

U. S. Institute of Peace
Grant Competition
Enhancing Positive Relations and Mitigating Tensions between Syrian Refugees and Host Communities

Background

Entering its fifth year of conflict, Syria continues to suffer a devastating humanitarian crisis with over 250,000 deaths and \$119 billion dollars in losses to its national economy according to reports by the United Nations. The conflict has also resulted in over 4.4 million Syrian refugees - including 1.1 million children – who have fled across the borders into neighboring Lebanon, Turkey, Jordan and Iraq. A few hundred thousand have fled to more distant countries like Greece, Germany and Sweden and have become refugees there, in addition to 7.6 million internally displaced people. Millions more have been left in poor living conditions with shortages of food and drinking water. Additionally, the country’s internal infrastructure has been shattered and basic public services such as health and education have been compromised. Estimates from leading humanitarian organizations state that there are nearly three million children out of school putting the country at a risk of losing an entire generation to the conflict.

In the midst of this conflict, a number of Syrian civil society organizations (CSOs) have initiated programs with the goal to alleviate some of the humanitarian stress as well as preserve social cohesion, but have had limited impact beyond the immediate humanitarian aid. This is due to a number of reasons, but mainly: lack of resources, limited capacity of CSOs to implement programs and compete for funds, and the challenging security situation and continuation of violence which hinder CSO’s ability to function effectively.

USIP’s program goals in Syria seek to mitigate and prevent the flare up of preventable conflicts in the short run, and in the long run contribute to the formation and acceptance of alternatives to violence along all levels of Syrian society. In that scope, USIP will support peacebuilding initiatives led by CSOs, strengthen their capacity in providing immediate services to their communities, as well as build their institutional structures in support of stable and accountable governance structures in a post-conflict Syria.

As importantly USIP seeks to address the relationship between local government and civil society actors and their communities, with the aim to strengthen their role as facilitators and conveners in their respective communities and/or constituencies.

Call for Concept Notes

The USIP call for concept notes on “Social Stabilization in Syria” falls under the grantmaking program of USIP’s Middle East and Africa Center (MEA). It is designed to support peacebuilding and conflict resolution programs in the Middle East and Africa. Priority will be given to local organizations, though U.S. and international organizations and universities with a strong history of work in Syria may also apply. USIP supports both research projects and initiatives that focus on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, conflict prevention, community resilience, and countering violent extremism.

Project Priorities:

USIP will accept project proposals that address mitigating tensions between refugees and their host communities in Lebanon and Jordan. The overarching goal of this initiative is to engage the refugees with their host community in a productive dialogue that can yield into mutual cooperation mechanisms, find solutions that are satisfactory to both sides, in addition to building local capacities of both communities in order to prevent future conflicts.

Eligibility and Guidance:

1. Non-profit and academic institutions are eligible to apply for funding, provided that they are duly registered organizations with demonstrated capacity to manage USG funding. Private sector for-profit organizations are not eligible to apply for USIP funding. USIP is unable to provide funding to individuals. Applicant organizations must be able to demonstrate that they have sufficient personnel and organizational capacity in the area where the project would be implemented.
2. Support cannot be provided to government agencies or to individuals working for government agencies.
3. Current USIP grantees are not eligible to apply. Individuals working as USIP contractors may or may not be eligible to apply depending on the nature of the contract.
4. An organization can only submit one proposal for each individual call for proposals. Applicants can submit proposals for more than one call for proposals at a time, but they must clearly indicate doing so in all applications. Proposals submitted to multiple calls must ensure that as long as project personnel do not work on more than one project.
5. The Institute of Peace does not provide funds for the creation of a new organization, for the construction or maintenance of an office, for direct social services, or for microenterprise projects.
6. Funding is not available for degree work (payment of tuition fees or support for M.A. or Ph.D.-related work). Requests for dissertation research support should be directed to USIP's Jennings Randolph Peace Scholar Dissertation Program.
7. Applications that list as participants, consultants, or project personnel members of USIP's Board of Directors, staff or fellows will not be accepted.
8. Any application that lists USIP as a collaborator in the project will not be accepted for review.
9. The Institute does not provide funds to support the establishment of a new organization. Organizations may only seek funds for a specific project, and the applying organization must already be properly registered with the relevant authorities. Please read the entire Application process and Frequently Asked Questions "FAQ" sections for detailed information on whether you are eligible to apply.

How to Apply

This Call for Proposals involves a two-step application process. The first step in the process is to submit a mandatory concept note. **Please use the sample concept note form. Concept notes**

should be no longer than 3 pages. The concept note template will guide you through the process and help you formulate your proposal narrative in the following sections:

- 1) How the proposed project will contribute to the themes discussed above in the priorities;
- 2) The goals of the project and the activities that will be implemented;
- 3) The qualifications of the organization and the project team;
- 4) How the project will be monitored and evaluated; and
- 5) The estimated cost of the project. (A full budget is not necessary)

Concept Notes should be submitted to the menagrants@usip.org. At the top of the concept note and within the body of the email, please provide the name of the implementing organization, the name of the contact person, and the email address and telephone number of the contact person.

After a review of the concept notes, a select number of applicants will be contacted and asked to submit a full proposal. USIP Grants staff will provide the application forms.

Timeline:

May 2016 Notification

1. **Concept Notes:** Concept notes may be submitted beginning immediately, and will be considered as they arrive. **The deadline for submitting concept notes is Friday January 22, 2016.**
2. **Proposals:** We will invite selected applicants to develop their concept note into a full application by **February 1, 2016, and full applications will be due no later than February 29, 2015.**

Final award notification is announced on **May 27, 2016**. Please feel free to be in touch with specific questions or for additional information as you submit concept notes. **Do not submit a full application unless you have been invited to do so. USIP will not review unsolicited applications.** All submissions will receive a response. You may submit your questions to menagrants@usip.org.

Proposal Guidance Stronger project proposals will include or reflect:

- A clearly articulated link to USIP's conflict resolution and peacebuilding mandate.
- An adherence to the geographic and thematic focus specified in the Project priorities section.
- A demonstrated-awareness of previous and current related work being implemented by other organizations, and an explanation of how the proposed project offers a unique contribution.
- A well-developed project logic, with clearly-defined objectives aligning with the problem to be addressed, and clearly-defined activities that relate to the objectives. Special attention should be given to the results and anticipated impacts of the project.

- A demonstrated- organizational capacity and, where relevant, personnel based in the countries where the grant funds are being applied.
- A demonstrated- awareness of possible risks and security challenges, as well as strategies to mitigate them.
- A thoughtful monitoring and evaluation plan that will provide evidence on whether the project achieved its objectives.
- A demonstrated- ability to engage men and women equally in their programing as appropriate to the scope of the project.

Funding

Subject to available funding, current plans for this solicitation are as follows:

- Total funding Allocation: \$125,000
- Number of projects funded: 3-5
- Grant range: \$25,000 (minimum) to \$50,000 (maximum)

Final decisions regarding funding will be made by the United States Institute of Peace Board of Directors. If you have any questions, please email Raya Barazanji at rbarazanji@usip.org. Please note that concept notes should only be submitted to the address menagrants@usip.org.

About the United States Institute of Peace

The United States Institute of Peace is an independent, nonpartisan institution established and funded by Congress to increase the nation's capacity to manage international conflict without violence. To learn more, please visit www.usip.org.