

Title: The Link: Powering US-Egypt Relations  
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## **The Challenge**

Today's global issues are pressing, complicated, and interconnected to a greater degree than we have ever seen. And yet, our future global leaders often learn in insulated educational environments, lacking real engagement with scholars, policy leaders, and students from the countries with which they seek to engage.

By connecting tomorrow's leaders via an online foreign policy community, The Link seeks to facilitate cross-cultural dialogue, foster mutual respect, and equip future foreign policy leaders with the nuanced knowledge and tools they will need to solve critical international issues. The Link believes in creating a more effective, knowledgeable, and innovative foreign policy community through practical and collaborative learning.

## **Project Overview**

The project will focus on the development and use of three main components in order to achieve its goals:

### **1. Webinar Trainings**

Participating students will enroll in monthly training webinars, led by international practitioners on identified topics of interest to the student audience. Students will learn from these experts in seminar-style webinars that allows for a visual presentation, along with quizzes, Q&A, and written and verbal class discussion. Seminars will be accompanied by recommended reading materials and culminate in a certificate of completion for all students who attend and pass each session.

### **2. Scholarly Video Series**

Each month, students will have the opportunity to vote on which topic they would like to see featured in that month's video series. Based upon the identified student interest, one Egyptian and one US scholar will be tapped to deliver a compelling, short-form video brief on the issue for publication on the website. Beyond hearing varied perspectives from highly-respected foreign policy scholars, students will also have the opportunity to respond to these scholar's arguments via written publication on the website.

### **3. Collaborative Policy Briefs**

The Link's Policy Brief section will pair one Egyptian student and one American student together to collaboratively research, write, and publish policy briefs on issues of mutual interest throughout the academic year. Contributors will be selected via a competitive application process that seeks to pair students based on their expressed topical interests and goals. Each pair will be required to publish at least two papers per year.

## **The Goals**

The Link aims to create a more effective and innovative international community by equipping the next generation of policy leaders with knowledge and tools to better serve their careers. In doing so, The Link will focus on three core components of audience engagement: capacity building, professional development, and community building.

## **Population Served**

The Link will be targeted toward university students in relevant degree programs, student groups, and other networks in both US and Egyptian higher education institutions. Expert contributors to the website will be recruited from diverse foreign policy backgrounds for the benefit of the student audience, including think tank scholars, academic professors, practitioners, and policy makers.

## **Project Milestones**

### *Phase 1: Recruitment*

Recruitment of content contributors (scholars, practitioners, etc.) for video and webinar series begins.

### *Phase 2: Marketing*

Website design period and marketing push to relevant student groups and degree programs.

### *Phase 3: Policy Brief Applications Open*

Applications accepted for policy brief contributors.

### *Phase 4: Pilot Program Launched*

Webinar series, video series, and policy brief contributions begin. Student feedback solicited throughout.

## **Expected Outcomes**

- Capacity building through experiential learning that includes both consumption and contribution of knowledge
- Demonstrable professional development to support students' career trajectories through knowledge sharing, publication opportunities, and substantive training
- Authentic, meaningful community building that stems from critical discourse, mutual respect, and shared learning experiences

## **Furthering the Foundation's Mission**

By bringing together young foreign policy scholars around critical international issues, The Link contributes directly to the mission of the Shafik Gabr Foundation. The Link combines individual contributions with community learning to emphasize the role that each citizen must play in building an international community and affecting real and lasting change. By facilitating substantive dialogue between the US and Egyptian communities – both students and experts alike – The Link will foster a community of mutual respect that also equips students with nuanced understandings of the philosophy, history, and priorities of their counterparts. Armed

with the vital skills and relationships, these students are better placed to contribute to constructive and creative international solutions – in line with the mission of the Shafik Gabr Foundation.