

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

U.S.-Qatar Partnership Initiative: Celebrating America 250 and Beyond

Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Department of State
U.S. Embassy in Qatar, Public Affairs Section
Opportunity number: OFOP0002219

Application deadline: August 30, 2025

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Notice of Funding Opportunity

A. Basic Information**1. Overview**

Funding Opportunity Title	U.S.-Qatar Partnership Initiative: Celebrating America 250 and Beyond
Funding Opportunity Number	OFOP0002219
Announcement Type	Initial
Deadline for Applications	August 30, 2025, 5:00 pm, Doha time
Assistance Listing Number	19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Length of performance period	6 to 18 months
Number of awards anticipated	Multiple awards (dependent on amounts)
Award amounts	Awards may range from a minimum of \$10,000 to a maximum of \$100,000 (approximately)
Total available funding	\$200,000 pending availability of funds
Type of Funding	FY25 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds
Anticipated project start date	September 15, 2025

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, fixed amount award (FAA), or cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements include substantial involvement of the bureau or embassy in program implementation of the project. An FAA can also include substantial involvement. Examples of substantial involvement are included in section C below.

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 18 months or less.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

Priority Region: Doha, Qatar

Executive Summary

The *Public Affairs Section (PAS)* of U.S. Embassy Doha is pleased to announce a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for proposals aimed at strengthening ties between the United States and Qatar. This initiative seeks to foster mutual understanding and collaboration through programs that highlight shared values and promote bilateral cooperation. The overarching goal is to make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous by leveraging strategic themes and priorities.

Strategic Themes and Priorities

America 250: In anticipation of the 250th anniversary of the United States, proposals should include programs that celebrate this milestone by emphasizing the historical and cultural connections between the United States and Qatar. Activities may include cultural exchanges, educational programs, and events that highlight the shared history and values of both nations.

Entrepreneurship: Proposals should aim to foster entrepreneurial spirit and innovation. Programs may include workshops, mentorship opportunities, and collaborative projects that support startups and small businesses. The goal is to create a dynamic environment that encourages economic growth and job creation.

Emerging Technology/Artificial Intelligence (AI): Applicants are encouraged to submit proposals that explore the potential of emerging technologies and AI to address common challenges. Programs may include technology transfer initiatives and joint ventures that promote innovation and technological advancement.

Youth Leadership: Proposals should focus on empowering the next generation of leaders. Programs may include leadership training, exchange programs, and initiatives that encourage civic engagement and community service among youth.

Applicants should have considerable, practical, and relevant experience in the implementation of the proposed activities to be seriously considered for this project. Previous experience working with Qatari audiences is required.

Proposals must identify a clearly defined target audience that the project seeks to influence. Well-defined audiences are countable and accessible through the project's activities. Proposals should specify the changes in knowledge, understanding, attitudes, or behavior that they seek with the project – and how they plan to measure these outcomes.

The proposals must impact or benefit at least one of the following priority audiences:

- *Educational institutions*
- *Artists, historians, and cultural experts*
- *Qatari youth (high school and university students)*
- *Early career level professionals*
- *Entrepreneurs and innovators*
- *Teachers and academic professionals*

Proposals addressing audiences not listed above are still eligible, but they must clearly indicate why addressing the proposed audience is especially important to achieving the

goals stated in Section A of this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- *Not-for-profit and community service organizations registered and operating in Qatar, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience.*
- *Individuals (Qatari citizens and residents of Qatar) who are based in Qatar (recipient of an award to an individual is a single person, not an organization or a group of individuals).*
- *Public and non-profit private educational institutions registered in Qatar.*
- *Public and non-profit private educational institutions registered in the U.S., working with local affiliate institutions registered in Qatar.*
- *Qatari government institutions.*

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov at the time of submission of application, 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.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:

- Programs relating to partisan political activity
- Charitable or development activities, including fundraising campaigns
- Construction projects
- Programs that support specific religious activities
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs
- Scientific research
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of an organization
- Programs that duplicate existing programs

C. Program Description

1. Goals and Objectives

Strengthen Bilateral Relations: Enhance diplomatic, educational, and cultural ties between the United States and Qatar through collaborative programs that reflect shared values and interests.

Promote Mutual Understanding: Foster greater understanding and appreciation of each other's cultures, histories, and societal contributions through educational and cultural exchanges.

Encourage Innovation and Economic Growth: Support initiatives that drive economic development, technological innovation, and entrepreneurial success in both countries.

Empower Future Leaders: Invest in the development of youth leaders who will contribute to the prosperity and stability of both nations.

Project Examples:

America 250 - Cultural Heritage Exchange Program: Organize a series of cultural exchange events where American and Qatari artists, historians, and cultural experts collaborate on exhibitions, performances, and workshops. These events could highlight the historical connections and shared values between the two nations, culminating in a joint celebration of America's 250th anniversary.

Entrepreneurship - Bilateral Startup Incubator: Establish a startup incubator that supports entrepreneurs from both the United States and Qatar. The program could include mentorship from successful business leaders, access to funding opportunities, and collaborative projects that address market needs in both countries. This initiative would foster innovation and economic growth, creating jobs and new business opportunities.

Emerging Technology/Artificial Intelligence (AI) - Joint AI Research Initiative: Launch a collaborative educational program focused on AI and emerging technologies.

Youth Leadership - Youth Leadership Exchange Program: Develop an exchange program that brings together youth for leadership training, community service projects, and cultural immersion experiences. Participants would engage in workshops on civic engagement, public speaking, and project management, preparing them to become future leaders in their respective communities.

Additional Project Ideas

Educational Partnerships: Create partnerships between American and Qatari educational institutions to develop joint degree programs, student exchange opportunities, and collaborative projects. Projects may also activate or expand programming with the American Corner at the Community College of Qatar.

Tech Innovation Challenge: Organize a tech innovation challenge where teams compete to develop solutions to common problems using emerging technologies. Winners could receive funding and support to bring their ideas to market, fostering a spirit of innovation and collaboration.

Cultural Diplomacy Program: Implement a cultural diplomacy program that includes film screenings, literary festivals, and culinary events showcasing the diverse cultures of the United States and Qatar.

By implementing these types of projects, the United States and Qatar can strengthen their bilateral relationship, promote shared values, and achieve strategic goals that benefit both nations.

<https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/qa/pdf/2021/04/global-female-leaders-outlook-2021-digital-qa.pdf>

Examples of standard outcome indicators include, but are not limited to:

- **Participant Feedback:**
 - Satisfaction and feedback scores.
- **Collaborative Projects:**
 - Number of collaborative projects (exhibitions, performances, workshops).
 - Projects initiated by program alumni.
- **Media and Public Awareness:**
 - Media coverage and public awareness.
- **Cultural Exchange and Partnerships:**
 - Increase in cultural exchange agreements or partnerships.
- **Surveys and Assessments:**
 - Pre- and post-program surveys and post-program assessments.
- **Startups and Entrepreneurship:**
 - Number of startups incubated and supported.
 - Jobs created by supported startups.
 - Revenue growth and market expansion.
- **AI and Research:**
 - Impact of AI solutions on global challenges.
- **Youth and Leadership:**
 - Number of youth in leadership positions.
 - Changes in knowledge, skills, and behavior of youth participants.

- **Policy and Regulation:**
 - Laws, policies, regulations, or standards proposed, adopted, or implemented.
- **Education and Professional Exchange:**
 - Qualified Qatari citizens and residents in professional exchange programs in the United States.
 - An increase in the number of students going to the United States or an increased interest among prospective students in studying in the United States.

2. Substantial Involvement

Substantial involvement in a fixed amount award or a cooperative agreement typically refers to the degree of engagement and collaboration between the awarding agency and the recipient during the project's implementation. These will be documented in more detail in the award document. Common types of substantial involvement include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Review and approval of processes such as the implementation plan, scope of work, and subaward approvals.
2. Technical expertise and assistance to ensure the project's success.
3. Monitoring and operational planning.
4. Changes to key personnel and mode of operations.

D. Application Contents and Format

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

Application forms required below are available at <https://grants.gov/forms>

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 **required**:

1. Mandatory Application Forms

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance - individuals)
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) (Note: The SF-424B is only required for individuals, organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov.)

2. Summary Page

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)

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 project, including project objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual Applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the State Department and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed.
- **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.
- **Project Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **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.
- **Proposed Project 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. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it meets the goals of the grant?

- **Project 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.

5. Attachments

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

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required above are available at the [U.S. Embassy Doha website](#), [Grants.gov](#), and on [MyGrants](#).

Department of State Contacts

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact:

DohaGrants@state.gov.

A Bidding Conference will be held via conference call/ in-person on Thursday, August 21, 2025, to answer questions from all potential applicants.

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

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than **August 30, 2025, 5:00 pm, Doha Time**

4. 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).

- ii. Certification Regarding Compliance with applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws

None of the funds awarded under this agreement may be used for any initiatives or programs, or any activities that do not comply with Executive Order 14173 titled Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity.

By signing the SF-424 or SF-424I Application for Federal Assistance, the Applicant certifies the following:

- 1) Its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code and;
- 2) It does not operate any programs promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws. A program promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion means a program whose purpose is to promote preferences based on race, color religion, sex, or national origins, such as in training or hiring.

5. *Other Submission Requirements*

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

F. Application Review Information

1. *Review Criteria*

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 30 points: The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points: The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and the program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget – 10 points: The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve the proposed activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – 15 points: Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability – 10 points: Program activities will continue to have a positive impact after the end of the program.

2. *Review and Selection Process*

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

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
- ii. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov

The following shall apply where the total Federal share of any award under this NOFO is greater than the simplified acquisition threshold (\$250,000):

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 U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Department will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

G. Award Notices

The award or cooperative agreement 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 countersignature. 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 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](#)

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.

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.