Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund

AF/Maputo, Department of State

Opportunity number: AF-PD-MAP-FY25-03

Application deadline: January 17th, 2025

Contents

U.S Department of State
AF/U.S. Embassy Mozambique
Notice of Funding Opportunity

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF)
Funding Opportunity Number	AF-PD-MAP-FY25-03
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	January 17; 2025
Assistance Listing Number	19.022
Length of performance period	12 months
Number of awards anticipated	02
Award amounts	Awards may range from a minimum of $5,000 to a maximum of $35,000
Total available funding	$35,000 pending availability of funds
Type of Funding	Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act.
Anticipated project start date	October 31,2025

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

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

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary
Priority Region: Mozambique

Executive Summary

AEIF provides alumni of U.S. government-sponsored and facilitated exchange programs with funding to expand on skills gained during their exchange experience to design and implement innovative solutions to global challenges facing their community. Since its inception in 2011, AEIF has funded nearly 500 alumni-led projects around the world through a competitive global competition. AEIF is designed to help U.S. government exchange alumni develop and implement projects that support U.S. foreign policy

objectives, promote shared interests, and benefit local communities. All AEIF projects must 1) convene alumni from different exchange programs to build or expand an alumni network capable of working together on common interests and increase regional and global collaboration of alumni, 2) strengthen the relationship between alumni and the U.S. government to work together on activities that address mutual goals and challenges, and/or 3) support alumni as they develop their leadership capacity and implement projects in their communities.

This year, pending availability of funding, AEIF 2025 will accept public service projects proposed and managed by teams of <u>at least two (2) alumni</u>

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following not-for-profit organizations are eligible to apply:

- Alumni Associations
- Organizations led by or partnering with USG alumni
- An individual (leading the project team)

- Applicants must be alumni of a U.S. government-funded or sponsored exchange program or a U.S. government-sponsored exchange program (https://j1visa.state.gov/).
- Projects teams must include teams of at least two (2) alumni.
- Alumni who are U.S. citizens may not submit proposals, but U.S. citizen alumni may participate as team members in a project.
- Alumni teams may be comprised of alumni from different exchange programs and different countries.

Note: Applications must be submitted by exchange alumni or alumni associations of USG exchange alumni. No other organizations are eligible to apply. Exchange alumni can partner with not-for-profit or non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and academic institutions to implement project activities. The grant can be issued to the individual alumni or the partner organization.

For-profit or commercial entities are not eligible.

2. ***Cost Sharing or Matching***
Inclusion of cost share is not a requirement of this opportunity.

3. ***Other Eligibility Requirements***

All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov as well as a valid registration in SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

In areas where authorization from the Mozambican government is required, applicants must prove that they have permission to execute project in said area or mention how they intend to get the authorization.

C. Program Description

1. ***Goals and Objectives***

Proposals must address at least one of the below-mentioned themes and demonstrate a commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles. They should illustrate how the project will support and advance equity with respect to religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or disability.

Proposals that do not address the theme as outlined in the program objectives will be deemed ineligible. All project activities must take place outside of the United States and its territories.

This cycle, the Public Diplomacy Section welcomes proposals in the following themes:

- **Education Partnerships**
  Proposals in this area may focus strengthening links between U.S. and Mozambican education institutions at the secondary and tertiary level. Examples include joint research projects that pair Mozambican and U.S. students and academics to address shared topics of concern, such as climate change, trades fields, migration, economic growth, history, culture, food security, inclusion, accessibility, STEM, and tech access. Vocational and technical training is also welcome.

- **English Language Learning**
  Proposals in this area may focus on one or more of the following: expanding access to English language education through teacher training programs, direct teaching of English language to targeted groups, curriculum development, expanding language learning resources, professional development, linking English language learning

with career development, and improving Mozambican's English level for prerequisite testing for admission to U.S. institutions of higher learning.

- **<u>Social Impact Entrepreneurship</u>**
Proposals in this area develop entrepreneurship ecosystems, by supporting social impact entrepreneurship endeavors that address environmental, educational banking, agricultural, health and accessibility, technological, and infrastructure challenges with for-profit businesses solutions. Proposals may support capacity-building for aspiring entrepreneurs, certifications, and access to seed funding enterprises with a significant social impact. Special emphasis will be given to proposals that are inclusive and demonstrate scalability after the proposal period is complete.

- **<u>Strengthening Media Ecosystem</u>**
Proposals in this area should enhance press freedoms and improve the capacity of journalists (senior and aspiring), to improve reporting standards, the quantity and quality of investigative reports, and increase media literacy for the public. This includes focusing on countering dis/mis information, as well as media access for underserved areas of Mozambique and underserved populations, including people with disabilities and those who only speak vernacular languages. Initiatives may focus on promoting collaboration between Mozambican and U.S. media organizations that deliver key improvements in countering disinformation, establishing ethical journalism standards, improving journalist safety, and increasing the sustainability of independent media outlets.

D. Application Contents and Format

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

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

The following documents are **<u>required</u>**:

1. *Mandatory application forms*

- AEIF 2025 Proposal Form
- AEIF 2025 Budget Form with budget narrative
- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals) at <u>www.grants.gov</u>, mz.usembassy.gov.
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) at <u>www.grants.gov</u>, mz.usembassy.gov.
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) at <u>www.grants.gov</u>, mz.usembassy.gov.

2. *Summary Page (optional)*

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

3. *Proposal (10 pages maximum)*

Please use the provided AEIF 2025 Application form to submit your proposal. It should contain information on the title of your project, the requested budget total, and the primary location of the project. Projects need to take place outside of the U.S. or its territories. Your proposal should have:

a) **Project Team Information:** At least two exchange alumni team members are required for a project to be considered for funding. Applications need to provide the name and contact information, describe the role each team member will have in the project, and their experience, qualifications, and ability to carry out that role. Applicants need to indicate what proportion of the team member's time will be used in support of the project.

b) **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed project, including project objectives and anticipated impact.

c) **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed

d) **Project Goals and Objectives:** The "goals" describe what the program is intended to achieve. The "objectives" refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable and reflect a commitment to DEIA principles.

e) **Project Activities**: Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.

f) **Project Methods and Design**: A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.

g) **Proposed Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
h) **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
i) **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
j) **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
k) **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. *Budget Justification Narrative*

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

AEIF 2025 can support the following budget items:

- Intra-regional or in-country transportation
- Rental of venues for project activities
- PPE and sanitizing equipment
- Meals/refreshments integral to the project (i.e., working lunch for a meeting)
- Reasonable costs to support virtual programming (i.e., subscription to Zoom, Webex, camera/microphones for virtual meetings, mailing services, etc.)
- Trainer or speaker honoraria expenses (i.e., maximum $250/day fee, travel, lodging, per diem)
- Reasonable equipment and materials
- Communications and publicity materials, such as manuals or project advertisements

5. Attachments:
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities;
- Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov);
- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program;
- Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner;

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. *Address to Request Application Package*

All Applications should be submitted using the mandatory forms mentioned line D.1 above, the forms are available on the embassy website and can also be requested through MaputoPDProposals@state.gov.

2. *Department of State Contacts*

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

3. *Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (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 in 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. An applicant must maintain an active registration while it has a proposal under review by the Department and must continue to keep the registration active for the entire duration of the period of performance of any Federal award that results from this NOFO.

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

 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 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 prior to registering in SAM.gov.

- **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 to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an 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 an 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):
> NCAGE Code Request Tool (nato.int)

Exemptions
An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis. See 2 CFR 25.110 for a full list of exemptions.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

4. *Submission Dates and Times*

   Applications are due no later than January 17,2025 GMT

5. *Funding Restrictions*

   i.   Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

       None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to provide any payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

AEIF 2025 will **not** support the following budget items:

• Staff salaries, office space, and overhead/operational expenses	• Social travel/visits	• Venture capital, for-profit endeavors, or charging a fee for participation in the project
• Large items of durable equipment or construction programs	• Gifts or prizes	• Provision of direct social services to a population
• Alcohol, excessive meals, refreshments not integral to the project, or entertainment	• Duplication of existing	• Support for specific religious activities
• Charitable or development activities	• Provision of direct social services to a population	• Fund-raising campaigns
• Individual scholarships	• Institutional development of an organization	• Any airfare to/from the United States and its territories
• Academic or scientific research	• Support or opposition of partisan political activity or lobbying for specific legislation	• Activities that take place in the United States and its territories

6. *Other Submission Requirements*

All application materials must be submitted by email to
MaputoPDproposals@state.gov

F. Application Review Information

1. *Proposal Evaluation Criteria*

The AEIF Selection Committee will use the criteria below to review and evaluate applications.

Relevance to U.S. Mission Mozambique Goals
The proposal provides sufficient information on how the activities will support the Mission's themes/ goals provided on this NOFO.

Purpose and Summary, Description, and Implementation Plan
When developing the purpose, summary, description, and implementation plan, applicants should aim to make all descriptions clear, concise, and compelling. Reviewers will judge the proposals based on the likelihood of the project to exert a sustained, powerful influence on the community where it is undertaken. Does the project address an important gap of understanding or need? If the aim of the project is achieved, how will existing knowledge or practice be improved? What audience do the applicants hope to reach with this project? How many will participate? How will they be selected? How does the project incorporate DEIA principles?

Degree of Alumni Involvement
Projects must include the involvement of at least two (2) exchange alumni. They may be the project team leaders or collaborate directly with PAS in formulating the project. More than two alumni may comprise the team; however, the minimum is two. As the team leaders, the alumni must be closely involved in project planning, implementation, etc. Applicants should ensure that the proposal includes the following information for each alumni team member: first name, last name, exchange program, country of citizenship, roles and responsibilities, and degree of time spent on the project.

Participation and Support from Local Partners
The proposal demonstrates buy-in and support from the community where the project will take place. Local partner involvement is a strong sign that there is community support and that the project will engage a broad array of experts, such as subject matter experts, community centers, academic institutions, businesses, local/national government, non-governmental organizations, American Spaces, etc.

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Project
A monitoring & evaluation (M&E) plan is pivotal to project implementation and important tracking of progress towards the project's objectives and goals. An M&E plan should consider the data needed to effectively monitor progress toward specific outputs and outcomes as well as how that data collection will be accomplished. Well-crafted indicators should be used to understand a program's progress toward the desired results. An M&E plan should be reviewed for the following:
• Completeness
• Applicability and logic of objectives and indicators
• Clear approach to monitoring
• Adherence to SMART criteria
• Data quality plan
• Capacity to implement plan

Communication, Media, and Outreach Plan
The project should include a clear plan and timeline for how and when the team will share information about the project. It is important to ensure that the U.S. Embassy gets recognition throughout the process, if circumstances permit.

Budget and Budget Narrative
The budget and narrative justification are sufficiently 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. The results and proposed outcomes justify the total cost of the project. Budget items are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

3. Risk Review

i.   Risk factors – must include

Under the merit review as required by 2 CFR 200.206, prior to making a Federal Award the Department will review and consider the following risk factors:

     a. Financial stability
     b. Management systems and standards
     c. History of performance
     d. Audit reports and findings
     e. Ability to effectively implement requirements
     f. If there are any program specific risk factors that will be considered, describe them here.

G. Award Notices

The award will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and counter-signature. The recipient may only start incurring project expenses beginning on the start date shown on the 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.

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by July via email

Payment Method:
Recipients will be required to request payments by completing form SF-270—Request for Advance or Reimbursement and submitting the form to the Grants Officer.

H. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements*

    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:

    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 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:
        - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an impartial process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
        - 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 pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if

an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

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

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

2. *Reporting*

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify what reports are required and how often these reports must be submitted.
The applicant must provide an interim report about the use of the first installment of funds before additional funds will be released. If no interim report is provided, no additional funds will be released.
Upon completion of the project, all grantee organizations must complete a formal report, which consists of a narrative and a financial report, and submit it to the U.S. Embassy. Form for narrative report and guidelines for financial report can be obtained from the Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Embassy. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

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.

I. 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 $10,000 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 $10,000 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 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1.

"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.