

## MAS USRA APPLICATION

Applications are due June 28<sup>th</sup> and November 28<sup>th</sup> (twice a year) and usras will be stated accordingly

### About the MAS usra:

The usra is an intensive, spiritually-focused, activism-oriented program that develops the individual and invites him or her to join hands with MAS and work for the sake of Islam as a central priority in life. There are weekly assignments prior to and following each usra. Each member is expected to spend approximately 3-6 hours a week on usra and usra-related activities (usra attendance [~ 2 hours], usra assignments [1-2 hrs], dawah work (example MSA work, MAS Youth work, or other Islamic work, etc) [3 hrs], social activities [2 hours /month].) Each usra generally contains around 5-7 members. After the usra program (1 to 2 years), if one chooses not to become a regular MAS member, he/she can continue with other MAS programs and activities, remaining involved without becoming a regular member.

This application is one part of the selection process. The other part is the Tarbiya committee's evaluation of the candidate based on its knowledge and interaction with the candidate. The Tarbiya committee will also speak to other active, experienced MAS members who have gotten to know/worked with the candidate.

The ideal usra candidate is someone who pushes himself/herself to:

- Have correct Islamic *Aqeeda*
- Perform and fulfill all the religious obligations (i.e. the prayers, fasting etc)
- Avoid major sins and bad behavior
- Have good conduct and sound Islamic manners (especially honesty, trust, truthfulness, fulfilling promises, and away from ill-intentions towards others)
- Have flexibility and willingness to change/adopt to the needs of da'wa / Islamic work
- Have a willingness to grow and develop
- Have no ties with other groups/individuals who have antagonistic ideas against Islam
- Have a willingness to be a social person and network and interact with others
- Possess leadership qualities or work towards them
- Have a balanced understanding of Islam and not be extreme

### Prerequisites for usra membership:

Due to the high level of commitment required of usra members, we ask that each meet the following qualifications:

- Willingness to work for Islam with others in an organized group
- Have been involved in activities that show one's priority for spiritual/personal development (such as halaqas, qiyams, classes, serious personal study, retreats)
- Have a high level of involvement in Islamic work
- Have been in the Boston area for at least 8 months
- Willing to be committed to the usra and hold working for Islam as a central priority in life

### **I: Personal Information**

Please write a short paragraph about yourself – name, where you live, what you currently do, how long you have been in Boston, any other notable biographical details.

### **II: Essay Questions (250 word maximum for each – about a paragraph) – Answer 6 out of 10.**

1. Why do you want to join an usra? What do you hope to gain from the usra? To contribute to it?
2. Describe a turning point in your Islamic development.
3. What are your personal goals as a Muslim? An activist? How do you plan to achieve these?
4. Describe your formal and informal Islamic education and training and any exposure to the following areas: fiqh, seerah, Islamic history, Qur'an, hadith.
5. Describe your involvement in the Muslim community, Islamic activism, spiritual activities (qiyams, retreats, etc) and dawah work – do also include any MAS activities (eg: MAS Youth, Freedom Foundation, Education Committee, Retreats, etc)
6. Discuss a problem you encountered in Islamic work and how you dealt with it.
7. What Islamic topics do you feel you know the most about? The least about? Which of these are you most interested in learning more about?
8. Describe your participation in halaqas.
9. Which of MAS's goals and programs besides the usra are you most interested in?
10. Describe your major time commitments and activities for the upcoming two years.