



## U.S. Embassy Cairo Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Leaders for Democracy Fellowship Program

### ***Description and Project Overview:***

The State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) is pleased to announce the eighth year of its Leaders for Democracy Fellowship (LDF) project. This program, conducted in English, advances reform efforts in the Middle East and North Africa by providing emerging civic leaders and democracy activists the opportunity to spend several months in the United States to gain academic skills and practical experience as well as networking opportunities with like-minded peers and professionals. The academic portion of the LDF program will take place **March 22 to June 21, 2014** at **Syracuse University's Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs in Syracuse, New York**. Program participants will subsequently be offered fellowships at Washington, D.C.-based institutions and organizations.

MEPI and the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, are pleased to announce the call for applications for the eighth year of the LDF project. This project provides young and mid-career civic activists and democratic reform leaders from the Middle East and North Africa with the opportunity to complete academic coursework at Syracuse and gain relevant professional experience in Washington, D.C. The fellowship will cover international and domestic travel, health insurance, housing and a moderate living stipend.

The project is open to applicants between the ages of 25 and 40 with bachelor's degrees and sufficient English language fluency to successfully function in an American academic and professional environment. Applicants also should have at least five years of work experience and the capacity to apply the experience gained through the fellowship in a way that would benefit an organization, sector or specific community in their home countries. The project will run from March 22 to June 21, 2014. Fellows are expected to travel to the United States unaccompanied. An alumni conference will be held in the region in the last quarter of 2014 (details to follow at a later time).

### ***Academic Component:***

The LDF project begins with five weeks of academic coursework that addresses leadership, democracy, democratic transitions around the globe, comparative politics, civil society, communication, conflict resolution, and change management, among other topics. Fellows are expected to be active participants in all seminars and workshops that include theoretical debates as well as active skills-building sessions. Participants are also expected to lead discussions and make presentations to the Fellows and the broader Maxwell School community.

### ***Internship Component:***

After completing the academic portion of the project, each participant will engage in a seven-week professional assignment with a relevant political, non-governmental or public policy organization in Washington, D.C. Through this component of the project, participants will gain practical experience about the ways that such institutions interact with government and civil society while also gaining valuable knowledge, experience, skills and further professional contacts to benefit their respective professional pursuits back home.

### ***Costs:***

MEPI and Syracuse will cover international and domestic travel, health insurance, housing and a moderate living stipend in the United States for all Fellows. All Fellows will travel to and from the United States in unaccompanied status.

**Application Requirements:**

- S/he has at least five years of experience working as a professional in a political reform oriented field, (e.g., civil society, rule of law, human rights, family law reform, etc.);
- S/he has demonstrated a commitment and desire to remain working in this field for the foreseeable future and an equal commitment to being a leader of positive change within his or her own country;
- S/he has exhibited leadership skills over time and the capacity to apply the opportunities presented in this program in a way that would benefit an organization, sector, or specific community;
- S/he has a level of English language fluency sufficient to function successfully in a high-level academic as well as professional environment;
- S/he has at least a bachelors degree and the demonstrated ability to succeed in a demanding and intensive academic environment; and
- S/he has not already completed a similar academic degree or internship in the United States, and is not subject to J-visa restrictions.

Along with an **updated resume** and a **copy of Egyptian ID/passport**, each candidate should submit an **essay of no more than 1,000 words, written in English**, which answers the following questions:

1. How will a MEPI Leaders for Democracy Fellowship enable you to better lead your community or country towards greater democracy and citizen participation in the institutions and activities of government?
2. Specifically, what do you hope to gain from this project and what are your plans to apply the experience it offers?
3. What changes do you hope to bring about in your country during the next 10 years?

Applicants may also include up to **two letters of recommendation**, but these are optional. Please note that only applicants fulfilling the program's requirements will be considered for an interview.

Please submit your applications and supporting documentation by email to: [CairoMEPI@state.gov](mailto:CairoMEPI@state.gov) with the Subject line: **2014 MEPI- Leaders for Democracy**

**Deadline for Applications: November 16, 2013 at 4:30 PM**

*Kindly note that the selected applicants will be contacted for an interview on November 24-25, 2013*