

**U. S. Institute of Peace
Grant Competition
Call for Proposals
Promoting Youth Engagement and Countering Violent Extremism
in Libya and Tunisia**

Background

Since the fall of the regimes of Bin Ali in Tunisia and Gaddafi in Libya, youth roles and engagement in the public sphere of the two countries have changed from abstention to heavy-handed activism. While many factors played into this paradigm shift, high rates of unemployment among youth, particularly those with higher education, can be considered as a key factor. Another important factor, is widespread notions among youth that socio-economic discrepancies which exist in different parts of their country (whether interior vs. the coast in Tunisia, or the East vs. West in Libya), can be mitigated through intensified civic activism. Combined with the search for a place in society in which their participation are taken into account, and their dignity is safeguarded, youth groups are becoming more vocal in advocating for peaceful political transitions and progressive economic reforms.

Against this trend, another trend of youth activism has also taken rise in the public arena, but in the form of violent extremist groups. These are often linked to terrorist networks and blamed for religiously motivated criminal attacks. Despite clamping down by the public authorities on these groups, they are still finding ways to carry out their attacks, strengthening their bases and expanding their networks through social media and cyber-recruitment. Young men and women recruits are attracted to these groups' radical ideologies because they often manifest themselves as an overall framework for a "way of life" that can absorb youth's frustrations and struggle with their notions of unjust and morally corrupt state.

With the rise of terrorist attacks in Libya and Tunisia, and the spread of the militant ideology of the so-called Islamic State, local authorities, civil society organizations and youth groups are increasingly faced with the challenge to counter violent extremists' narratives in their societies.

Description

USIP programmatic and analytical engagement in North Africa centers on the Institute's program mission to build the capacity of local actors and institutions to prevent, mitigate, and manage conflict through integrated approaches and partnerships. Given USIP's dedication to the creation of sustainable civil society institutions capable of creating platforms for engagement in community processes and dialogue on issues critical to transition, conflict management, and peacebuilding, USIP will support targeted grant-making to civil society partners working on those issues.

USIP seeks to deepen the impact of current interventions centered on community dialogue to counter violent extremism through targeted engagement of youth. As a growing need expressed by USIP staff and partners, this is an area of programming that brings together components of conflict prevention, countering extremist violence, and engagement of marginalized youth.

Call for Concept Notes

The USIP call for concept notes on “Promoting Youth Engagement and Countering Violent Extremism in Libya and Tunisia” 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 Tunisia and Libya may also apply. USIP supports both research projects and initiatives that focus on peacebuilding, conflict resolution, conflict prevention, community resilience, and countering violent extremism. This Call for Proposals is also available in **Arabic** and **French**.

Project Priorities:

USIP will accept project proposals that address the overall program priority of promoting youth engagement and countering violent extremism, with the following specific objectives:

1. Building capacity for conflict resolution and conflict prevention among local youth groups, university student unions, with special focus on disadvantaged areas.
2. Strengthening youth engagement in the public sphere and active civic participation.
3. Engaging religious leaders and other key stakeholders to promote non-violent activism and enhance community resilience.
4. Countering violent extremism in society through the promotion of non-violent approaches and action frameworks.

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. of 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. Any application that lists USIP as a collaborator in the project's activities will not be accepted for review.
8. 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:

September 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 Thursday March 31, 2016.**
2. **Proposals:** we will invite selected applicants to develop their concept note into a full application by **April 20, 2016**, and full applications will be due no later than **May 20, 2016**.

Final award notification is announced on **September 9, 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.
- 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.
- 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: \$15,000 (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.