digital safety and security.
- Civil Society in Jordan: addressing the successes, setbacks, and future prospects, including trust and collaboration between CSOs and the media's role as a watchdog, in addition to promoting awareness about Jordan's UPR commitments.
- Economic growth and opportunities: shedding light on needed economic reforms to realize untapped potential.
- Breaking Barriers: Women's economic and political participation in Jordan.
- Addressing information gaps for PWDs: shedding light on underserved information needs for PWDs and providing accessible content formats.

- Political participation: informing citizens of their civic rights and increasing citizens awareness of their role in the democratic processes.
- Public service: educating citizens about the essential public services and how to effectively access and utilize them. Additionally, highlighting the gaps in public services to engage with decision-makers and drive improvements.

Sawt encourages proposals that showcase collaborative approaches to content production and dissemination such as syndication or publishing partnerships.

Produced content must be new (original and not repackaged) and in Arabic (local Jordanian or Standard Arabic), it should be formulated using respectful language and should avoid negative stereotypes. Additionally, it is important to ensure that the content is accessible to all audiences. This can include providing alternative formats such as captions and sign language for individuals with hearing disabilities. Proposals must contain a plan for dissemination that includes an anticipated audience reach in Jordan and to ensure that no one is left behind by targeting marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and PWDs.

### Evaluation Criteria for Sub-fund 3

Applications will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation criteria set forth below. Awards will be granted to applications that offer the best technical and financial value to Sawt. Applicants should note that these criteria: **(1) serve as the standard against which all applications will be evaluated, and (2) serve to identify the significant matters that applicants should address in their applications.**

#	Criteria	Sub-Criteria	Points
1	<b>RELEVANCE</b> Alignment, Past Performance & Relevant Experience	<p>Applicant proposal addresses a key issue and challenge facing the Jordanian society at large and has the relevant organizational capacities and experience covering the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alignment with key issues, challenges, and priority topics. (10 points).</li> <li>• Past performance indicates working successfully with donors under funds of similar size, as well as the ability to meet accountability and grants requirements. (5 points)</li> <li>• Organizational competency relevant to the scope of the APS, sub-fund 3, including experience working on Sawt’s main objectives which are 1) Good, trusted knowledge-building resources 2) Participation and advocacy. (5 points)</li> <li>• Past performance indicating successfully producing high quality content and information products. (5 points)</li> </ul>	25 points
2	<b>Approach</b> Technical Proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent to which the technical proposal addresses all parts of the proposed initiative, particularly addressing identified information needs of target audience(s) and a suitable approach to reach them. (5 points)</li> </ul>	35 points



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The extent to which the technical proposal demonstrates how the application will achieve the APS requirements and demonstrates no deficiencies. (5 points)</li> <li>The extent to which the technical proposal indicates relying on diverse, expert, and balanced opinions as well as clearly listed resources. (5 points)</li> <li>The extent to which the technical proposal indicates an evidence-, fact-, and rights-based approach. (5 points)</li> <li>The extent to which the technical proposal uses an original, innovative, and creative treatment (5 points).</li> <li>The extent to which the technical proposal uses an inclusive approach that is accessible to a wide range of audiences including those with limited access to traditional and mainstream media. (5 points)</li> <li>The extent to which the technical proposal provides a clear time phased production plan, dissemination plan, and use of multimedia tools for dissemination and engagement. (5 points)</li> </ul>	
3	<b>Sustainability &amp; MEL</b> Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) & Audience Insights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application has a MEL plan utilizing audience insight to monitor and track the success of activities and overall performance, particularly measuring audience reach, engagement and sentiment. (10 points)</li> </ul>	10 points
4	<b>Impact</b> Measuring activities results and its linkage to achieve Sawt ultimate goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The application should align with the ultimate goal of Sawt Activity, i.e.: sustained civic engagement, and how the intended activities are going to support Sawt’s effort in achieving its objectives and goal as identified above (5 points).</li> <li>The application demonstrates the ability to work with other partners collaboratively to increase dissemination and reach of product. (5 points)</li> </ul>	10 points
5	<b>EFFICIENCY</b> Management Capacity, Staffing Plan and Proposed Personnel Qualifications, Cost Effectiveness of Proposed Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Qualifications of the proposed team to execute the proposed project activities, under budget and on schedule, while meeting project objectives. (Based on bios and proposed activities). (5 points).</li> <li>The projected expenses (budget) reflect the organization's skill and understanding in financial planning for the project, as well as their familiarity with the cost of activities. Costs must be allowable, allocable, and fair in accordance with USAID's cost guidelines. (5 points).</li> </ul>	20 points



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The applicant organization participated or is a participant in Sawt’s digital first Program and has demonstrated commitment. (10 points)</li> </ul>	
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## Section II- Award Information

### Estimated Funding Level

Sawt expects to award multiple grants with a total pool of **USD 3,000,000** for the three sub-funds allocated as follows:

**Sub-fund 1: Advocacy Grants:** Under this sub-fund, the total funding pool **USD 1,800,000**. Funding size per application under this Sub-fund is up to USD 100,000.

**Sub-fund 2: Public Policy Grants:** Under this sub-fund, the total funding pool **USD 600,000**. Funding size per application under this Sub-fund is up to USD 100,000.

**Sub-fund 3: Media Content Production Grants:** Under this sub-fund, the total funding pool **USD 600,000**. Funding size per application under this Sub-fund is up to USD 50,000.

Sawt may choose to fund the selected application(s) fully, partially, or incrementally. The final amount will depend on grant activities and final negotiation and may be lower or higher than the requested amount, but not exceed the funding ceiling per sub-fund. Preference will be given to organizations with previous experience in implementing similar projects with demonstrated tangible results and impact, and for applications that demonstrate collaborative work, innovative approaches, cooperation with the media, and approaches for engaging with stakeholders. **Organizations must be able to demonstrate a recent history of implementing a similar scope of work in the last three (3) years.**

### Anticipated Subaward Duration

Sawt anticipates a performance period of **up to 18 months**. However, the final duration will depend on the Grants Evaluation Committee decision after the evaluation of the applications and may be shorter or longer than the proposed duration, but not exceed the maximum performance period of 18 months.

### Award Type

Grants may be provided where funds are disbursed based on specified “milestones” or deliverables (FAA – Fixed Amount Awards), cost reimbursable funds (Standard Grant), or either in direct material or equipment (In-Kind Grant). The grant mechanism will be determined by Sawt through a pre-award determination process based on the nature of the grant activity and the financial and management capacity of the selected organization. The award size, number of awards, and amount of available funding is subject to change.

## Section III- Eligibility Requirements

### Eligibility Criteria

This APS is issued as a public notice to ensure that all interested and qualified organizations have a fair opportunity to submit applications for funding. Organizations applying for any sub-fund must meet the following minimum eligibility criteria to be considered eligible for a subaward resulting from this APS:

- Must be legally registered in Jordan.
- Under sub-fund 1 and sub-fund 2: Advocacy and public policy, organizations must have a performance record in implementing advocacy or public policy (as relevant) related activities in Jordan in the last Three (3) years.
- Must submit a complete application package using the attached templates and instructions.
- Must submit only to one sub-fund. Organizations can re-apply to the same sub-fund or apply to other sub-funds in the next rounds of the APS, and only after the response about the original application is received from Sawt grants team. Organizations who apply for more than one sub-fund simultaneously will be disqualified.
- At the time of submission, organizations should not have more than two active grants with the Sawt project. Any application from such organizations will be disqualified.
- Not to be listed with active exclusions on the UN Security Designation List, Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, System for Award Management (SAM), or Internews List of Debarred Grant recipients.

All applications will go through an initial screening against these minimum eligibility criteria and any applicant that does not meet the criteria will be eliminated.

### Cost Share

Cost share is not required; however, organizations are encouraged to contribute from their own resources for the implementation of the activities where feasible.

## Section IV- Application and Submission Information

### Pre-Application Workshop(s)

#### Registration for Pre-Application Workshop(s)

Eligible organizations that are interested in attending a pre-application workshop and/or receiving other information about this APS must register through this link <https://forms.office.com/r/dpY9aPsX9Y>. Changes in the APS will be announced on this link <https://internews.org/sawt-advocacy-and-public-policy-grants-fund/> where this APS has been posted.

Sawt will be holding the first pre-application workshop on **Thursday July 25, 2024** in Amman. The workshop will be held in-person and online and will provide an opportunity to the eligible and interested applications to ask questions and inquire about the APS and receive guidance on how to complete the application package. Interested organizations that meet the eligibility requirements and wish to attend the workshop **must register** through this link <https://forms.office.com/r/dpY9aPsX9Y> no later than **July 18, 2024**. The venue and time of the first in-person workshop in addition to the online workshop links will be shared with registered organizations.

Sawt will be holding additional online pre-application workshops as listed in the following table titled “Pre-application Workshop Schedule”. Details of the online workshop will be shared with organizations for the workshop.

Pre-application Workshop Schedule		
Round	Tentative Date	Location
<b>First Workshop</b>	<b>25 July 2024</b>	<b>In-person and online session. Details will be shared with registered organizations.</b>
<b>Second Workshop</b>	<b>24 October 2024</b>	<b>Online session. Details will be shared with registered organizations.</b>
<b>Third Workshop</b>	<b>23 January 2025</b>	<b>Online session. Details will be shared with registered organizations.</b>
<b>Fourth Workshop</b>	<b>24 April 2025</b>	<b>Online session. Details will be shared with registered organizations.</b>

Table 2: Pre-application Workshop Schedule

Note: while the workshop is recommended to all interested organizations, it is not a requirement for the submission of applications under this APS.

Submission of questions: Questions on this APS should be addressed to [jo-sawt-grants@internews.org](mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org) where they will be reviewed and answered according to the dates in the table 3: Questions Deadlines below. The deadline for receiving questions is included in the table below titled “Question deadlines”.

**Phone calls are not allowed at any time.**

Question Deadlines		
Round	Applications Deadline	Questions Deadline
Round one deadline	30 September 2024 @ 5:00 pm	15 August 2024 @ 5:00 PM
Round two deadline	31 December 2024 @ 5:00 pm	14 November 2024 @ 5:00 PM
Round three deadline	31 March 2025 @ 5:00 pm	20 February 2025 @ 5:00 PM
Round four deadline	30 June 2025 @ 5:00 pm	22 May 2025 @ 5:00 PM

Table 3: Questions deadlines

### Application Package Instructions

Interested organizations are invited to submit a Full Application Package that consists of Program Description (Annex 1), Detailed Budget (Annex 2), along with Registration Certificate and a record of similar activities implemented in the last Three (3) years. Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis and will be reviewed per Table 1: Application submission deadlines. All applications will be reviewed based on compliance with the APS requirements, technical merit of the proposal ideas, cost, and feasibility for participation during the evaluation process.

Organizations may provide documentation to demonstrate the recent history of similar activities of similar size and scope. Examples of accepted records are, but not limited to, videos, pictures, external evaluations, and reports of similar activity.

The APS solicits applications for initiatives that will be implemented in Jordan. Organizations should clearly mention the geographic areas in which project activities will be implemented.

Organizations should retain for their records one copy of all parts of the application and all annexes that accompany their application.

The Full Application Package must be submitted in font Gill Sans MT, font size (11), and must include page numbers.

The applications must be prepared in accordance with the instructions below.

Note that all shortlisted organizations will be subject to a pre-award assessment and due diligence by Sawt staff. This includes, but is not limited to, filling questionnaires, providing copies of policies and procedures, providing audited statements and other financial and management assessment processes.

## Full Application Package Requirements

### **Program Description:**

To facilitate the review of the applications, Program Description (Annex I) must adhere to the instructions detailed in Annex I – Program Description template. This includes page count, font, font size, etc. as listed per each category.

### **Budget Template:**

A detailed budget is required as part of the application package. The budget as an attachment should detail all direct costs associated with the implementation and completion of activities, as well as any indirect costs such as those related to any sub-award. The Budget Template includes:

- Detailed Budget
- Budget Narrative

The Budget Template includes specific cost information and additional required information from the applicant. Detailed budget notes should describe each proposed budget line item, including the basis for calculating each cost, and provide a justification for why the line item is needed for successful implementation of the proposed project. All costs budgeted must be reasonable, allocable to the proposed project, and allowable. No profit or fee can be included in the budget and paid for with grant funds.

### **Submission Instructions**

Applications must be submitted by email to [jo-sawt-grants@internews.org](mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org) no later than the deadline mentioned on the cover page of this APS or subsequently announced deadlines. All correspondence must include the relevant APS number, the sub-fund, and title in the email subject line.

### **Required Documents:**

Please submit the following attachments with your proposal package:

- Program Description (Annex I)
- Detailed Budget (Annex II)
- Any documentation to demonstrate recent history of similar activities of similar size and scope. Examples of accepted records are, but not limited to, videos, pictures, evaluation results, or reports of a similar activity.
- Copy of organization's certificate of registration

Any inquiries about this APS must be submitted in writing to [jo-sawt-grants@internews.org](mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org) by the Questions Submission deadlines listed on **Table 3: Questions deadline** for each specific round, and should reference the APS number in the subject line. Phone calls are not accepted.

## Section V – Application Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed after the submission deadlines as outlined in Table I: Applications submission deadlines. No application will be accepted nor reviewed after the final closing date of this APS.

### Eligibility Screening

Upon receipt of an application, Sawt grants team will review each application to ensure it meets the eligibility requirement mentioned under Section III before sharing it with the Grants Evaluation Committee (GEC) for review. Any application that does not meet the eligibility requirement will be considered ineligible and will not be reviewed by the GEC.

### Grants Evaluation Committee (GEC) Review

All eligible applications will be shared with the Grants Evaluation Committee (GEC) members who are subject matter experts carefully selected either internally from Sawt Team or externally from a pool of experts that can contribute to a fair and technical evaluation of applications.

Based on the number of applications received, each of the GEC members will be allowed a specific time to review, evaluate and score each application as per the announced evaluation criteria. Once all applications are evaluated and scored, the Sawt grants team will arrange for a meeting where average scores for each application is presented and applications are discussed among the GEC members.

After the discussion concludes, the GEC will select applications, suggest period of performance, funding size and other considerations as suitable for each application.

### Post- Selection Information

Following the GEC's selection of applications, Sawt will inform the successful applicants with the selection decision. An official notice of award letter is the official authorization document, which Sawt will provide, either electronically or in hard copy to the successful applicant's main point of contact as identified in the application.

Sawt will also notify unsuccessful and ineligible organizations concerning their status **after the selection is completed**.

### Co-Creation Session

Co-creation is an intentional, collaborative design approach that brings organizations together to collectively produce a mutually valued outcome, using a participatory process that assumes some degree of shared power and decision-making.

Sawt will be utilizing the co-creation to foster the coalitions forming and enhance the collaboration between the selected organization and other stakeholders. By combining this approach with strategic planning, technical assistance, and collaboration with the media, it ensures that the priorities are developed and

sustained. Moreover, this process encourages selected organizations and stakeholders to establish their priorities through a consultative approach involving beneficiaries and other relevant parties.

During the co-creation session, selected organizations are encouraged to demonstrate abilities to work collaboratively with other organizations and the media.

Sawt reserves the right not to award, or award one or more members of a coalition at any stage of the APS without any further discussions or negotiations.

### **Post Co-Creation Session**

Based on the outcomes of the co-creation session, successful organizations will be required to share additional information and documentation in order for Sawt to assess the initiative outcomes and cost reasonableness. Sawt staff will notify organizations about the required information and documentation.

## **Section VI - Sawt Civil Society and Media Support Fund APS Contact Information**

The point of contact for this APS and any questions during the APS process is:

Grants Department  
Strengthening Civil Society and Media Systems (Sawt) Activity  
Address: 8 Nauh Al Roumi Street, Amman - Jordan  
Email: [jo-sawt-grants@internews.org](mailto:jo-sawt-grants@internews.org)

Any inquiries by an applicant about this APS must be submitted in writing, and Sawt will provide unified responses to the inquiring applicant and all other applicants before the submission deadline. Verbal clarification or instructions given before awarding a grant will **NOT** be binding. Any information given to an applicant concerning this APS will be furnished promptly to all other applicants as an amendment of this APS if that information is necessary in submitting applications or if the lack of it would jeopardize other applicants from being eligible.

## **Section VII – Additional Considerations**

### **Gender, Equality, and Social Inclusion (GESI)**

Sawt places a high priority on integrating GESI considerations across all interventions. This ensures that women, youth, and people with disabilities are acknowledged as significant stakeholders in all interventions and are empowered to actively participate in all activities. Applicants are required to outline their plans for integrating and including women, youth, and vulnerable individuals or at the very least, mitigating any adverse effects on these groups in Annex I: Program Description.

GESI is an essential component to consider in the grant application to ensure that the proposed activities are designed and implemented in a way that promotes gender equality and social inclusion and addresses the needs and concerns of marginalized groups. This should be considered while working on needs

assessment, setting the objectives and outcomes, developing and implementing the activities and strategies, monitoring and evaluation, budgeting, and allocating resources.

## Environmental Considerations

When applicable, selected organizations will not receive awards until their proposals are screened by the prime funder to assure activities will result in no adverse environmental impact, to develop mitigation measures, as needed, and to specify environmental monitoring and reporting.

## UEI Number

The Federal Government has transitioned from the use of the DUNS Number to the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) as the primary means of entity identification for Federal awards government-wide. UEI numbers are required in accordance with 2 CFR Part 25, and the transition from DUNS to UEI has resulted in the UEI being issued by the Federal Government in SAM.gov. Before receiving any grant of USD \$25,000 or more, organizations must obtain a UEI number. ***Sawt requires organizations to register and obtain a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). A UEI number is a must before receiving a grant. As obtaining a UEI number may require significant time Sawt recommends submitting request as soon as possible to avoid potential delays.***

## Cost Principles

Application budgets and selected subrecipients' costs will be reviewed in accordance with the applicable cost principles to assure reasonableness, allocability, and allowability:

1. Not for Profit organizations:
  - a. [2CFR200](#) Subpart E, Cost Principles
2. For Profit organizations:
  - a. [48CFR31.2 Federal Acquisition Regulations](#) (FAR) and [48CFR731.2](#)
  - b. [Acquisition Regulation \(AIDAR\) - A Mandatory Reference to ADS 300 Series Acquisition Chapters](#) - Cost Principles for Commercial Organizations

All costs must be reasonable, allocable, and allowable. Reasonable costs are those costs that are generally recognized as ordinary and necessary and would be incurred by a prudent person in the conduct of normal business. Allocable costs are those costs specifically linked to the execution of the activity such as staff salaries, consultations, transportation, stationery and supplies, and other direct costs. Allowable costs are those costs that conform to any limitations in the grant award.

This grant program will **NOT** fund the following costs:

- Second-tier grants.
- Pre-award Cost (cost incurred prior to signing the agreement).
- Value Added Tax (VAT), General Sales Tax (GST) in Jordan, Customs and Duties and other taxes.



- Profit margin.
- Ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or “representation” expenses.
- Purchases of restricted goods, such as: restricted agricultural commodities, motor vehicles including motorcycles, pharmaceuticals, medical equipment, contraceptive products, used equipment; without the previous approval of Sawt, or prohibited goods under USAID regulations, including but not limited to the following: abortion equipment and services, luxury goods, etc.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Construction.
- Purchases of goods or services restricted or prohibited under the prevailing USAID source/nationality.
- Any purchase or activity, which has already been covered by other donors or projects.
- Prior obligations of and/or, debts, fines, and penalties imposed on the selected applicants.

## Indirect Costs

Selected organizations will be eligible for reimbursement of indirect costs if they:

Have a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from their cognizant agency or accept a de minimis indirect cost rate of 10% applied to Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC). MTDC is defined as all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, employee and consultant travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards or subcontracts under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges or patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs<sup>2</sup> and the portion of each subaward more than \$25,000.

## Subaward Administration

Internews is required to respect the provisions of the United States Foreign Assistance Act and other United States laws and regulations. The Grant Program will be administered according to Internews’ policies and procedures as well as USAID’s regulations for non-U.S. non-governmental grantees which are laid out in the Automated Directives System (ADS) Standard Provisions for Non-U.S., Non-governmental Grantees, found here (<https://www.usaid.gov/ads/policy/300/303mab>). Before awarding, grant recipients will be required to review, complete and sign to confirm their compliance with the ADS certifications (<https://www.usaid.gov/about-us/agency-policy/series-300/references-chapter/303mav>)

The following regulations and provisions, at minimum, will apply to grant agreements issued as a result of this APS:

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<sup>2</sup> Participant support costs are direct costs for items such as stipends or subsistence allowances, travel allowances, and registration fees paid to or on behalf of participants or trainees (but not employees) in connection with conferences, or training projects.

- For US organizations:
  - [2CFR200](#) and [2CFR700](#) Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards
  - [ADS303maa Standard Provisions for US Non-governmental Organizations](#)
- For Non-US organizations:
  - [ADS303mab Standard Provisions for Non-U.S. Non-governmental Organizations](#)

## Reporting

Grants awarded as a result of this APS will include technical and financial reporting requirements. Technical and financial reports will be submitted on a monthly or quarterly basis per Sawt's decision.

## Internews and USAID Prior Approval

The selected applications will be subject to Internews and USAID approval before a grant is awarded. Therefore, organizations are reminded that there may be delays in the completion of the process. Should such approval not be given, the grant cannot be awarded. Sawt has the right to hold pre-selection meetings and to request additional documents.

## Disclaimer

The issuance of this APS does not commit Internews to make an award to any prospective applicants responding to this solicitation. Prospective applicants will not be reimbursed for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.

Internews reserves the right to reject any and/or all applications or make an award without further discussion or negotiations. Internews also reserves the right not to provide reasons nor justifications in case of rejection.

## Annexes

- ANNEX I – Program Description Template
- ANNEX II – Budget Template
- Please refer to <https://internews.org/sawt-advocacy-and-public-policy-grants-fund/> for an up-to-date list of Digital First Media Partners

**[End of APS]**