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# MEPI Alumni Connection

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MEPI



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## MEPI Leaders Grants Application Instructions Feb 2021

### Program Overview

During the uncertain times of the COVID-19 pandemic, community resilience is being challenged at every corner of the globe. With overwhelmed institutions, local activists are taking the stage to address the needs of their communities. MEPI Alumni are among these leaders across the Middle East and North Africa. Small grants for alumni will aid in their ability to take quick action on the ground. These fixed amount awards of \$500-3000 will support alumni in short-term efforts of 1-2 months in length. These grants will not only allow IREX and MEPI to help scale alumni efforts, but to also better track and report on their community engagement during and after this dynamic time. Alumni will be required to provide short reports on their activity and its impact.

### May 2021 MLG Timeline:

- Applications open: March 1<sup>st</sup> ,2021
- Applications Deadline: Monthly Basis, Depending on Available Funding
- Grant Award Recipients Announcement: Monthly Basis between
- Grant Period: 1-2 months
- Final Report Due: Two weeks from project completion

### Eligibility Requirements

Candidates will be considered without respect to race, color, religion, national origin, or gender. Persons with disabilities are strongly encouraged to apply. The MEPI Leaders Grants is a merit-based competition open to:

- MEPI Alumni in good standing, who have successfully fulfilled all requirements of previously awarded alumni grants and other USG opportunities, if applicable.
- MEPI Alumni who submit a complete application; collaborating with additional Team Members from MEPI or other DOS programs are encouraged but not required.
  - Upon selection, the MEPI Leaders Grants Awardee is responsible to IREX for all financial responsibilities and project deliverables including a completed Application, a signed Terms & Conditions of Participation (T&Cs), a Bank Wire Transfer Form, and a Final MEPI Leaders Grants Impact Report.
  - Any (optional) additional Team Members are responsible for following the rules and regulations of the MEPI Leaders Grants and working in collaboration with the MEPI Leaders Grants Awardee to implement their projects.
- The MEPI Leaders Grants Awardee and Team Member(s) (if any) must be current citizens of and currently reside in one of the following eligible countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Yemen.
- Individuals in the following circumstances are **NOT** eligible for the MEPI Alumni Grant:
- Individuals currently residing outside of the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Yemen. Note that Residents or Citizens of Egypt, United Arab Emirates, West Bank /Gaza, Libya, Syria, or Oman are not eligible.
- Local employees of the U.S. missions abroad who work for the U.S. Department of State are ineligible for grants during the period of their employment and for one year following the termination of employment.
- Current IREX employees and consultants and their immediate family members (spouses, parents, children, and siblings).
- Alumni are not eligible for another MEPI Leading Grant until all deliverables including reporting have been completed for any previous grant.

### **Selection Criteria**

Applications will be reviewed against the following selection criteria:

- Impact and responsiveness to an identified local need during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Clarity and feasibility of the project design. Project goals and proposed plan should be specific, measurable, and achievable within the 1-2-month timeframe.
- Transparency and reasonableness of budget. The budgetary lines should clearly showcase the needed expenses and how they lead towards the realization of the sought impact within the offered grant capacity limit.
- Relevance of monitoring, evaluation, and learning plan. Using smart tools to measure and highlight the success milestones, any lessons learned, or recommendations for future funding opportunities by using qualitative and/or quantitative monitoring, evaluation, and learning approaches (anecdotes, stories, surveys, focus groups, etc.).

Examples of eligible initiatives (other project ideas are encouraged):

- Software to improve online learning developed by alumni;
- Materials to support underserved community members in a local project responding to the crisis; and
- Resources to retrain-community members with skills learned through a MEPI Alumni Connection training such as L2D or Digital Storytelling.

Please Note: Activities related to purchasing medical equipment, medical assistance, or charity-based projects are not eligible activities for MLG funding.

### **Application Evaluation**

All received completed applications, will be evaluated competitively against the technical eligibility and selection criteria internally in consultancy with MEPI and U.S. Posts within the eligible countries on a rolling basis.

IREX reserves the right to verify all information included in the application. If there is a discrepancy, or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

All proposed projects selected for award must be reviewed and cleared by the U.S. Embassy to the proposed country of the project, prior to final selection.

### **Checking & Monitoring Requirements**

All MEPI Leaders Grants awardees will be required to adhere to at least one check-up call or any other monitoring process requirements by IREX during the award cycle.

## **Reporting Requirements**

All MEPI Leaders Grants awardees will be required to submit a Final MEPI Leaders Grants Impact Report to IREX within two weeks of project completion.