

**U.S. Department of State
U.S. Mission to the UAE
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: U.S. Consulate Dubai Public Diplomacy Section, Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: Academy of Women Entrepreneurs

Announcement Type: Grant or Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: DXB-NOFO-2024-01

Deadline for Applications: September 20, 2024

Assistance Listing Number: 19.040

Total Amount Available: Up to \$150,000.00 (Subject to availability of funds)

CONTACT INFORMATION

- For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.
- For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, contact: Dubai-PAO-DL@state.gov
- All application materials must be submitted by email to ayyashl@state.gov

In order to be eligible to receive an award under this NOFO, 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 begin the registration processes immediately to ensure the registrations are completed well in advance of the submission deadline.** The process can require several **weeks** for the registrations to be validated and confirmed. See *Section D: Submission Requirements* for further details.

Due to the volume of applicants and inquiries, Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) **does not** accept letters of intent, concept papers, or requests for meetings or phone calls prior to application.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application package has been received in its entirety. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible. Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Executive Summary:

The U.S. Mission to the UAE announces this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for organizations to submit proposals to implement the Academy of Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) in the UAE. The 14-month program will include a 4–6-month training and mentorship program to support at least 20 UAE-based, women-owned small and medium enterprises (SMEs) build the knowledge, skills, and networks to expand market reach by taking advantage of the UAE entrepreneurship ecosystem and bilateral trade opportunities. Following the training period participants will have the opportunity to showcase successes at trade shows and policy summits.

Background:

AWE in UAE is a business training program (AWE) that provides UAE-based, women-owned SMEs the knowledge, networks, and access they need to build resilience and grow their businesses. AWE UAE will convene private sector networks, U.S. Government resources/alumni, and public and private resources to establish a network Emirati and long-term UAE resident entrepreneurs and business leaders that have the capacity to develop business growth plans and leverage market expansion and media opportunities. AWE UAE supports U.S.-UAE business partnerships, public-private sponsorships, and builds institutional capacity to increase women's access to economic opportunities.

Since 2019, AWE has advanced women's businesses by empowering more than 25,000 women entrepreneurs in 120+ countries. Implemented in the UAE since 2020, AWE has helped 41 women-led business, which to date have raised \$7 million in funding, generated \$45 million in revenues, and created 500+ jobs

Participants and Audiences:

At least 20 Emirati and long-term UAE resident women-owned SMEs. Participants must have an operational business with at least two years of revenue + VAT registered entity, and a minimum team of two people.

Project Goal: Help to support women entrepreneurs in the UAE through a 14-month program focused on upskilling and scaling 20 UAE-based female business owners and entrepreneurs by exposing them to the UAE startup ecosystem. **Project Objectives:** **AWE 5.0 funding opportunity seeks to provide at least 20 UAE based women entrepreneurs with a 4–6-month training and mentorship program to scale successful businesses and to showcase successes at trade shows and policy summits in the Fall 2025.**

By promoting women's economic opportunities October and ensuring that women have the capabilities and resources needed to participate in the global economy, AWE directly supports the first-ever interagency U.S. Strategy on Global Women's Economic Security. AWE in UAE also builds bilateral preferred trade and investment ties by providing U.S. and UAE best practices for women entrepreneurs to expand market access and develop the highest standards of quality, integrity, and innovation.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: October 01, 2024 to Nov 30, 2024

Number of awards anticipated: *one*

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$100,000.00 to a maximum of \$150,000.00

Type of Funding: *FY24 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds*

Anticipated programs start date: *October 01, 2024*

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant or Cooperative agreement

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed by December 2025.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- *Not-for-profit organizations (U.S. or UAE based)*
- *Think tanks*
- *Public and private educational institutions*
- *Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions*

For-profit entities, even those that may fall into the categories listed above, are **not** eligible to apply for this NOFO. Organizations may sub-contract with other entities, but only one, non-profit, non-governmental entity can be the prime recipient of the award. When sub-contracting with other entities, the responsibilities of each entity must be clearly defined in the proposal.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required for this funding opportunity.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order 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 for more information.

4. This opportunity will not support:

- Projects relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Construction projects;
- Projects that support specific religious activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs
- Scientific research or surveys;
- Commercial projects;
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
- Projects that duplicate existing projects; or
- Illegal activities

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

- Application forms required below are available at <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/forms-repository.html>
- Due to the volume of applicants and inquiries, the Public Affairs Section (PAS) will not accept letters of intent, concept papers, or requests for meetings or phone calls prior to application.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application package has been received in its entirety. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible. Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

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

Applicants must ensure:

- Proposal clearly addresses the goals, audiences, and objectives of this notice.
- All documents are in English.
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars.
- All pages are numbered.
- All applicant authorized signatures are provided where indicated on the various, required forms.
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents and components are **required and must be included in the applicant's submission:**

Section 1. Mandatory application forms

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) (Attachment #1)
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) (Attachment #2)
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) (Attachment #3)

All submissions must include the SF-424 Application for Federal Assistance and the SF-424A Budget Information—Non-Construction. These forms and the instructions for completing them are available at <http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html> under the heading “SF-424 Family.” NOTE: The SF-424B is required only for those applicants who have not registered in SAM.gov. An authorized signature by the applicant must be provided on this form.

Section 2. Technical Proposal (12 Pages maximum): 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. (Attachment #4) ; if you opt to use our suggested template.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Organizational Description and Capacity:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants

from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies as well as experience with and expertise in areas related to those described in the NOFO. You may use the attached Applicant Organization Information Survey form to provide this information

- **Program Methods, Design, Activities, and Deliverables:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Proposed Program Schedule and Timeline:** 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. Include the proportion of their time that will be used in support of this program.
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees, if applicable.
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Proposals must include a draft Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) plan.

Section 3. — Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative:

- **Detailed Budget -** Applicants must submit a detailed line-item budget. Applicants are encouraged to utilize the template provided with the funding opportunity but are not required to do so (Attachment #5). Line-item expenditures should be listed in the greatest possible detail. The budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories: personnel; fringe benefits; travel; equipment; supplies; consultants/contracts; other direct costs; and indirect costs. See Annex Section I for a description of the types of costs that should be included in each category. Personnel salaries should include the level of effort and the rate of pay, which should cover the percentage of time each staff member will dedicate to grant-based activities. If an organization is charging an indirect cost rate without a NICRA, it must apply it to the modified total budget costs (MTDC), refer to 2CFR§200.68. **Budgets shall be submitted in U.S. dollars** and final grant agreements will be conducted in U.S. dollars.
- **Budget Justification Narrative –** Applicants must submit a budget justification narrative to accompany the detailed line-item budget. The purpose of the budget justification narrative is to supplement the information provided in the detailed budget spreadsheet by justifying how the budget cost elements are necessary to implement project objectives and accomplish the project goals. The budget justification narrative is a tool to help PDS staff fully understand the budgetary needs of the applicant and is an opportunity to provide descriptive information about the requested costs beyond the constraints of the budget template. Together, the detailed budget spreadsheet, the budget justification narrative, and the SF-424A should provide a complete financial and

qualitative description that supports the proposed project plan and should be directly relatable to the specific project components described in the applicant's proposal.

Section 4. - Required Attachments:

- a. **Key Personnel Resumes:** A résumé, not to exceed one page in length, must be included for the proposed key staff persons, such as the Project Director and Finance Officer, as well as any speakers or trainers (if applicable). If an individual for this type of position has not been identified, the applicant may submit a 1-page position description, identifying the qualifications and skills required for that position, in lieu of a résumé.
- b. **Letters of support from program partners:** Letters of support should be included for sub-recipients or other partners. The letters must identify the type of relationship to be entered into (formal or informal), the roles and responsibilities of each partner in relation to the proposed project activities, and the expected result of the partnership. The individual letters cannot exceed 1 page in length.
- c. **Indirect Costs:** If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included in the application submission.
- d. **Proof of Non-profit Status:** Documentation to demonstrate the applicant's non-profit status (e.g., U.S.-based organizations should submit a copy of their 501(c)(3) Internal Revenue Service determination letter, and non-U.S. organizations should provide evidence of non-profit status issued by a government entity).
- e. **Proof of Registration:** A copy of the organization's registration should be provided with the proposal application. U.S.-based organizations should submit a copy of their IRS determination letter. UAE-based organizations should submit a copy of their certificate of registration from the appropriate government organization.

Other items NOT required/requested with the application submission, but which *may* be requested if your application is approved to move forward in the review process include:

- a. Copies of an organization or program audit within the last two (2) years
- b. Copies of relevant human resources, financial, or procurement policies
- c. Copies of other relevant organizational policies or documentation that would help the Department determine your organization's capacity to manage a federal grant award overseas.
- d. Information to determine what financial controls and standard operating procedures an organization uses to procure goods and services, hire staff and track time and

- attendance, pay for grant-related travel, and identify other financial transactions that may be necessary to undertake the project activities
- e. The Embassy reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registration: All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain a SAM.gov registration as well as a Unique Entity Identifier Number (UEI). Registration through www.SAM.gov is free of charge.

The Unique Entity Identifier (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. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to register in SAM.gov.

Starting April 2022, the UEI will be assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at www.SAM.gov. To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew its sam.gov registration annually.

www.sam.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov.

If an organization plans to issue a sub-contract or sub-award, those sub-awardees must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). Those entities can register for a UEI only at SAM.gov.

If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application could be deemed **ineligible**. All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations, the latter are free of charge.

Please note: Any applicant with an exclusion in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension."

5. Submission Dates and Times

All application materials must be submitted by email to *Dubai-PAO-DL@state.gov*

Submission Deadline: All applications must be received by Thursday, September 20, 2024, 5 p.m. UAE time. No application will be accepted after that date.

6. Funding Restrictions:

Pre-award costs are not an allowable expense for this funding opportunity.

7. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants must acquire all required registrations and rights in the United States and UAE.

Any sub-recipient organization must also meet all the U.S. and UAE requirements described above.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria: Each application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the criteria enumerated below. The criteria are designed to assess the quality of the proposed project, and to determine the likelihood of its success.

- **Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 25 points:** The program idea should be innovative and well developed, with sufficient detail about how project activities will be 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. Proposals should also demonstrate how the program will support diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) principles and engage underserved communities in their program’s administration, design, and implementation.
- **Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 25 points:**
 - The project proposal demonstrates that the organization has sufficient expertise, skills, and human resources to implement the project.
 - The organization demonstrates that it has a clear understanding of the underlying issue that the project will address.
 - The organization demonstrates capacity for successful planning and responsible fiscal management. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.
 - 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
- **Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 20 points:** The project plan is well developed, with sufficient detail about how activities will be carried out. The proposal specifies target audiences, participant recruitment, and geographic areas of implementation. The proposal outlines clear, achievable objectives. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The project scope is appropriate and clearly defined.
- **Budget – 10 points:** The budget and narrative justification are sufficiently detailed. The budget demonstrates that the organization has devoted time to accurately determine expenses associated with the project instead of providing rough estimates. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The results and proposed outcomes justify the total cost of the project. Budget items are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation - 10 points:** There is a complete and thorough draft submission of a M&E Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP). This will include a list of proposed project activities, corresponding milestone, output, and outcome indicators, a description of data collection methods, and a timeline for collecting such information. The proposal presents a clear theory of change on how the program will address that problem. Further, if the project requires selecting participants, or beneficiaries, the proposal should articulate how the selection will be done in an equitable way.
- **Sustainability – 10 points:** The project proposal describes clearly the approach that will be used to ensure maximum sustainability or advancement of project goals after the end of project activity.

2. Review and Selection Process

- a. Acknowledgement of receipt. Applicants will receive acknowledgment of receipt of their proposal.
- b. Review. All submissions are screened for technical eligibility. **If a submission is missing any required forms/documents, it will be considered ineligible and will not be reviewed by the grants review committee.** A technical review panel will review eligible proposals based upon the criteria noted in this NOFO.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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 project 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.

The Federal government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement. 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. The U.S. government also reserves the right to make an award in excess of the award ceiling.

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 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)
- [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
- [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)
- [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE \(FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\)](#)
- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
- [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following: NOTE:

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
 - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
 - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
 - Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in [2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters](#).

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about this funding opportunity or the grant application process, please contact: ayyashl@state.gov

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel and Fringe Benefits: 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, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. 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. Embassy. 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.

Branding Requirements

As a condition of receipt of a grant award, all materials produced pursuant to the award, including training materials, materials for recipients or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under an agreement, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, and backdrops, podium signs, etc. must be marked appropriately with the standard, rectangular U.S. flag in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity. Note: Exceptions to the branding requirement are allowable under certain conditions. If an applicant is notified that their award has been chosen for funding, the Grants Officer will determine, in consultation with the applicant, if an exception is applicable.

Copyrights and Proprietary Information

If any of the information contained in your application is proprietary, please note in the footer of the appropriate pages that the information is Confidential – Proprietary. Applicants should

also note what parts of the application, program, concept, etc. are covered by copyright(s), trademark(s), or any other intellectual property rights and provide copies of the relevant documentation to support these copyrights.