

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs**

Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 19.500

Establishing MEPI Alumni Network Local Chapters

Opportunity Number: NEAPI-11-AW-035-MENA-062111

Competition ID: Alumni 2

Announcement Type: Revised

Key Information:

Application Deadline	23:59:59 Eastern Time on July 17, 2011
Federal Agency Contact Note: Questions about the goals and intentions of this program announcement should be submitted within the first 30 days of the open announcement period.	Katie Epp Nea-grants@state.gov 202-776-8874
Date Opened	June 21, 2011
Electronic Link for Full Announcement	(MEPI Website): www.mepi.state.gov

Funding Opportunity Synopsis:

Project Synopsis:

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) announces a competition for proposals to establish a network that connects all alumni of MEPI-funded projects. Currently, there are over 11,000 MEPI alumni and this number is growing daily. The MEPI Alumni Network will connect a group of local MEPI Alumni Chapters (single or multi-country) that together provide coverage for the entire region where MEPI operates. Through this MEPI Alumni Network, we hope to support and strengthen MEPI alumni and their commitment to and engagement in civic activism, creating an environment where MEPI alumni can work together to bring positive change to the region using and expanding upon the skills acquired through their various MEPI experiences.

MEPI encourages innovative proposals that maximize online and offline networking opportunities for its alumni.

This open competition is a follow-on to the Request for Applications for “Establishing Local MEPI Alumni Chapters” which was open for applications on April 15 – May 30. If an application has already been submitted under the April 15-May 30 RFA “Establishing MEPI Alumni Local Chapters”, please be assured that the application has been received and is under review. You do not need to resubmit an application under this RFA unless you are changing the focus of your proposal.

Eligible Countries:

MEPI is seeking to establish Local Chapters of the MEPI Alumni Network in the following countries and territories: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

Due to a low number of proposals received for certain countries under the previous MEPI Alumni Request for Applications MEPI will give priority to applications that propose Local Alumni Chapters in the following countries: **Algeria, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, the UAE, and Yemen.**

All applicants are welcome to apply to establish single-country or multi-country chapters. Applicants must indicate under which priority area they intend to apply, i.e., either “single country” or “multi-country”.

Funding Mechanism Type: Cooperative Agreement or Grant

Estimated Number of Awards: up to 18

Estimated Total Program Funding: \$3,000,000

Estimated Award Ceiling (per country): \$375,000 (Up to \$125,000 per year)

Estimated Award Floor (per country): \$180,000 (Up to \$60,000 per year)

Length of Project Period: 3 years

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants which include any registered non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and institutions of higher education (such as colleges and universities), alone or with specified partner organizations, are invited to apply for funding to establish and maintain single or multi-country MEPI Alumni Chapters.

Background Information about MEPI and the MEPI Alumni Network:

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located in the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, is a unique program designed to engage directly with and invest in the peoples of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). MEPI works to create vibrant partnerships with citizens to foster the development of pluralistic, participatory, and prosperous societies throughout the MENA region. To do this, MEPI collaborates with local, regional, and international non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academic institutions, and governments.

Through its Washington, D.C. headquarters and Regional Offices in Abu Dhabi and Tunis, MEPI has contributed more than \$580 million to more than 680 projects in 18 countries and territories since its establishment in 2002. More information about MEPI can be found at: www.mepi.state.gov.

MEPI seeks to establish a network that connects all alumni of MEPI-funded projects. Currently, there are approximately 11,000 MEPI alumni in the region. The MEPI Alumni Network will connect groups of MEPI alumni and enable them to work together to bring positive change to the region using the skills acquired through their MEPI experiences. Our goal is to provide 100% coverage for the entire Middle East and North Africa region to include all countries listed under 'eligible countries' in this program announcement. MEPI encourages innovative proposals that maximize online and offline networking opportunities.

MEPI will partner with successful applicants throughout the start-up phase of the Local Chapter(s), and will maintain a close relationship with each Chapter to support its activities throughout the entire grant period. A dedicated MEPI staff member based in Washington, D.C. will work closely with each Chapter and successful applicant. In addition, staff at local U.S. embassies will support Chapter start-up and activities throughout the grant period.

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I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

Overview of Funding Opportunity

The Middle East Partnership Initiative seeks to establish a network that connects all alumni of MEPI-funded projects. Currently, there are over 11,000 MEPI alumni and this number is growing daily. The MEPI Alumni Network will connect a group of local MEPI Alumni Chapters (single or multi-country) that together provide coverage for the entire region where MEPI operates. Through this MEPI Alumni Network, we hope to support and strengthen MEPI alumni and their commitment to and engagement in civic activism, creating an environment where MEPI alumni can work together to bring positive change to the region using and expanding upon the skills acquired through their various MEPI experiences. Our goal is to provide 100% coverage for the entire Middle East and North Africa region to include all countries listed under 'eligible countries' in this program announcement.

Eligible Countries:

MEPI is seeking to establish Local Chapters of the MEPI Alumni Network in the following countries and territories: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, West Bank and Gaza, and Yemen.

Eligible Applicants:

Eligible applicants who may apply for this funding opportunity include any registered non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and institutions of higher education (such as colleges and universities.)

All organizations, U.S. – based or foreign, are invited to apply for this RFA. Applicants should demonstrate that they have a presence in the country or countries for which they are applying.

MEPI will accept applications from organizations applying to establish MEPI Alumni Local Chapters. We encourage applicants to apply as umbrella organizations in fostering the establishment of a Local MEPI Alumni Network Chapter for a single country or multiple countries. An organization acting as an umbrella will enter into a grant agreement with MEPI to create local chapters in one or more country through an on-the-ground presence or a sub-award. MEPI Washington will retain the ability to work directly with its local MEPI Alumni chapters and MEPI Alumni Coordinators, as outlined in the attached sample MOU.

In addition, any organization acting as an umbrella should expect that MEPI staff in Washington DC and at U.S. embassies in the region will interact directly with partners on the ground and sub-grantees in addition to the selected umbrella organizations.

This open competition is a follow-on to the Request for Applications for “Establishing Local MEPI Alumni Chapters” which was open for applications on April 15 – May 30. If an application has already been submitted under the April 15-May 30 RFA “Establishing MEPI Alumni Local Chapters,” please be assured that the application has been received and is

under review. You do not need to resubmit an application under this RFA unless you are changing the focus of your proposal.

Priority Areas -Applications for Single-Country and Multi-Country Chapters:

All applicants are welcome to apply to become a single-country or multi-country chapter. Please indicate on the Cover Sheet (See Appendix 2) the Priority Area under which the organization applying.

Local Chapter Roles and Responsibilities - All Priority Areas

MEPI will partner with successful applicants throughout the start-up phase of the Local Chapter, and will maintain a close relationship with each Chapter to support its activities throughout the entire grant period. A dedicated MEPI staff member based in Washington, D.C. will work closely with each Chapter and successful applicant. In addition, staff at local U.S. embassies will support Chapter start-up and activities throughout the grant period.

Working closely with MEPI, each Local Chapter will organize activities, projects, and programs consistent with the MEPI Alumni Network goals outlined below.

MEPI Alumni Network Goal 1: Strengthen Connections among Alumni, Activists, and Civil Society Organizations

Local Chapter Roles:

- Increase links among MEPI alumni and with other U. S. Government alumni networks
- Promote and support activities that further MEPI's mission among alumni and active citizens across the region

MEPI Alumni Network Goal 2: Enhance Alumni Skills to Seize Opportunities for Civic Engagements

Local Chapter Roles:

- Provide professional development and leadership training
- Strengthen civic engagement and advocacy skills
- Promote innovation through mentoring

MEPI Alumni Network Goal 3: Maintain and Strengthen Relationships with MEPI Alumni

Local Chapter Roles:

- Forge ongoing relationships between MEPI alumni, MEPI staff, and Embassy officials
- Expand MEPI projects to new audiences, by identifying new grantees and new program participants
- Facilitate Alumni feedback of MEPI projects and activities
- Facilitate the collection of follow-up data for evaluation and monitoring MEPI long-term activities

MEPI Alumni Network Goal 4: Encourage MEPI Network Alumni to Remain Active in Civic Life

Local Chapter Roles:

- Organize volunteer and community service activities for MEPI Alumni
- Inform alumni of opportunities to become involved in community service and advocacy projects
- Establish links among MEPI alumni that focus on activism, advocacy, civic engagement, and social entrepreneurship

Within the first six months of operation, Local Chapters will work with MEPI staff and local U.S. embassy staff, to:

- Create by-laws for chapter governance and administration, including selection of officers and establishment of operating procedures
- Create a steering committee elected by chapter membership to manage projects and identify revenue-generating activities

Program activities organized by Local Chapters should address the following key MEPI priorities:

- Supporting local civil society, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), women's groups, and professional associations at the grassroots level committed to building democracies and undertaking reform.
- Encouraging programs for youth, particularly programs that provide practical opportunities to experience democracy in action, participate in public service, engage in volunteerism, and contribute to improving their local communities.
- Fostering networks among local NGOs, civil society, local government structures, and the business community as a mechanism for promoting democratic reforms.
- Encouraging women's participation in public life at the local, regional, and national levels.
- Promoting good governance programs that include anti-corruption and transparency components.
- Promoting the rule of law and legal reforms including legal rights education and professional legal education.
- Promoting public awareness and involvement in current political issues, including voter education, and building advocacy skills among individuals and groups.

Successful Applicant Roles and Responsibilities – All Priority Areas

In addition to working closely with MEPI Washington and local U.S. embassies staff, successful applicants will provide the Local Chapter with the following:

- administrative and financial management of the grant
- operational and logistical support
- activity ideas

- realistic goals for the operation of the Chapter
- guidance, mentoring, and capacity-building

Successful applicants will not serve as an intermediary between the Local Chapters and MEPI officials in Washington, DC; MEPI staff in Washington, DC will work directly with Local Chapters and local Alumni Coordinators.

Personnel Requirements

Successful applicants will designate one staff member to serve as the Project Director. This person will handle the day-to-day administration of the award and management or, if necessary, the establishment of the Local Chapter. Successful applicants will also participate in the selection of a MEPI Local Chapter Alumni Coordinator with input from MEPI Washington and the U.S. Embassy in the country (or countries).

Budget Requirements

Successful applicants must budget for office and meeting space for Local Chapter meetings and activities as well as sending a representative to an annual MEPI Alumni Network Regional meeting. More information and guidance on submitting a budget can be found in Part IV, Section D—Preparing an Application and Formatting Requirements.

Reporting Requirements

Successful applicants will be legally responsible for satisfying all requirements associated with receiving federal funds:

- Demonstrating sound financial management
- Maintaining current, accurate, and comprehensive financial records and fulfilling audit requirements
- Providing regular and accurate reports on financial status, program activity, progress toward goals, and other performance measures

Activity Requirements

Successful applicants, regardless of priority area, will perform the following within the **first six months** of the grant:

- Recruit and hire, with the advice and consent of MEPI staff in Washington, D.C. and at local U.S. Embassies, a MEPI Local Chapter Alumni Coordinator to guide and supervise the Local MEPI Alumni Chapter activity.
- Provide and maintain an office(s) for the Chapter Coordinator and a meeting/activity locale(s) for the Local Chapter
- Budget for and send the MEPI Local Chapter Alumni Coordinator and Project Director to a three-day MEPI Alumni Network meeting in the Middle East or North Africa in the first year of the grant award

Regional MEPI Alumni Network Meeting

Applicants funded through this RFA are required to budget for and be prepared to send two people (one must be the MEPI Local Chapter Alumni Coordinator and the

other the Program Director or the person who handles the day-to-day operation of the grant) to a three-day MEPI Alumni Network meeting each year of the grant award. This meeting will be held in the Middle East or North Africa. **Please include costs for these meetings in your budgets.** To help budget these costs applicants may use travel to a meeting in Istanbul, Turkey as a reference.

- Be prepared to send two personnel to a possible Washington, D.C. MEPI Alumni Network meeting.

Washington, D.C. MEPI Alumni Network Meeting

In addition to the Regional MEPI Alumni Network meeting, all selected organizations must be prepared to send two people to up to two Washington, D.C. MEPI Alumni Network meeting(s). The Washington, D.C. meeting(s) would be a multi-day training program designed to train Chapter Coordinators and Project Directors in the Federal grant policies and processes and guide the creation of the products necessary for successful chapter functioning and operation. MEPI Washington will cover all costs associated with the Washington, D.C. Alumni Network meeting(s) (e.g., flight, lodging and meals). **Please do not include this meeting in your budgets.**

- All applicants must have a signed Memorandum of Understanding in place with the Local Chapter within six months of the establishment of the Local Chapter.

Memorandum of Understanding

As stated previously, successful applicants must sign an MOU with the Local Chapter to clearly establish the roles and responsibilities of each entity. This MOU will define the existence of each Local Chapter as a separate entity, autonomous of the successful applicant. An example MOU is provided (Appendix 1).

II. AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism Type:	Cooperative Agreement or Grant
Estimated Number of Awards:	Up to 18
Estimated Award Ceiling (per country):	\$375,000 (Up to \$125,000 per year)
Estimated Award Floor (per country):	\$180,000 (Up to \$60,000 per year)
Length of Project Period:	3 years

A total of approximately \$3,000,000 in Economic Support Funds for approximately 18 grants will be awarded through this RFA. If selected to receive a grant, applicants will be awarded funds for 3 years.

Single-Country Applicants:

Applicants applying to become a single-country chapter may propose a maximum budget of \$375,000 for a period of three years. The maximum budget per year should be up to \$125,000.

Multi-Country Applicants:

Applicants applying to become a multiple-country chapter may propose a maximum budget of \$375,000 per country for a period of three years. The maximum budget per year, per country should be up to \$125,000. Each country should have a separate budget. **For example:** If you are proposing to establish a local chapter in two countries, your maximum budget would be \$750,000 and your budget per year would be \$250,000. It would be \$375,000 per country.

Competing Continuation:

Requests for funding to extend beyond the initial budget period will be entertained on the basis of a competing continuation award. MEPI will review each grantee's progress in meeting grant requirements, including timely submission of required reports, and compliance with all terms and conditions of the award; timely submission of a request for additional funding; the availability of funds; and that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Department of State.

Successful applicants may be requested to expand their scope of work to include additional counties not originally proposed in their application.

III. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

All applications will be screened by the Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative to determine whether each applicant meets all of the program eligibility requirements detailed below. *The instructions below apply to both priority areas under which an applicant may apply.*

NOTE: Applications that do not demonstrate that they meet all of the eligibility requirements will not advance to the Technical Review stage. Nothing can be added to an application once it has been submitted.

A. TYPES OF APPLICANTS

The Middle East Partnership Initiative is committed to anti-discrimination policy in all its programs and activities. MEPI welcomes proposals irrespective of applicants' race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. We invite applications from organizations working with minority, disenfranchised, and lesser-served communities, including women, people with disabilities, and youth.

Eligible applicants include any registered non-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector organizations, for-profit organizations, small businesses, and institutions of higher education (such as colleges and universities).

All applicants must be legally registered organizations prior to applying to this RFA.

B. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION FOR U.S.-BASED APPLICANTS

B.1 Grants.gov

The Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative requires that all applications for funding from U.S.-based applicants be submitted through Grants.gov. In order to apply, organizations must complete the Grants.gov registration process. To register, please go to www.grants.gov and click on “Get Registered.” The registration process can take 10 business days or longer, even if all the registration steps are completed in a timely manner. Registration is a five-step process: 1) obtain a DUNS number; 2) register with Central Contracting Registration (CCR); 3) create a profile, including username and password; 4) obtain Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) authorization; and 5) track AOR status.

B.2 Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Number System

All U.S.-based applicants must provide a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number to apply to this funding opportunity. The Data Universal Number System is a nine-digit number established and assigned by Dun and Bradstreet, Inc. to uniquely identify business entities. Obtaining a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number is the first step required by an organization to register with the Grants.gov system. If the organization does not already have a DUNS number, please begin this process immediately.

A DUNS number may be acquired at no cost on-line at: fedgov.dnb.com or via telephone at: 1-866-705-5711. This process normally takes one business day.

B.3 Central Contractor Registration

All U.S.-based applicants must be registered with the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) to apply to this funding opportunity. The CCR is the Federal repository in which an applicant must provide information required for the conduct of business as an award recipient. Obtaining Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the second step required by an organization to register with the Grants.gov system. CCR registration expires each year and must be updated annually. Further, applicants must maintain an active CCR registration, with current information, while their application is under consideration for funding.

Registration procedures may be found at www.ccr.gov. This process can take three to five business days or up to two weeks.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION FOR FOREIGN-BASED APPLICANTS

Foreign-based applicants are strongly encouraged to register their organizations with Grant.gov, obtain a Data DUNS number; and Central Contractor Registration. Details on how to register with these systems are outlined in Sections B.1, B.2, and B.3 above. **Foreign-based organizations are not required to have a DUNS number or Central Contractor Registration to apply to this opportunity.**

PLEASE NOTE: Additional guidance on registering with Grants.gov can be found at MEPI’s website (<http://mepi.state.gov/mepi/english-mepi/funding-opportunities/apply-for-a-grant/application-procedure>). Applicants may also contact MEPI at nea-grants@state.gov to request this guidance.

D. ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

D.1 Sub-Awards

Applicants may propose sub-awards within their application submission. A sub-award is defined as an award provided to a third-party individual or organization for the performance of certain programmatic work. All sub-awardees, located in the U.S. and who will receive funds of \$25,000 or more are required to have a DUNS number and maintain an active CCR registration with current information. For information on obtaining a DUNS number and registering with CCR please see Sections B.2 and Section B.3 above.

IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. APPLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

All applications must include the application components detailed in this section. Please refer to Section B.3 for additional submissions requirements (e.g., font size, page margins). Failure to submit all of the required documentation described in this RFA will result in the application not being considered for funding.

NOTE: All applications must be submitted in English.

A.1 Required Documents

Federal Assistance Application Forms (SF-424, SF-424a, and SF424b):

Applicants must complete all three forms to be considered for funding. **Information on how to complete the SF-424 and SF-424a can be found in Appendix 5.**

Project Narrative:

The Project Narrative describes the efforts the applicant will undertake to address the priorities and goals of this announcement. It may be no longer than 10 pages. More details on preparing the Project Narrative can be found in Section C.1—Preparing the Project Narrative below.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to review this information before preparing their Narrative.

Budget Narrative:

The Budget Narrative provides detail about both the Federal request and the non-Federal match. Please note that budget requests cannot exceed \$125,000 USD per year for a three year period.

There is no page limit for this section of an application. A sample template can be found in Appendix 3. **NOTE: Applicants must use the same format as found in the sample.** More details on preparing the Budget Narrative can be found in Section C.2—Preparing the Budget Narrative below and in Appendix 5. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to review this information before preparing their Narrative.**

MEPI Application Coversheet:

The Coversheet provides a detailed summary of the applicant and their proposal, and **must include a maximum two-page executive summary**. In addition, applicants will identify the priority area under which they are applying, and where their organization is located in this document. A sample template can be found in Appendix 2. This should be included as a separate document attachment in the submission. **NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample.** If the applicant does not use the template, they must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample.

Applicant Organizational Information:

This document provides details about the type of organization, an organization's structure and policies, and an applicant's ability to manage Federal funds. A sample template can be found in Appendix 4. This should be included as a separate document attachment in the submission.

NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample. If the applicant does not use the template, they must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample.

A.2 Optional Documents

These documents may not exceed a total of 10 pages, and may be included as separate attachments with the submission. More detailed instructions for preparing attachments are provided in Appendix 5.

Resumes, Biographical Sketch, or Job Descriptions for key personnel and partners:

They may be included within the project narrative or as a separate document included in the appendices portion of the application. If these items are not included, applicants will be scored lower under *Staff and Position Specifications* review criteria outlined in Part V, Section A—Application Evaluation Criteria.

Pre-Submission Checklist:

The Checklist ensures that an applicant has accurately documented the eligibility requirements and included all major components of the application. It can be found in Appendix 6 in the announcement.

A.3 Application Submission Sample Templates

Fill-able versions of the sample templates mentioned in Sections B.1 and B.2 can be downloaded from www.grants.gov by following the instructions below:

1. Select "Find Grant Opportunities" under the "For Applicants" category on the left-hand side of the Grants.gov home page, and select Basics Search.
2. Enter the Funding Opportunity Number or CFDA number, and click "Search."
3. Click on the appropriate announcement link. (Applicant will be directed to the announcement's synopsis page.)
4. At the top of the announcement page, click on the header entitled "**Full Announcement**"
5. On the "Full Announcement," page, select the files entitled "Other Supporting Documents—Fillable Sample Template Documents and Appendices."

B. PREPARING AN APPLICATION AND FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

B.1 Preparing the Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must be a separate document in the electronic submission on Grants.gov. The Project Narrative may not exceed 10 pages. **If it exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.**

The Project Narrative should describe the efforts that will be undertaken to address the roles and responsibilities outlined in Part 1—Funding Opportunity Description, including:

Approach and Activities:

- Clearly outline a plan of action that explains how the work to establish a MEPI Alumni Local Chapter will be accomplished within the proposed start-up time frame of six months;
- MEPI would like to see that the applicant will provide guidance and logistical support for the Local Chapter, but will allow for the independence of the Local Chapter.

Results and Benefits:

- Describe the benefits and outcomes that will occur as a result of the applicant's management of the grant;
- Describe how results and impact will be sustained if MEPI funding should end.

Organizational Capacity:

- Demonstrate the experience of the applicant for the area of work for which activities are proposed;
- Describe the applicant's understanding of the current country context, including how previous work in country will inform the proposed activities and approach;
- Demonstrate the capacity to launch and manage the project effectively in country.

Staff and Positions:

- Describe the roles of key personnel and their skills and qualifications to carry out the proposed work; and
- Provide resumes, biographical sketches, or job descriptions for key personnel.

B.2 Preparing the Budget Narrative

All applicants, regardless of priority area, must submit a Budget and Budget Narrative. There is no page limit for this section of the application. A sample template can be found in Appendix 3.

Applicants must budget for the following items:

- **Regional MEPI Alumni Network Meeting**—Applicants funded through this RFA are required to budget for the sending of two people (one must be the Alumni Coordinator and the other the Program Director or the person who handles the day to day operation of the grant) to a three-day Regional MEPI Alumni Network Meeting in the first year of the award.

When preparing the budget, the applicant may include the following costs:

- Office and meeting space costs for Local Chapter Activities
- Alumni travel within country or in the region
- Costs for speakers and/or trainers
- Office supply costs, including a laptop computer, printer, and projector

Single-Country Applicants: Applicants applying to become a single-country chapter may propose a maximum budget of \$375,000 for a period of three years. The maximum budget per year should be up to \$125,000.

Multi-Country Applicants: Applicants applying to become a multiple-country chapter may propose a maximum budget of \$375,000 per country for a period of three years. The maximum budget per year, per country should be up to \$125,000. Each country should have a separate budget. **For example:** If you are proposing to establish a local chapter in two countries, your maximum budget would be \$750,000 and your budget per year would be \$250,000. It would be \$375,000 per country.

B.3 Application Formatting Requirements

It is strongly recommended that applicants submit grant applications using Microsoft Office. If applicants do not have access to Microsoft Office products (e.g., MS-Word, MS-Excel) they may submit their documents in Adobe PDF format.

All applications must be submitted in English.

Text legibility: The required font is 12-point, Times New Roman. The application must be single spaced, with all margins (left, right, top, and bottom) of at least one inch each.

Page numbering: Pages should be numbered consecutively **from beginning to end**, so that information can be located easily during review of the application (hand write page numbers if necessary). In addition, applicants are strongly encouraged to include a Table of Contents with their submission. Attachments should be labeled and separated from the Project Narrative and Budget Narrative, and the pages should be numbered to continue the sequence. **Documents containing scanned images must also contain page numbers to continue the sequence.** The Standard Forms 424 (SF-424, SF-424a, and SF-424b), MEPI Application Coversheet, Applicant Organization Information are excluded from the page numbering requirement.

Page Limits: The limitation of pages for each submission should be considered as a maximum and not necessarily a goal, and excludes the SF-424 forms, MEPI Application Coversheet, Applicant Organization Information, and the Budget Narrative.

Adhering to the standards outlined above will help to ensure the accurate submission of the document. Failure to comply with these requirements may affect the successful transmission and consideration of an application.

C. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR U.S.-BASED APPLICANTS

All U.S. based applicants must submit their application through Grants.gov. To submit an application, please follow the instructions below.

C.1 Downloading the Application Package from Grants.gov

To submit an application using Grants.gov, applicants must first download the application package. To download the application package, go to www.grants.gov, and follow the steps below:

1. Select “Apply for Grants” under the “For Applicants” category on the left-hand side of the Grants.gov home page.
2. Select “Download a Grant Application package.”
3. Complete the search engine that will be used and click “Download Application.”
4. Review the search results, at the bottom of the page, and click the “Download” link next to the correct program announcement or competition title.

NOTE: When downloading the Grant Application Package, applicants must be sure to select and move the following mandatory forms to the “Mandatory Documents for Submission” field displayed on Grants.gov:

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424a)
- Project Narrative Attachment Form
- Budget Narrative Attachment Form
- Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424b)

To include the requested and optional documents outlined in Section A.2 above, applicants should select and move the optional form “Attachments” to the displayed “Optional Documents for Submission” field.

For more information about downloading the application package, please read the instructions in the User Guide found at the Grants.gov apply site, on the Help page.

C.2 Submitting an Application on Grants.gov

Please allow sufficient time for entering the application into Grants.gov. The process of electronic submission through Grants.gov includes multiple e-mails from Grants.gov. When an applicant submits an application, a notice that the application is being processed will be sent and the individual whose e-mail address was entered will receive two e-mails from Grants.gov within 24-48 hours. One e-mail will confirm receipt of the application in Grants.gov, and the other will indicate that the application was either successfully validated by the system (**with a tracking number**) or rejected due to errors. It will also provide instructions that if the named individual did not receive a receipt confirmation **and** a validation confirmation or a rejection e-mail within 48 hours, he/she must contact Grants.gov directly.

It is important to understand that **the application process is not complete until an applicant has received a Grants.gov tracking number**. Receipt of the tracking number is the only indication that Grants.gov has successfully received and validated an application. If an applicant does not receive a Grants.gov tracking number, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center for assistance at 1-800-518-4726.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the applicant to monitor their applications to ensure that they are successfully received and validated by Grants.gov. **If an application is not successfully validated by Grants.gov, it will not be forwarded to MEPI as the receiving institution.**

D. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION FOR FOREIGN-BASED APPLICANTS

Foreign-based applicants may submit an application through Grants.gov or via email to nea-grants@state.gov.

D.1 Submitting an Application on Grants.gov

Please follow the instructions outlined in Sections C.1 and C.2 above.

D.2 Submitting an Application to NEA-Grants@state.gov

Please allow sufficient time for sending an application to MEPI via email. **When submitting an application via email, applicants must do the following:**

1. **Be sure to include all the required documents outlined in Section B.1 above.** Failure to submit all of the required documentation will result in the application not being considered for funding.
2. **Be sure to include a signed copy of the SF-424 and SF-424b forms.**
3. Include the **Funding Opportunity Number and Title of the RFA in the Subject Line** of the email.
4. **If the email with attachments exceeds 5 MB, please submit the application documents in multiple emails.** Each email must indicate the email number (e.g., Email 1 of 2), so that MEPI can track a submission.

It is important to understand that **the application process is not complete until an applicant has received an email from MEPI confirming receipt of an email submission**. This email is only an indication that MEPI has successfully received an application via email. If an applicant does not receive an email, contact MEPI via email at nea-grants@state.gov.

Please note that it is the responsibility of the applicant to monitor their applications to ensure that they are successfully submitted to MEPI. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their application well before the deadline to ensure that their application is successfully received by MEPI.

E. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Applications are due before 23:59:59 eastern time (ET) on **July 17, 2011**. **There will be no grace period, and any application not received by the application deadline will not be considered for review.**

Applicants are encouraged to submit their proposals far enough in advance of the deadline so they can alert MEPI (nea-grants@state.gov) of any technical difficulties they might encounter in submitting their application through Grants.gov or via email.

Within 30 days of submission, applicants will be notified via email (from nea-grants@state.gov) that their applications have been received. This notification will include an application log number that applicants must use to track their applications.

V. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below. The criteria are designed to assess the quality of the proposal and to determine the likelihood of its success. The criteria are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application. Proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their fullness, coherence, clarity, and attention to detail. Points are awarded only to applications that are responsive within the context of this program announcement.

Approach and Activities –The applicant clearly describes how its proposal will address the requested program area. The applicant outlines a plan of action that explains how the start-up work and requirements will be accomplished in the first six months. The applicant describes how it will provide guidance and logistic support for the Local Chapter, while allowing for the independence of the Local Chapter. (25 points)

Results and Benefits – The applicant describes the benefits and outcomes that will occur as a result of the applicant’s management of the grant. The applicant describes how results and impact will be sustained if MEPI funding should end. (20 points)

Organizational Capacity – The applicant has expertise and capacity to work with and engage young people, local organizations, and community leaders in the MENA region. The applicant demonstrates a high level of regional and/or country expertise. The applicant demonstrates that it has the capacity to manage the new project in addition to its other activities. (30 points)

Staff and Position Specifications – Each key person whether staff or volunteer is described in a biographical sketch; a job description is provided for each open key position. A biographical sketch of required credentials describes any positions to be advertised post-award. Individual organization staffs, including volunteers, are well qualified and described. (10 points)

Budget Narrative - The detailed budget includes the Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (SF-424a) and a budget narrative (as outlined in Appendix 3). The budget narrative provides details of calculations including estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated. The costs proposed are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results, and the plan for services is realistic. The budget narrative documents the necessity, reasonableness, and allocation of all

proposed costs. Adequate travel to and within the Middle East and North Africa is proposed. (15 points)

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

The Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative is committed to ensuring a competitive and standardized process for awarding Economic Support Funds grants. Applications will be screened initially by MEPI to determine whether applicants meet all eligibility requirements outlined in Part III; the required documents outlined in Part IV; and address the priorities outlined in Part I. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not advance to the Technical Review stage.

All applications that proceed to Technical Review will be rated on a 100-point scale. Point values for individual elements of the application are presented in Part V, Section A—Application Evaluation Criteria. Technical Reviewers' ratings, and any resulting recommendations, are advisory. All final grant award decisions will be made by the Deputy Assistant Secretary.

VI. ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

Within 30 days of receipt of the application, MEPI will notify the authorized representative and program point of contact listed on the SF-424 through email (from nea-grants@state.gov) that the application has been received. The correspondence will include an application log number that the applicant must reference when asking questions about their submission. If an applicant submits an application on time and does not receive notification by August 16, 2011 MEPI may be contacted at nea-grants@state.gov for additional information.

By September 15, 2011 if an applicant is under consideration for funding, the authorized representative, project director, and business official will receive a pre-award letter via email (from nea-grants@state.gov), signed by the Office's Deputy Director. The pre-award letter begins the negotiation process for a Financial Assistance Award. A Financial Assistance Award document, sets forth the amount of funds granted; the terms and conditions of the grant, the effective date of the grant; the budget period for which initial support will be given; the non-Federal share to be provided (if applicable); and the total project period for which support is contemplated. The Financial Assistance Award will be signed by a warranted Department of State Grant Officer and the award package will be transmitted electronically.

By September 16, 2011 if the applicant is not funded, the authorized representative and program point of contact listed on the SF-424 will receive a letter via email (from neagrants@state.gov), signed by the Office's Deputy Director.

VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this funding opportunity including: completing an application, financial and grants management issues; or technical matters, contact:

Jessica Baker

(202) 776-8524

nea-grants@state.gov

For questions regarding registering with Grants.gov or using Grants.gov to submit an application, contact the Grants.gov Contact Center. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding Federal holidays.

Grants.gov Contact Center

(800) 518-4726

support@Grants.gov

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between an Alumni Chapter and Partnering Organization Serving as the Grantee

Below is a sample MOU that can be used between a Local MEPI Alumni Chapter and partnering organization when the Local Chapter is not considered a legally eligible entity for the purposes of applying for Federal funding. Applicants can tailor the agreement as needed. **If a Local MEPI Alumni Chapter is using a partnering organization as the official grantee, an MOU must be included in the application as Attachment 5.**

Sample MOU between a Local MEPI Alumni Chapter and a Grantee

- 1- This agreement between *[Alumni Chapter Name]* and *[Grantee Name]* shall be from *[Date]* until terminated by mutual agreement:

RESPONSIBILITIES

- 2- *[Alumni Chapter Name]* shall be responsible to:
 - a. Set policy for its own programs.
 - b. Formulate goals and objectives in compliance with MEPI Terms and Conditions.
 - c. Oversee operation of the Alumni Chapter's activities and programs.
 - d. With *[Grantee Name]*, jointly select and direct *[Alumni Chapter Name]* staff and volunteers, set goals and objectives for contract employees, and negotiate and approve contracts.
 - e. Create, approve, and follow its budget in compliance with MEPI requirements.
 - f. Provide to *[Grantee Name]* copies of all required documentation, such as grant proposals, by-laws, meeting minutes, goals and objectives, budgets, and personnel and program policies.
 - g. Reimburse *[Grantee Name]* for any indirect or direct expenses incurred by *[Grantee Name]* on behalf of *[Alumni Chapter Name]* with prior approval of *[Alumni Chapter Name]*.
 - h. Be solely responsible for liabilities arising out of its program and its interaction with program participants. *[Alumni Chapter Name]* specifically indemnifies *[Grantee Name]* against claims arising from actions of *[Alumni Chapter Name]*.
 - i. Maintain a physical mailing address (not a Post Office Box).
- 3- *[Grantee Name]* shall be responsible to:
 - a. Provide *[Alumni Chapter Name]* staff with office space.
 - b. Compile *[Alumni Chapter Name]* financial reports on a mutually agreed upon schedule.
 - c. Provide banking services, perform bookkeeping, prepare and distribute payroll, pay invoices, and prepare and submit the appropriate forms for employment taxes. Wages and payroll taxes due, along with approved invoices, shall be paid from *[Alumni Chapter Name]* funds.

- d. With *[Alumni Chapter Name]*, jointly select and direct *[Alumni Chapter Name]* staff and volunteers, set goals and objectives for contract employees, and negotiate and approve contracts.
- e. Maintain all records pertaining to costs and expenses to properly reflect all direct costs of labor, materials, equipment, supplies, services, and other costs and expenses when reimbursement is claimed or payment is made.
- f. Maintain a nonprofit mailing permit which can be used by *[Alumni Chapter Name]*.
- g. Obtain or continue current liability coverage for *[Grantee Name]* premises.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

4- *[Grantee Name]* and *[Alumni Chapter Name]* mutually agree to abide by all applicable Federal and State anti-discrimination statutes, regulations, policies, and procedures.

This agreement shall be subject to all applicable provisions of State and Federal law and regulations related to the delivery and funding of social service.

Local Chapter Representative's Name

Grantee Representative's Name

Local Chapter Representative's Signature

Grantee Representative's Signature

_____/____/____
Title Date

_____/____/____
Title Date

Instructions: This Application Cover Sheet should be filled out in its entirety. Any information that is in blue text should be deleted prior to submitting this document as Attachment #1 with your application package. **Please be sure to indicate priority area under which you are applying and where your organization is located.** Under *Executive Summary*, please summarize the proposed project. The summary should be a maximum of two pages.

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF THE MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE
APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

Applicant:	
Partner(s) <i>(local or regional, if any):</i>	
Countries Affected by Project:	
Funding Opportunity Title:	Funding Opportunity Close Date:
Priority Area—Identify Single or Multi-Country:	
Organization Headquarters (Country):	
Total Estimated Funding for Project:	Proposed Start and End Date for Project:

Executive Summary:

Please summarize the proposed project in the space below. The summary should be a maximum of two pages.

Budget Narrative Sample Template

Instructions: This Budget Narrative Sample Template should be filled out in its entirety. Any information that is included in blue text should be deleted prior to submitting this document as the "Budget Narrative" attachment on Grants.gov. It is only included as guidance for sample text or suggested information. Costs listed in any category below should include an explanation of how the requested funds will be used to support the proposed project. Please note that the response "Not Applicable," or "N/A," is generally not acceptable. Instead, a sufficient explanation should be provided in either the proposal narrative or within each field to explain why an item is not applicable.

<i>Organization Name, Period of Performance</i>				
1. Personnel <i>(Description: An employee of the organization whose work is tied to the proposed project)</i>				
Position	Name of Employee	Annual Salary/ Rate	Level of Effort (%)	Cost <i>(Salary x LOE)</i>
Ex: Program Director	John Doe	\$164,890	10.00%	\$16,489
Ex: Project Coordinator	TBD	\$46,276	100.00%	\$46,276
1. Personnel Sub-Total				\$62,765
<p>Narrative Justification: <i>Enter a description of the Personnel funds requested and how their use will support the purpose and goals of your proposal. Be sure to describe the role, responsibilities, and unique qualification of each position.</i></p> <p>SF-424a Note: <i>Enter the total cost of 1.a in Section B Column 1 line 6a of the form.</i></p>				

Budget Narrative Sample Template

2. Fringe Benefits (Description: May include contributions for social security, employee insurance, pension plans, etc. Only those benefits not included in an organizations indirect cost rate agreement (i.e., NICRA) may be shown as direct costs)

Component	Wage	Rate	Cost (Wage x Rate)
Ex: FICA	\$62,765	7.65%	\$4,802
Ex: Workers Compensation	\$62,765	2.50%	\$1,569
Ex: Health Benefits	\$62,765	2.50%	\$1,569
2. Fringe Benefits Sub-Total			\$7,940

Narrative Justification: Enter a description of the Fringe funds requested, how the rate was determined, and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal.

SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 2.a in Section B Column 1 line 6b of the form.

Budget Narrative Sample Template

3. Travel (Description: Explain need for all travel. Must follow U.S. Government regulations. The lowest available commercial fares for coach or equivalent accommodations must be used. Local travel policies prevail.)					
Purpose of Travel	Item Description	Unit of Measure	Cost Per Unit/Rate	Number of Units	Cost (Cost Per Unit x No. of Units)
Ex: Leadership Training	Airfare--Origin: Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, Yemen, and/or Oman; Destination: Amman, Jordan	Roundtrip Airfare	\$ 500.00	20	\$10,000
	Lodging in Amman for 20 participants for 3 days (U.S. Government allowable rate)	day	\$ 183.00	60	\$10,980
	Meals and Incidentals for 20 participants for 3 days (M&IE--U.S. Government allowable rate))	day	\$ 127.00	60	\$7,620
Ex: Local Travel	Local travel in Amman, Jordan for 20 participants for 3 days	day	\$ 500.00	3	\$1,500
3. Travel Sub-Total					\$30,100
Narrative Justification: Describe the Purpose of Travel and how costs were determined.					
SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 3.a in Section B Column 1 line 6c of the form.					

Budget Narrative Sample Template

4. Equipment (Description: Permanent equipment is defined as non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more.)				
Item Description	Unit of Measure	Cost Per Unit	Number of Units	Cost (Cost Per Unit x No. of Units)
None			0	\$ -
4. Equipment Sub-Total				\$ -
Narrative Justification: Enter a description of the Equipment and how its purchase will support the purpose and goals of this proposal.				
SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 4.a in Section B Column 1 line 6d of the form.				

5. Supplies (Description: Materials costing less than \$5,000 per unit and often having one-time use.)				
Item Description	Unit of Measure	Cost Per Unit	Number of Units	Cost (Cost Per Unit x No. of Units)
<i>Ex: General Office Supplies</i>	month	\$ 50.00	12	\$600
<i>Ex: Laptop</i>		\$ 900.00	1	\$900
5. Supplies Sub-Total				\$1,500
Narrative Justification: Enter a description of the Supplies requested and how their purchase will support the purpose and goals of this proposal.				
SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 5.a in Section B Column 1 line 6e of the form.				

Budget Narrative Sample Template

6. Contractual (Description: The costs of project activities to be undertaken by a third-party contractor should be included in this category as a single line item charge. A complete itemization of the cost should be attached to the budget. If there is more than one contractor, each must be budgeted separately and must have an attached itemization.)

Name/Item Description	Unit of Measure	Unit Cost	Number of Units	Cost (Cost Per Unit x No. of Units)
<i>Consultants</i>				
Ex: Jane Smith/Leadership Training Expert	day	\$350	12	\$4,200
Ex: Jane Smith travel from Washington, DC to Amman, Jordan for training conference	Roundtrip Airfare	\$1,200	1	\$1,200
Ex: TBD/Monitoring and Evaluation Expert	day	\$275	12	\$3,300
Ex: Monitoring and Evaluation Expert travel from Washington, DC to Amman, Jordan	Roundtrip Airfare	\$1,200	1	\$1,200
<i>Contracts</i>				
Ex. Sub-Award to Jordanian NGO (budget and terms TBD)	award agreement	\$10,000	1	\$10,000
6. Contractual Sub-Total				\$19,900

Narrative Justification: Explain the need for each agreement and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal. For those contracts already arranged, please provide the proposed categorical budgets. For those subcontracts that have not been arranged, please provide the expected Statement of Work, Period of Performance and how the proposed costs were estimated and the type of contract (bid, sole source...etc).

SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 6.a in Section B Column 1 line 6f of the form.

Budget Narrative Sample Template

7. Construction: Not Allowable

SF-424a Note: Leave this section blank in Section B Column 1 & 2 line 6g of the form

8. Other Direct Costs (Description: Expenses not covered in any of the previous budget categories.)

Item Description	Unit of Measure	Cost Per Unit	Number of Units	Cost (Cost Per Unit x No. of Units)
Ex: Office Telephone	month	\$100	12	\$1,200
Ex: Amman hotel conference room rental for training	day	\$800	3	\$2,400
8. Other Direct Costs Sub-Total				\$3,600

Narrative Justification: Explain the need for each item and how their use will support the purpose and goals of this proposal. Be sure to break down costs into cost/unit and explain the use of each item requested.

SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 8.a in Section B Column 1 line 6h of the form.

9. Total Direct Costs

SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost in Section B Column 1 line 6i of the form.

\$125,805**10. Indirect Costs (Must reflect a provisional or pre-determined Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.)**

SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost of 10.a in Section B Column 1 line 6j of the form.

0.00%

\$0**11. Total Costs (Sum of the Total Direct and Indirect Costs)**

SF-424a Note: Enter the total cost in Section B Column 1 line 6k of the form.

\$125,805

Budget Narrative Sample Template**BUDGET SUMMARY**

Budget Categories	Federal Request (Cost)
1. Personnel	\$62,765
2. Fringe Benefits	\$7,940
3. Travel	\$30,100
4. Equipment	\$0.00
5. Supplies	\$1,500
6. Contractual	\$19,900
7. Construction	\$0
8. Other Direct Costs	\$3,600
9. Total Direct Costs (lines 1-8)	\$125,805
10. Indirect Costs (reflect provisional, pre-determined rate and allocation base)	\$0
11. Total Costs (lines 9-10)	\$125,805

Applicant Organizational Information

Instructions: The Applicant Organizational Information template should be filled out in its entirety. Any information that is included in blue text should be deleted prior to submitting this document as Attachment #2 with your application package. Please note that the response “Not Applicable,” or “N/A,” is generally not acceptable. Instead, a sufficient explanation should be provided in either the project narrative or within each field to explain why an item is not applicable.

GENERAL INFORMATION						
1. Organization Name:						
2. Type of Organization <i>(check all that apply)</i>	Overseas:		Non-Profit:		Non-Governmental:	
	Domestic:		For-Profit: (Commercial)		Educational Institution:	
3. Is your Organization incorporated, registered, or licensed as a legal entity						
<i>If Yes:</i>	Place of Incorporation or Registration (State/County):					
	Incorporation or Registration Date:					
<i>If No:</i>	List parent company or organization name and address OR explain status below:					
4. Program Director <i>(The person who will oversee the day to day activities of the grant):</i>						
Program Director Title:			Email Address:			
Address:			Telephone Number			

Applicant Organizational Information

5. Financial or Business Official (<i>The person who is responsible for the financial components of the grant.</i>)	
Budget Officer Title:	Email Address:
Address:	Telephone Number
ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE AND POLICIES	
6. Is your organization governed by Board of Directors? (Yes or No):	
7. Does your organization have a written personnel policy and procedure manual? (Yes or No):	
8. Does your organization have a written accounting and financial policy and procedure? (Yes or No):	
FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING MANAGEMENT	
9. What is the ending date of your organization's fiscal year (MM/DD/YYYY)?	
10. Does your organization have an automated accounting system? (Yes or No):	
<i>If Yes:</i>	Can the accounting system show amounts incurred for individual awards and show charges to separate funding sources? (Yes or No):
<i>If Yes:</i>	Can the accounting system generate reports that show these specific costs incurred for individual awards? (Yes or No):
<i>If Yes:</i>	Does the accounting system allow for reporting of Cash and In-kind contributions (from non-federal sources) i.e., cost share? (Yes or No):

Applicant Organizational Information

11. Are there written procedures for determining reasonableness, allocability, and allowability of costs?				
12. Does your organization prepare annual financial statements (e.g., balance sheet, income and expense statement)?				
13. Does your organization have written policies and procedures for monitoring sub-awardees or sub-recipients, including consultants?				
14. Does your organization have a current A-133 audit? (Yes or No)				
15. Has your organization received grant or agreement funds before? (Yes or No):				
<i>If Yes:</i>	Please provide the following information on awards or funding received in the last five years. Please specifically note if funds are U.S. Government (USG) funds.			
	<u><i>Name of Donor</i></u>	<u><i>Amount</i></u>	<u><i>Period</i></u>	<u><i>USG Funds?</i></u> <u><i>(Yes or No)</i></u>

Preparing an Application for Funding

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GENERAL GUIDANCE

It is strongly recommended that applicants submit grant applications using Microsoft Office products. If applicants do not have access to Microsoft Office products (e.g., MS-Word, MS-Excel) they may submit their documents in Adobe PDF format. If an applicant uses a file format other than Microsoft Office or PDF, the application may be unreadable.

The required font is 12-point Times New Roman. The application must be single spaced, with all margins (left, right, top, bottom) being at least one inch each. Adhering to these standards will help to ensure the proper transmission of your document.

It is strongly recommended that applicants include a Table of Contents. The Table of Contents should include the page numbers for each of the major sections of the application and for each attachment. The Table of Contents need not include page numbers for the SF-424 forms, MEPI Cover Sheet, and Applicant Organization Information.

Applicants should also ensure all pages in the application are numbered consecutively and meet the page limit requirements outlined in Part IV, Section D—Preparing an Application and Formatting Requirements of the RFA. **If the application exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.**

Preparing an Application for Funding

Documents containing scanned images must also contain page numbers to continue the sequence. Failure to comply with these requirements may affect the successful transmission and consideration of an application.

REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

Federal Assistance Application Forms

How to Complete the Application for Federal Assistance—SF-424

Item #1—Type of Submission: Select “Application or Pre-Application” (The Request for Application will specify what type of application.)

Item #2—Type of Application: Select “New”

Item #3 - #4—Date Received/Applicant Identifier: Leave blank, it will be assigned by the Federal agency

Item #5 - #7—Federal Entity Identifier/Federal Award Identifier: Leave blank, it is not applicable to this program

Item #8—Applicant Information:

8a – Input your organization’s legal name

8b – If U.S. Organization, enter your EIN or TIN as assigned by the IRS; If international organization enter “44-4444444.”

8c – Enter your organization’s DUNS number. If international organization that does not have a DUNS number, leave blank.

8d – Enter your organizations address including country

8e – If applicable, enter the name of a department or division that will coordinate the proposed activities.

8f – Name of the project person to contact about this application.

Item #9—Type of Applicant - Please select all that apply.

H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Learning

N. Nonprofit

O. Private Institution of Higher Learning

Q. For Profit

R. Small Business

W. Non-domestic (non-US entity)

X. Other (Specify)

Item #10—Name of Federal Agency: Input – “Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of the Middle East Partnership Initiative”

Preparing an Application for Funding

Item #11—Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number and Title: Input – “19.500” and the title is “Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI).” This is a required field.

Item #12—Funding Opportunity Number and Title: Input the number and title provided in the request for application.

Item #13—Competition Identification Number and Title: Input the title provided in the request for application.

Item #14—Areas Affected by Project: List country or countries where your organization proposes to perform its proposed activities.

Item #15—Descriptive Title of Applicant’s Project: Provide a brief descriptive title of your project. This description can either be typed in the box or added as an attachment.

Item #16—Congressional Districts

16a – Applicant: If in the U.S., enter the congressional district of your organization. If International organization, enter “00-000.”

16b – Program/Project: If program takes place in the U.S., enter all the congressional districts affected by the program. If program is outside the U.S. enter “00-000.”

Item #17—Proposed Project: Enter the proposed start date and end date of your project. This is a required field; however, actual dates will be negotiated if selected for funding.

Item #18—Estimated Funding

18a – Enter the amount of funding your organization is requesting from MEPI (Federal funding).

18b – Enter “\$0.00.”

18c-d – Enter “\$0.00.”

18e – Enter the total of all other costs.

18f – If you anticipate any income to be generated by this project (i.e. registration fees) input that information here, if applicable.

18g – Total all the numbers from 18a-18f

Item #19—Is Application subject to Review by State Under Executive Order 12372

Process? Select “c. Program is not covered by E.O. 12372”

Items #20—Is Applicant Delinquent of any Federal Debt. Please select yes/no. If yes, please complete page 3, providing an explanation.

Item # 21 – Authorized Representative: Please provide the name, contact information, and signature of the authorized representative for your organization. The governing body of your organization must have specifically documented the designation for an authorized representative to submit an application for funding to the U.S. Government. If selected for funding this

Preparing an Application for Funding

documentation may be requested. **PLEASE NOTE:** It is a best practice to have the SF-424 signed by the same authorized representative that would sign any ensuing award document for your organization. If a different authorized representative must sign any ensuing award document, that person will need to attach documentation confirming that they have the recipient organization's delegation of authority to commit the organization to an award.

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How to Complete the Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs—SF-424a

The sections below, highlighted in yellow, provide guidance for completing the official SF-424a form. The information is displayed as it will appear on the official form. The official form can be downloaded from Grants.gov.

Section A – Budget Summary						
Grant Program Function or Activity (a)	Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance No (b)	Estimated Unobligated Funds		New or Revised Budget		
		Federal (c)	Non-Federal (d)	Federal (e)	Non-Federal (f)	Total (g)
1. <i>Enter the “Funding Opportunity Title”</i>	19.500	\$0.00	\$0.00	<i>Enter Amount Requesting From MEPI</i>	\$0.00	<i>Enter Total of Federal and Non-Federal Costs</i>
2.						
3.						
4.						
5. TOTALS		\$0.00	\$0.00	<i>Enter Total Amount Requesting</i>	<i>Enter Total Cost Share</i>	Total Amount

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Section B – Budget Categories					
6. Object Categories	Grant Program, Function or Activity				Total
	(1) Enter Federal Cost (MEPI Cost)	<i>(2) Leave Blank</i>	<i>(3) Leave Blank</i>	<i>(4) Leave Blank</i>	(5) Totals
a. Personnel (costs of employee salaries and wages)	<i>Total Personnel from Budget Summary</i>				
b. Fringe Benefits (Costs of employee fringe benefits, i.e. Health insurance, retirement insurance, taxes, etc.)	<i>Total Fringe from Budget Summary</i>				
c. Travel (Costs of projected-related travel)	<i>Total Travel from Budget Summary</i>				
d. Equipment (Costs of tangible, non-expendable, personal property having a useful life of more than one year and a cost of \$5,000 or more per unit)	<i>Total Equipment from Budget Summary</i>				
e. Supplies (Office or program supplies, other than those included in Equipment category)	<i>Total Supplies from Budget Summary</i>				
f. Contractual (Allowable direct expenses to sub-recipients, including consultant fees and travel expenses)	<i>Total Contractual from Budget Summary</i>				
g. Construction (If applicable)	\$0.00				
h. Other (Enter total of all Other Costs)	<i>Total Other from Budget Summary</i>				

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i. Total Direct Charges (Sum of 6a-6h)		Sum of Federal Direct Costs (6a-6h)					
j. Indirect Charges (Category may be used only when the applicant has an approved indirect cost rate from a U.S. government agency)		<i>Enter Total from Budget Summary, if applicable</i>					
k. TOTALS (sum of 6i and 6j)		Sum of Federal Direct and Indirect Costs (6i-6j)					
7. Program Income (The estimated amount of income, if any, that would be generated from this project. Interest gained from U.S. Government funds is not an allowable expense.)		\$0.00		\$0.00			\$0.00
Section C – Non-Federal Resources (Amount of Non-USG resources that will be used to support the project) <i>NOTE: Leave this Section Blank</i>							
(a) Grant Program		(b) Applicant		(c) State	(d) Other Sources	(e) TOTALS	
8.							
9.							
10.							
11.							
12 Total (sum of line 8-11)							
Section D – Forecasted Cash Needs (for Year 1 of the Project) <i>NOTE: Leave this Section Blank</i>							
13. Federal		Total for 1 st year	1 st Quarter	2 nd Quarter	3 rd Quarter	4 th Quarter	
14. Non-Federal							
15. Total (Sum lines 14 and 14)							

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Section E – Budget Estimates for Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project				
<i>NOTE: Leave this Section Blank</i>				
(a) Grant Program	Future Funding Periods (Years)			
	(b) First (Year 1)	(c) Second (Year 2)	(d) Third (Year 3)	(e) Fourth (Year 4)
16.				
17.				
18.				
19.				
20. Total (Sum of lines 16-19)				
Section F - Other Budget Information				
21. Direct Charges (total from 6i)	<i>Total from 6i above</i>	22. Indirect Charges (Total from 6j)	<i>Total from 6j above</i>	
23. Remarks: (any additional comments you wish to add)				

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Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must be a separate document in the electronic submission on Grants.gov. It must be uploaded to Grants.gov under the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” field. Your project narrative should address the categories and priority areas outline in Part 1—Funding Opportunity Description. Applicants must identify the category and priority area under which they are applying.

Page Limit allowed for Project Narrative: The Project Narrative may not exceed 10 pages. **If it exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.**

The Project Narrative should describe the efforts you will undertake to address the roles and responsibilities outlined in Part I—Funding Opportunity Description, including:

Approach and Activities:

- Clearly outline a plan of action that explains how the work to establish a MEPI Alumni Local Chapter will be accomplished within the proposed start-up time frame of six months;
- MEPI would like to see that the applicant will provide guidance and logistical support for the Local Chapter, but will allow for the independence of the Local Chapter.

Results and Benefits:

- Describe the benefits and outcomes that will occur as a result of the applicant’s management of the grant;
- Describe how results and impact will be sustained if MEPI funding should end.

Organizational Capacity:

- Demonstrate the experience of the applicant for the area of work for which activities are proposed;
- Describe the applicant’s understanding of the current country context, including how previous work in country will inform the proposed activities and approach;
- Demonstrate the capacity to launch and manage the project effectively in country.

Staff and Positions:

- Describe the roles of key personnel and their skills and qualifications to carry out the proposed work; and
- Provide resumes, biographical sketches, or job descriptions for key personnel.

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Budget Narrative

The Budget Narrative must be a separate document in the electronic submission on Grants.gov. It must be uploaded to Grants.gov under the “Budget Narrative Attachment Form” field. A sample template can be found in Appendix 3. **NOTE: Applicants must use the same format as found in the sample.**

Before developing a project budget, applicants should review the Middle East Partnership Initiative’s (MEPI) guidelines detailed below and in the RFA to determine application details including program expectations and any restrictions on the types of costs that may appear in the budget.

The Budget Narrative is used to determine if the costs in a MEPI application are reasonable and permissible. All of the proposed costs listed must be reasonable, necessary to achieve project objectives, permissible in accordance with applicable Federal cost principles, auditable, and incurred during the project period. All figures must be in U.S. Dollars and rounded to the nearest dollar.

Page Limit allowed for Budget Narrative: There is no page limit for this section of your application.

Budget Definitions:

Authorized Organization Representative (AOR): The individual authorized to act on behalf of the applicant and assume the obligations imposed by the Federal laws, regulations, requirements, and conditions that apply to grant applications or awards. This person will be the signatory on the SF-424 and SF-424b forms.

Consultant: An individual or organization who gives professional advice and provides services for a fee and is not a direct hire employee of a grantee’s organization. Typically a consultant performs a one-time activity.

Contract: A contract under a grant may be awarded for two purposes: 1) goods or services needed to support the grantee’s performance of the project or program or 2) an award to a third party for performance of substantive programmatic work. The first category is termed “vendor relationship,” and is described in more detail below under “Vendor.” The second category is termed “sub-recipient relationship” and may be in the form of a contract under the grant or, in some cases, a sub-award. More detail on the “sub-recipient” relationship is detailed below under “Sub-Award or Sub-Recipient or Sub-Grantee.” The relationship rather than the terminology drives the governing requirements for these two relationships.

Direct Costs: Costs used for salaries, travel, equipment, supplies, contractual arrangements, and tangible goods or services associated with this project.

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Indirect Costs: Costs that cannot be identified readily and specifically with a particular sponsored project, program, or activity, but are necessary to the operation of the organization (e.g., overhead, facility maintenance). These costs require a negotiated indirect cost rate (NICRA); otherwise, they must be charged directly and justified in detail.

Project Costs: The total allowable costs incurred by a recipient and charged to the award during a budget period. These costs may include those costs supported by Federal funds, costs contributed by the recipient to meet a matching requirement, and the value of any third-party in-kind contributions counted toward the recipient's matching requirement.

Sub-Recipient or Sub-Awardee or Sub-Grantee: A third-party individual or organization who receives an award for the performance of certain programmatic work. All sub-recipients require prior approval from MEPI. The receiving organization (sub-recipient):

- Has its performance measured against whether the objectives of the grantee's project are met;
- Has responsibility for programmatic decision making (to the extent specified in its contract/sub-award);
- Has responsibility for adherence to applicable grant compliance requirements; and
- Uses their awarded federal funds in conjunction with a program of the organization as compared to providing goods or services for a program of the pass-through entity.

Vendor: An organization who receives funding from the grantee for the procurement of a good or service needed to support the grantee's performance of the project. A vendor relationship is one under which the receiving organization (vendor):

- Provides the goods and services within normal business operations or to many different purchasers;
- Operates in a competitive environment;
- Provides goods or services that are supplementary to the operation of the grantee's project; and
- Is not subject to federal programmatic compliance requirements.

When a grantee obtains routine goods and services necessary for performance of the grant-supported project, it may be through activities chargeable to indirect costs (e.g., acquisition of audit services) or, as appropriate, through a direct charge (i.e., contractual).

Allowable Project Costs

The cost principles below address four tests in determining the permissibility of costs. These four tests apply regardless of whether the particular category of costs is one specified in the cost principles or one governed by other terms and conditions of an award. These tests also apply regardless of treatment as a direct cost or an indirect cost. The fact that a proposed cost is awarded as requested by an applicant does not indicate a determination of permissibility.

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1. **Reasonable:** A cost is reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be practical under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the cost. The cost principles elaborate on this concept and address considerations such as whether the cost is necessary for the organization's operations or the grant's performance, whether the recipient complied with its established organizational policies in incurring the cost or charge, and whether the individuals responsible for the expenditure acted with due prudence in carrying out their responsibilities to the Federal government and the public at large, as well as to their organization.
2. **Allocable:** A cost is allocable to a specific grant, function, department, or other component, known as a cost objective, if the goods or services involved are chargeable or assignable to that cost objective in accordance with the relative benefits received or other equitable relationship. A cost is allocable to a grant if it is incurred solely in order to advance work under the grant; it benefits both the grant and other work of the organization, including other grant-supported projects or programs; or it is necessary to the overall operation of the organization and is deemed to be assignable, at least in part, to the grant.
3. **Conforming:** A cost conforms if it matches with any limitations or exclusions set forth in the Federal cost principles outlined in the award terms and conditions. These costs may vary in type of activity, the type of recipient, and other characteristics of individual awards.
4. **Consistent:** A cost must be consistent with regulations, policies, and procedures of the recipient that apply uniformly to both Federally supported and other activities of the organization. Recipients must be consistent in assigning costs to cost objectives. They must be treated consistently for all work of the organization under similar circumstances, regardless of the source of funding, so as to avoid duplicate charges (e.g., direct costs, indirect costs, cost sharing).

Budget Narrative Sample Template

The Budget Narrative Sample Template--Appendix 3 provides examples of possible costs. Applicants should revise the template to reflect the costs associated with their proposed activities. In addition, any blue text in the template should be deleted prior to submitting this document. Applicant should replace this information with their proposed costs and justifications.

When completing the template, applicants should ensure the following:

- Presented in U.S. dollars, rounded to the nearest dollar;
- Include an estimate of the cost of tasks and activities projected based on budget category identified on the Budget Information Form (SF 424a);
- Provide details of calculations including estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated;
- Funding should not duplicate on-going activities;

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- Budget categories should be clearly labeled and identified;
- The use of “miscellaneous expenses,” “etc.,” or any similar term as a budget item is unacceptable;
- Cost-sharing (salaries, rent, utilities, equipment etc.) is strongly encouraged. Applicants will be expected to document cost-sharing arrangements. Not included as a cost in any other Federally supported award.

Cost Category Guidelines

Use the checklist information below to ensure that your budget provides all the necessary information.

1. Personnel

- Is each position identified by title or responsibility?
 - **Program Director:** The individual who will provide daily oversight of the grant, including fiscal, and personnel management, community relations, and project implementation and evaluation during the project period.
 - **Project Coordinator:** The individual who will coordinate coalition services and MEPI project activities, including training, coalition communication, data collection, and information dissemination.
 - **Financial or Business Official:** The person who handles the financial components of the grant.
 - **Key Personnel:** MEPI grant key personnel include a Program Director and or Project Coordinator. Key personnel are defined as individuals who contribute to the programmatic development or execution of the project in a substantive, measurable way, whether or not they receive salaries or other compensation under the grant.
- Is the identified position occupied, if so is the name of the employee identified?
- Is the basis for determining each employee’s compensation described (annual salary and % time devoted)?
- Are time commitments and the amount of compensation stated and reasonable?
- Are salary increases anticipated during the grant period and are they justified (Cost of Living Allowance, etc.)?
- Are any personnel costs unallowable?
 - Does the level of effort of the employee exceed 100% of all work on all projects or positions?
 - Federal Employee

2. Fringe Benefits

- Is each type of benefit indicated separately or does the organization have an approved fringe benefit rate (NICRA)?
- Are fringe increases anticipated during the grant period and are they justified?
- Are any fringe costs unallowable?

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3. Travel

- Is the travel necessary for the purpose of the program?
- Are travel costs separately identifiable and reasonable (transportation, hotel, meals, and mileage)?
- Is the basis for computation provided?
- Does the organization travel policy follow the Federal guidelines (e.g., Fly America, per diem rates, etc.)?

4. Equipment

- Does the equipment have a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more?
- Is the request reasonable and allowable under the project?
- Are equipment items specified by unit and cost?
- Are purchases distinguishable from rentals or leases (vehicles, large items of equipment)?

5. Supplies

- Are supplies listed separately?
- Are costs per unit identified and detailed?
- Is the basis for the cost reasonable?

6. Contractual

- Is the type of service to be rendered described?
- Did you name the consultant or contractor, if known?
- Is the total amount for any contract in excess of \$100,000?
- Did you provide a separate budget for sub-recipients or contracts?

8. Other

- Are items grouped by type (space rental, printing, phone, maintenance, sub-award, etc.)?
- Are all costs justified and allowable?
- Is each sub-award (or sub-grant) described (i.e., description of activities to be performed, method of selection, type of agreement, budget with narrative) and the amount of award included?

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MEPI Application Coversheet

The Coversheet provides summary detail about the applicant and their proposed activities. In addition, applicants will identify the priority area under which they are applying and where their organization is located in this document. A sample template can be found in Appendix 2.

NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format.

The Coversheet should be a separate document and included as Attachment #1 under the “Optional Documents for Submission” field on Grants.gov.

Page Limit allowed for MEPI Application Coversheet Executive Summary: The executive summary portion of the Coversheet may not exceed 2 pages. **If the executive summary exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.**

Applicant Organization Information

A sample template can be found in Appendix 4. **NOTE:** Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format. This document provides MEPI with information about your organization’s structure and policies; and allows MEPI to assess your organization’s ability to manage Federal funds.

The Applicant Organization Information should be a separate document and included as Attachment #2 under the “Optional Documents for Submission” field on Grants.gov.

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OPTIONAL DOCUMENTS

Those documents that are not included in the proposal narrative and budget may be included as attachments or appendices. Examples of attachments to be included in this section of your application are:

- **Resumes, Biographical Sketch, or Job Descriptions for key personnel and partners.** They may be included within the project narrative or as a separate document included in the appendices portion of your application. If these items are not included, applicants will be scored lower under the *Staff and Position Specifications* review criteria outlined in Part V, Section A—Application Evaluation Criteria.
- **Pre-Submission Checklist** can be found in Appendix 6. This Checklist ensures that you have accurately documented the eligibility requirements and included all major components of the application.

Page Limit allowed for Attachments: These additional document may not exceed 10 pages. **If these documents exceed the page limit, the application will be screened out and will not be reviewed.**

Please consolidate all other materials in your application to ensure the fewest possible number of attachments. Be sure to label each file according to its contents (e.g., Attachments 1-3, Attachments 4-5).

Pre-Submission Checklist

Instructions: The Pre-Submission Checklist ensures that an application meets all submission requirements. Please place an “X” beside each item that has been completed. Any information that is included in blue text should be deleted prior to submitting this document as the last attachment with your application package.

PRE-SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Items to Complete	“X” if Completed
Has the entire proposed project period been identifier in item #17 on the SF-424 form?	
Did you complete item #18 on the SF-424 form?	
Did you check “c” in item #19 on the SF-424 form? MEPI applicants are not covered by E.O. 12372	
Did your Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) read and sign item #21 on the SF-424 form?	
Did you complete the Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs (SF-424a)?	
Did your AOR read and sign the Assurances—Non-Construction Programs (SF-424b)?	
Is your Executive Summary on the MEPI Cove Sheet no more than 2 pages?	
Did you identify if you are a Single or Multi-Country priority area on the MEPI Cover Sheet?	
Did you identify your organization’s headquarters on the MEPI Cover Sheet?	
Did you prepare and complete the MEPI Cover Sheet?	
Did you prepare and complete the Applicant Organization Information document?	
Did you prepare and include a Table of Contents outlining the sections of your application?	
Is your Project Narrative no more than 10 pages?	
Has your Project Narrative addressed all the RFA goals and priorities?	

Pre-Submission Checklist

Items to Complete	“X” if Completed
Did you prepare a Budget Narrative as outlined in Appendix 3 using the Budget Narrative Sample Template?	
Did you include Resumes, Biographical Sketch, or Job Descriptions for key personnel and partners?	

U.S.-Based and Foreign-based Applicants Submitting via Grants.gov

Items to Complete	“X” if Completed
Do you have a DUNS number?	
Are you registered with the Central Contractor Registration?	
Did you upload your Project Narrative to the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” field on Grants.gov?	
Did you upload your Budget Narrative to the “Budget Narrative Attachment Form” field on Grants.gov?	
Did you attach as Attachment #1 the MEPI Cover Sheet?	
Did you attach as Attachment #2 the Applicant Organization Information Document?	
Did you include optional Attachments and are they no longer than 10 pages? (This excludes the MEPI Cover Sheet and Applicant Organization Information.)	

Foreign-based Applicants Submitting via Email

Items to Complete	“X” if Completed
Did you attach the signed SF-424, SF-424a, and SF-424b forms?	
Did you attach the MEPI Cover Sheet?	
Did you attach the Applicant Organization Information document?	
Did you attach your Project Narrative?	
Did you attach your Budget Narrative?	
Did you attach your optional Attachments? (This excludes the MEPI Cover Sheet and Applicant Organization Information.)	