

Action Project: LEAD-Etkalem.

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Goal

There are two challenges we seek to resolve. First, there is no online space at present that brings together opinions, ideas, artistic work, historical context, and civil discourse focused on Egyptian-United States relations. Second, we pose the question: What's next? How and where do we continue to flourish the dialogue and the mission of the Gabr Fellowship?

Issue

These are tumultuous times for young people across the globe. In Egypt, the 2011 Revolution has not resulted in the transformation that many sought while the 2013 uprising has left the country in a state of uncertainty. Egyptian youth face high rates of unemployment, increasing gender discrimination, and censorship of ideas. In the United States, young people also face high unemployment, massive student loan debt, and uncertain futures. Across our respective nations, conversations are being had, information is being consumed in cafes, classrooms, studios, and homes.

Project

We propose the creation of LEAD/Etkalem, Etkalem being the Arabic word meaning "talk." LEAD/Etkalem provides the portal for purposeful dialogue at the human level, amongst the people, citizen to citizen dialogue. It will foster greater understanding between our cultures and countries. But how do we actualize this vision of LEAD/Etkalem - - and who will seek us out?

Our concept is to have **four distinct sections** to this website, based on the LEAD acronym.

1 - LEARN. In this area, visitors will have access to articles, opinion pieces, book recommendations, and our signature series of short videos that we're calling Etkalem, which will feature experts in their fields who will share insights and ideas about Egypt and the United States. These will be done in a Ted-talk like format.

2 - EXPRESS. Here we will feature artists, music, and short stories that speak to the East/West dialogue and/or the struggles these artists face in their respective countries articulating their message through various mediums of art.

3 - ACT. Here we will feature links and information about the Gabr Fellows' action projects and other similar efforts in the US and Egypt.

4 - DIALOGUE. This is the area for active engagement. We will have discussion forums, host reddit "ask me anything" conversations, feature a twitter feed of

recent posts, and have a weekly poll question featuring a hot topic on East/West relations.

Those are the four areas of LEAD/Etkalem.

Who are our target audience? Our readership and active participants start with the people who have helped the program and provided the Fellows with insight on history, art, politics, economics, development, and more and those who challenged our conventions. We ask your participation through submitting articles or creating Etkalem videos. Visitors will also include scholars and students of the East/West relationship. Others will be curious minds - young and old - who want to engage in the dialogue or share their own ideas or art. The YouTube videos, Reddit “ask me anythings” and interactive forums will drive new readers to the site.

Together, these four sections allow us to LEAD and Etkalem by establishing an online community to engage intellectual curiosity, artistic voices, committed problem-solving and ongoing dialogue. Whether passively consuming information and ideas or actively engaging in conversation and compelling projects, LEAD/Etkalem users will see a new, more thoughtful understanding and relationship emerge.

What's next? LEAD/Etkalem.