

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION / U.S. MISSION TO SOUTH AFRICA
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: **Academy for Women Entrepreneurs LESA**
Funding Opportunity Number: **PDS-ZAF-FY24-04**
Deadline for Applications: **April 26, 2024**
Assistance Listing Number: **19.022 (Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs Appropriation Overseas Grants)**
Total Amount Available for All Awards: **Up to \$119,190**
Anticipated Awards: **1-2**

This funding opportunity is open to non-profit organizations only.

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Academy for Women Entrepreneurs LESA (Lesotho, Eswatini and South Africa)

The U.S. Mission to South Africa announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs, a 5-month program to train women entrepreneurs based in South Africa, Lesotho and Eswatini.

The Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE) is a program of the U.S. Department of State and Arizona State University's Thunderbird School of Global Management. The Academy for Women Entrepreneurs LESA (Lesotho, Eswatini and South Africa) program is centered on the Francis and Dionne Najafi 100 Million Learners Global Initiative, an accredited online global management and entrepreneurship certificate consisting of five world-class courses and available to learners across the globe.

Applicants for this notice of funding opportunity will support cohorts of women entrepreneurs in seven cities – five in South Africa and one each in Lesotho and Eswatini. The cohorts will attend virtual and in-person events at American Spaces in each location. For participation in the 100 Million Learners program, the applicant will work with the U.S. Embassy to identify an in-person alumni facilitator in each city to lead the participants. The AWE LESA program focuses on the 18-module foundation course which has particular focus on global entrepreneurship and innovation.

Facilitators will also lead in-person discussions and serve as mentors for program participants. There are a total of 18 sessions taking place on a weekly basis. Facilitators may be alumni of related U.S. government programs and should be selected in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate General. Facilitators will attend pre-program training and orientation.

The eventual implementing partner will also need to run a program launch, graduation event as

well as a pitch practice session in each city.

Upon graduation, the implementing partner will work with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate to administer the USADF (United States Africa Development Fund) funding competition to graduates of the program who wish to apply and support the application review process. This competition is run on an annual basis and is subject to the availability of funds.

Additional information about the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs:

<https://eca.state.gov/awe>

Additional information about our American Spaces:

- [South Africa](#)
- [Lesotho](#)
- [Eswatini](#)

Priority Region:

Project activities will take place between July/August and December in five cities across South Africa, one city in Lesotho, and one city in Eswatini.

Program Goal:

- Promote economic prosperity, including equitable economic development opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups and individuals.

Program Objectives:

- Provide a resource for women entrepreneurs to engage in online education with guided facilitation and localization.
- Foster networks that support participants' access to peer-to-peer mentorship, business partners, and scaling opportunities with businesses in the region and in the United States.
- Provide access to a range of educational programs tailored to women's economic empowerment to expand the effects of participation.

Participants:

1. Young women (aged 21–35).
2. Early-stage entrepreneurs (businesses that have been operating for 1-3 years) that run businesses with a community improvement element or other social impact.
3. Some level of post-secondary study (i.e. certificate, diploma, undergraduate degree or postgraduate degree) in order to complete the 100 Million Learners course successfully.
4. Citizen/legal resident of the country in which the participant's cohort is based.
5. Reside within 40km of the cohort base locations in Free State (Mangaung), Gauteng (Johannesburg), Kwa-Zulu Natal (Pietermaritzburg), Limpopo (Polokwane), Western Cape (Cape Town), Maseru (Lesotho), and Manzini (Eswatini).
6. The participant numbers will be as follows: Limpopo (15 participants); Johannesburg (15 participants); Bloemfontein (10 participants); Cape Town (10 participants); Pietermaritzburg (10 participants); Maseru (20 participants); Manzini (20 participants).

7. Committed to an average of 5 hours per week to the AWE program.
8. Basic computer skills and access to a laptop/computer with internet connection.

Academy for Women Entrepreneurs Southern Africa Regional Summit

The U.S. Mission to South Africa announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a 3-day regional summit for alumni of the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs from the Southern Africa Customs Union (SACU), namely Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa.

The main objectives of the summit are to build networks of women entrepreneurs from SACU countries, explore opportunities for business expansion through trade and accessing regional markets, partnerships, best practices, and provide a learning opportunity on the latest digital innovations that relate to entrepreneurship in Africa.

Applicants for this funding opportunity will support the host Embassy (U.S. Mission to South Africa) by administering all logistical activities in the planning and execution of the summit (e.g. venue identification and booking, catering, processing speaker payments etc.), as well as travel logistics for participants traveling to the summit. A total of seventy alumni including speakers and facilitators are expected to attend in-person at a Gauteng-based venue.

Priority Region:

Summit activities will take place during Global Entrepreneurship Week at a venue in Gauteng, South Africa. Participants will travel from Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, and South Africa.

Program Goal:

- Promote economic prosperity, including equitable economic development opportunities for historically disadvantaged groups and individuals.

Participants:

1. Young women who have participated in the AWE program in one of the following years – 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.
2. Citizen/legal resident of South Africa (26 participants), Lesotho (5 participants), Eswatini (5 participants), Botswana (12 participants) or Namibia (12 participants)
3. Must be running a fully operating business that has shown growth (revenue, staff and/or community impact) since graduating from the AWE program.

Audiences:

- National, provincial, and municipal (or equivalent) government departments and agencies focused on economic development, women's empowerment, and gender equity.
- Non-governmental organizations and other civil society organizations focused on related topics and subject matter.

- Investors and other entities focused on economic prosperity, trade and investment opportunity development, and other related subject matter.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: One to two

Award amounts: \$25,000 to \$119,190

Total available funding: \$119,190

Type of funding: FY 2024 Fulbright-Hays public diplomacy funds

Anticipated projects start date: On or before June 1, 2024

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that bureau/embassy staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 12 months or less.

The Department of State 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 project, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

Only **non-profit South African or U.S. organizations with proven on-the-ground implementation capability in South Africa** are eligible to apply. This includes non-profit think tanks, civil society/non-governmental organizations, and public and private educational institutions.

Applicants may be asked to provide proof of their non-profit status if such status is unclear to the selection committee.

Cost sharing or matching

Cost-sharing is not required.

System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

To be eligible to receive an award, an organization must have a valid registration on [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov). Please see Section D below for information on how to obtain this registration.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Submission date and time

Applications are due no later than 23h59 SAST on April 26, 2024.

Address to Request Application Package

The **required forms** for this Notice of Funding Opportunity are available on grants.gov at

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>. An optional detailed budget spreadsheet is also available on the Embassy website at

<https://za.usembassy.gov/grants>.

Tip

Review this section carefully before submitting your application.

Failure to meet all the requirements could result in your proposal being rejected on technical grounds.

Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all the instructions below carefully. Please submit all proposal documents as described below via email to PretoriaGrants@state.gov with the name (abbreviated if long) of the organization applying and “AWE NOFO application” in the subject line (for example: UniZulu AWE NOFO application).

Only applications emailed to PretoriaGrants@state.gov will be considered. The required documentation listed below must be attached to the email. Documents uploaded to the “cloud” will not be retrieved.

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** and contains clear and measurable indicators of success along with a clear plan for measuring and evaluating whether those indicators have been met.
- Anyone reading the proposal can clearly understand the specific **activities** proposed and how those activities will achieve the stated goals and objectives
- The proposal contains a clear **budget** and budget narrative detailing how the budget proposal supports the proposed activities and goals/objectives of the project.
- All documents are in **English**; proposals submitted other languages will not be considered.
- All budgets are in **U.S. dollars**.
- All pages are numbered.

The following documents are required:

1. Mandatory application forms (if either of these forms is missing, your application will be technically ineligible):

SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)

SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction projects)

An additional form, SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction projects), is only required for organizations not registered in SAM.gov.

These forms can be downloaded from <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>. Do not create your own form and name it “SF-424” or “SF-424A”.

2. Proposal (seven 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.

- **Cover sheet:**
 - Name of the organization applying for federal financial assistance.
 - Confirmation of the non-profit status of the organization.
 - Proposal date.
 - Title of the project.
 - Proposed start and end date of the project.
- **Proposal summary:** short narrative that outlines the purpose of the proposed project and its anticipated impact.
- **Project methods and design:**
 - **Goal(s):** What is the **problem** that needs to be addressed, and how will your project address this problem? In other words, what is the overall **purpose** of your project, and why should it be funded? Clear and concise language is highly recommended.
 - **Participants & audiences** should be clearly defined.
 - **Objectives:** What are the achievable and measurable goals and objectives your project aims to achieve? These are not outputs or activities (i.e.: number of sessions or number of participants); these are specific and substantive outcomes you hope to achieve with this project.
 - **Activities:** What are the activities that you will implement to achieve the objectives and ultimately help solve the stated problem? Be specific and clear about what exactly you intend to do and include a **timeline**. A logic model might be appropriate.
 - **Monitoring and evaluation plan:** 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 project be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the

grant? The plan should state specific and measurable indicators of success and the intended method for measuring achievement of each indicator. This is a key component of a successful proposal.

- **Future funding and sustainability:** The plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.
- **Introduction to the Organization applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the project, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies. Also note:
 - **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles, and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the project. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this project?
 - **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.

3. Budget Justification Narrative:

After filling out the SF-424A budget form (above), create a separate document to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section H. *Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information. A suggested budget template is included in the Grants.gov announcement for this funding opportunity and at <https://za.usembassy.gov/grants>.

4. Attachments:

- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the project.
- Letters of support from project partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.
- Official permission letters, if required for project activities.

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

To receive federal assistance funding an organization must have an active SAM.gov registration.

Background:

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.

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. If your organization does not have a UEI, go to SAM.gov to request one.

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. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

- 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 DO 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.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.

Quality and Feasibility of the Project Idea: The project idea is well developed, with detail about how project activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants: The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives: Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget: The budget justification is detailed. 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.

Monitoring and evaluation plan: Applicant demonstrates ability to measure project success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The project includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability: Project activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the project.

Review and Selection Process

A selection committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIS)

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 on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

- i. That 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 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.
- iii. That 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 §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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 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.

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: Payment will be made by EFT. For South African bank accounts, the exchange rate on the date of the transaction will be used.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Before applying, 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 projects, 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 project 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 project goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and project reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. It is anticipated that reports will be due within thirty days of each reporting period, and within one hundred and twenty days of the final completion of the award period.

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](#).

Foreign Assistance Data Review: As required by Congress, the Department of State must make progress in its efforts to improve tracking and reporting of foreign assistance data through the Foreign Assistance Data Review (FADR). The FADR requires tracking of foreign assistance activity data from budgeting, planning, and allocation through obligation and disbursement.

Successful applicants will be required to report and draw down federal funding based on the appropriate FADR Data Elements, indicated within their award documentation. In cases of more than one FADR Data Element, typically project or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

For assistance with the requirements of this funding opportunity, please contact [PretoriaGrants@state.gov](mailto: PretoriaGrants@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 project, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the project.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this project, for project staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the project 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 project, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the project), 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 project. 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 project activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the project, 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 project 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.