

U.S. Department of State

Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2024 Launching the Young South Asian Leaders Initiative (YSALI)

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: PDS-COL-2024-YSALI

Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: 19.040 - Public Diplomacy Programs

Deadline for Applications: August 16, 2024, 5pm Eastern Standard Time

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 YSALI@state.gov.
- To inquire about the process for obtaining a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) contact Donald Hunter at HunterDS@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

U.S. Embassy Colombo, in collaboration with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy, invites proposal submissions from U.S. public and private academic, cultural, and exchange-of-persons institutions, and other not-for-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501 (c) (3) (see section C. Eligibility Information) for the design and implementation of U.S. and regional workshops for the inaugural cohort of the Young South Asia Leaders Initiative (YSALI). This is an exciting opportunity to inform a new youth leadership initiative at the U.S. Department of State in a dynamic region with a significant youth population. YSALI is a new network, modeled on existing programs like the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI), the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), and others, designed to deliver on the Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS) by building the capacity of young leaders in South Asia. South Asia's more than 420 million young people will be pivotal to meeting regional and global challenges. YSALI's investment in youth from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka will help empower young leaders in the region to tackle shared challenges.

Background

YSALI is a new network conceived by the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, Office of Press and Public Diplomacy in consultation with constituent posts, drawing on best practices from existing State Department networks for young leaders in other regions. SCA intends to build the YSALI network from existing country-specific and regional youth initiatives, offering membership to already identified young people, and moving them up the ladder of engagement with the United States by offering new opportunities and a shared platform for connection. This configuration will help build the network in a controlled growth format. The YSALI themes are: 1) driving prosperity through entrepreneurship, 2) democratic resilience and a vibrant civil society, and 3) regional climate resilience.

Project Audience

Participants will be undergraduate students, recent graduates, or young professionals aged 18-30 from the seven countries in South Asia (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka). Mission India will manage the YSALI membership for Bhutan. All programs will be conducted in English and all participants must be able to understand and communicate in English. As needed, the implementer will be required to provide accommodations for Deaf, hard of hearing, and/or visually impaired participants to ensure they are able to fully participate in workshops.

For each individual workshop, the recipient will coordinate with the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, U.S. Embassy Colombo, and the other U.S. embassies in South Asia to recruit and select 80-100 participants from among the pool of YSALI members. For the regional climate resilience workshop, participants should have demonstrated strong community leadership skills, and the drive to make impactful change in their communities. For the civic engagement workshop, participants should have a demonstrated commitment to develop and sustain community projects, and the initiative to promote civic participation and good governance. Participants may not participate in both workshops; each will have a unique cohort of 80-100 participants.

YSALI Network Goal

YSALI will become a powerful network to advance the vision of a connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient Indo-Pacific by connecting and empowering promising young leaders through the region to tackle shared challenges.

YSALI Network Objectives:

1. To connect like-minded young leaders across the region, through participatory workshops and subsequent collaboration across the region via a small grants program.
2. To sustain connections through the creation of a virtual network of emerging leaders.
3. To deepen participants' understanding of current issues and opportunities and equip young leaders with the confidence and skills to address regional challenges.
4. To instill a shared sense of place and identity within the larger Indo-Pacific community.
5. The concepts of leadership, giving back to the community, and strengthening a sense of identity and place within the broader Indo-Pacific based on shared values and shared challenges should be integrated into the program.
6. To build leadership capacity among cohort members, and foster the spirit of community service, while increasing understanding of the United States and the South Asia region, to address common goals.

Program Specific Guidelines

SCA and posts will be responsible for building the membership base and connecting members. The recipient will design high-quality workshops in the United States and South Asia in years one and two for YSALI members as follows:

In its first year, the YSALI program will consist of one U.S.-based workshop and two workshops in SCA YSALI countries on strategic topics. In year two, it will consist of two overseas regional workshops pending availability of funds. The implementing partner should develop a budget and plan for all five workshops. The implementer should plan for double-occupancy accommodations for workshop participants.

The inaugural regional workshop will advance the YSALI theme of regional climate resilience. The 2025 YSALI Regional Workshop will bring together 80- 100 YSALI members who have demonstrated leadership skills and are committed to climate resilience. The recipient will then further refine the topic in consultation with Embassy Colombo and the YSALI team. Through interactive presentations, case studies, site visits, and activities, participants will explore and implement short- and long-term solutions to addressing climate change and environmental issues in the context of a regionalized and globalized society. Participants will also have the opportunity to meet with community and non-profit organization leaders working on environmental issues.

The proposal should include workshop follow-on activities to be supported by the grantee such as virtual collaborative work, projects funded through small seed grants, or ongoing mentorship to help foster connections among and action by the YSALI members. The follow-on activities should be included in the monitoring and evaluation plan and the budget.

The proposal should include a pre- and post-workshop survey to measure the overall effectiveness of the workshop as well as any changes to the participants' knowledge of the workshop topic.

The concepts of leadership, giving back to the community, and strengthening a sense of place within the broader Indo-Pacific based on shared values and shared challenges should be integrated into the program. Consideration to integrating diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility should be made throughout the program, from participant recruitment to follow-on activities. Workshop speakers/facilitators/mentors should be citizens of the United States or a South Asian/YSALI country.

The recipient is expected to develop syllabus materials and an event program with participant and speaker biographies, as well as design banners, backdrops, and other printed materials, using the YSALI logo provided by the State Department. The recipient is expected to design a digital engagement strategy for workshop participants and social media audiences, including live video or live online engagement during the program.

No new website specific to the event should be created or launched. Domain, hosting, and build costs will not be covered.

Expected Activities -- Year One

The recipient will be responsible for arranging and using cooperative agreement funds to cover all elements related to participant and staff travel including international and domestic flights, visas, travel to and from airports, visas, accommodations, per diem, meals during the program, insurance, etc. As part of YSALI workshops, the recipient must draft and share with the Department a proposed participant agreement for travel to include behavioral expectations, communication protocols in case of emergencies, and understanding of the consequences should they choose not to follow program guidelines. The recipient must be prepared to

manage medical emergencies, involuntary returns due to violation of program policies, and other potential travel anomalies.

1. Regional Workshop 1 – Regional Climate Resilience

- a. **Location:** The first regional workshop shall be held in Sri Lanka in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy Colombo. Should hosting not be possible in Sri Lanka due to extenuating circumstances, the recipient should hold the workshop in Bangladesh, Maldives, or Nepal, depending on cost, safety or other factors. For purposes of this solicitation, the recipient should plan for Sri Lanka.
- b. **Participants:** The YSALI Regional Workshop on Climate Resilience will bring together 80- 100 YSALI members who have a stated interest in mitigating climate vulnerabilities.
- c. **Format:** This will be a 3-5 day workshop in Sri Lanka.

2. Regional Workshop 2 – Civic Engagement

- a. **Location:** The second regional workshop shall be held in one of the participating YSALI countries, determined in consultation with the YSALI coordinator.
- b. **Participants:** The YSALI Regional Workshop on Civic Engagement for Good Governance will bring together 80-100 YSALI members who have a stated interest in promoting civic participation, good governance, and transparency and accountability in government.
- c. **Format:** This will be a 3-5 day workshop in the region.

3. U.S. Workshop – Leadership and American Democracy

- a. **Location:** The first week should be held in a medium-sized city on the campus of (or in close proximity to) a U.S. university or college campus. The second week should be held in Washington, DC.
- b. **Participants:** This will be a 14-day workshop, inclusive of international travel, for 80 participants. Before the workshop, the recipient shall host a half-day orientation during an SCA-friendly time zone to allow for initial networking and any pre-work.
- c. **Format:** The focus of the first week should be leadership and networking. Curriculum elements should include group discussions, experiential learning activities, and exercises that include aspects of leadership, teambuilding, collective problem-solving skills, effective communication, and management skills. Participants should be introduced to and engage with U.S. academics, students, and university administration on campus, including International Student Services.

The focus of the second week should be on the contemporary American political and media landscape, plus U.S. culture and shared values. The goal is to reinforce the power

of shared democratic values, provide a first-hand look at the U.S. political process and the role of civil society, and enhance people-to-people ties between young South Asians and Americans. Participants should learn about the essential elements of contemporary American life, in particular leadership, civil society, community engagement, and politics and how these elements inter-relate.

The workshop should include formal presentations, discussions and cultural or social events.

Planning for the second week should be done in close cooperation with the YSALI Coordinator in the Bureau for South and Central Asian Affairs, who will help arrange discussions with policymakers at the U.S. Department of State and interagency.

4. Small Grants Program

- a. For the workshop's finale, participants may compete for small grants to implement projects and/or campaigns to promote civic participation, transparency, and accountability in government. The recipient is responsible for administering the small grants program, including disbursing funds and monitoring grant activities. A follow-on activity may also be implemented after the program to report on project successes and challenges and produce a toolkit with best practices on cross-border collaboration.

Expected Activities – Year Two

The recipient should plan to repeat the two regional workshops overseas. The regional workshop on climate resilience should focus on another sub-theme and the workshop should be planned for Bangladesh, Maldives, or Nepal.

The second workshop can either be held at the same location as the workshop in year one or another location, based on lessons learned in year one, costs, and other factors. The recipient should focus on a sub-theme under the democracy banner based on consultations with SCA and U.S. Embassy Colombo.

Recipient Responsibilities

The award recipient is responsible for the design, implementation, and monitoring of the workshops. Proposals must provide a detailed and comprehensive narrative describing overarching workshop objectives. Proposals will also include descriptions of pre-departure preparation and logistics; administrative details and a staffing plan; plans for monitoring and evaluation; incorporation of a diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility (DEIA) framework into all aspects of the program; media and outreach plans; and budget and budget narrative. In addition, the proposal will include a summary of the applicant's thematic experience and expertise.

The award recipient will be responsible for arranging and using cooperative agreement funds to cover all elements related to participant and staff travel including international and domestic flights, visas, travel to and from airports, visas, accommodations, per diem, meals during the program, insurance, etc.

The proposal should include a pre- and post-workshop survey to measure the overall effectiveness of the workshop as well as any changes to the participants' knowledge of the workshop topic.

Consideration to integrating diversity, equity, inclusivity, and accessibility should be made throughout the program, from recruiting participants to leading the follow-on activities. Workshop speakers/facilitators/mentors should be citizens of the United States or a South Asian/YSALI country.

The recipient is expected to develop syllabus materials and an event program with participant and speaker biographies, as well as design banners, backdrops, and other printed materials. The recipient is expected to design a digital engagement strategy for workshop participants and social media audiences, including live video or live online engagement during the program.

Recruitment and Selection

YSALI participants for all workshops will be selected from a closed network of fewer than 1,000 YSALI members who obtained membership by actively participating in U.S. Embassy public diplomacy programs already operating in the region. As such, marketing plans can be limited to emails, discussions with post, and/or presentations. Proposals must demonstrate the capacity to assist U.S. embassies and consulates in the region in developing and administering a consistent, merit-based selection process, which includes outreach to eligible program participants and may include an application, written essays, and/or interview. Recruitment plans should consider diversity including, where applicable, institutional, geographic, racial, gender, ethnic, age, religious, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

The implementing partner will be responsible for creating a workshop application form that will be sent directly to YSALI members. The implementing partner will send a suggested roster of workshop participants to U.S. Embassy Colombo and the YSALI Coordinator in Washington. Final participant selection is subject to approval by the YSALI Coordinator and the U.S. embassies/consulates in YSALI countries.

Overview of Media and Outreach

In addition to recruitment, the proposal must include a description of how the YSALI workshops will be publicized to various media audiences and outlets, in coordination with SCA's social media team and U.S. embassies and consulates' public diplomacy teams.

Publications, program materials, and all online platforms, including social media should explain the mission of YSALI and emphasize the U.S. Department of State's role as the program's sponsor. As such, all materials should note that "YSALI workshops are a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and administered by [award recipient]." This language should appear prominently on all print and electronic materials and should precede any language regarding the role of the award recipient in administering the program. Publications are required to prominently feature the YSALI logo, the American flag, and the U.S. Department of State seal in accordance with established branding guidelines. The outreach strategy and all publication materials, including cover designs, must be submitted to SCA/PPD for approval prior to publication and dissemination.

Substantial Involvement

In a cooperative agreement, the Department is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. The Washington-based YSALI Coordinator will have substantial involvement in this effort including participant selection and approval of the program structure and content of the U.S. component, with support from U.S. Embassy Colombo.

U.S. Embassy Colombo and SCA/PPD are providing maximum flexibility for applicant organizations to offer program models that effectively meet the overall goals of the program.

U.S. Embassy Colombo and SCA/PPD reserve the right to adjust the participating countries, participant numbers, themes, and institute dates based upon Department priorities.

For the workshops, the role of the Department is outlined below:

- Provide design input into the U.S. workshop, including organizing U.S. Department of State and/or White House engagement.
- Approve location of city for first week of the U.S. based workshop.
- Approve workshop designs, pace, itinerary, and program books throughout the cooperative agreement.
- Embassy Colombo will host the first regional workshop, drawing on experience from its regional youth forum held last year. The recipient will be responsible for managing the workshop, including handling logistics, drafting an agenda, securing speakers, and researching and recommending venues. The recipient will work in close collaboration with the U.S. Embassy Colombo and the YSALI Coordinator in planning workshops.
- Approve the application form for YSALI members.
- Circulate the application form to closed circle of YSALI members.

- Finalize the slate of YSALI participants nominated by posts.
- Support B1/B2 U.S. visa interviews by expediting appointments where possible and providing a letter explaining the purpose of travel.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2024, \$1,800,000, pending the availability of funds

Approximate Total Funding: \$1,800,000

Approximate Number of Awards: One award

Minimum “Floor” of Award: \$1,500,000

Maximum “Ceiling” of Award: \$2,000,000

Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2024

Type of Funding: Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Smith-Mundt Act (.7 Funding).

Anticipated Project Completion Date: February 28, 2027. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – 30 months.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 30 months or less including time for follow-on grants. 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 program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

Support for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA): All programs should consider strategies for expanding the pool of individuals/organizations/beneficiaries to afford opportunities for as diverse and inclusive population as is feasible to bring diverse perspectives based on religion, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, national origin, and age to implementation of the program.

The U.S. Embassy Colombo reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described under circumstances deemed to be in the best interest of the U.S. government, pending the availability of funds and approval of the designated grants officer.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible Applicants

1. U.S. public and private academic and cultural institutions, exchange-of-persons, and other not-for-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit applications for this competition. Applicants must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application and maintain active status through the life of the award. Please see the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

1. Cost Sharing or Matching

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

2. 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. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

3. 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

Eligible Participant Support Costs:

- Workshop costs including, but not limited to, honoraria for speakers, educational materials, lodging, room rental(s), welcome and farewell events, and participant admissions;
- Sub-awards to other non-profit organizations with appropriate registration;
- Travel costs including, but not limited to, round trip international airfare, visa travel, ground transportation, domestic travel, accommodation, and other transit costs;

- Per participant allowances including baggage allowance, travel allowance (\$100), and meals and incidentals;
- Alumni Programming/follow-on activities, including seed grants, Reciprocal Exchanges, etc.;
- Monitoring and evaluation costs related to data collection, analysis, and reporting;
- Tax withholding;
- Wire transfer fees;
- Consultant fees;
- Virtual platform hosting;
- Communications;
- Recruitment and outreach materials;
- Medical contingency;
- Medical costs related to the pandemic including, but not limited to, testing and medically required quarantine (outside of medical facilities covered under ASPE);
- Reasonable accommodations; and
- Other approved cost categories as necessary (excluding construction)

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at grants.gov.

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 documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper.

- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.
- All applicant authorized signatures are provided where indicated on the various, required forms.

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*)
- SF-424A (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)

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.” An authorized signature by the applicant must be provided on this form.

Section 2. Technical Proposal (20 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.

- **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 (Attachment 5).
- **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.
- **Support of Equity and Underserved Communities:** A description of how the applicant plans on incorporating principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) and engaging underserved communities in their program's administration, design, and implementation. For more information, please reference section F. Federal Award Administration Information.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Proposals must include a draft Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP). The M&E PMP should show how applicants intend to measure and demonstrate progress towards the project's objectives and goals. Attachment 3 of this funding opportunity contains a template that may be used to fulfill this requirement. While the grantee is free to create their own template, completing Attachment 3 will ensure a thorough PMP.

The key components to the PMP are as follows:

- a. **Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative:** In narrative form, applicants should describe how they intend to monitor and evaluate the activities of their award and collect data that tracks award performance. In addition, the applicant should describe any M&E processes, including key personnel, management structure (where M&E fits into the overall program's staff structure), technology, and as well provide a brief budget narrative explaining any line-item expenditures for M&E listed in the program's budget. Submission should demonstrate an ability to adjust project activities based on new information. If the proposal is from a prior grantee, the proposal discusses how the grantee has adapted, improved or otherwise modified their approach based on learning from previous experience. This narrative is limited to two pages.
- b. **Theory of Change Diagram:** Applicants will be expected to submit either a Theory of Change diagram or an If-Then Statement that illustrates how project activities will lead to intended outcomes. Attachment 3 includes a suggested format for these requirements.
- c. **Monitoring and Evaluation Datasheet:** The applicant must include their proposed activities and their expected outputs and outcomes as well as the goals and objectives as written in the NOFO. The datasheet's purpose is to explicitly illustrate how a project's activities lead to tangible results (such as increased beneficiary skills,

knowledge, or attitudes) that ultimately address a PDS objective. For more information, please see Attachment 3.1: Instructions.

The selected applicant's M&E PMP is subject to review and approval before any award will be issued under this NOFO. The selected applicant will be required to work with PDS Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist to ensure the applicant's M&E PMP achieves an expected level of expertise and meets PDS objectives.

Expenses directly associated with monitoring and evaluation are considered allowable. The suggested template includes a space to list the portion of the total budget amount directly associated with monitoring and evaluation activities.

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 4). 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.

Additional Budget Notes:

- **Audit Requirements:** Please note the audit requirements for Department of State awards in the Standard Terms and Conditions <https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm> and 2CFR200, Subpart F – Audit Requirements. The cost of the required audits may be charged either as an allowable direct cost to the award OR included in the organization’s established indirect costs in the award’s detailed budget.

Visa Fees: Include all visa application and related fees in your budget as applicable.

Section 4. - Required Attachments:

- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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).
- 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.

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."

1. Submission Dates and Times

All application materials must be submitted via email to YSALI@state.gov.

Submission Deadline: All applications must be received by August 16, 2024. For the purposes of determining if an award is submitted on time, PDS will utilize the timestamp provided by Grants.gov. This deadline is firm and is not a rolling deadline. If organizations fail to meet the deadline noted above their application will be considered ineligible and will not be considered for funding.

1. Funding Restrictions:

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

2. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants must acquire all required registrations and rights in the United States. All intellectual property considerations and rights must be fully met in the United States.

Any sub-recipient organization must also meet all the U.S. 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. Use of the suggested template (Attachments 3 & 3.1) will satisfy these requirements. Funded projects will have their plans finalized during the negotiation phase, and monitoring plans may be subject to periodic updates throughout the life of the project.
- **Sustainability – 10 points:** The project proposal clearly describes 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 listed above in Section D, 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.
- c. Follow up notification. Applicants will generally be notified within 120 days after the NOFO deadline regarding the results of the review panel.

3. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov (formerly, Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS))

- a. 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 FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

- b. 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;
- c. 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

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

Recipients are required to submit quarterly program progress and financial reports throughout the project period. The quarterly progress report should include an up-to-date copy of the PMP datasheet. Progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final certified programmatic and financial reports are due 120 days after the close of the project period.

All reports are to be submitted electronically.

Awardees that are deemed to be high risk may be required to submit more extensive and frequent reports until their high-risk designation has been removed.

The Awardee must also provide the Embassy on an annual basis an inventory of all the U.S. government provided equipment using the SF428 form.

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 program or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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

Question Deadline: For questions on this solicitation, please contact YSALI@state.gov. Questions must be received on or before July 1, 2024. Applicants should not expect an email response to questions, as questions received before the deadline will be answered in a question-and-answer document and posted at Embassy Colombo's website.

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.