

# Frequently Asked Questions

Originally Published: January 26, 2011

Revised: March 2, 2011

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### **Important Message to All Applicants**

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**Important Message to Student Leaders Program Applicants:**

All applicants are advised that **critical changes** have been made to Priority Area A— Student Leaders Program of the Civic Education RFA (NEAPI-11-AW-031-MENA-01211). To view the revised announcement, please go to our *Open Funding Opportunities* page on the MEPI website (<http://mepi.state.gov>). The changes begin on page six of the announcement and relate to the length of the project period.

**Important Message to All Applicants:**

All applicants are advised to read the Request for Application (RFA) in its entirety. **New eligibility requirements, submission requirements, and sample templates are now included.** The change to the format of the announcement is to assist you, the applicant, in understanding what MEPI is looking for in an application for funding. Failure to submit all the required documentation described in the RFA will result in your application not being considered for funding.

**Please note:** MEPI designed a new budget template that combines both the narrative and budget line items. **Applicants should use the same format as found in the sample.** This will enable a more consistent review by the technical review panel, MEPI programming staff, and MEPI grants management staff.

**Technical Issues:**

**1. I cannot access the full announcement link on Grants.gov.**

All MEPI funding opportunities are posted on our website. To find the full announcement, go to [www.mepi.state.gov](http://www.mepi.state.gov), and select the “Funding Opportunities” tab. Click on the “Apply for a Grant” link, and then the “Open Opportunities” link to view our announcements. Click on the announcement title to download the full announcement.

**2. Are there MS-Word and MS-Excel versions of the Sample Template Documents? Where can I find them?**

To download the sample templates for this RFA, please follow the instructions below:

- 1) Go to [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)
- 2) Click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” link, and select “Basic search”
- 3) Enter the funding opportunity number, and click “Search.”
- 4) Click on the appropriate announcement link (You will be directed to the announcement’s synopsis page)
- 5) At the top of the announcement’s synopsis page, you will see three headers. **Click on the header entitled “Full Announcement.”**
- 6) On the Full Announcement page, you will see a list of files. Select the file entitled “Other Supporting Documents—Fillable Sample Template Documents and Appendices” and with the description “Zip of all attachments.” By selecting this file you will download the all the sample template documents appendices.

## Priority Area A—Student Leaders:

### 1. What is the budget period for the Student Leaders Program?

Applications can propose a budget period of not more than one year in length. In addition, successful applicants should be prepared to host the program again in 2013, pending funds availability and grantee's progress in meeting grant requirements.

### 2. Are there specific dates for the 2012 programs? How long should applicants plan for the academic residency and field study?

Applicants can propose any five-week period during the summer of 2012, but all dates are subject to change. **As stated in the announcement, the academic residency should be designed around a four-week period, and the field study should be one-week in duration.** The field study may be broken into different trips, with the total amount of time of this component equaling one-week. Once successful applicants are notified, MEPI will work with them to create a timeframe that is congruent with MENA university schedules so that the largest possible number of students is able to attend.

### 3. How should we budget for the opening and closing program activities in Washington, DC?

There will be three days of orientation on either end of the Student Leaders program. As stated in the announcement, "Proposed budgets should assume responsibility for participant and staff travel to and from Washington, DC for opening activities." There are **no other items** that applicants need to propose or budget for related to the opening and closing activities.

### 4. Can the program combine the Student Leaders with U.S. youth (at the host university) during the program to supplement their U.S. experience?

MEPI encourages opportunities for the Student Leaders to interact with their American peers. However, the preponderance of the program budget should directly support activities for the Student Leader participants.

### 5. Will the participants to this program arrive and depart from the host university at the beginning and end of the program?

Participants to the student leaders will travel arrive and depart from Washington, DC at the beginning and end of the program. As stated in the announcement, the international travel to and from the U.S. will be funded under a separate mechanism.

## Funding Opportunity Questions:

### 1. Are you looking for country-specific, regional, or multi-country projects?

Applicants may propose country-specific, regional, or multi-country projects and activities. **Please note:** We currently do not fund Iraq-specific projects. However, regional and multi-country projects may include an Iraq component. Further, we are unable to fund participants from the West Bank and Gaza in regional programs or fund projects that are specific to the West Bank and Gaza.

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### **2. How does one learn about projects previously funded by MEPI?**

Please review our country fact sheets on the MEPI website ([www.mepi.state.gov](http://www.mepi.state.gov)) to get a sense of the range of activities we've funded over the years.

### **Award Questions:**

#### **1. Is there a finite amount of funding for awards under this announcement?**

The ceilings and floors outlined in the RFAs are specific to each award. No award will be more than the ceiling and no award will be less than the floor. MEPI has the ability to award a total amount of funding (indicated in the announcement) over a period of two years after the announcement's close date. The number and funding amount of awards are subject to the availability of funds.

### **Eligibility Questions:**

#### **1. Are Palestinian organizations eligible for a grant?**

Unfortunately, MEPI is currently unable to support new programming in the West Bank and Gaza due to a Congressionally-mandated funding cap. Programming is defined as the inclusion of participants from the West Bank and Gaza in regional programs, as well as activities specifically taking place in the West Bank or Gaza. Future RFAs may not contain this provision.

### **Budget Questions:**

#### **1. How should we present a two-year project within Appendix 2—Budget Narrative Template?**

Applicant may prepare and submit two separate budgets detailing Year 1 and Year 2 costs, or they may add a column to the template which outlines Year 2 costs. The budget should be submitted through the "Budget Narrative" category on Grants.gov.

### **Application and Submission Questions:**

#### **1. Where should we include the Table of Contents in our application? Is it included in the page limits?**

The Table of Contents should include the page numbers for each of the major sections of the application and for each attachment. It can be attached to your project narrative or submitted as a separate attachment with your application. Also, it need not include page numbers for the SF-424 forms, MEPI Cover Sheet, and Applicant Organization Information. The Table of Contents is excluded from the page limitations outlined in the announcement.

#### **2. Should the Project Narrative be single- or double-spaced?**

The project narrative should be typed in 12-point Times New Roman font, single-spaced, and should not exceed 20 pages.

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### 3. **Should the various attachment documents be labeled with specific names?**

When enclosing the attachment documents in your submission, please label them based on their title in the announcement (e.g., MEPI Application, Applicant Organization Information, etc.)

### 4. **Where should we include a Sustainability Plan in our application?**

Applicants may submit a Sustainability Plan within the project narrative or as a separate document included in the appendices portion of their application. The quality and feasibility of the proposed Sustainability Plan will be among the elements on which proposals are evaluated. Sustainability Plans should not exceed two pages and should be typed in 12-point font. **Note:** There are page limits to the project narrative and optional documents. If an application exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.

### 5. **Where should we include a Results-Oriented Monitoring and Assessment (ROMA) Plan in our application?**

Applicants may submit a ROMA plan within the project narrative or as a separate document included in the appendices portion of their application. The quality and feasibility of the proposed ROMA will be among the elements on which proposals are evaluated. ROMA plans should not exceed five pages and should be typed in 12-point font. **Note:** There are page limits to the project narrative and optional documents. If an application exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.

### 6. **Will my application be disqualified if I don't use the samples provided for the MEPI Application Coversheet (Appendix 1), Budget Narrative (Appendix 2), and the Applicant Organization Information (Appendix 3)?**

For an application to be considered it must include the Federal Assistance Application Forms; a Project Narrative; a Budget Narrative; a Coversheet; and Applicant Organizational information. Should an applicant decide not to use the samples provided, they should ensure that their submission includes all the elements outlined in each sample.

### 7. **Is there a limit on the number of applications an organization may submit? Can an organization submit multiple proposals for one priority area?**

Applicants may submit more than one proposal; however, each proposal should address only one of the published priority areas. Applicants must submit a separate application for each priority area under which they apply and must clearly state which priority area each application addresses.

## **Application Evaluation Criteria:**

### 1. **Will my application lose points if I don't use the sample template to prepare my Budget Narrative and Result-Oriented Monitoring and Assessment Plan?**

Applicants who do not use the samples will not lose evaluation criteria points. The Budget Narrative should support the proposed project activities and include the elements outlined under the announcement's Budget Narrative criteria. Per the announcement, "Projects with results monitoring and evaluation plans will receive the highest consideration and additional evaluations points."