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, PDF files may be submitted. Directions for creating PDF files can be found on the Grants.gov website. 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 A.2 and Section A.3 of the RFA. **If the application exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.**

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

SF-424—Application for Federal Assistance

The SF-424—Application for Federal Assistance collects basic information on the applicant, the proposed project, the funding amount requested, and information about the announcement to which you are applying. Below, please find instructions on how to complete each of section of the form.

Instructions to Complete the SF-424 Form

Item #1—Type of Submission: Select "Application."

Item #2—Type of Application: Select "New."

Item #3 - #4—Date Received/Applicant Identifier: Leave blank.

Item #5a - #5b—Federal Entity Identifier/Federal Award Identifier: Leave blank.

Item #6 - #7—Date Received by State/State Application Identifier: Leave blank.

Item #8—Applicant Information:
8a – Input your organization's legal name.
8b – U.S. Organization: Enter your EIN or TIN as assigned by the IRS.
International organization: Enter "44-4444444."
8c – U.S. Organization: Enter your organization's DUNS number.
International organization: If you have a DUNs number, enter it here.
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.

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Item #9—Type of Applicant - Please select one of the following.
H. Public/State Controlled Institution of Higher Learning
M. Nonprofit
N. Private Institution of Higher Learning
P. For Profit
Q. Small Business
V. Non-domestic (non-US entity)
W. Other (Specify)

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

Item #11—Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number and Title: Input – "19.500" and the title is "Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)."

Item #12—Funding Opportunity Number and Title: Input the number and title provided in program announcement to which you are applying.

Item #13—Competition Identification Number and Title: Input the title provided in the program announcement to which you are applying.

Item #14—Areas Affected by Project: List country or countries where your organization proposes to perform its proposed activities. For applicants proposing regional programs please input "MENA region."

Item #15—Descriptive Title of Applicant's Project: Enter a brief descriptive title of your project.

Item #16—Congressional Districts
16a – Applicant:
U.S. Organization: Enter the congressional district of your organization.
International Organization: Enter "00-000."
16b – Program/Project:
U.S.-Based Program: Enter all the congressional districts affected by the program.
International Program (outside the U.S.): Enter "00-000."

Item #17—Proposed Project: Enter the proposed start date and end date of your project. 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 the amount of any Non-Federal (e.g. non-U.S. Government) resources that will be used to support the project. This includes cost sharing and matching.
18c-d –U.S. Organization: Enter any funding you are receiving from the State and Local governments for this project, if applicable.

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18e – Enter the total of all other costs. (Explain)
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. Do you owe the U.S. government money? Please select Yes/No. If yes, please provide an explanation.

Item # 21 – Authorized Representative: By checking box 21 and signing the SF-424, you are certifying that the information in the 424 form is complete and accurate to the best of you knowledge **and** that you agree to comply with the required assurances and certifications. 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. **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.

SF-424A—Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs

The SF-424a—Budget Information—Non-Construction Program provides information on the applicant's financial plan for carrying out the proposed project. Both the amount requested from MEPI and the cost-share amounts are to be included in the financial plan. A more detailed budget will be submitted through the Budget Narrative portion of your application. Below, please find instructions on how to complete each of section of the form.

Instructions to Complete the SF-424A Form

Below, please find instructions on how to complete each of section of the form. All the amounts that you will input into this form can be found in your Budget Narrative submission. It is recommended that you prepare your Budget Narrative and then complete the SF-424a form.

SECTION A—BUDGET SUMMARY

Line #1:

Column (a)—Grant Program Function or Activity: Input "Middle East Partnership Initiative"
Column (b)—Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance No: Input "19.500"
Column (c)—Estimated Unobligated Funds, Federal: Leave Blank
Column (d)—Estimated Unobligated Funds, Non-Federal: Leave Blank
Column (e)—New/Revised Budget, Federal: Enter the amount of Federal funding your organization is requesting.

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Column (f)—New/Revised Budget, Non-Federal: Enter the amount of Non-Federal (e.g. non-U.S. Government) funds that will be used to support the project.
Column (g)—New/Revised Budget, Total: Enter the total of Column E and Column F.

Lines #2-4, Columns (a)-(g): Leave Blank

Line #5:
Column (c)—Estimated Unobligated Funds, Federal: Input "$0.00."
Column (d)—Estimated Unobligated Funds, Non-Federal: Input "$0.00."
Column (e)—New/Revised Budget, Federal: Enter the amount from Line #1, Column (e)
Column (f)—New/Revised Budget, Non-Federal: Enter the amount from Line #1, Column (f).
Column (g)—New/Revised Budget, Total: Enter the amount from Line #1, Column (g).

SECTION B—BUDGET CATERGORIES

Line #6—Object Class Categories:
Column (1)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Input "Federal Cost (MEPI Cost)."
Column (2)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Input "Non-Federal Cost (Cost-Share)."
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.

Line #6.a—Personnel:
Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Personnel section of your Budget Narrative**.**
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Personnel section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.b—Fringe Benefits:
Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Fringe section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Fringe section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

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Line #6.c—Travel:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Travel section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Travel section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.d—Equipment:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Equipment section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Equipment section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.e—Supplies:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Supplies section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Supplies section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.f—Contractual:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Contractual section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Contractual section of your Budget Narrative**.**
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.g—Construction:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input "$0.00."
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input "$0.00."
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Input "$0.00."

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Line #6.h—Other:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input the Total Cost from the Other section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Other section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.i—Total Direct Charges:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Enter the total of Lines # 6.a thru #6.h in Column 1.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Enter the total of Lines #6.a thru #6.h in Column 2.
Column (3— Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.j—Indirect Charges:

Column (1)—Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Indirect section of your Budget Narrative**.**
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input the Total Cost from the Indirect section of your Budget Narrative.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #6.k—TOTALS:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Enter the total of Lines #6.i thru #6.j in Column 1.
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Enter the total Lines #6.i thru #6.j in Column 2.
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Enter the Total of Column 1 and 2.

Line #7—Program Income:

Column (1)—Federal Cost: Input "$0.00."
Column (2)—Non-Federal Costs: Input "$0.00."
Column (3)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (4)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Leave Blank.
Column (5)—Grant Program, Function, or Activity: Input "$0.00."

SECTION C—NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES

Line #8:

Column (a)—Grant Program: Input "Middle East Partnership Initiative."
Column (b)—Applicant: Enter total of #Line 6.k, Column 1 in Section B.
Columns (c) & (d): Leave Blank.

Column (e)—Totals: Enter Total from Column (b).

Lines #9-11, Columns (a)-(e): Leave Blank.

Line #12:
Column (b)—Applicant: Enter amount from of Line #7, Column (b).
Columns (c) & (d): Leave Blank.
Column (e)—Totals: Enter Total from Column (b)—Applicant.

SECTION D—Forecasted Cash Needs

Leave this entire section blank.

SECTION E—Budget Estimates for Federal Funds Needed for Balance of the Project

Leave this entire section blank.

SECTION F—Other Budget Information

Line #21—Direct Charges: Enter total from Line #6.i, Column 5 in Section B.

Line #22—Indirect Charges: Enter total from Line #6.j, Column 5 in Section B.

Line #23—Remarks: Add any additional comments you wish to make.

SF-424B—Assurances—Non-Construction Programs

The SF-424B—Assurances—Non-Constrcution Programs sets forth certain requirements that an application must certify that they will comply if a grant is awarded.

The form should be reviewed and signed by the Authorized Organization Representative.

Certification and Assurances—Foreign-based Organizations and Public International Organizations

TERRORISM -Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions Who Commit, Threaten To Commit, or Support Terrorism, Executive Order 13224: Executive Order 13224 designated 27 individuals and entities that commit or pose a significant risk of committing terrorist acts and authorized the Secretary of State to designate additional individuals and entities.

The recipients are reminded that U.S. Executive Order and U.S. laws prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, individuals and organizations associated with

terrorism. It is the legal responsibility of the recipient/contractor to ensure compliance with these Executive Orders and laws.

HOST COUNTRY LAWS (for non-US NGOs): The recipient's employees shall maintain private status and may not rely on local U.S. Government offices or facilities for support while under this recipient.

The sale of personal property or automobiles by recipient employees and their dependents in the foreign country to which they are assigned shall be subject to the same limitations and prohibitions which apply to direct-hire Department of State personnel employed by the Mission, except as this may conflict with host government regulations.

Other than work to be performed under this award for which an employee is assigned by the recipient, no employee of the recipient shall engage directly or indirectly, either in the individual's own name or in the name or through an agency of another person, in any business, profession, or occupation in the foreign countries to which the individual is assigned, nor shall the individual make loans or investments to or in any business, profession, or occupation in the foreign countries to which the individual is assigned.

The recipient's employees, while in a foreign country, are expected to show respect for its convention, customs, and institutions, to abide by its applicable laws and regulations, and not to interfere in its internal political affairs.

In the event the conduct of any recipient employee is not in accordance with the preceding paragraphs, the recipient's chief of party shall consult with the Department of State Mission Director and the employee involved, and shall recommend to the recipient a course of action with regard to such employee.

The parties recognize the rights of the U.S. Ambassador to direct the removal from a country of any U.S. citizen or the discharge from this award of any third country national when, in the discretion of the Ambassador, the interests of the United States so require.

HOST COUNTRY LAWS (for PIOs): Member states of a PIO must respect the independence of the PIO, and the integrity of its operations within the framework of its charter. It is a general policy principle that PIOs, composed of many member nations, are not expected to subject their books and records to inspection by officials of each country participating in the organization. Accordingly, Department of State generally relies on the international organization's management and its internal auditing and procurement policies and procedures.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION: With regard to religious persecution in particular, the recipient must ensure that its personnel take into account in their work the considerations reflected in the International Religious Freedom Act concerning country-specific conditions, the right to freedom of religion, methods of religious persecution practiced in foreign countries, and applicable distinctions within a country between the nature of and treatment of various religious practices and believers.

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LIABILITY: The recipient shall hold and save the Government, its officers, agents and employees. harmless from all liability of any nature or kind, including costs and expenses, for or on account of any or all suits for damage sustained by any person or persons or property by virtue of performance of this award.

PROTOCOL AND DECORUM: During the term of this award, the recipient will be associated with the Government in such a manner that the recipient's actions will reflect upon the Government and the United States. Therefore, the recipient will be responsible to the U.S. Public Affairs Counselor in charge regarding protocol and decorum at all times.

LOBBYING RESTRICTION: The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by this agreement shall be used by the recipient for lobbying or propaganda which is directed at influencing public policy decisions of the Government of the United States or any State or locality thereof. This provision shall not be construed so as to abridge the right of any recipient to exercise the same freedom of speech as is protected by the first article of amendment of the United States Constitution, so long as such recipient does not use funds provided under this award in exercising such right.

CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES: By acceptance of this award and any assistance (payment) hereunder, the recipient certifies that the recipient will not engage in the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance during performance of the award.

DEBARMENT AND SUSPENSION: You must comply with requirements regarding Debarment and suspension in Subpart C of 2 CFR part 180, as adopted by the Arts Endowment in Title 2 CFR, Chapter 32, and Part 3254. There are circumstances under which we may receive information concerning your fitness to carry out a project and administer Federal funds--for instance:

- Conviction of, or a civil judgment for, the commission of fraud, embezzlement, theft, forgery, making false statements;
- Any other offense indicating a lack of business integrity or business honesty that seriously and directly affects your present responsibility; or
- Any other cause of so serious or compelling a nature that it affects an organization's present responsibility. In these circumstances, we may need to act quickly to protect the interest of the government by suspending your funding while we undertake an investigation of the specific facts. We may coordinate our suspension actions with other Federal agencies that may have an interest in our findings. A suspension may result in your debarment from receiving Federal funding government-wide for up to three years.

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Project Narrative

The Project Narrative must be a separate document in the electronic submission on Grants.gov or via email. 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.

The **Proposal Narrative** should:

Results and Benefits

- Clearly identify the anticipated beneficiaries and describe the results to be accomplished realistically within the timeframe of the award.
- Demonstrate the ability to measure results against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward the MEPI goals and objectives described in the program announcement.
- Provide a results monitoring and evaluation plan (a.k.a ROMA Plan) that focuses on outcomes and impact of programmatic activities, and uses measurable and qualitative indicators that are specific to the context and length of project. **NOTE:** More information about preparing a ROMA Plan can be found in Part III—Eligibility Information and Appendix 4 above.
- Describe how results and impact will be sustained following the completion of the project. **NOTE:** More information about developing a sustainability plan can be found in Part III—Eligibility Information above;
- If any component of the proposed plan relies on information from external studies or resources, be sure to provide complete references using footnotes or endnotes.

Approach:

- Clearly describe how the project will address the requested program area.
- Describes an innovative strategy or plan specific to the program announcement and to the location(s) and context(s) where proposing to work.
- Describe in detail how the approach is innovative and impactful, how project content is locally-driven and relevant, and how the project complements and does not duplicate existing efforts toward similar goals.
- Describe how the proposed project does not meet needs and opportunities not already addressed by current donor funding.
- Consider presenting ideas that leverage existing social, community, or regional networks, whether on- or offline, to promote sustained civic participation.
- Describe any unusual features of the project such as design or technological innovations, geographical reach, reductions in cost or time, the targeting of underrepresented groups, or extraordinary social and community involvement;
- Cite factors that might accelerate or decelerate the work and state reasons for taking the proposed approach rather than alternatives;

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Organizational Capacity:

- Demonstrate the experience and capacity to work with and engage institutions, organizations, and leaders in the MENA region.
- Provide a description of existing or potential partnerships with specific organizations and beneficiaries and an indication of the partners' support for proposed activities. Detail the rationale for the consortia, each partner's respective role, and how the coalition will enhance the progress towards achieving MEPI goals in the stated program areas of competency. **NOTE:** Letters of Intent or Agreement for cooperating partners should be included as a separate attachment in the appendices. More information about what constitutes a partner can be found in Part III—Eligibility Information above;

Staff and Specifications:

- Describe the role and qualifications of each key person, whether staff, partner, consultant, or volunteer in a biographical sketch
- Provide a job description for each open key position.
- Clearly describe any key positions to be advertised post-award and provide short description of hiring credentials

Page Limit allowed for Project Narrative: The Project Narrative may not exceed 15 pages. **If the Project Narrative exceeds the page limit, the extra pages will be removed from the application package.**

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Budget Narrative

The Budget Narrative must be a separate document in the electronic submission on Grants.gov or via email. A sample template can be found in Appendix 2. **NOTE: Applicants must use the same format as found in the sample.** 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).

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, any cost-sharing, 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, whether supported by grant funds or match funds, 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. All consultants require prior approval from MEPI.

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.

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

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 projected, 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).

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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.

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).

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Budget Narrative Sample Template

The Budget Narrative Sample Template--Appendix 2 provides examples of possible costs. Applicants should revise the template to reflect the costs associated with their proposed activities. In addition, applicants should remove any descriptions within the document and replace it with their cost 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;
- Budget categories should be clearly labeled and identified;
- The use of "miscellaneous expenses" 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?

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?

MEPI Application Cover Sheet

The Cover Sheet provides summary detail about the applicant and their proposed activities. A sample template can be found in Appendix 1. **If using the template, the information in blue text should be deleted prior to submitting this document. NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample.

If using the sample template, the Cover Sheet should be filled out in its entirety. Under the *Executive Summary* header, please provide a brief summary of the proposed project (e.g., This project will…). An applicant's summary should include a brief description of the project objectives, intended results, beneficiaries, and general plan of action.

The Coversheet should be a separate document. If submitting an application through Grants.gov, the Coversheet can be included as Attachment #1 under the "Optional Documents for Submission" field of the application package.

Page Limit allowed for MEPI Application Coversheet Executive Summary: The executive summary portion of the Coversheet may not exceed one page (with the blue text removed).

Applicant Organization Information

The Applicant Organizational Information 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. A sample template can be found in Appendix 3. **NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample.

The Applicant Organization Information should be a separate document. If submitting an application through Grants.gov, the Coversheet can be included as Attachment #2 under the "Optional Documents for Submission" field of the application package.

Preparing an Application for Funding

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:

- **Disclosure for Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL)**
- **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.
- **Sustainability Plan.** Guidance on preparing a Sustainability Plan can be found in Part III, Section D.2 of the RFA. Sustainability plans should not exceed two pages.
- **Results-Oriented Monitoring and Assessment Plan.** Guidance on preparing a ROMA plan can be found in Part III, Section D.3 and in Appendix 4 of the RFA. ROMA plans should not exceed five pages.
- **Organizational Chart** outlining clear lines of responsibility and authority in the applicant organization.
- **Letters of Agreement** or Letters of Intent from proposed partners.
- **Work Plans, Project Timeline, Calendar of Activities—**A work plan is a detailed list of proposed activities, milestones, and approximate dates. You may choose to include a work plan, project timeline, and/or calendar of proposed activities.
- **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: Theses additional document may not exceed 15 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).