



US-IRAQ HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS (HEP)

2017 SMALL GRANTS

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 17, 2016

Supported by the U.S. Embassy, Baghdad

1. OVERVIEW OF THE US-IRAQ HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS (HEP)

The US-Iraq Higher Education Partnerships (HEP) promotes higher education reform in Iraq. Through the HEP, Iraqi universities engage with the global community and catalyze social, political, and economic development in Iraq. Through capacity building activities within the HEP, Iraqi faculty become better equipped to conduct ongoing curriculum review while raising the standard of their curriculum to model internationally recognized accreditation standards. Previously, the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad contributed to strengthening Iraqi universities through its focus on partnerships and linkages to U.S. universities as part of the University Linkages Program.

To further build on this foundation of cultural understanding and capacity building, IREX is pleased to announce a second round of the Higher Education Partnerships small grant program. Under the HEP, all public and private universities under auspices of the Iraqi and KRG Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research are invited to apply.

These small grants will support creative ideas that build sustainable relationships between Iraqi and U.S. universities to focus on priority areas for Iraqi higher education. Grants will provide seed funding for U.S. and Iraqi partners to develop longer term relationships and partnerships.

Call for Applications:

Applicants are invited to develop a project that will be completed within 6-12 months. Applicants can request from **\$5,000 to \$45,000** for the project. Grants receiving higher amounts of funding must show broad impact for multiple beneficiaries. **IREX reserves the right to suggest alterations to an applicant's budget or to fund some, but not all, components of an application.**

Possible areas of focus for collaboration for this grant:

- Capacity building in faculty instructional strategies in a specific academic department
- Review and update the curriculum for a specific degree program
- University Administration
- Industry Engagement
- Collaborative research projects, particularly in STEM fields;
- Capacity building in English language teaching and learning
- Establishment of distance learning programs
- Development of information systems to establish digital record keeping;
- Modernization of libraries and publication resources
- Development of career advisory services on campuses
- Counseling and intervention services on campuses for victims of violence and other psychological distress
- Initiatives to promote tolerance and peaceful activities on campuses;
- Activities to build youth-based approaches to countering violent extremism

2. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must hold a full-time position as a faculty or administrator at one of the eligible public or private universities in Iraq. Previous HEP or ULP Small Grants recipients are eligible to apply, but priority will be given to applicants who have not previously participated in the HEP or ULP.

All public and private universities under auspices of the Iraqi and KRG Ministries of Higher Education and Scientific Research are eligible to apply.

Current IREX employees and consultants and their immediate family members (spouses, parents, children, and siblings) are not eligible to compete in any IREX-administered grant programs, either as individuals or as the responsible party representing an institutional applicant.

3. PROGRAM DATES

Proposals with required documents due **November 17, 2016**. Upon completion of the first round of awards, IREX will accept additional proposals on a rolling basis until the program end or funds are exhausted. Program dates will fluctuate based upon the project's timeline. IREX reserves the right to alter an applicant's timeline.

<u>November 17, 2016:</u>	First deadline for submission of applications
<u>November-December, 2016:</u>	Selection committee reviews, evaluates, and selects finalists
<u>December 2016:</u>	Short listed projects respond to follow up questions and requests for information
<u>January 2017:</u>	Grant awards announced
<u>February 2017:</u>	US partnerships formed and final program design discussions
<u>March 2017:</u>	Program implementation
<u>February 2018:</u>	Program activities conclude

4. SELECTION CRITERIA

The following criteria will be evaluated:

- Feasibility of project and timeline
- Clearly written and described proposal in English
- Clearly identified outcomes and measures of success of the project
- Thoroughness and relevance of applicant's answers to application questions
- Demonstrated investment in innovation and reform, especially around the application topic
- Commitment from parties needed to execute the project, including department heads, dean, and the Iraqi university president
- Financial soundness, including a clearly described budget with real and necessary costs
- Capacity and availability of key staff to work collaboratively with U.S. partners
- Project sustainability

IREX encourages applicants to contact IREX with questions regarding the HEP Project grant application. IREX staff will review and comment on the application drafts until 2 weeks prior to the deadline. To receive feedback or comments on your application, please email the draft to hep-iraq@irex.org.

5. APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

- In the application, each project should have clearly identified benchmarks and measurable signs of progress. The application and budget should clearly identify specific, realistic cost estimates related to project products, such as training materials, travel, or consulting fees.
- Read all instruction and information carefully before filling out the application form
- All forms must be completed in English and must be typed
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted
- Submit an electronic copy of the application to IREX/Washington by sending an e-mail with **all attachments to hep-iraq@irex.org by Thursday, November 17, 2015.**

In addition to the Application Form the following documents must be attached electronically:

A) Budget (Please see example budget document) REQUIRED

All applications must include a completed budget outlining costs of the grant project. All budget information submitted with the application should be in U.S. dollars and the exchange rate used for calculation should be included.

The budget form must include all projected expenses for the grant activities, including the requested amount under this grant and any cost sharing contributions.

Cost sharing is highly encouraged. Cost share is contributions from your university or third parties that can be counted toward the project budget. This typically include things such as donations of room rental, office supplies, salaries, and the use of funds from a different grant or funding source to cover costs associated with the project. Volunteer or reduced-rate services furnished by others can also be considered as cost share.

Allowable expenses under this grant include:

- costs for training for Iraqi faculty in the U.S.,
- travel costs for U.S. or Iraqi faculty or administrators for participation in joint training, research or other activities that have a clear and direct result benefiting more than the individual participants
- limited event costs for workshops for Iraqi students, faculty, and staff that build upon HEP activities
- consulting fees for U.S. faculty whose services are requested by Iraqi partners
- other costs will be considered based on the scope of the project

Non-allowable expenses under this grant include:

- office space
- university faculty and staff salaries
- equipment/software purchases that do not support changes in curriculum or instructional methods
- other overhead and indirect costs.

Based on the comments of the selection committee, IREX reserves the right to alter an applicant's budget or to fund some, but not all, components of an application.

B) Workplan REQUIRED

The workplan includes when and how the different parts of the project will be completed, and who will be responsible for each component. Training dates, consulting dates, visa application dates, and travel dates should be included in the timeline.

C) Resumes/CV REQUIRED

Resumes for the primary faculty member who will be working on the project should be attached as part of the application. Resumes must be submitted in English or accompanied by an English translation.

D) Letter of Support from university president/vice chancellor REQUIRED

A letter of support from the Iraqi university president/vice chancellor will be required with the application. The letter of support should indicate that the proposal has the institutional backing necessary for successful completion. Letters must be accompanied by an English translation.

E) Letter of Support from Dean

A letter of support from the dean representing the applicant's department or college will be required with the application. The letter of support should indicate that the proposal has department and/or college backing necessary for successful completion. Letters must be accompanied by an English translation.

6. U.S. PARTNERSHIP INFORMATION

Applicants are not required to identify a U.S. university partner. IREX will assist in matching U.S./Iraqi universities to form the small grants partnerships and provide coaching for institutions as needed.

However, if the applicant has an existing relationship with a U.S. university and would like to partner with this university specifically, then the applicant should list the U.S. university in the application (under Project Collaborators”).

7. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Program and Financial Reports

All grant recipients will be required to submit program and financial reports. The financial report will detail expenses through the completion of the project. The project report will detail the progress and results of the project through the end as they relate to the established outcomes and activities as indicated in the project application. In addition to the reports, IREX reserves the right to conduct a project site evaluation at the recipient’s university.

Taxes

Some countries consider a grant from a non-commercial organization to be taxable income. Grant recipients are responsible for all taxes or bank processing/wiring fees incurred from the receipt of a HEP Project Grant. Taxes and bank processing/wiring fees may be included in the project budget, IREX will advise for U.S. based tax information.

Method of Grant Payment

Recipients of the Project Grants will receive award funds in a variety of methods including direct payment of expenses from IREX/Washington or IREX/Iraq, cost reimbursable invoices, or limited wire transfers from IREX/Washington. Grantees will be required to provide full documentation including invoices, bank information, etc. along with the Terms and Conditions.

All sections of the application must be submitted electronically and supporting documentation must be emailed to hep-iraq@irex.org by the submission deadline. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

IREX reserves the right to verify all of the information indicated in the application. In the event that there is a discrepancy, or information is found to be false, the application will immediately be declared invalid and the applicant ineligible.

If you have questions about the fellowship opportunity or application submission, please contact HEP program staff directly at hep-iraq@irex.org