U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
DIPLOMACY IN ACTION

MEPI: Application Cover Sheet

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
OFFICE OF THE MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE (NEA/PI)
APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Applicant/Primary Implementer: The Ascenders - University of New Mexico	
Coalition Partner(s) *(local or regional, if any)***:** Skateistan; The School of Leadership (SOLA)	
Countries Affected by Project: Afghanistan	

Funding Opportunity Title: The Ascenders Project	**Funding Opportunity Close Date:** October 23, 2019
Total Estimated Funding for Project: $500,000	**Proposed Start and End Date for Project:** January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2022

FOR MEPI USE ONLY:

Application Number:	
Rank Order:	**Average Score:**

Executive Summary:

Please summarize the proposed project in the space below. Please describe the project activity or phases, the intended audience, the project milestones, and the intended results. The summary should be no more than two pages.

ASCENDERS PROJECT: EMPOWERING YOUNG WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN TO REACH NEW HEIGHTS IN LEARNING

December 7, 2018

ABSTRACT

This project aims to empower young women by encouraging them to engage in education through the use of technology and social networks. Students will be mentored on video blog and podcast development, taught how to use tablets, GoPro cameras, software editing, and encouraged to share their personal stories via podcasts and video diaries on social network platforms. By partnering with an Afghan run private boarding school and local NGOs, we will be able to provide additional, scalable learning opportunities for young girls, and a space for brothers and fathers to advocate for women's inclusion in education.

The Ascenders

Group 3, Module 2: OILS 536

Contents

Introduction

Afghanistan has a history of patriarchal rule that emphasizes the need for young boys to be educated, while young women have historically been required to focus on domestic tasks. This is especially true in rural and remote areas of the country. Introduce Source: Since 2001, the United States andAfghanistan have been at war, a 17-year conflict that has only complicated providing educational services and basic necessities to the Afghan population ("I Won't Be a Doctor," 2017). Nearly one-third of children had not attended school at the beginning of the year in 2017, three-quarters of whom were girls. This was largely due to the increased presence of the Taliban in the region, which forbids educating women. Introduce Source: Young girls face impending violence if caught by the Taliban on their way to school, and the lack of educated women has led to a shortage in qualified teachers ("Education in Afghanistan," 2017).

In spite of the ongoing conflict and changes in governmental rule, innovative strategies have taken hold in the country to ensure that more children are able to have access to education. By engaging organizations and schools who are already embedded within the communities in Afghanistan, this project aims to reach a larger audience of Afghan children interested in learning by engaging them in technology literacy programs. Through diligent, thoughtful cultural engagement, we believe information and communication technologies (ICT) can enhance learning opportunities and ultimately provide an empowered youth with new skills to build a more stable economy and equitable society.

Program Design & Cultural Inclusivity

This partnership will work to use innovative media to encourage engagement between Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) focused on youth outreach and provide young girls with the opportunity to share their stories with the public, both within their own country and across borders. It will do so while being mindful of unique cultural and economic barriers and challenges. The overarching goal of this project is to increase access to educational platforms for young Afghan youth to learn how to read and use ICT to build knowledge and become active members of society. This is especially poignant for young women. Currently, if an Afghan girl is allowed to attend school, "[s]he has to compensate for her absence. She must be diligent and attentive in cooking, cleaning and looking after her younger siblings to prove she has not gotten

any bad ideas at school that would cause her to act any differently. A small slip-up in her household duties could cost her schooling" (TEDxInstitutLeRosey, 2017, 4:37). Although this project will engage youth of both genders, the focus will be on educating and empowering Afghani girls.

By engaging with culturally literate institutions in the region, as well as cultural consultants knowledgeable in Afghan/US relations and communication styles, such as the non-profit Afghan Coalition, this project will be able to foster deeper engagement with youth already familiar with education programs. This will also enable the project to reach a larger audience through the implementation of ICTs and distance learning techniques. We propose to partner with The School of Leadership (SOLA), a private boarding school that encourages critical thinking and civic engagement, as well as a non-governmental (NGO) organization called Skateistan that focuses on youth empowerment and uses skateboarding to effectively connect with Afghan youth. The University of New Mexico will facilitate cross-cultural connections between the US based consultants and Afghanistan based sites, as well as provide instructional design and technical assistance. Through first person narrative storytelling, students will experience the world of cinematic cultural storytelling through their mentorship with the Experiments in Cinema Film Festival.

Project Partners

- **The University of New Mexico (UNM), Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA:**
  - Organizational, Information and Learning Sciences (OILS) is an interdisciplinary program at University of New Mexico out of the Library Department that focuses on adult learning, instructional design and technologies, as well as teaching distance education and eLearning/mLearning capabilities (UNM OILS, 2018). The OILS program will design learning activities and work with local contacts to ensure translation, content, and timelines are maintained. This project will engage faculty and graduate students.

  - Department of Cinematic Arts (DCA) at the University will engage UNM faculty and students to provide lessons and techniques in developing storytelling through accessible video technology, such as mobile media devices.

- o Information Technology (UNM IT) will provide technical support for program design and implementation.

- **Experiments in Cinema (EIC): A Celebration of International Cinematic Experimentation, Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA:** EIC will mentor engaged youth in video storytelling and aid in submitting works to the Experiments in Cinema Film Festival. Each year EIC brings the international community of cinematic "un-dependents" to Albuquerque, New Mexico, USA for a film festival that is designed to inspire a new generation of homegrown media activists to participate in shaping future trends of cultural representation (Experimental Cinema, 2018). This venue offers a unique platform for women's stories from varied world cultures, which the youth will learn from and aid in the production of cinematic media.

- **Skateistan, Kabul, Afghanistan:** Skateistan is a non-governmental organization (NGO) that was founded in 2007 in Kabul, Afghanistan and has since expanded into Cambodia and South Africa. Skateistan's mission is to empower youth through skateboarding and education. It is the first international development initiative of its kind. The group provides a safe place for children and young adults of both genders to play and learn. By November of 2009, Skateistan began holding classes, for many children this was their first time in a classroom. Instruction is focused on an arts-based curriculum where students learned about topics such as human rights, cultural studies, nutrition, and the environment. These classes are intended to prepare the students to join public school. In 2010, they reached approximately 300 youths per week with nearly 40% of their students being girls. By 2016, those numbers grew to 1,100 youths per week and a milestone of 50% female participants (Skateistan, 2018). By introducing ICT and supporting their youth initiatives, we will partner with Skateistan to empower young women to share their stories with the world while teaching them marketable skills through tech literacy. Skateistan staff will provide on-site IT services to the children and program coordination with staff in the United States.

- **The School of Leadership, Afghanistan (SOLA), Kabul, Afghanistan:** SOLA is an Afghan-led private boarding school for girls, the first of its kind in the country. SOLA's mission is to provide Afghan girls a rigorous education that promotes critical thinking, a sense of purpose, and respect for self and others (SOLA, 2018). This partnership plans to work with SOLA as a cultural mentor in Afghanistan to encourage men to advocate for girls and young women to attend school so they can become critical thinkers and engage with society to articulate and solve problems while establishing personal and cultural identity. Working with SOLA, this program will utilize enhanced ICT to aid in expanding its audience of primary school aged girls, to include sixth through twelfth grade girls. Through ICT, including mobile media and social networking, the program will establish and expand communities of practice and knowledge sharing to empower girls to seek post-secondary education. This collaboration will build on SOLA's established trust in the community and offer long-term sustainability by increasing opportunities for the target audience to yield ongoing productivity for the regional economy.

Additional Subcontractors:

- **Afghan Coalition, Freemont, California, USA:** The Afghan Coalition is a non-profit community based organization that seeks to empower refugee families, women and youth, both locally and in Afghanistan and to build bridges between the United States and Afghanistan (ACF, 2018). Their mission is accomplished through the provision of community services, supporting member organizations' community based programs and fostering understanding, reconciliation, reconstruction and mutual relations between the people of Afghanistan and the people of the United States. They provide general services in cultural counseling and translation, among many others, and will contribute to this project by assisting in the development of culturally, linguistically, and religiously appropriate content for distance learning materials to be used with Afghan youth. We hope to utilize their unique perspective of both cultures to ensure our learning materials are culturally appropriate and will employ their translational services.

Project Goals

This project proposes that through the innovative use of traditional media, and by increasing new media capabilities, literacy rates can increase, social and gender isolation can decrease, and women's empowerment can grow by building partnerships with organizations focused on women's education and engagement in civil society. The cooperation and effectiveness of ICT projects can build social network platforms, promote civic engagement, provide outreach for youth and expand girl's exposure to technology, stimulating economic entrepreneurship and women's empowerment through technical literacy to solve problems. Funding an ICT project intended to expand the learning opportunities for underserved population will yield return on investment in numerous ways. "Empowering marginalized people to expand their knowledge base is one of the most effective ways the Internet can support people in their efforts to alleviate poverty. The technical and market information available via the Internet, if provided in an assimilative manner, can contribute to increased productivity and commercialization of local products" (Jayaweera, 2012, p. 4). As economic productivity in Afghan regions increase, cultural acceptance of girl's role in education with new technology will be accepted and strengthened.

Our goal is to partner with existing organizations working toward youth education and empowerment in Afghanistan to improve their educational tools and population reached by applying distance education techniques and ICTs to provide greater opportunities for all youth, but especially girls, to learn through. This will cultivate deeper civil engagement, and eventually support a society with economically engaged women who will in time overcome the cycle of poverty. By creating an innovative partnership among NGOs, non-profits, a state-run University and an Afghan run private school, we aim to develop sustainable, scalable educational opportunities for young Afghan children to gain personal, professional, and marketable skills.

Problem Statement

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Afghanistan remains one of the countries with the lowest literacy rates in the world. In 2017, they reported that approximately 31% of the adult population (those over 15 years of age) could read and write. As in many low- and middle-income countries, Afghanistan remains

behind specifically in terms of women's literacy, and currently reports a rate of about 17% with a high variation in the data, indicating that the fate of Afghan literacy relies heavily on geographic areas and gender ("Enhanced Literacy," 2017). UNESCO reports that the highest rates of literacy in Afghanistan are in their urban centers such as the capital, Kabul. This hosts the highest literacy rate for women, at nearly 35%. In this same report, literacy for men was approximately 68%. UNESCO reports that the percentage of women within the global illiterate population has remained steady over the past 20 years, at 63–64%, even as the overall number of illiterates decreased. Of the 149 countries that submitted data on adult literacy to the UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), 68 had achieved gender parity by 2011 (UNESCO, 2014).

A 2013 UNESCO report showed that mobile literacy in Afghanistan grew at an astonishingly high rate between 2001 and 2012, from less than 1% to over 18 million active mobile subscriptions ("Mobile Literacy," 2013). Yet both literacy rates for women in Afghanistan remain stubbornly low to this day and are some of the lowest in the world. One of the largest factors contributing to the stark divide in literacy rates is the cultural differences in societal expectations between men and women.

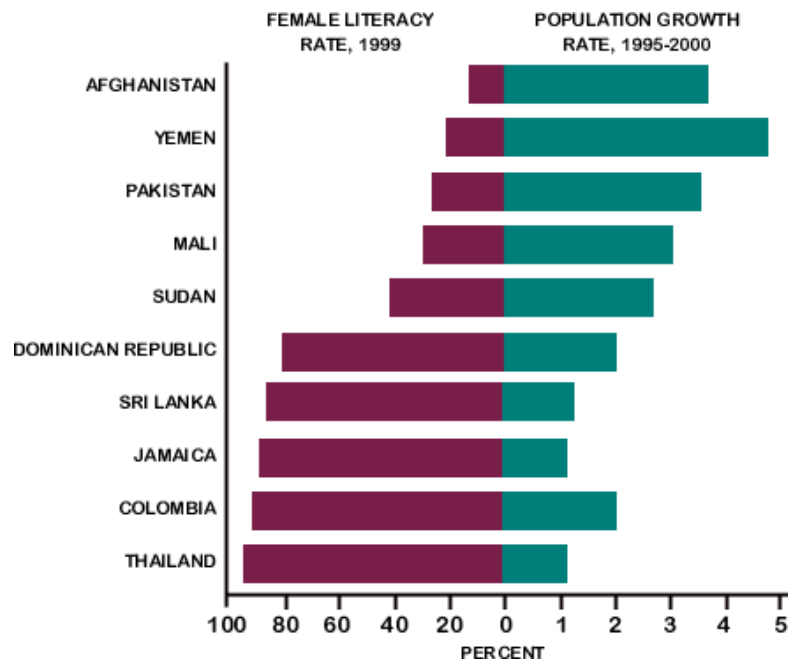*Figure 1. "Female Literacy Rates and Population Growth." Reprinted from "Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future: a multimedia teacher education programme" by UNESCO. Retrieved from http://www.unesco.org/education Copyright 2010 by UNESCO.*

The male dominant culture of Afghanistan limits girls from attending school. Girls are typically required to help manage the home and expected to remain home from school in order to tend to household duties after the age of nine. The challenges for girls to attend school in Afghanistan start at the home. An Afghan girl who wishes to attend school "needs to convince her male family members to grant her permission to go to [do so]. If she lives in an extended family household, that means seeking permission from each of her grandfathers, father, brothers, uncles and male cousins. And if she manages to get all of that, she is one of the few very lucky girls in her community" (TEDxInstitutLeRosey, 2017, 1:54). In order to promote education for women, men must accept and embrace the concept of improving society by allowing girls to seek an education. Therefore, those who are already in support of women's education must be engaged at a deeper level to advocate for educating young girls.

This project will focus on Afghan youth of both genders ages 5 to 17 already engaged with Skateistan, and young females (ages 11 and above) already engaged in SOLA. SOLA currently serves young girls in primary education within a boarding school with plans to expand to sixth through twelfth grade girls. This project aims to assist Skateistan in reaching a larger audience and improving educational programs. This project will also enhance SOLA's expansion with ICT and social networking to empower girls to seek post-secondary education so they can actively assess and address societal issues.

Project Rationale

This project will provide youth empowerment through the development of podcasts and video blogs (vlogs) to provide social networking opportunities with eLearning technologies. It will foster creativity through making and using podcasts and vlogs, which will allow them to use their own voices and communication style to share stories, poems, videos, ideas, hopes, dreams, and more. By engaging youth in storytelling mechanisms that do not require reading and writing, we hope to engage a larger audience of children interested in learning.

We believe that video storytelling and podcasts will work especially well in an Arabic culture that is high context, indirect, and non-linear compared to Western cultures. "[T]he communication message of non-linear cultures normally has multiple themes, is expressed in oral terms and heightened by nonverbal communication. The non-linear thought framework … involves the 'simultaneous bombardment and processing of a variety of stimuli' so these people

would think in images, not just words. Time orientation is less important than people and events, and frequently, time is not segmented" (Zaharna, R., 1995). Because of this, we believe that vlogs will be an especially powerful story telling devices for Afghan children, one that honors their culture's oral tradition and, allows multiple subtle layers to be incorporated. This innovative approach will promote storytelling through the introduction and use of video technology.

Scalability

Through the SOLA boarding school system, girls can build and expand their own knowledge communities through ICT. With technical and structural guidance in storytelling, mobile media will be used to empower girls and young women through exposure to global diversity and inclusion. In a boarding school specifically devoted to girl's development, most of the daily barriers girls face are removed. They have time to dedicate to their education and individual development. Their time is freed up to focus on schooling, and thanks to the internet, they have access to teachers from all over the world (TEDxInstitutLeRosey, 2017, 6:19). As this program expands networking and educational opportunities for girls with SOLA, empowerment will be achieved and sustained as young women increasingly seek post-secondary degrees.

The founder of SOLA, Shabana Basih-Rasikh, spoke to the bravery shown by families who challenge Afghanistan's cultural norms and allow their daughters to attend a boarding school for girls. "It is so inspiring to watch the fathers, grandfathers and brothers of my students who not only realize the potential in their young women but also advocate for other girls in their family network to attend my school" (TEDxInstitutLeRosey, 2017, 8:46). Gaining the trust of men in this unique culture will promote long-term sustainability so growing numbers of women can attend school and help address critical issues with ICT to include preserving their culture, language, and shared stories through social networking and communities of knowledge. As women achieve their educational goals, they will become inspirational role models for the girls of Afghanistan.

Skateistan is another opportunity for expansion, as it has locations outside of Afghanistan and is connected to other youth outreach groups. By having boys and girls work together in the Skateistan program lessons, we hope to bridge the current cultural divide between the genders and aim for a future where men are more tolerant and supportive of their female counterparts and family members. However, "[l]iteracy learning is not always attractive,

9

motivational and relevant for women. The need to link the immediate learning needs with the longer-term strategic objectives of empowerment and gender equality poses time and resource challenges. Programmes are successful in engaging women in learning when they offer literacy classes related to their needs and gain the support for women's education of the wider community, including family members" (UNESCO, 2014).

Through this effort, we hope to provide young women with marketable skills and deeper cultural engagement. As part of an ICT implementation, local mentors share their knowledge with the community, yielding progressive results in establishing the technology as a valuable resource for knowledge gathering, "…the benefits of teaching a few are expanded exponentially when they in turn teach others, thus broadening the local knowledge base" (Harvey-Carter, 2009). We want to provide women with hope for a brighter future, and marketable skills that may lead them to be self-sufficient, should they choose.

Project Objectives

- Objectives for new media capabilities networking within the country and across borders:
    a. Provide Information and Communication Technology (ICT) resources and instruction to youth and female oriented Civil Society Organizations (CSO);
    b. Utilize ICT to create podcasts and vlogs that can be shared between the CSOs and to the general public;
    c. Expand ICT resources and training to include cinematic applications that will foster networking between the CSOs and international counterparts.

Literature Review/Cultural Considerations

To inform the development of this grant, we conducted a literature review and researched other successful ICT programs in similar areas. Overall, there is consistent recognition within the literature that significant barriers to equitable outcomes in education in Afghanistan exist. The current disparities exist in part due to a long history in societal norms and traditional educational systems. Our aim is to change the way education is thought about in Afghanistan by supplying innovative technologies and tools that will encourage girls to become engaged, and support husbands and fathers to engage their wives and daughters in education. "Traditional beliefs can create huge barriers to learning for women. Participation can also be hindered by distance,

insecurity and language. It is crucial that men are involved in the transformative process if they control and exercise power. The same is true for the involvement of whole communities to change power relationships and traditional power structures" (UNESCO, 2014). By collaborating with well-established organizations and schools, and by developing culturally appropriate content, we propose that a scalable model will alter the way in which education is delivered across the country.

Due to the cultural barriers limiting women's participation in school, girls seeking an education in Afghanistan have very few female role-models. "In Paktika Province of southern Afghanistan, of the 3,111 registered teachers only sixteen are female, of the sixteen female teachers, only one has graduated high school and five more have completed primary education" (TEDxInstitutLeRosey, 2017, 3:28). By working with SOLA and ICT to increase the number of educated women, the project will have a productive impact and promote cultural acceptance of educated women teachers and role models for the community. Making educational content accessible in varied regional languages, aided by ICT, will enhance the community's acceptance and promote unique cultural identity. "In Afghanistan, ethnic and linguistic differences have prevented us from developing a truly unified national identity, and SOLA is at the forefront of addressing this, an inclusive educational environment is at the heart of our mission" (TEDxInstitutLeRosey, 2017, 9:37).

To design culturally appropriate materials for Indigenous Australians, McLoughlin (1999) emphasizes three factors: "cultural awareness of the target group, instructional design decisions, and the provision of educational flexibility in an online environment" (Al-Harthi, 2005). Cultures constantly negotiate the unpredictable social consequences of technology on moral, political, cultural and religious values. Accordingly, they either restrict or advance the use of technology (Al-Harthi, 2005). This project will ensure that linguistically and culturally appropriate trainings are developed and approved by cultural experts and consultants on the project.

Project Activities

This project focuses on increasing new media capabilities between CSOs within Afghanistan, as well as providing youth and young women the opportunity to share their stories with the general public and international counterparts.

Implementation and design of the first phase of the project is estimated to span 18 months and will be completed by one full-time Grant Manager and UNM OILS graduate students, under the supervision of the Project Director. The initial phase of this project includes evaluating the technology resources and infrastructure available within the organizations, as well as introducing additional ICT resources to youth through the CSO's Skateistan and SOLA. The youth will then learn to create podcasts and vlogs that can be shared between the organizations and to the general public, with parental and governmental permission.

Activities for Objective 1:

- The first activity for this project is to assess and implement ICT resources within the organizations. This will be done by working closely with the organization and governmental leaders. With approval, we will provide tablets with internet and recording capabilities. Tablets were chosen because they have expanded computing power over mobile telephone devices. The additional computing power will be necessary to generate and edit media. Additionally, we would like to provide action ready video recording devices, such as a GoPro camera.

- Instruction in the use of the tablets, action camera, and editing software will be designed by UNM OILS graduate students. As a part of the OILS program, graduate level students complete an instructional design course. We plan to utilize the learning activity completed during this course to design the necessary material for this phase of the project. Because this activity is being completed by graduate students, it will be of no cost to the grant. The full-time Grant Manager will be responsible for ensuring translation into the appropriate language and any modification for cultural relevance.

Activities for Objective 2:

- The second activity involves creation and dissemination of podcasts and vlogs. For this activity the youth and young women will learn what podcasts and vlogs are, how they can be used to share stories, and ways that they can be shared with others in CSOs and the public.

- Instruction in the design, creation, and sharing of media will also be completed by UNM OILS graduate students as a part of their coursework and will be of no charge to the grant.

The full-time Grant Manager will be responsible for translation into the appropriate language and any modification for cultural relevance.
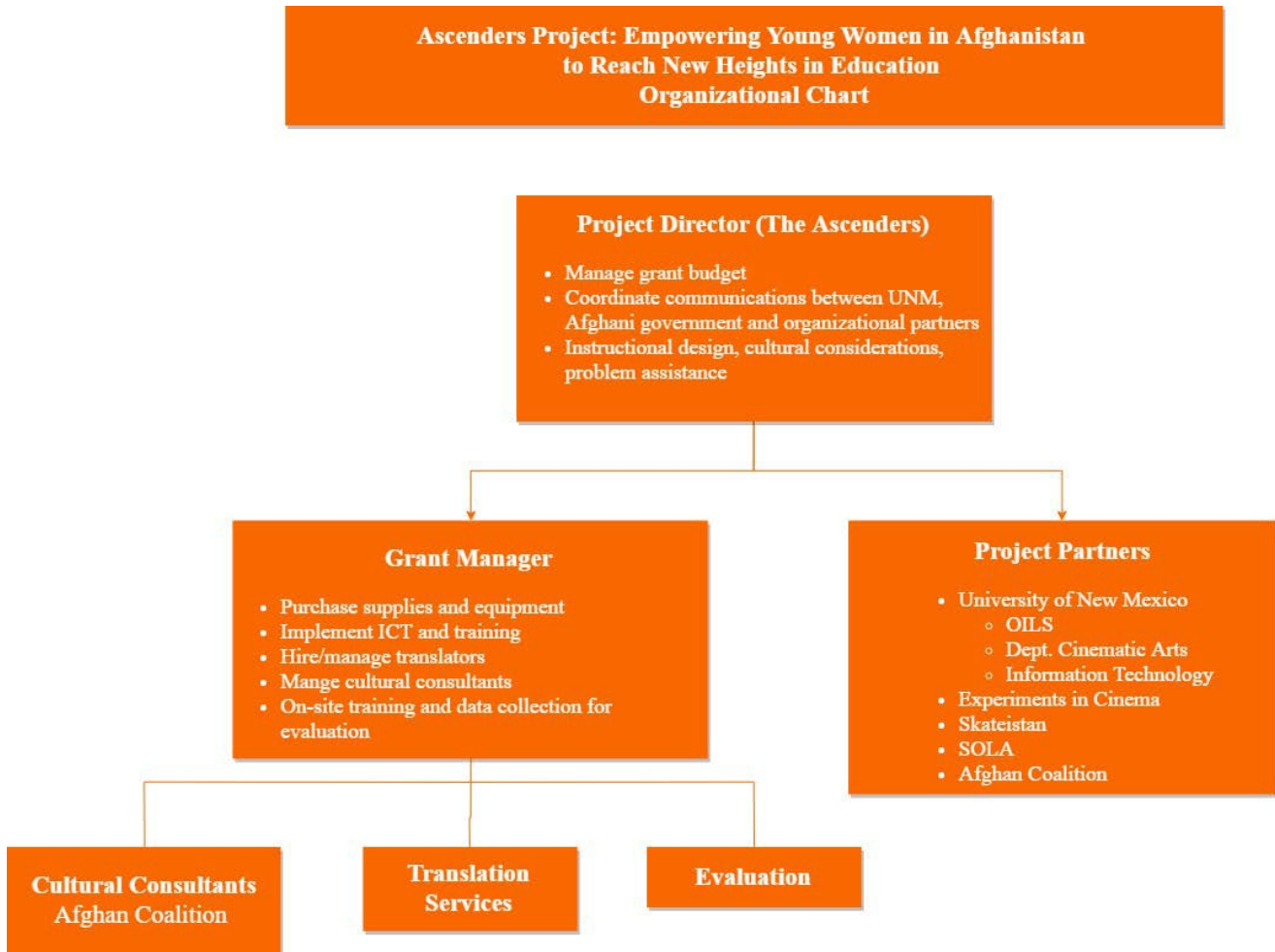
Phase II: Cinematic Expansion

The second phase of this project includes expanding the ICT training for cinema and increasing networking between the CSOs and across borders. Implementation and design of the second phase of the project is estimated to span 18 months and will be completed by one full-time Grant Manager and UNM OILS graduate students, under the supervision of the Project Director.

Activities for Objective 3:

- The third activity of this project requires and enhanced network and introduction of international counterparts. International support will come from UNM's Cinematic Arts program as well as from the group Experiments in Cinema. Through these partners, the young women will be able to design a short film including writing a screenplay, recording video and sound, editing into one complete story, and sharing it with the world. Their initial international viewing will be through the Experiments in Cinema organization, where their films will be screened at an international community film festival as part of a special featured segment dedicated to the unique stories from the girls and young women of Afghanistan at the Guild Theatre in Albuquerque, NM, USA.

Organizational Capacity and Partnerships

Ascenders Project: Empowering Young Women in Afghanistan to Reach New Heights in Education
Organizational Chart

Project Director (The Ascenders)
- Manage grant budget
- Coordinate communications between UNM, Afghani government and organizational partners
- Instructional design, cultural considerations, problem assistance

Grant Manager
- Purchase supplies and equipment
- Implement ICT and training
- Hire/manage translators
- Mange cultural consultants
- On-site training and data collection for evaluation

Project Partners
- University of New Mexico
    - OILS
    - Dept. Cinematic Arts
    - Information Technology
- Experiments in Cinema
- Skateistan
- SOLA
- Afghan Coalition

Cultural Consultants
Afghan Coalition

Translation Services

Evaluation

Challenges to Implementation and Sustainability

An unmistakable barrier to this project is the known cultural and communication divide between American and Middle Eastern cultures. We understand that "non-Western world views include cooperation, collectivity, relativity of time, holistic thinking, extended family, religion as a part of culture, acceptance of other cultures, and social orientation." We need to consider that "distance education as a technology can evoke different meanings and reactions among individuals with different cultural orientations" due to different cultural orientations towards independence and self-reliance (Al-Harthi, 2005). We propose engaging the Bay Area based non-profit, Afghan Coalition, for their socio-cultural knowledge and guidance through the development and implementation of the grant.

Budget and Budget Justification

The Ascenders Project:

Empowering young women in Afghanistan to reach new heights in learning.

USG BUDGET (MEPI) SUMMARY:

Object Class Categories	Quantity	Cost	Total
1. Personnel			
Project Director (per hour)	1560	$ 45.00	$ 70,200
Grant Manager (per hour)	6240	$ 25.00	$ 156,000
2. Fringe Benefits (36%)	-	-	$ 81,432
3. Travel			
Flight (roundtrip)	4	$ 1,500.00	$ 6,000
Lodging with meals (per week)	38	$ 100.00	$ 3,800
Per diem (per day)	266	$ 10.00	$ 2,660
4. Equipment (>$5000 per each)	-	-	-
5. Supplies (tangible items that are <$5000 each)			
Microsoft Surface Pro	20	$ 810.00	$ 16,200
GoPro Hero 7	6	$ 200.00	$ 1,200
International Shipping		$ 500.00	$ 500

6. Contractual

Translator (per trip)	3	$ 500.00	$	1,500
7. Other (10%)	-	-	$	50,000
8. Total Direct Charges (sum of lines 1 through 7)	-	-	$	389,492
9. Indirect Charges (pre-determined rate of 26%)	-	-	$	101,268
10. Program Income:	-	-		-
11. TOTALS (sum of lines 8 thru 10)			**$**	**490,760**

PERSONNEL (UNM Only):

Project Director: The Ascenders

The Ascenders is a group entity that will be acting and paid as a single staff individual. The Ascenders have the role of Project Director (PD). The PD will be paid 25% of a full-time equivalent (520 hours) at a rate of $45.00 per hour.

The Ascenders will be responsible for:

- Managing the grant budget
- Coordinating communication between the University of New Mexico, the Afghani government, and organizational partners
- And consulting on instructional design, cultural considerations, and any problems that arise during the course of the grant

This entity will work from the UNM campus, communicating electronically with all partners. One member of the Ascenders group will travel to Afghanistan at the beginning of the project to foster relations with the CSOs and Afghani government.

Grant Manager: To be hired

A grant manager will be hired to be the primary implementer of the project. An ideal candidate will have a background in Learning Science, preferably an OILS MA graduate, with experience working with a culturally diverse population. Strong preference for experience with Muslim religion and Middle Eastern cultural traditions. The Grant Manager will be paid 100% of a full-time equivalent (2080 hours) at a rate of $25.00 per hour.

The Grant Manager will be responsible for:

- Purchasing supplies and equipment
- Implementing Information and Communication Technology and training
- Hiring appropriate cultural and language support personnel (translators)
- And traveling to Afghanistan to perform on-site training and collect data for the evaluation of the project's success

The full-time Grant Manager will spend three months out of each year of the grant (for a total of nine months) in Afghanistan supporting the project. The remaining time will be spent working from UNM campus.

OILS Graduate Students:

OILS graduate students will be used to create the instructional design and training materials at no cost to the grant. Students are required to complete and instructional design course and capstone project as part of their graduate coursework. We plan to utilize the student's learning activities to generate the necessary training materials for this project and provide the OILS graduate students with real-world instructional design experience.

FRINGE BENEFITS (for UNM personnel):

The University of New Mexico fringe benefit rate is set at 36% for staff members.

TRAVEL:

Initial Trip: The PD and Grant Manager will travel to Kabul, Afghanistan at the onset of the project. The PD for two weeks, the Grant Manager will remain for three months. During this time the PD and GM will evaluate the technology resources present within the organizations and determine what additional support may be needed for successful implementation of the project.

Recurring trips: The Grant Manager will return to Kabul, Afghanistan once per year for the remaining two years. Each trip will be for three months.

Flight(s): From Albuquerque, NM to Kabul, Afghanistan can be made for $1,500 round trip.

Per Diem: A per diem rate of $10 US dollars per day will be paid while in Afghanistan to cover offsite meals and transportation.

Lodging: Lodging and meals will be provided by the SOLA boarding school at a rate of $100 US dollars per week.

EQUIPMENT:

No equipment over $5,000 will be used for this project.

SUPPLIES:

The supplies listed below were selected for their low cost, portability, and international availability. These items are small and discrete which will be preferable to keep our partners and their students safer from the threat of theft, bodily harm, or property damage.

Tablets: The Microsoft Surface Pro was chosen for its high computing power and portability. Microsoft can ship internationally and does provide support in Afghanistan. They also offer a 10% educational discount. The Microsoft Surface Pro retails for $899 – 10% = $810 each.

Another benefit of the Microsoft Surface Pro is a variety of free video editing software applications. No additional cost is needed for software.

Video Recording: The GoPro Hero 7 was chosen for its small size, long battery life, and ease of use. The GoPro is a durable, action recording camera and microphone system. The GoPro Hero 7 white retails for $199.99 each.

Shipping: Shipping is estimated at $500.

CONTRACTUAL:

Translator: A translator will be hired to assist with spoken and written language translation and will act as a cultural guide to assist UNM Staff while abroad. The translator will be paid a flat rate of $500 US dollars per trip for a total of three trips.

INDIRECT CHARGES:

The University of New Mexico indirect cost rate is set at 26% of the direct cost.

PROGRAM INCOME:

Resources provided by this project are to be free of charge to participating Civil Society Organizations and their learners. No income is to be generated from this project.

NON-FEDERAL RESOURCES:

No non-federal resources are scheduled to be used for this project.

Evaluation Plan

The evaluation plan was developed with key questions based on the project's activities and objectives to show effectiveness in addressing the use of ICT to expand civic participation and enhanced educational opportunities for the youth of Afghanistan. This evaluation plan will incorporate aspects of formative and summative strategies.

- **Key Questions:**
    - To what degree have participants engaged with CSOs through ICT?
    - To what degree have participants used ICT to create podcasts and video blogs, and shared with CSOs and the general public?
    - How are ICT resources being used to expand cinematic application to foster networking between CSOs and other international counterparts?
    - To what extent has the program promoted adoption of ICT through mobile devices like phones, pads and GoPro cameras?
    - To what degree are social networking skills being utilized by participants?
    - How has the project enhanced participants' ICT skills?
    - To what extent has the project impacted the economic status of the participants' and their community?
    - To what extent has the project promoted literacy and knowledge building through regional languages?

Formative Evaluation:

- Activities will collect data to assist in monitoring the project's early development. Feedback to project partners will address how the implementation is developing and satisfying the goals through activities of empowering youth through enhanced education with ICT and gaining cultural acceptance. These initial findings will help project partners in assessing and revising strategies if warranted. Adjustments to enhance productivity and alignment with goals and objectives can be addressed.

Summative Evaluation:

- A summative evaluation will be conducted during the last quarter of the third year to show the project's overall results. The project's merit and value to its audience will also

be assessed. This evaluation will be available for review to aid in continued research of ICT implementation initiatives intended to reach and empower underserved populations of youth and women around the world. Activities conducted in the third year of the project will express the degree to which it met the goals and objectives. Data will express the project's continued scalability.

Project Management Timeline

Fiscal Year	1/1/2019 -12/31/2019				1/1/2020 – 12/31/2020				1/1/2021 - 12/31/2021			
Quarter	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
Hiring grant manager	▓											
Purchasing supplies and materials		▓	▓									
Instructional design (OILS grads)	▓	▓			▓	▓			▓	▓		
Travel		▓				▓				▓		
Phase I: Podcasts/Vlog	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓						
Phase II: Cinematic Expansion							▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Evaluation and Reporting				▓				░				▓

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