



# Cost Specialist

June 2024

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## About the Near East Foundation (NEF)

The Near East Foundation (NEF) is a non-profit international development organization headquartered in Syracuse, New York. NEF has supported livelihoods recovery and community-based economic development in the Middle East, Africa, and Caucasus since 1915. NEF draws on local teams, experience, and partnerships in these regions to create community-led solutions to improve livelihoods and local governance among conflict and crisis-affected groups, while maintaining neutrality and ensuring inclusiveness in its approach. Working through a network of country offices and local partners, NEF has operations in ten countries: Armenia, Jordan, Lebanon, Iraq, Mali, Morocco, Palestine, Sudan, South Sudan, and Syria. NEF programs are organized around three themes: Inclusive Economic Development, Climate-resilient Development, and Stabilization and Peacebuilding.



## The Role

**Role:** Cost Specialist

**Reports to:** Vice President of Business Development

**Location:** Washington, DC (Hybrid and must be legally authorized to live and work in the United States without company sponsorship now and in the future)

**Salary:** \$68,250 to \$81,900 USD, plus benefits

**Travel:** 5%

**Relocation Assistance:** Yes

## Job Summary

The Near East Foundation (NEF) is seeking a talented and motivated individual for the position of Cost Specialist to be based in its Washington, D.C. headquarters as part of the Business Development (BD) team. As a Cost Specialist you will be responsible for ensuring the timely and accurate preparation of cost proposals and supporting documents in compliance with solicitation requirements. Your role will involve collaborating with proposal teams, providing cost advice, negotiating budgetary items, and preparing proposals budget to support NEF's new business efforts effectively.



## Key Responsibilities

1. **Cost Proposal Preparation:** Ensure that required cost proposals and supporting documents are prepared promptly and are accurate and compliant with solicitation requirements. Prepare line-item budgets and supporting documentation for cost proposal submissions, including budget narratives, certifications, and financial information. Support the development of cost-benefit and value for money Analyses. For all shared costs, ensure that cost proposals take into account NEF's ongoing projects, current projects end dates, and committed expenses.
2. **Cost Advice and Negotiation:** Provide cost advice to proposal teams in alignment with proposal objectives, ensuring that proposed budgets are realistic, competitive, and aligned with NEF's financial policies and procedures. Negotiate budgetary items with sub-partners under the guidance of technical staff and the VP of Business Development, ensuring cost-effectiveness and compliance with donor regulations.
3. **Proposal Budget Reviews:** Present draft proposal budgets for cost proposal reviews, soliciting feedback from relevant team members at NEF HQ and country offices to ensure accuracy, completeness, and compliance with NEF's standards and guidelines.
4. **Budget Refinement and Compliance:** Refine budget templates and narratives as necessary to streamline the proposal development process and enhance proposal quality and competitiveness. Assist in the development and enforcement of compliance with NEF's cost and pricing processes and procedures, ensuring adherence to organizational standards and donor requirements.
5. **Process Improvement:** Identify opportunities for process improvement and assist in the implementation of initiatives to streamline and optimize NEF's cost and pricing processes.



6. **Full Cost Recovery and Value for Money:** Partner with NEF managers and senior leadership to ensure forward-looking costs and staffing are included in proposal budgets. Suggest best practices in cost allowance to demonstrate value for money and effective stewardship of resources.
7. **Other duties as assigned.**

Crosscutting:

Uphold NEF's core values of localization, respect, inclusion, and integrity by helping to build an environment of accountability and learning, keeping work commitments and respecting colleagues' time, listening to diverse colleagues, and participating in regular feedback and performance reviews.

## Candidate Profile and Qualifications

### Qualifications

Commitment to NEF mission, curiosity, a strong willingness to learn and understand NEF's programs and the communities and stakeholders who are our partners in development, and a capacity for passionate advocacy for locally led and impactful work.

- Bachelor's degree in finance, accounting, business administration, or a related field; advanced degree preferred.
- At least 3-5 years of experience in budgeting, financial analysis, and cost proposal development, in the international development sector.
- Strong understanding of financial principles, budgeting processes, and cost analysis techniques.
- Familiarity with donor regulations and compliance requirements, particularly those of major institutional donors (e.g., USAID, FCDO, EU, UN, GIZ).
- Excellent analytical skills, with the ability to interpret complex financial data and provide strategic recommendations.



- Advanced skills in budgeting software, Microsoft Excel, and other relevant financial management tools.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills, with the ability to collaborate effectively with diverse stakeholders across departments and organizations.
- Strong attention to detail and accuracy, with the ability to manage multiple tasks and deadlines effectively in a fast-paced environment.
- Demonstrated ability to work independently and as part of a team, with a proactive and solution-oriented approach to problem-solving.

### Required Qualification

- Candidates must be legally authorized to live and work in the United States without company sponsorship now and in the future.

### Desired Skills

- Proficiency in French and/or Arabic is a plus.

## How to Apply

All correspondence, at this stage, should be via Oxford HR. To apply for this post, click on the “Apply” button on the job advert page, complete our online application form, and submit your CV and cover letter as two different documents, which should be prepared before applying as they will be considered in the application process.

The cover letter should be no more than two pages long and explain why you are interested in this post and how your skills and experience make you a good fit.

The document should be saved in PDF in the following format: Your First Name-Your Last Name-Documents Name-Date (mmyy) e.g., Pat-Jones-CV-012024-NEF or Pat-Jones-CoverLetter-012024-NEF.

### Timeline

Closing Date: 28 July 2024



**First stage interviews:** Week starting 12th August 2024

**Final interviews:** TBC

## Selection process

All candidates will receive an update regarding their application after the closing date. We advise candidates to add the role email to their safe senders list and regularly check their spam folder.

## Equality Statement

The Near East Foundation promotes Equal Employment Opportunities for all applicants seeking employment and NEF employees.

We encourage all individuals who believe they have the skills necessary to succeed within this position and thrive at NEF to apply for this role, even if you do not meet 100% of the qualifications. Women candidates are strongly encouraged to apply.

## Pre-employment Checks

Any Employment with the Near East Foundation will be subject to the following checks prior to start date:

- A satisfactory Restricted Party Screening.
- Receipt of satisfactory references.
- Workplace Verification Check.



## Benefits

NEF offers a comprehensive benefits package which includes: 20 vacation days plus 12 Company Holidays; flexible sick-time policy, generous medical, dental and, vision coverage; HRA and FSA benefits; employer paid short and long-term disability; employer paid life insurance; TIAA-CREF retirement plan with 8% employer contribution, paid family leave, Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and more!

## NEF's Strength Is Its People

Our team is our fuel to achieving the innovation, quality programming, community focus, mutual trust, sustainability, and learning needed to realize our mission. To help our team thrive, we support a working structure that prioritizes flexibility, personal commitments, and staff well-being while promoting a work culture of teamwork, collaboration, respect, integrity, and excellence.

**As an international organization, we value a truly diverse workforce and prioritize a culture of inclusivity and belonging.** We strive to create a high-achieving work environment informed by different cultures, perspectives, and experiences. With a commitment to diversity, equality, equity, and inclusion in all we do, our aim is to ensure that people feel heard, protected, and empowered to contribute to NEF's mission from day one.

## Queries

If you have any queries on any aspect of the appointment process, need additional information, or would like to have an informal discussion, please email at [aktan@oxfordhr.com](mailto:aktan@oxfordhr.com) in the first instance.

## About Oxford HR

Oxford HR operates globally - mainly within the international development and charity sectors. We carry out retained executive search mandates at board and senior management levels. We also offer human resource and organizational development consultancy.

Oxford HR has many years of experience in search as well as an extensive network of international development, social sector, corporate, public sector, and academic contacts from across the world. We carry out comprehensive and often international searches designed to meet the specific needs of our client.