U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL HO CHI MINH CITY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION
American Spaces Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Program Office: Public Affairs Section in U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi
                                       Minh City
Funding Opportunity Title: American Spaces Grant Funding
Announcement Type: Grant or Individual Grant
Award Amount: $1,000 - $10,000
Funding Opportunity Number: PAS-SVM700-23-002
Deadline for Applications: 11:59 p.m., June 15, 2023 (Vietnam Time)
CFDA Number: 19.441 - ECE- American Spaces
                                       19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs

SUMMARY

This document contains detailed instructions and information about the Proposal process. Please read it carefully.

All applicants must submit proposals via email to HCMCGrants@state.gov. Funding will primarily go to activities held at the American Center in Ho Chi Minh City but will also include programs in provinces from Thua Thien Hue to the South of Vietnam.

We will generally consider proposals in the $1,000-$10,000 range. Proposals over $10,000 will only be considered with a cost share and on a case-by-case basis.

These grants aim to further the U.S. Mission's public diplomacy goals of enhancing prosperity for Vietnam through market orientation, governance, education, and the environment; improving security cooperation; enhancing education ties, strengthening media engagement, and/or building capacity of local partners.

Due to the volume of applicants and inquiries, Public Affairs Section does not accept requests for meetings or phone calls prior to application.

Contents

A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City's Public Affairs Section (PAS) is pleased to announce available funding for organizations and individuals to carry out programming at the American Center Ho Chi Minh City and at two American Hangouts in the Mekong Delta region hosted at Can Tho University and An Giang University respectively.

The Public Affairs Section will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards on a non-competitive basis, subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

For proposals at the American Center in Ho Chi Minh City, all projects must take place during the regular office hours of the American Center (Mondays 1:00-5:00 p.m. and Tuesday-Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.). The American Center is *NOT* open during weekends and U.S. and Vietnamese holidays. For proposals at the American Hangouts in the Mekong Delta region, all projects and activities will need to be coordinated with the American Center team in Ho Chi Minh City. Majority of program activities must be completed at the American Center and/or American Hangouts to be considered for funding.

Target Audience
The target audiences are current secondary high school and university students or early/mid-career professionals (24-40 years old).

Length of performance period
Duration should be a minimum of six months and a maximum of one year. Successful projects will be eligible for renewal, but additional funding is not guaranteed.

Award Amount
Award Amount will vary between $1,000 and $10,000. Proposals over $10,000 will be considered only with a cost share and on a case-by-case basis. Proposals which include a cost share are strongly encouraged and have a higher likelihood of being funded. The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City reserves the right to award less or more than the amount of funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as they may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government.

Themes
Proposals for projects that focus on one or more of the priority objectives related to the following themes and target audiences specified below:

I. **Women's Empowerment Clubs**

Sample activities include, but are not limited to:

- **Professional Skills:** The club will promote skills to help advance women in mid-career positions, including but not limited to management, leadership, communications, decision-making, public speaking, and presentation.

- **Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) and Business:** The club will provide women currently working in STEAM or business with the fundamentals of enterprise development, supply chain, and marketing practices that are essential to creating start-ups. The club will help build a network and mentorship opportunities for members in practicing STEAM and the entrepreneurial process.

- **Civil Society:** The club will focus on gender equity, human rights, social issues, combatting domestic violence, health care, philanthropy, and family planning. Alternatively, the club will focus on guiding young professionals towards career advancement. In either club, the aim will be to increase women's participation in public activities.

- **Women in Politics and Governance:** The club will build dialogue, critical thinking, and negotiation skills for female participants majoring in public administration, international relations, and labor rights. Alternatively, the club could focus on assisting young professionals to identify existing social issues. In both clubs the goal is to help women express themselves publicly and achieve promotions and leadership positions in political institutions. The club will provide skills and knowledge needed for women to raise their voices against violence and corruption and advocate for more transparency and stricter law enforcement.

- **Underprivileged and Vulnerable Groups:** The club will provide the access to knowledge regarding existing legislation and facilities for vulnerable communities, including: transgender women, unidentified gender, persons with disabilities, and religious or ethnic minorities. The club will focus on employment opportunities and advising women and girls with disabilities, sexual trafficking or abuse survivors, and domestic violent victims. The club will help develop participants' self-confidence and encourage them to be active and visible members of society.

II. **STEAM Clubs**

Proposals that focus on one or more of the priority STEAM and esports programs and target audiences specified below. We will not consider funding proposals for students under age 15.

- **Digital Innovation:** Courses aimed at high school and college students and young professionals who are interested in Data Analytics, Machine Learning, Deep Learning, Artificial Intelligent (AI), Big Data as well as 3D Assembly Modelling , Immersive Media Ecosystem (Augmented Reality - AR, Virtual Reality - VR), and the Internet of Things (IoT) in order to help participants widen their choices of higher education and STEAM-related career opportunities.

- **Coding and Programming Club:** Courses aimed at students and young professionals on coding and programming languages (Python and/or HTML, CSS, JavaScript are preferred) Courses implemented at the American Center's Makerspace to nurture high school students' STEAM curiosity at an early age to enhance creativity, innovation, and problem solving skills. The program should equip students with the skills necessary to create prototypes that increase environmental sustainability, innovation, and government accountability.

- **STEAM and Business:** Courses aimed for participants currently working in STEAM-related business to introduce fundamentals of enterprise development, supply chain, website performance, data analysis, and digital marketing practices that are essential to creating start-ups. The program will help build networking and mentorship opportunities for students and young professionals in practicing STEAM and entrepreneurial processes.

- **Robotics and Astronomy Club:** Courses aimed at high school and college students to learn about robotics concepts and astronomy fields. Classes should be scheduled at a regular basis and captured with capstone projects to evaluate the impact. By the end of the course, students are expected to prototype their "robonaults" to enhance astronomical technology.

- **Esports Gaming Club:** Courses or summit aimed at students and young professionals to prepare soft skills for the esports industry, including but not limited to English language, programming, resilience, risk-taking, patience, perseverance, problem-solving, strategizing, concentration, discipline, leadership, collaboration, critical thinking, pattern recognition, and multi-tasking. The program will provide training to improve technical skills on streaming and social media content generation, gaming speed enhancement, and career orientation for esports.

III. **English Language Clubs**

Sample activities include, but are not limited to:

- **English for Science Technology Engineering Arts Mathematics (STEAM):** English class to enhance the English capacity of students/young professionals in the STEAM field for more effective STEAM learning, research, and global job-seeking.

- **English for Medical Practitioners:** Proposals must aim at improving communication skills for Vietnamese medical students, practicing physicians, and healthcare with English-speaking patients and/or customers. The course should focus on effective interactions, medical examination and how to deliver consultations in English.

- **English for Social Entrepreneurs:** English class for staff working at non-government and not-for-profit organizations and social enterprises to gain cross-cultural communication understanding and enhance business communication skills.

- **English for Underprivileged Groups:** English class for patrons of existing charity groups and organizations, including but not limited to shelters for women, abuse victims or children's organizations.
- **English for Activism:** English classes focusing on advocacy, activism, and skills for presentation and writing proposals and letters of intent.

- **English for American Culture:** English classes to help learners improve vocabulary while exploring components of American culture, such as American music, sports, customs, and holidays.

- **English for Public Speaking:** English class to strengthen presentation and cross-cultural communication skills for high school and college students and young professionals to help them become more successful in their studies or career track.

- **English for Business:** English class for recent graduates and young professionals to gain business vocabulary, concepts, and issues to improve career advancement opportunities.

IV. Celebrating 10th Anniversary of U.S.-Vietnam Comprehensive Partnership Campaign

Sample activities include, but are not limited to:

- Organizing a series of speaker programs, talk shows, speaking /podcast/ video/writing/storytelling contests for Vietnamese high school, university students, and young professionals (18-40 years old) to highlight and showcase the U.S.-Vietnam 10th anniversary of comprehensive partnership.

V. Promoting Entrepreneurship in Coastal Vietnam

Sample activities include, but are not limited to:

- Implement a series of onsite and virtual programs about soft skills training for better job opportunities for marginalized and underrepresented groups, which include but not limited to:
  - members of marginalized racial and ethnic communities,
  - women and girls,

- persons with disabilities,
- Indigenous peoples,
- refugees and internally displaced persons,
- members of religious minority groups,
- LGBTQI+ persons,
- rural residents,
- those adversely impacted by environmental inequities,
- and those adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

VI.   Diversity & Inclusion Program Series

Sample activities include, but are not limited to:

- Design a series of in person/virtual/hybrid programs at the American Center or American Hangouts or universities in the Mekong Delta to support activism or raise awareness of LGBTQI+ issues; support persons with disabilities from discrimination in education or employment; preventing gender-based violence, etc.

VII.   Environment/Climate Change Awareness "Green" Club for Youth (15-24)

Sample activities include, but are not limited to:

- Promoting wider public understanding of climate change and its local, regional, and national risks (especially in the Mekong Delta region), as well as the benefits and opportunities created by the ongoing shift toward clean energy.

- Crafting social media campaigns and activities in English to deliver solutions for regional and national challenges of food, health, energy, and climate.

- Creating environmental campaigns/projects in English and in Vietnamese to showcase Vietnam's natural resources and biodiversity and the threats due to wildlife poaching and trafficking, deforestation, overexploitation of natural resources, and climate change.

Criteria used for evaluating the proposals as follows:

- For programs at the American Center in Ho Chi Minh City or at the American Hangouts in the Mekong Delta: design and implement the programs and activities during opening hours or via online classes if in-person engagements are not feasible. The American Center in Ho Chi Minh City can accommodate a maximum of 200 students. For the American Hangouts, please work with the American Center team to coordinate access to the space.

- Competitive proposals will have two to four contact hours per week, for a minimum of 100 hours in total.

- Duration should be a minimum of six months and a maximum of one year.

- Grantee is encouraged to recruit students and course attendees.

- The language of instruction is preferably English, but Vietnamese may be used in some instances. The final presentation or capstone project must be in English.

- The proposal must include detailed information about project members and instructor(s), including CV, resume, and other relevant professional experience.

- The instructors of the class should be trained teachers or working professionals.

- The grantee is responsible for obtaining visas and any other legal documents required by the Government of Vietnam for staff to work in the country.

- Budget in the proposal must include:
  - Cost of teaching materials for teachers and learning materials for students
  - Cost of U.S.-based alternative e-learning/meeting platform
  - Salary of teachers
  - Marketing and recruiting costs
  - Field trips

- The proposal must also include marketing strategies, syllabus, and plan for course monitoring and evaluation.

- Post-course feedback on the participants' performance.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

- **Length of performance period:** Projects generally must be completed in one year but can be longer in certain circumstances.
- **Award amounts:** awards may range from a minimum of $1,000 to a maximum of $10,000 for each project.
  A detailed budget is required to justify the amount. The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Consulate General in Ho Chi Minh City reserves the right to award less or more than the amount of funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as they may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.
- **Type of Funding:** Fiscal Year 2023 American Spaces Support Funds and Fiscal Year 2023 Public Diplomacy Funding.
- **Anticipated programs start date:** Before September 30, 2023.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, Fixed Amount Award (FAAs), or Cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements and some FAAs are different from grants in that Public Affairs Section staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation ("Substantial Involvement").

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 12 months or less but can be longer in certain circumstances. Public Affairs Section will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Submissions are encouraged from **U.S. and Vietnamese** entities with relevant programming and/or teaching experience. This experience should be documented in the proposal. Eligible entities include:
- not-for-profit, civil society/non-governmental organizations
- universities; non-profit educational institutions
- individuals

For-profit entity is not allowed to apply. Previous federal award recipients who are not/were not in compliance with the terms of their financial and program reporting requirements are ineligible to apply. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure they are in compliance with all applicable terms, conditions, and Office of Management and Budget guidance and requirements. Those organizations found to be in non-compliance may be found ineligible for funding or designated high risk if selected for funding.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost share is encouraged but not required (applies for submitters who are organizations only).

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via www.SAM.gov as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Application Deadline

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time before the closing date of this opportunity; however, all submission must be received by **11:59 p.m., June 15, 2023 (Vietnam time)**. For the purposes of determining if an award is submitted on time, officials will utilize the time-stamp provided by email. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE FOR LATE SUBMISSIONS.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that an application has been received in its entirety. U.S. Consulate General Ho Chi Minh City bears no responsibility for applications not received before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission.

2. <u>Content and Form of Application Submission</u>

<u>Please follow all instructions below carefully</u>. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of Application

Please ensure:
- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. SF-424 *(Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)* or SF-424-I *(Application for Federal Assistance --individuals)*
2. SF424A *(Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)*
3. SF424B *(Assurances for Non-Construction programs)*
4. Budget Justification Narrative. Link: <u>Budget Narrative Template</u>
5. Proposal (*5* pages maximum). Link: <u>Grant Proposal Template</u>
6. 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
7. Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner

8. Official permission letters, if required for program activities
9. Proof of entity.

Please see below description and requirements for each template/ form:

a) Mandatory application forms
- *SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)* or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance individuals)
- SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) for organizations or SF424B for individuals
- Budget Justification Narrative. Link: Budget Narrative Template

b) Summary Cover sheet: Cover sheet stating the applicant's name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

c) Proposal: The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.
- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying**: A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Consulate General HCMC and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed.
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The "goals" describe what the program is intended to achieve. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and *XXX* will be improved? The "objectives" refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities**: Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design**: A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- **Proposed Program Schedule:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles, and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.

- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

d) Budget Justification Narrative: After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate file to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

e) Attachments
- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- Proof of entity.

3. <u>**Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)**</u>

   Required Registrations:

   All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

   Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

   The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

   Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. <u>Please begin your registration as early as possible</u>.

   - Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.

   - Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
   - **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO**

Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities. If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket ("incident") with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: "I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE or NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated."

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that <u>DO</u> plan to do business with the DoD in addition to Department of State should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

NCAGE Homepage:
https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx
NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

Exemptions
An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.

- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come

from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

4. **Submission Dates and Times**

Submit your complete package to HCMCGrants@state.gov by 11:59 p.m., June 15, 2023 (Vietnam time).

DO NOT WinZar or WinZip your application otherwise it may not be reviewed.

DO include "Application for PAS-SVM700-23-002_Project Name" in the subject of your email.
If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: HCMCGrants@state.gov with subject "INQUIRIES – PAS-SVM700-23-0023".

A formal decision on your proposal will normally be made within 60 days but may take longer. Once a decision is made to fund your proposal, and all documentation is complete we will begin the process of funding.

5. **Funding Restrictions**

The following types of programs **are not eligible for funding:**
Activities and expenses that are generally not funded include, but are not limited to:
- the purchase or long-term lease of space or buildings in support of program activities;
- support personal business;
- construction projects;
- research projects and publications;
- individual travel to conferences;
- scholarships to support educational opportunities or study for individuals;
- funding ongoing projects, which would otherwise be funded through other means;
- financial support for fundraising or fund development projects;
- projects that are inherently political in nature or that contain the appearance of partisanship/support to an individual or single party in electoral campaigns;
- political party and lobbying activities;
- projects that support specific religious activities;
- cash prizes for competitions;
- networking events;
- business-class travel;
- development projects without a clear public diplomacy component
- translations;
- alcoholic beverages.

- book publishing or documentary making unless it represents small portions of the total grant.

E. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

1. Criteria

Each technically eligible application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated by a panel on the basis of the criteria detailed below. Each organization/individual can submit more than one proposal.

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – The program idea should be well developed, with sufficient detail about how project activities will be strategically carried out. The proposals should demonstrate originality and outline clear, achievable objectives. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The project scope is appropriate and clearly defined.

Project Justification and Support of U.S. Public Diplomacy Priorities – The project is likely to provide maximum impact in furthering the broader U.S. Public Diplomacy policy objectives. The project addresses one or more of the priority program objectives, target audiences, and geographic area identified in the solicitation. The proposal contains a compelling justification, demonstrating an in-depth understanding of the environment and citing specific factors creating/influencing the need for the proposed project.

Organization's Record and Capacity – The organization has expertise in the subject area and demonstrates the ability to perform the proposed activities. The organization demonstrates capacity for successful planning and responsible fiscal management. Applicants who have received grant funds previously have been compliant with applicable rules and regulations. Where partners are described, the applicant details each partner's respective role and provides curriculum vitae (CVs) for persons responsible for the project and financial administration. Proposed personnel, institutional resources and partners are adequate and appropriate.

Cost-Effectiveness - The budget and narrative justification are sufficiently detailed and linked. Projects with budgets that do not match the program narrative, and vice versa, are unlikely to be successful. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities. The results and proposed outcomes justify the total cost of the project. Budget items are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.

Monitoring and Evaluation - Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward Public Affairs Section goals. Projects should demonstrate the capacity for engaging in outcome-

based evaluations and identify proscribed outputs and outcomes to measure how program activities will achieve the program's strategic objectives. The Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan should include output- and outcome-based indicators, baseline and target for each indicator, disaggregation if applicable, monitoring and evaluation tools, data source, and frequency of monitoring and evaluation.

Sustainability and Impact - Proposals should clearly delineate how elements of their program will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect may include but is not limited to, plans to build lasting networks for direct and indirect beneficiaries, follow-on training and mentoring, and continued use of project deliverables. A strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating capacity-building results, a plan to generate revenue, or interest and support from the private sector. Proposed impact should be clearly outlined and coincide with public diplomacy goals.

2. **Review and Selection Process**

U.S Consulate General HCMC strives to ensure that each application receives a balanced evaluation by a Review Panel. U.S Consulate General HCMC Grants Officer will determine eligibility of each submitted proposal. All technically eligible applications for a given NOFO are reviewed against the same criteria, which include quality of project idea, project planning/ability to achieve objectives, institutional record and capacity, inclusive programming, cost effectiveness, multiplier effect/sustainability, and project monitoring and evaluation.

Additionally, the Review Panel will evaluate how the application addresses the NOFO request, U.S. foreign policy goals, and the overall priority needs of the U.S Consulate General HCMC.

The Review Panel may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of the funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

3. **Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov (formerly, FAPIIS)**

For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold over the period of performance (see §200.01 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants that:

i. The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review

and consider any information about the applicant that is in the U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

ii. An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM that a Federal awarding agency previously entered;

iii. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Payment Method: Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified *via email*.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions: Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at: https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/. Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

In accordance with the Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Underserved Communities, proposals should demonstrate how the program advances equity with respect to race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability. The proposal should also demonstrate how the program will further engagement in underserved communities and with individuals from underserved communities. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing racial equity and underserved communities will enhance the program's goals and objectives, as well as the experience of participants.

The support of underserved communities will be part of the review criteria for this opportunity. Therefore, proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is the required form for the financial reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted and what information the narrative report should contain.

The U.S. Consulate General HCMC reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period.

A final narrative and financial report must also be submitted within 90 days after the expiration of the award.

Please note: Delays in reporting may result in delays of payment approvals, and failure to provide required reports may jeopardize the recipient's ability to receive future U.S. government funds.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact HCMCGrants@state.gov.

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials

and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least $5,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than $5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All "Other" or "Miscellaneous" expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

"Cost Sharing" refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Mission.   It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers' time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.