



U.S. Embassy Ethiopia, PD Request for Statements of Interest

Africa /Addis Ababa, Department of State

Opportunity number: PDS-004-FY2025

Application deadline: January 31, 2025

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**U.S Department of State
Africa/U.S. Embassy Ethiopia, Public Diplomacy Section
Request for Statement of Interest**

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	U.S. Embassy Ethiopia, PD Request for Statement of Interest
Funding Opportunity Number	PDS-004-FY2025
Announcement Type	Initial announcement
Deadline for Applications	January 31, 2025 (12:00am and GMT+3)
Assistance Listing Number	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19.040 - Public Diplomacy Programs • 19.022 - Educational and Cultural Exchange programs • 19.441 - American Spaces Sustaining Programs
Length of performance period	12 to 18 months
Number of awards anticipated	5 awards (dependent on amounts)
Award amounts	Awards may range from a minimum of \$25,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. Exceptional proposals above \$200,000 may be considered pending funding availability.
Type of Funding	FY25 Smith Mundt & Fulbright Hays, Public Diplomacy Funds
Anticipated project start date	Awards must be executed no later than October 1, 2025

The U.S. Embassy Ethiopia/ Bureau of Africa of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations or individuals to submit a statement of interest (SOI) to carry out public engagement programs. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a concise 2-page statement of interest designed to clearly communicate projects idea and objectives. This is not a full proposal and will not result in a federal assistance award at this step.

The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit project ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their project idea(s) by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decision(s) are made.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant or Cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that embassy staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

Project Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in **12-18 months**.

The U.S. Embassy Ethiopia PD section reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described in the statement of interest, should there be an absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. government. All projects are subject to negotiation by the Grants Officer before final award. The section also retains the right to execute non-competitive continuation amendment(s). Any amendment(s) is based on performance, subject to availability of funds, and not guaranteed.



1. Executive Summary

PD Ethiopia invites SOIs for programs that strengthen cultural ties between the United States and Ethiopia through cultural, media, and exchange and programs that highlight shared values and promote bilateral cooperation. All programs must include an American cultural element or connection with U.S. experts, organizations, or institutions that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policies, values, and perspectives.

PD grant programs include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars, and speaker programs
- Artistic and cultural workshops, performances, and exhibitions
- Programs developed by alumni of U.S.- sponsored exchange and programs
- Programs that strengthen relationships between Ethiopian and U.S. universities, businesses, and/or organizations
- Media training

This request for SOIs is intended to inform individuals, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and academic institutions about opportunities from the Public Diplomacy section to support projects in at least one of the following thematic areas:

- Efforts to support Ethiopia's economic and political reforms, including support for civil society, democracy, and governance, and/or election processes
- Helping media professionals, media educators, and the public learn how to discern reliable sources of information and identify mis- and disinformation, etc.
- Promoting economic growth, especially via entrepreneurship, innovation, and promoting education about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM)
- Engaging emerging and under-represented populations, including youth, women, and persons with disabilities through leadership, education, English language, culture, and other programs
- Promoting tolerance and peace through reintegration and reincorporation of under-represented populations including youth, women, persons with disabilities, and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Promoting fair and peaceful elections
- Promoting effective leadership and civic engagement
- Promoting sustainable policies to protect the environment

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The Public Diplomacy section encourages applications from the U.S. and Ethiopia:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions
- Individuals will be considered, but priority is given to registered organizations and educational institutions with a proven track record of success.

For-profit or commercial entities, including for-profit media organizations, are not eligible to apply.



2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

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.5 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or to be registered in SAM.gov.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one SOI per organization. If more than one SOI is submitted from an organization, all SOIs from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding. **(Exceptions are local and international universities.)**

C. Program Description

1. Goals and Objectives

The U.S. Embassy Ethiopia of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations and individuals to submit a statement of interest (SOI) to carry out a public engagement program. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a concise **(2-page maximum)** statement of interest designed to clearly communicate projects idea and objectives. This is not a full proposal and will not result in a federal assistance award at this step.

The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit project ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their project ideas by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decisions are made.

D. Application Contents and Format

1. Content and Form of Application Submission

Statements of interest (SOIs) **must be** submitted using the concept note template uploaded to grants.gov, together with the SOI call.

2. Content of SOI must include:

- A brief project description summarizing goals, objectives and outcomes, performance indicators, beneficiaries, and proposed timeline.
- A clear statement of the applicant's organizational capacity to carry out the proposed activity and manage U.S. government funds.
- Documents must be submitted fully in English
- The anticipated total budget amount (in U.S. dollars)
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

3. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

SOIs received by January 31, 2025, will be reviewed by February 28, 2025, with responses going out in March 2025.



4. Department of State Contacts

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

5. 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 SOI.

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 2: 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 \(nato.int\)](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx)



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 SOI at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the SOI 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.

6. Funding Restrictions

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

None of the funds awarded resulting from this SOI 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).

The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:

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

7. Other Submission Requirements

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

E. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

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

Quality of Program Idea – 50 points: The SOI is responsive to program framework. The idea is communicated well and is feasible. SOI's that promote creative approaches to address program objectives are highly encouraged. The proposed timeline is reasonable.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 25 points: The SOI should demonstrate the organization's expertise and previous experience in administering programs. If a local partner is identified, the SOI should briefly describe the partner's role and experience.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 25 points: The SOI should clearly articulate proposed program activities and expected results towards achieving program objectives and goal(s).



2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible SOI applications. *All eligible SOIs will be reviewed against the criteria listed above. SOIs are reviewed individually against the criteria and not against competing SOIs. For a fair review, all panelists will review the first page of the SOI up to the page limit and no further. The panel may provide conditions and/or recommendations on SOIs to enhance the proposed program. Conditions must be addressed, and recommendations should be addressed, in a full proposal application.*

Following the review, any successful SOI applicants will be contacted and instructed to submit full applications. A full application will include:

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals)
- SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) – the SF424B are only required for individuals, organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov.

3. Risk Review

i. Risk factors

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. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. 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:

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 SOI 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](#)

G. 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.