



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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Table of Contents

Part 1: Executive Summary1

Part 2: Description of Key Activities.....2

 Cycle 17 Sub-Awards2

 Cycles 18 and 19.....2

 Innovation.....2

 Administration2

Part 3: Plans for the Next Quarter.....3

Part 1: Executive Summary

During this quarter, much of the program's activity was focused on conducting the Cycle 17 site visits and preparing to announce the Collaborative Research Grants for Cycle 18. In addition, preparations were made for the launch of the Joint Fund's Cycle 19 request for proposals (RFP). Finally, the first stage of the Innovate Egypt program was implemented, with an eight-week training course completed by 16 teams. Six teams were selected for further advanced commercialization support.

Part 2: Description of Key Activities

Cycle 17 Sub-Awards

Throughout the quarter, NAS staff corresponded with U.S. principal investigators (PIs) regarding a variety of issues, including budget concerns, travel questions, and program guidelines. In addition, two Cycle 17 U.S. PIs received their Year 2 funding during this reporting period. These funds were disbursed after NAS confirmed that compliant financial reports had been submitted, showing sufficient spend-down rates of previous advances.

During this quarter, NAS conducted site visits to the institutions of six Cycle 17 U.S. PIs. During these site visits, NAS staff and the U.S. PIs toured facilities, discussed the technical status of each project, addressed administrative issues of concern, and discussed ways in which program management could be improved.

Cycles 18 and 19

During the quarter, NAS prepared for the announcement of the Cycle 18 Collaborative Research Grants. NAS stayed in contact with the U.S. PIs listed as alternates and finalists and discussed the cycle's timeline with the Egyptian program implementer, the Science and Technology Development Fund (STDF).

The program's governing U.S. – Egypt S&T Joint Board approved the Cycle 18 list of Egyptian Junior Scientist Development Visit Grantees and finalized the Cycle 19 RFP priority areas. In preparation for the launch of the Cycle 19 RFP, NAS and STDF also finalized the Cycle 19 online application system.

It should be noted that the Cycle 18 grantees were announced and the Cycle 19 RFP was launched in January 2018. These activities will be detailed in the next quarterly report.

Innovation

During this quarter, the first stage of the Innovate Egypt program was implemented. This stage consisted of an eight-week training program. This training began and ended with in-person workshops in Cairo, hosted by Venturewell's staff and trainers, in event space reserved by STDF. In between these in-person events, six weeks of online training occurred for the selected teams. Six teams were later selected to receive advanced customized training through Innovate Egypt's second phase, known as the AIMS (Advanced Innovation Mentoring and Support) Accelerator.

Administration

- NAS organized several calls with USAID, the Department of State, and the U.S. Embassy in Cairo to discuss program updates.
- On December 1st, the program's annual report was sent to USAID.
- On December 8th, a quarterly accrual report was sent to USAID.

Part 3: Plans for the Next Quarter

- As mentioned above, the Cycle 18 grants were announced in January 2018. This announcement included updating of the program's NAS website and collecting necessary documents from the U.S. PIs to draft their sub-awards. STDF separately manages the process of preparing the grant documents for the Egyptian PIs.
- The Cycle 19 RFP was announced in January 2018, with a March 8 deadline. After the RFP's launch, NAS will focus on outreach efforts and responding to applicant inquiries.