



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

Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)
For Applications to the [2017 MEPI Local Grants Annual Program](#)
Statement published on November 30, 2016

U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv

PLEASE REFER TO THIS DOCUMENT WHEN PREPARING AN APPLICATION

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Local Grants Overview

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

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

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

U.S. Embassy Project Priority Areas

In addition to the general project priority areas outlined in the Funding Opportunity [“MEPI Local Grants Annual Program Statement.”](#) which was published on November 30, 2016 under CFDA number 19.500, U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv has identified the following project priority areas:

- Preference will be given to projects that promote MEPI's goals especially within vulnerable communities across Israel that have partnerships and cooperation with community, officials, decision making leadership, and institutions. The most competitive projects will complement one another and work together to address a single issue from different angles.
- Projects that encourage the representation of all sectors of society in decision-making, including national governance and politics and policy discussions; Promote dialogue between relevant authorities and communities; Address at-risk youth populations and prevent violent extremism.
- Projects that address gender, political orientation, and national diversity within social, economic, and policy groups; Advocate for public accountability and the rule of law; Work on prompting tolerance, respect and combating racism through community projects and educational initiatives.
- Projects that work on the advancement of entrepreneurship, business development and economic advocacy, as well as forging relevant public and private partnerships through holistic approaches.

- Proposals focusing on conflict resolution, coexistence, and reconciliation, while extremely worthwhile, usually do not meet MEPI Israel main criteria. If this is your key objective, we encourage you to consider applying for [USAID Conflict Management and Mitigation Grants](#) or check the Embassy's ongoing [Public Diplomacy Grants Program](#).

These U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv project priority areas are designed to provide further guidance and clarification to the information already provided in the 2016 MEPI Annual Program Statement.

Deadlines and Other Information

Applications Deadline: Proposals must be submitted to U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv by **no later than 20:00 on January 8, 2017**. Please clearly label your email subject line to indicate “2016 MEPI Local Grant Application for U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv”. Completed applications should be emailed to U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv at mepitelaviv@state.gov

Questions: If you have any question please send them to mepitelaviv@state.gov by **December 15, 2016**. Answers will be published at this **LINK**

Bidders' Conferences: The embassy will also hold three **Bidders' conferences** (info sessions) at the following dates and locations **::

December 5, 2016 in Nazareth

11:00 a.m. at the Public Library - Shnilller neighborhood

December 6, 2016 in Tel Aviv

11:00 a.m. at the Office of Public Affairs, US Embassy on 1 Ben Yehuda Street, Migdalor Building 8th Floor, Tel Aviv

December 6, 2016 in Jerusalem

14:30 p.m. at the American Center in Jerusalem on 19 Keren Hayesod Street

****Please register your name and your organization's name at mepitelaviv@state.gov**
Space is limited

Eligibility

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

Required Registrations

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

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

Registration with the IRS may be required. Please review the Annual Program Statement to

determine if this registration is necessary for your organization.

Note: If organizations are in the process of registration, and have encountered documented, technical registration issues, these applications will be reviewed for eligibility on a case-by-case basis provided the application is recommended by the selection committee. Per U.S. law, valid and active registration in the relevant systems is a requirement to receive grant funds.

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

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

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

Required Registrations and Other Information

Organizations should be registered in the Registrar of Corporations (Rasham Hamutot) at the Israeli Ministry of Justice.

Application Requirements

Complete applications must include the following:

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

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

5. Detailed Line-Item Budget (preferably in Microsoft Excel) that includes three [3] columns including the request to MEPI, any cost sharing contribution, and total budget (see Budget Template for more information on budget format). A summary budget should also be included

using the OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample). **Costs must be in U.S. dollars.** Detailed line-item budgets for sub-grantees should be included in additional tabs within the excel workbook. Additional budget guidance is provided in Appendix II: Budget Narrative Instructions.

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

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

a) Applications should include their organizational' s chart, organization's local registration document, a list of previous donors and two letters of recommendation from a recent funder if applicable.

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

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

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

For all application documents, please ensure:

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

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

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

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

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

Submitting an Application

To submit your application, please follow the steps below:

1. Review the completed application documents (Application for Federal Assistance Form (SF-424), Project Narrative, Budget Narrative, and Budget Information Forms (SF-424A). **Please note:** A signature is required on the **Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)**.
2. **All application materials must be in English and all costs must be in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided.** For any documents provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version. (Please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents).
3. Send all five documents via email to U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv. **If you are unable to email the documents, please contact the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to discuss other delivery options.** The application materials must be submitted electronically by the designated due date and time noted in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). If reasonable accommodations are granted for persons with disabilities or for security reasons, applications must still be received by MEPI by the designated due date and time noted in the NOFO. It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all of the material submitted in the grant application package is complete, accurate, and current. The MEPI Program strongly encourages all applicants, especially foreign or first-time applicants, to submit applications before the designated due date to ensure that the application has been received and is complete.

Submission Date and Time

Applications must be time stamped before 20:00 on January 8, 2017. There will be no grace period, and any application not received by the application deadline will not advance to the Technical Review stage.

Award Notices

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

MEPI expects to notify applicants about the status of their application by April 1, 2017. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and

committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application. **MEPI reserves the right to award funding to applicants under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date.**

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from U.S. Embassy Tel Aviv.

Proposal Review Process

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

Proposal Review Criteria

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

Quality of Project Idea – 25 points

Applications should be responsive to the solicitation, appropriate in the country/regional context, and should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the General Specific Program Priorities outlined in this document.

The MEPI Program prioritizes innovative and creative approaches rather than projects that simply duplicate or add to efforts by other entities. This does not exclude projects that clearly build off existing successful projects in a new and innovative way from consideration. Where similar activities are already taking place, an explanation should be provided as to how new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing activities and how these efforts will be coordinated.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives/Partnership – 25 points

A strong application will include a clear articulation of how the proposed project activities contribute to the overall project objectives, and each activity will be clearly developed and detailed. The applicant should demonstrate substantive how they can achieve the objectives identified in the application. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame. A complete application must include a logic model to demonstrate how the project will have an impact on its proposed objectives. Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If local partners have been identified, the MEPI Program strongly encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners. If applicable, applications should identify target areas for activities, target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, and the specific roles of subawardees, among other pertinent details. In particularly challenging operating environments, applications should include contingency plans for

overcoming potential difficulties in executing the original work plan and address any operational or programmatic security concerns and how they will be addressed.

Institution's Record and Capacity -25 points

The MEPI Program will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. A key objective of the local grants function is developing the capacity of local CSOs to manage their assistance locally.

Applications should demonstrate an institutional record of successful programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives.

Cost Effectiveness -25 points

The MEPI Program strongly encourages applicants to clearly demonstrate project cost-effectiveness in their application, including examples of leveraging institutional and other resources. However, cost-sharing or other examples of leveraging other resources is not required and does not need to be included in the budget. Inclusion in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process. Budgets however should have low and/or reasonable overhead and administration costs and applicants should provide clear explanations and justifications for these costs in relation to the work involved. All budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate its necessity, appropriateness, and its link to the project objectives.

Please note: if cost-share is included in the budget then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, the MEPI Program's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

Additional Information

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

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