

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
U.S. EMBASSY NEW ZEALAND, PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

This is the initial announcement of this funding opportunity.

<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b>	Academy for Women Entrepreneurs – Pacific Region
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b>	PAS-NEWZEALAND-2024-02
<b>Application Deadline:</b>	Monday, December 18, 2024 at 5:00pm New Zealand time
<b>Total Amount Available:</b>	\$20,000 USD per country, subject to availability of funds
<b>CFDA Number:</b>	<b>19.040 - Public Diplomacy Programs</b>

**A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy New Zealand Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to implement the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) to promote women’s social and economic empowerment, pending the availability of funds. The cohort should take place sometime between April 2024-April 2025. Each AWE cohort should include about 30 women meeting either online or in person. AWE cohorts may take place in any, all, or the following select countries: New Zealand, Niue, the Cook Islands, Tokelau, French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Futuna, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, Palau, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, or the Federated States of Micronesia.

**About the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs**

By ensuring that women have the skills, capabilities, and resources to fully participate in the economy, AWE directly supports the U.S. National Strategy on Gender, Equity, and Equality.

AWE was established in 2019 to provide women with the knowledge, networks and access to launch or scale successful businesses. Cohorts of approximately 30 women meet online and in-person to learn core business skills such as strategic planning, marketing and finance, then discuss the material with local facilitators, business leaders, and U.S. exchange alumni mentors. Through its partnership with Arizona State University’s Thunderbird School for Global Management and the Freeport-McMoran Foundation, AWE utilizes a no-cost, online learning platform. Used by AWE since 2019, [DreamBuilder](#) teaches participants the fundamentals of starting or growing a small business from a U.S. perspective, offering modules on marketing, pricing, and bookkeeping, and includes a built-in business plan generator. It is available only in English and Spanish, though posts may conduct mentoring and facilitation in local languages.

This year, implementing partners may also use a new online curriculum, in whole or in part – the [Najafi 100 Million Learners Global Initiative](#) - alongside or instead of DreamBuilder. 100 Million Learners’ Global Entrepreneurship and Innovation Bootcamp may be most suitable to implementing partners who are looking for a more challenging business curriculum, or who wish

to provide complementary modules on key topics in entrepreneurship and innovation. 100 Million Learners is currently offered in 20 languages and will add up to 20 more in the future.

Proposals to establish new AWE cohorts must use either DreamBuilder or 100 Million Learners for their curriculum.

### **About the Partnership with U.S. Embassies**

AWE programming occurs in close partnership with U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy Sections. U.S. Embassies will provide content and training for AWE facilitators and implementers. Through U.S. Embassies' contacts, AWE implementers will have access to local and regional alumni engagement, U.S. experts and speakers who can engage virtually and in person on entrepreneurship and innovation-related topics.

### **About the Proposal**

Successful proposals will demonstrate strong engagement of AWE alumni, target key audiences, and collaborate with private and public sector partners.

Proposals should include requests for up to \$20,000 USD per country included. Proposals should include initiatives such as opening new AWE cohorts, offering follow-on entrepreneurship programming to AWE alumni, and conducting AWE alumni engagement activities. All proposals must carefully and clearly justify the budget amounts requested. To maximize budgets, implementing partners are encouraged to seek cost-share and in-kind support for AWE from local organizations, host government partners, and private sector businesses.

Proposals may include follow-on activities such as virtual collaborative work, small seed grants, ongoing mentorship, group activities, speakers, and site visits.

Proposals should include pre- and post- engagement surveys to measure the overall effectiveness of the AWE program as well as any changes to the participants' knowledge.

Proposals must include the AWE FY24 Proposal form, AWE FY24 Budget Form, SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B.

The successful recipient is expected to have experience working with and in the Pacific region in a culturally appropriate and responsive manner.

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: Up to 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: Multiple

Award amounts: Up to \$20,000 USD per country included

Total available funding: Up to \$20,000 USD per country included

Type of Funding: FY Public Diplomacy Funding

Anticipated project start date: April, 1 2023

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

U.S. Embassy New Zealand anticipates having approximately \$20,000 USD per country in Fiscal Year 2024 Public Diplomacy funds available to support successful applications submitted in response to this NOFO, subject to the availability of funding.

U.S. Embassy New Zealand may issue one or more awards resulting from this NOFO to the applicant(s) whose application(s) conforming to this NOFO are the most responsive to the objectives set forth in this NOFO. The U.S. government may (a) reject any or all applications, (b) accept other than the lowest cost application, (c) accept more than one application, (d) accept alternate applications, and (e) waive informalities and minor irregularities in applications received.

The U.S. government may make award(s) on the basis of initial applications received, without discussions or negotiations. Therefore, each initial application should contain the applicant's best terms from a cost and technical standpoint. The U.S. government reserves the right (though it is not under obligation to do so), however, to enter into discussions with one or more applicants in order to obtain clarifications, additional detail, or to suggest refinements in the project description, budget, or other aspects of an application.

Applications should request no more than \$20,000 USD per country. Applicants should include an anticipated award start date in April 2023 and the period of performance should be approximately 12-24 months, with the event taking place in 2024, pending discussions with the Department of State.

U.S. Embassy New Zealand anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement and expects to be substantially involved in its implementation. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

1. Approval of the Recipient's work plans, including: program dates, planned activities, travel plans, proposed speakers, planned expenditures, event planning, and changes to any activity to be carried out under the cooperative agreement;
2. Approval of sub-award Recipients if applicable, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
3. Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### ***C.1 Eligible Applicants***

U.S. Embassy New Zealand welcomes applications from non-profit organizations/non-government organizations (NGOs) and private, public, or state institutions of higher education. For-profit entities are not eligible to apply.

### ***C.2 Cost Sharing***

Providing cost sharing is encouraged, but not a requirement for this NOFO. Inclusion of cost share in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process.

### ***C.3 Other***

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM)([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) 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.” Additionally no entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

No entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM) is eligible for any assistance or can participate in any activities under an 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 CFR1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.”

A valid Unique Entity Identified (UEI) number, and an active SAM.gov registration will need to be obtained before an organization is able to submit a full application. This requirement replaces the previous requirement for a DUNS.

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### ***D.1 Address to Request Application Package***

Applicants can find application forms, kits, or other materials needed to apply on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) under the announcement title "Young Pacific Leaders Annual Conference " funding opportunity number PAS-NEWZEALAND-2023-02. Please contact the point of contact listed in section G if requesting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or for security reasons. Please note: reasonable accommodations do not include deadline extensions.

### ***D.2 Content and Form of Application Submission***

For all application documents, please ensure:

1. All documents are in English and all costs are in U.S. dollars. If an original document within the application is in another language, an English translation must be provided (please note: the Department of State, as indicated in 2 CFR 200.111, requires that English is the official language of all award documents. If any documents are provided in both English and a foreign language, the English language version is the controlling version);
2. All pages are numbered, including budgets and attachments;
3. All documents are formatted to A4 paper; and,
4. All documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1-inch margins. Captions and footnotes may be 10 point Times New Roman font. Font sizes in charts and tables, including the budget, can be reformatted to fit within 1 page width.

Complete applications must include the following:

Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A, and SF-424B, as directed on Grants.gov; completed and signed SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities”(if applicable) (which can be found with the solicitation on Grants.gov); and your organization’s most recent audit (single program audit, if applicable, or standard audit).

AWE FY24 Budget Form (in Microsoft Excel) that includes the request to U.S. Embassy New Zealand, any cost sharing contribution, and total budget (see below for more information on budget format). A summary budget should also be included using the OMB approved budget categories (see SF-424A as a sample). Costs must be in U.S. dollars. Detailed line-item budgets for sub-awardees should be included in additional tabs within the Excel workbook. The Budget narrative should include substantive explanations and justifications for each line item in the detailed budget spreadsheet, as well as the source and a description of all cost-share offered. Personnel costs should include a clarification of the roles and responsibilities of key staff, base salary, and percentage of time devoted to the project. The budget narrative should provide additional information that might not be readily apparent in the detailed-line item budget, not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the budget, i.e. salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel

AWE FY24 Proposal form (in Microsoft Word)

If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a .pdf file. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by project and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding and therefore does not count against the submission page limitations. If your proposal involves subawards to organizations charging indirect costs, please submit the applicable NICRA also as a .pdf file. If your organization does not have a NICRA per 2 CFR 200. 414(f) the organization can elect to charge the de minimis rate of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68. The budget narrative should indicate what costs will be covered using the 10% de minimis rate.

Please note: U.S. Embassy New Zealand retains the right to ask for additional documents not included in this NOFO. Additionally, to ensure all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the U.S. Embassy New Zealand Review Panel will review the first page of the requested section up to the page limit and no further.

Additional information that successful applicants must submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

1. Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the Review Panel;
2. Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

### ***D.3 Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)***

Applicants must have an active registration in SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) prior to submitting an application, must prove a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, replacing the previous use of the DUNS in this capacity, and must continue to maintain an active SAM registration with

current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by the U.S. government.

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 is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM 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 obtain a UEI number and register in SAM.

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

No entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM is eligible for any assistance or can participate in any activities in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR Part 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR Part 1989 Comp., p. 235).

U.S. Embassy New Zealand may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time U.S. Embassy New Zealand is ready to make an award, U.S. Embassy New Zealand may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

All organizations applying for federal awards (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

NCAGE/CAGE code

[www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) registration

Step 1: Apply for a NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

NCAGE application: Application page here

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>

For help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423

For help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766

Email [NCAGE@dliis.dla.mil](mailto:NCAGE@dliis.dla.mil) for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM by logging onto:

<https://www.sam.gov>. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

- Submission Dates and Times

#### *D.4 Submission Dates and Times*

**Applications are due no later than 5:00 p.m. New Zealand time on December 18, 2023 by email to [publicaffairsusnz@state.gov](mailto:publicaffairsusnz@state.gov) with the subject line “Academy for Women Entrepreneurs [Specific Pacific Country]”, funding opportunity number PAS-NEWZEALAND-2024-02.**

Submission via email will automatically log the date and time an application submission is made, and the U.S. Embassy New Zealand will use this information to determine whether an application has been submitted on time. Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless the U.S. Embassy New Zealand point of contact listed in section G is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors outside of the applicants’ control and is the sole reason for a late submission. Applicants should not expect a notification upon U.S. Embassy New Zealand receiving their application.

If ultimately provided with a notification of intent to make a Federal award, applicants typically have two to three weeks to provide additional information and documents requested in the notification of intent. The deadlines may vary in each notification of intent and applicants must adhere to the stated deadline in the notification of intent.

#### *D.5 Funding Restrictions*

U.S. Embassy New Zealand will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization. No entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM is eligible for any assistance.

Federal awards generally will not allow reimbursement of pre-Federal award costs; however, the grants officer may approve pre awards cost on a case by case basis. Generally, construction costs are not allowed under U.S. Embassy New Zealand awards.

#### *D.6 Other*

**All application submissions must be emailed to [publicaffairsusnz@state.gov](mailto:publicaffairsusnz@state.gov).**

**It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that an application has been received in its entirety. U.S. Embassy New Zealand bears no responsibility for applications not received before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission.**

Faxed and couriered documents will not be accepted. Reasonable accommodations may, in appropriate circumstances, be provided to applicants with disabilities or for security reasons.

Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable solicitation and these instructions.

### **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

#### *E.1 Criteria*

Evaluators will judge each application individually against the following criteria, listed below in order of importance, and not against competing applications.

### Quality of Project Idea

Applications should be responsive to the NOFO, appropriate in the regional context, and should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the stated mission.

### Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives

A strong application will include a clear articulation of how the proposed project activities contribute to the overall project objectives, and each activity will be clearly developed and detailed. A comprehensive monthly work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and the logistical capacity of the organization. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable results-focused and achievable in a reasonable time frame. Applications should address how the project will engage relevant stakeholders and should identify local partners as appropriate. If local partners have been identified, U.S. Embassy New Zealand strongly encourages applicants to submit letters of support from proposed in-country partners. Additionally, applicants should describe the division of labor among the direct applicant and any local partners. If applicable, applications should identify target areas for activities, target participant groups or selection criteria for participants, and the specific roles of sub-awardees, among other pertinent details. In particularly challenging operating environments, applications should include contingency plans for overcoming potential difficulties in executing the original work plan and address any operational or programmatic security concerns and how they will be addressed.

### Institution's Record and Capacity

U.S. Embassy New Zealand will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Applications should demonstrate an institutional record of responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's objectives.

### Cost Effectiveness

U.S. Embassy New Zealand strongly encourages applicants to clearly demonstrate project cost effectiveness in their application, including examples of leveraging institutional and other resources. However, cost-sharing or other examples of leveraging other resources is not required and does not need to be included in the budget. Inclusion in the budget does not result in additional points awarded during the review process. Budgets however should have low and/or reasonable overhead and administration costs and applicants should provide clear explanations and justifications for these costs in relation to the work involved. All budget items should be clearly explained and justified to demonstrate its necessity, appropriateness, and its link to the project objectives.

Please note: If cost-share is included in the budget then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, U.S. Embassy New Zealand's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

### Multiplier Effect/Sustainability

Applications should clearly delineate how elements of the project will have a multiplier effect and be sustainable beyond the life of the grant. A good multiplier effect will have an impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant. A strong sustainability plan may include demonstrating continuing impact beyond the life of a project.

### Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Complete applications will include a detailed plan (both a narrative and table) of how the project's progress and impact will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project. Incorporating a well-designed monitoring and evaluation component into a project is one of the most efficient methods of documenting the progress and results (intended and unintended) of a project. Applications should demonstrate the capacity to provide objectives with measurable outputs and outcomes and engage in robust monitoring and assessment of project activities. The quality of the M&E plan will be judged on the narrative explaining how both monitoring and evaluation will be carried out, as well as who will be responsible for those related activities. For each performance indicator, the table should also include baselines and yearly and cumulative targets, data collection tools, data sources, types of data disaggregation, and frequency of monitoring and evaluation. There should also be metrics to capture how project activities target the most at risk and vulnerable populations or addresses their concerns, where applicable.

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### ***F.1 Federal Award Notices***

U.S. Embassy New Zealand will provide a separate notification to applicants on the result of their applications. Successful applicants will receive a letter electronically via email requesting that the applicant respond to panel conditions and recommendations. This notification is not an authorization to begin activities and does not constitute formal approval or a funding commitment.

Final approval is contingent on the applicant successfully responding to the panel's conditions and recommendations, being registered in required systems, and completing and providing any additional documentation requested by U.S. Embassy New Zealand. Final approval is also contingent on final review and approval by the Department of State's warranted grants officer.

The notice of Federal award signed by the Department of State's warranted grants officers is the sole authorizing document. If awarded, the notice of Federal award will be provided to the applicant's designated Authorizing Official via email to be counter-signed.

### ***F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements***

The Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards set forth in 2 CFR Chapter 200 (Sub-Chapters A through F) shall apply to all non-Federal entities, except for assistance awards to Individuals and Foreign Public Entities (for more information on these exceptions, see Chapters 5, Federal Assistance to Individuals, and

6, Federal Assistance to Foreign Public Entities Directive.) Sub-Chapters A through E shall apply to all foreign organizations, and Sub-Chapters A through D shall apply to all U.S. and foreign for-profit entities.

The applicant/recipient of the award and any sub-recipient under the award must comply with all applicable terms and conditions, in addition to the assurance and certifications made part of the Notice of Award. The Department's Standard Terms and Conditions can be viewed at <https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm>.

### ***F.3 Reporting***

Applicants should be aware that U.S. Embassy New Zealand awards will require regular financial and progress reporting. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is the required form for the financial reports. The progress reports must include a coversheet with information about the award, a narrative attachment as described below; and information about progress made on the Project Indicators, using a mutually agreed upon format approved by the grants officer.

Narrative progress reports should reflect the focus on measuring the project's impact on the overarching objectives and should be compiled according to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs as outlined in the award's Scope of Work (SOW) and in the

#### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

(M&E) Statement. An assessment of the overall project's impact should be included in each progress report. Where relevant, progress reports should include the following sections:

- Relevant contextual information (limited);
- Explanation and evaluation of significant activities of the reporting period and how the activities reflect progress toward achieving objectives, including meeting benchmarks/targets as set in the M&E plan. In addition, attach the M&E plan, comparing the target and actual numbers for the indicators;
- Any tangible impact or success stories from the project, when possible;
- Copy of mid-term and/or final evaluation report(s) conducted by an external evaluator; if applicable;
- Relevant supporting documentation or products related to the project activities (such as articles, meeting lists and agendas, participant surveys, photos, manuals, etc.) as separate attachments;
- Description of how the Recipient is pursuing sustainability, including looking for sources of follow-on funding;
- Any problems/challenges in implementing the project and a corrective action plan with an updated timeline of activities;
- Reasons why established goals were not met;
- Data for the required indicator(s) for the reporting period as well as aggregate data by fiscal year;
- Additional pertinent information, including analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs, if applicable.
- 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.

U.S. Embassy New Zealand reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period.

## **G. CONTACT INFORMATION**

For technical submission questions related to this solicitation, please contact Mara Hosoda, [HosodaMK@state.gov](mailto:HosodaMK@state.gov).

## **H. OTHER INFORMATION**

Applicants should be aware that U.S. Embassy New Zealand understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that U.S. Embassy New Zealand cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

The information in this NOFO is binding and may not be modified by any U.S. Embassy New Zealand representative. Explanatory information provided by U.S. Embassy New Zealand that contradicts this language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO and negotiation of applications does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. U.S. Embassy New Zealand reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the project evaluation requirements.

This NOFO will appear on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and the U.S. Mission New Zealand [website](#).