



U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
Office of Assistance Coordination
Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)
Local Grants Program
<http://mepi.state.gov/>

**Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)
for Applications to the 2016 MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement published on
November 30, 2016**

MEPI Program – Yemen

PLEASE REFER TO THIS DOCUMENT WHEN PREPARING AN APPLICATION

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Local Grants Overview

The Office of Assistance Coordination's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) Program seeks single-country proposals for its Local Grants Program. The Local Grants Program serves as the MEPI Program's most direct means of supporting organizations in the Middle East and North Africa. Generally, these awards are designed to:

- Strengthen civil society;
- Support constructive advocacy and civic activism;
- Support citizens' efforts to contribute to positive economic, social, and political empowerment;
- Expand opportunities for women and youth;
- Strengthen the rule of law;
- Develop independent media in service to communities; and,
- Help communities work alongside governments in shaping their own futures.

The MEPI Program's Regional Offices, located in the Middle East and North Africa, manage the Local Grants Program. Applications are reviewed and evaluated on the criteria outlined within these Proposal Submission Instructions. The project priority areas are outlined in the section below.

Project Priority Areas

In addition to the general project priority areas outlined in the Funding Opportunity 'MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement' which was published on November 30, 2016 under CFDA number 19.500, the MEPI Program – Yemen has identified the following project priority areas:

Priority Area A: Supporting Economic Recovery in Yemen

Averting the collapse of the Yemeni economy is a vital step towards creating a stable environment that will allow the peace process and resulting political transition to continue. NEA/AC seeks proposals that support economic recovery and stabilization initiatives at the local level. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

1. Livelihood/employment activities, particularly in fields critical to recovery (e.g. health, industrial, agricultural, infrastructure, and solar power);
2. Vocational training activities for the construction trades including a remedial education component, focusing in particular on vulnerable youth;
3. Supporting micro-enterprises and microfinance to encourage economic growth at the local level, limiting scope to fields critical to the recovery, particularly health, industrial, agricultural, construction, and also encouraging women's participation in these initiatives; and
4. Helping the private sector and transitional government identify short-term economic successes and confidence building measures that could incentivize commercial interests to return to Yemen.

Priority Area B: Supporting the Peace Process, Political Transition, and Post-Conflict Governance in Yemen

The establishment of a lasting, mutually beneficial agreement is paramount for political and economic recovery in Yemen. NEA/AC seeks proposals that support UN-led efforts at the local level to implement a peace agreement, enable the political transition, and help reconstitute good governance following a peace agreement. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

1. Amplifying the UN and transitional government’s public messaging strategies through public awareness campaigns and engagement with media, regional and local stakeholders, and civil society networks;
2. Enhancing the ability of women, youth, and persons with disabilities to engage in ongoing political dialogue and advocate with the transitional consensus government;
3. Supporting reconciliation efforts and building more effective conflict mitigation mechanisms at the local level;
4. Increasing connectivity between transitional governance bodies and local government institutions, including in the security and justice sectors; and
5. Supporting civic and voter education efforts, capacity-building to help all political parties effectively represent their constituencies, and cross-sectarian organizing, in preparation for eventual elections.

These MEPI Program – Yemen project priority areas are designed to provide further guidance and clarification to the information already provided in the 2016 MEPI Annual Program Statement.

Deadlines and Other Information

Proposals must be submitted to the MEPI Program – Yemen by no later than 5:00pm eastern time (ET) on February 13, 2017. Please clearly label your email subject line to indicate “2016 MEPI Local Grant Application for the MEPI Program – Yemen.”

Completed applications should be emailed to the MEPI Program – Yemen at:

Yemen: NEA-Grants@state.gov

Interested applicants should email any questions regarding this funding opportunity to NEA-Grants@state.gov with the subject “MEPI Local Grants Yemen Question” by 5:00pm eastern time (ET) on January 16, 2017. The MEPI Program – Yemen will respond to all questions and post the questions received with responses on <https://mepi.state.gov/mepi/english-mepi/funding-opportunities/apply-for-a-grant/open-funding-opportunities.html> by January 25, 2017.

Eligibility

For detailed information on the eligibility for the MEPI Local Grants Program, please reference the 2016 Annual Program Statement.

Required Registrations

As detailed in the MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement, all organizations must have active registrations of the following:

- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), formerly referred to as a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS)
- NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) Code
- System for Award Management (SAM)

Registration with the IRS may be required. Please review the Annual Program Statement to determine if this registration is necessary for your organization.

Note: if organizations are in the process of registration, and have encountered documented,

technical registration issues, these applications will be reviewed for eligibility on a case by case basis provided the application is recommend by the selection committee. Per U.S. law, valid and active registration in the relevant systems is a requirement to receive grant funds.

The registrant or entity is required to create an account in each of these websites by initially creating a Username and Password in all sites: Internal Revenue Service (IRS), if necessary; D&B for a UEI; and ultimately, the System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

The Legal Business Name and Address must be precise and **MATCH EXACTLY** when entering it into the IRS, D&B DUNS, NCAGE, and SAM.gov websites—this includes spaces, parentheses, capitalization, small letters, punctuation, etc. **Please apply for the D&B DUNS Number and NCAGE Code at the same time to reduce waiting time of information.**

For detailed information on registering for the MEPI Local Grants Program, please reference the 2016 Annual Program Statement

Required Registrations and Other Information

Not Applicable.

Application Requirements

Complete applications must include the following:

1. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF424B; completed and signed SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities” (if applicable) (which can be found with the solicitation on Grants.gov and on the Whitehouse.gov website at: <https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/omb/grants/sflll.pdf>);
2. Your organization’s most recent financial audit statement (A-133 audit or 2 CFR 200 Part F, if applicable or standard audit).
3. Project Narrative (not to exceed seven [7] pages in Microsoft Word). Organizations are strongly encouraged to use the Project Narrative Template provided in Appendix I to complete the Project Narrative. If an organization chooses not to use the provided format, the Project Narrative must capture all the requested information outlined in the document and clearly label each section for clarity. Project narratives should articulate a logical relationship between proposed activities and desired outcomes – presenting the cause and effect “chain of results” that a project hopes to achieve.

Please note the ten page limit does not include the any other required application document, including Attachments, Detailed Budget, Budget Narrative, or Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). Applicants are encouraged to submit multiple documents in a single Microsoft Word or Adobe file.

5. Detailed Line-Item Budget (preferably in Microsoft Excel) that includes three [3] columns including the request to MEPI, any cost sharing contribution, and total budget (see Budget Template for more information on budget format). A summary budget should also be included using the OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample). **Costs must be in U.S. dollars.** Detailed line-item budgets for sub-grantees should be included in additional tabs within the excel workbook. Additional budget guidance is provided in Appendix II: Budget Narrative Instructions.

6. Budget Narrative (preferably in Microsoft Word) that includes substantive explanations and justifications for each line item in the detailed budget spreadsheet, as well as the source and a description of all cost-share offered. For ease of review, MEPI recommends applicants order the budget narrative as presented in the detailed budget. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, base salary, and percentage of time devoted to the project. The budget narrative should provide additional information that might not be readily apparent in the detailed-line item budget, not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the budget, i.e. salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel. Please see Appendix II: Budget Narrative Instruction for more information.

7. Attachments (not to exceed ten [10] pages total, preferably in Microsoft Word) that include the following in order:

a) Roles and responsibilities of key project personnel: Please include short bios that highlight relevant professional experience. This relates to the organization's capacity. Given the limited space, CVs are not recommended for submission.

b) Additional optional attachments: Attachments may include timeline information, letters of support, memorandums of understanding/agreement, etc. Letters of support and MOUs must be specific to the project implementation (e.g. from proposed partners or sub-award recipients) and will not count towards the page limit.

8. If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a .pdf file. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by program and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding and does not count towards the page limit. If your proposal involves subawards to organizations charging indirect costs, please also submit the applicable NICRA as a .pdf file. Please see Appendix II: Budget Narrative Instruction for more information.

For all application documents, please ensure:

- 1) All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments;
- 2) All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper; and,
- 3) All documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Captions and footnotes may be 10 point Times New Roman font. Font sizes in charts and tables, including the budget, can be reformatted to fit within 1 page width.

Please note: The MEPI Program retains the right to ask for additional documents not included in this PSI.

Additional information that successful applicants must submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

- 1) Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the MEPI Selection Committee;
- 2) Submission of required documents to register in any applicable U.S. government grant systems, if receiving MEPI Program funding for the first time, unless an exemption is provided;
- 3) Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

All submissions must include these components, and must be submitted in English

Submitting an Application

To submit your application, please follow the steps below:

1. Review the completed application documents (Application for Federal Assistance Form (SF-424), Project Narrative, Budget, Budget Narrative, and Budget Information Forms (SF-424A)) for accuracy and make any necessary changes. **Please note:** A signature is required on the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)**.
2. **All application materials must be in English and all costs must be in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided.** For any documents provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version. (Please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents).
3. Send all five documents via email to NEA-Grants@state.gov. The application materials must be submitted electronically by the designated due date and time noted in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all of the material submitted in the grant application package is complete, accurate, and current. The MEPI Program strongly encourages all applicants, especially foreign or first-time applicants, to submit applications before the designated due date to ensure that the application has been received and is complete.

Submission Date and Time

Applications must be time stamped before 5:00pm eastern time (ET) on February 13, 2017.

There will be no grace period, and any application not received by the application deadline will not advance to the Technical Review stage.

Award Notices

Applicants who do not advance to the Technical Review stage will be notified 30 business days after the closing of the announcement. The authorized representative and program point of contact listed on the SF-424 will receive the notification via email. If an applicant does not receive such a notification, their submission was put forward for review.

MEPI expects to notify applicants about the status of their application by March 30, 2017. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application. **MEPI reserves the right to award funding to applicants under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date.**

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the MEPI Program team.

Proposal Review Process

A MEPI Selection Committee reviews all local grant proposals. The MEPI Program team will inform organizations if their proposals will or will not be shortlisted for further consideration. Only the most competitive proposals received by MEPI Committees will be selected for further consideration by MEPI's regional offices, which will process and negotiate the awards. The issuance of a grant award by a MEPI Regional Office is contingent on the availability of funds and the negotiation and finalization of an approved budget and award package.

Proposal Review Criteria

Applications should address the evaluation criteria outlined below. Selection Committee members will evaluate each application individually against the following criteria, listed in order of importance, and not against competing applications.

Results or Benefits – 30 points

The applicant explains how the project will address or complement existing advocacy by civil society, NGOs, and professional organizations; development of networks, partnerships, and coalitions; expansion of opportunities for youth; expansion of women's participation in public life; promotion of economic reform; promotion of rule of law; promotion of government transparency and accountability; promotion of public awareness; and development of media institutions. (10 points)

The project objectives are specific, clearly explained, and demonstrate how they will positively affect anticipated beneficiaries. (10 points)

The applicant describes realistic results to be accomplished within the timeframe of the proposed award. (5 points)

The applicant provides realistic milestones to indicate progress toward NEA/AC goals and objectives as described in the program announcement. (5 points)

Approach – 35 points

The applicant clearly describes how each proposed project activity will address the objectives outlined in the requested priority area. (15 points)

The proposed project design is innovative and original, as well as feasible. In terms of feasibility, applicants should explicitly indicate how activities will achieve positive impact and how outcomes will be measured. (10 points)

The applicant provides evidence of country analysis, baseline assessments, etc. of challenges, barriers, gaps, and opportunities in implementation of programming. (10 points)

Organizational Capacity – 15 points

The applicant demonstrates experience (e.g., has previously worked and/or has established contact/partners) in Yemen and has appropriate staffing capacity to manage the proposed project. (7 points)

The applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successful programs in the content area proposed (e.g., women's participation, rule of law promotion, media development, etc). (5 points)

The applicant demonstrates capacity for responsible fiscal management of donor funding (e.g., successful management of a previous sub-award or grant). (3 points)

Cost Effectiveness – 20 points

The budget demonstrates a reasonable cost per anticipated outcome. (6 points)

The preponderance of the budget is spent on supporting the project participants/activities in country and includes costs dedicated to management, monitoring, and evaluation. (6 points)

Additional sources (cost-share or matching) for project funding are proposed, as well as an explanation of how those additional sources will be used. (4 points)

The budget provides details of calculations, including estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. (4 points)

Additional Information

The MEPI Program will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization or armed actors.

Applicants should be aware that the MEPI Program understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that the MEPI Program cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.