

2019 MEPI Local Grants Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO - SFOP0005770)

Questions and Answers

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General Questions:

1. Is it exclusively required to work with governmental agencies (ministries, governmental agencies and its branches in other areas) or can a project be implemented in partnership with local authorities (municipalities and unions of municipalities)?

Answer: Applicants may propose partnerships with any type of organization.

2. Where can we get help to use the online system to submit the application?

Answer: Please refer to the NOFO Pages 19 to 22 for Registration Requirements and Application Submission.

The phone numbers for SAMS Domestic Support Help Desk is 888-313-4567.

SAM.GOV: **U.S. calls:** 866-606-8220/ **International calls:** +1 334-206-7828

3. How do I submit my application?

Answer: Per the NOFO Page 22, Applicants must submit their complete application materials electronically through **Grants.gov** or via email to NEA-Grants@state.gov by **5:00PM EST on May 21, 2019.**

4. I'm having trouble uploading form SF-424 on Grants. gov. Is there an alternative way to complete?

Answer: When applying through Grants.gov the SF424 forms are filled out within Grants.gov application package not uploaded as a separate attachment. Alternatively, when applying via email, the applicant should download the PDF version of the forms and attach them to their email. The SF-424, 424a, and 424b can be found here for download:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>

5. Is the 9-digit UEI number identical to what we previously termed as DUNS number? Where and how can I find out if the organization's SAM registration is active or needs renewal?
Answer: Yes, UEI (Unique Entity Identifier number) is currently referred to as the DUNS number. Please refer to the “Registration Requirements” section on pages 19 & 20 for the steps needed to register for both a UEI (DUNS) as well as a SAM.gov account.
6. When submitting our budget plan, should it start in late 2019 or 2020?
Answer: Projects awarded under this announcement are expected to begin in September 2019.
7. If we submit a two or three year plan, but end up receiving a sum smaller than we requested, will the award be released according to our original plan, or all at once?
Answer: Applicants should propose a budget for the entire project. If selected for funding, the final project budget will be negotiated with the Department of State.
8. If accepted, what will be the type and extent of the Department of State’s involvement in our project? Will it include selecting materials for us to teach or publish? Selecting Personnel? Financial guidance?
Answer: Applicants may find examples of Department of State substantial involvement on page 17 of the NOFO. Any special conditions or specific substantial involvement will be negotiated with the Department of State if an application is selected for funding.
9. In the budget template, should we leave rubrics irrelevant to our organization empty-e.g., if we do not employ U.S based personnel? Is there another template we should follow in such a case?
Answer: The template provided is for guidance and information purposes only and illustrates the OMB approved cost categories and provides samples and examples. The applicant may modify any examples provided in the template. Specifically, if your organization does not have U.S. Based personnel, this may be removed.
10. Would it be possible to consult with you or others, past the deadline for submitting questions but prior to the application deadline?
Answer: The deadline for questions was May 2, 2019. Any questions submitted past this deadline will not be answered. This ensures that all applicants have access to the same information when preparing and submitting an application.
11. In the project narrative application, when describing our mission or purpose, should the answer be specific- or in more general terms?
Answer: Applicants should provide as much specific information as possible in the project application. Please refer to the NOFO Page 22 and Appendix 1 for more information.
12. Can you tell me how to go about obtaining a DUNS number?
Answer: Please refer to the “Registration Requirements” section on pages 19 & 20 for the steps needed to register for both a UEI (DUNS) as well as a SAM.gov account.
13. Where can I find the application instructions in Arabic or French?
Answer: The NOFO is available on: [Grants.gov/Arabic Translation](https://www.Grants.gov/Arabic%20Translation)

14. Is it possible for us to purchase the laptops and other equipment's such as tables and chairs for the training centers? If not, can we use the grant to rent a fully equipped office?
Answer: Office décor and the purchase of equipment over \$5,000 dollars is not supported by this funding opportunity as stated on Page 7. Laptops, chairs and other supplies under \$5,000 dollars may be allowable if it is reasonable and necessary to support the proposed activities. Rental costs may be allowable under the Contractual or Other Direct Cost Category if justified.
15. Are organizations permitted to submit one application for more than one country?
Answer: Applicants may submit only one (1) application per page 11 of the NOFO
16. We understand that it is ok for an international organization to partner with a local organization, so long as the local one is the award recipient. Would you please confirm this?
Answer: Yes, that is correct.
17. On page 4 of the MEPI Local Grants Program Project Narrative Application, there is a table for listing past donors and the projects they funded. Should the entire history of the organization's funding be listed? Or is there a specific time period the organization should include - for instance, last fiscal year or last five years?
Answer: Please provide as much past funding history as possible. If the organization has received multiple awards in excess of 5 years, please detail the funding received only in the last five (5) years. NEA/AC reserves the right to request additional donor related information.
18. Is there a possibility to accept applications from NGO's that didn't manage to get the SAM account prior applying?
Answer: As stated in the NOFO, applicants must have a SAM registration to be eligible for an award. Please refer to the NOFO Pages 19 & 20 for instructions
19. The NOFO lists an Audit is required when an organization expends 750K. Does this need to be US government funds only and not relevant is it's other sources?
Answer: Domestic and foreign organizations that expend \$750,000 U.S. Dollars or more in a fiscal year in U.S. Government federal assistance are subject this audit requirement. Please refer to NOFO Page 23 & 24 for reference.
20. Re total Grant amount: Does the \$500,000 ceiling for the project has to include the cost share or a cost share can be added to the \$500,000?
Answer: The award ceiling amounts refer to the federal share of the award total.
21. Can you please clarify the confirmed youth age range? 18-25?
Answer: Applicants should propose a definition of youth that is specific to the country for which they are applying.

Country Specific Questions:

Qatar

1. What is the age group MEPI is targeting at this level?
Answer: Applicants may propose any age group to target.
2. Is there a possibility for co-sponsorship (MEPI to co-sponsor our project with another local sponsor)?
Answer: Applicants may propose partnerships. Partnerships may include cost-share, but should not that cost-share is not an evaluation criteria of this NOFO.

Lebanon

3. We intend to submit a project as part of a consortium of CSOs, our work would target mainly the regions of North Lebanon, South Lebanon, Bekaa, and Mount Lebanon (i.e. areas outside of the capital Beirut, especially marginalized areas and communities), in case we didn't target communities within Beirut, does this disqualify our project from being accepted?
Answer: As mentioned in the NOFO, applicants are encouraged to target all areas of Lebanon and not limited to one governorate. As long as more than one governorate is targeted, the proposal will not be technically disqualified for not abiding by the rules of the NOFO. Please refer to the Lebanon specific details in the NOFO.
4. Is a private, independent, non-profit, co-educational institution of higher learning based in Lebanon eligible to apply?
Answer: Yes they are eligible to apply.
5. Our organization is a not-for-profit organization with registered offices in Beirut, which acts as our operational headquarters, but with our initial registration in the UK. Do we qualify to apply for the grant?
Answer: Not-for-profit organizations registered in Lebanon are eligible to apply.
6. I am a Lebanese citizen who is graduated with a bachelor degree in accounting. I would like to know if I am capable to participate in this program and if yes, what is my next step?
Answer: The eligibility criteria for this NOFO does not include individuals. This NOFO targets registered civil society organizations, see page 18 of the NOFO.

Israel

7. Does this call take into account or reflect new administration policies regarding Israel and Palestine? In other words, does it consider projects in East Jerusalem to be Israel? Will accept rights-based projects that have Palestinians in the OPT (including East Jerusalem) as stakeholders?
Answer: Eligible applicants to this NOFO include organizations based (registered) in Israel with participants and activities limited to include those in Israel. For other possible funding to support your project, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem for information on other funding opportunities.

8. Our project trains social activists to promote issues of pluralism and equality in local municipalities. leaders. Would such an initiative be eligible to apply for a MEPI local grant?

Answer: If the project is addressing one of the four mission priorities listed for Israel, then you are eligible to apply. Please note that political campaigns are not eligible for funding from this opportunity.

9. Could [name redacted], make an application for relevant work focusing on and in partnership with the trans community?

Answer: If the project is addressing one of the four mission priorities listed for Israel, then you are eligible to apply.

10. Our organization has an established partnership with a section within the US Embassy; does that compromise our eligibility for a MEPI grant?

Answer: All eligible non-governmental organizations are eligible to apply.

11. Due to safety and sensitivity, we can request a waiver on the usage of U.S government icons, the MEPI logo, tags, Hashtags, etc. in our publications. However, if our grounds for waiver do not suffice, will it immediately disqualify our application, or will it be open for negotiation?

Answer: If selected for funding, branding may be negotiated with the Department of State. However, as stated in the NOFO awardees are expected to brand with the U.S. flag and MEPI logo.

12. Does [name redacted] that recently established a civil rights center in a Palestinian neighborhood in East Jerusalem whose population are permanent residents of the state of Israel, fit MEPI's grant strategy?

Answer: Eligible applicants to this NOFO include organizations based (registered) in Israel with participants and activities limited to include those in Israel. For other possible funding to support your project, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem for information on other funding opportunities.

13. Can we get an extension to the deadline to submit our application for this NOFO?

Answer: The NOFO will close on May 21. If there are any updates to this deadline it will be published on Grants.gov.

14. Are programs that involve Palestinians without Israeli citizenship in addition to Jewish and Arab/Palestinian citizens of Israel also eligible?

Answer: Eligible applicants to this NOFO include organizations based (registered) in Israel with participants and activities limited to include those in Israel. For other possible funding to support your project, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem for information on other funding opportunities.

15. Does job placement have to be part of the proposed program's components, taking place during the lifetime of the program and included in its targets and M&E plan? Or is it sufficient to demonstrate placement of past participants as a long-term result?

Answer: A strong application will include internships or job placement opportunities.

16. Is being an activist a criterion for the selection of participants? Or would it be eligible for example to target youth with leadership potential and build up their capacity for social entrepreneurship and social activism?

Answer: Applicants may propose any topic areas that fit within the priorities outlined for Israel; these examples fit within the priorities outlined.

17. Respective of the section on Israel, although the West Bank is not mentioned, is the West Bank included in programming allocated for Israel.

Answer: This NOFO only invites applications for projects in Israel. Projects proposed in the West Bank/Gaza will not be considered for funding.

18. Does this Statement: “target beneficiaries will be from periphery communities and disadvantaged groups, as well as relevant key policy figures.” mean that each program has to target both periphery and disadvantaged participants AND key policy figures? Or would one of these target groups be sufficient for a program to be eligible under the NOFO?

Answer: Proposals are not required to target both groups. A strong proposal will identify the target beneficiaries and explain the applicant’s rationale for its selection. In leadership-focused project, preference will be key policy figures.

19. What do you mean by "Must be registered with the Israeli Ministry of Justice"?

Answer: Applicants must be registered as a non-profit organization to be considered eligible.

20. In the NOFO, it is mentioned that the SF424 B is a requirement only for those who do not have a SAM registration. However, the SAM registration is a requirement for all applicants. Can you please clarify?

Answer: Due to systems limitations, Grants.gov requires organizations to submit the SF424B as part of the application package. As noted on Page 11, organizations that have received SAM.gov as of February 2, 2019 are not required to complete the SF424B form and may omit this document in their electronic email submission.

21. Will you accept rights-based projects that have Palestinians in the OPT (including East Jerusalem) as stakeholders?

Answer: Eligible applicants to this NOFO include organizations based (registered) in Israel with participants and activities limited to include those in Israel. For other possible funding to support your project, please contact the U.S. Embassy in Jerusalem for information on other funding opportunities.

Morocco

22. Does an organization requesting funding need to have a contact in the US to submit an application on its behalf or to benefit from MEPI funding?

Answer: As outlined on page 18 of the NOFO “Location Requirement: Only organizations that have an established local office in the country they propose to implement their project will be eligible to apply. Awards will be issued to the local office and not any partner or affiliate office that may be located outside of the country of implementation”. Applicants are not required to have a presence in the U.S.

Jordan

23. Can we apply as an INGO (HQ in Germany, Country Office Registration in Jordan) for this opportunity?

Answer: Yes, you can apply for this opportunity as long as your organization has an office and operations based in Jordan.

24. Kindly advise if our organization [name redacted] is eligible for this call and can apply as Leader for project proposal?

Answer: All Non-governmental are eligible to apply.

25. Investments and employment opportunities in the targeted governorates is very limited, can we submit our proposal to have two concepts?

A. Self-employment (Entrepreneurship)

B. Employment? Is this approved?

Answer: As long as the concept addresses the country specific priorities, both entrepreneurship and employment for youth in underprivileged areas can be submitted.

26. Can we include in our proposal vocational training for employment and self-employment (entrepreneurship)?

Answer: Vocational training and self-employment training that result in job or internship placement opportunities are eligible activities.

27. In MEPI Jordan local grant is not allowed to work in agriculture sector, can we recruit youth in this sector. Is it allowed to work with the agribusiness sector?

If it is approved to work with the agribusiness sector, can we work on employment and self-employment (Entrepreneurship) in this sector?

Answer: As noted in the NOFO agribusiness is not one of the areas supported by this NOFO.

28. Can we include in our proposal capacity building for CBOs and CSOs?

Answer: This is not one of the focus areas for Jordan. Please refer to the NOFO Jordan specific priorities.

29. Do all Jordan projects need to address both (1) improving communication, and (2) expanding opportunities for youth? Or is it acceptable for a Jordan project to focus only on the expanding economic opportunities part of the Country Priority paragraph?

Answer: Applicants are expected to address all priority areas, however all proposals will be considered.

Kuwait

30. There seems to be some vagueness regarding what kind of organization is eligible to be awarded MEPI local grants in Kuwait. What kind of organization can be awarded?

Answer: All non-governmental organizations are eligible to apply.