

U.S. Embassy London
Public Affairs Section

Funding Opportunity Title: Promoting a Better Understanding of the United States through American Studies

Announcement Type: Grant (new)

Funding Opportunity No: DOS-London-PD-2016-01

CFDA:

Opening Date: January 19

Closing Date: March 1

Program: Promoting a Better Understanding of the United States through American Studies

SUMMARY: The U.S. Embassy in London invites eligible organizations to submit proposals to develop and implement a small grants program to foster American Studies in the United Kingdom through exchanges, speaker programs, and conferences. Initiatives should be designed to promote a more accurate and positive image of the United States.

In this solicitation, U.S. Embassy London seeks proposals to develop and administer a small grants program to support the study of the United States in the United Kingdom. Proposals should outline how the program implementer will manage, administer and evaluate projects through small grants from \$250-\$40,000, and also define an award selection process based on merit, geographic, and thematic diversity, feasibility of proposed programs, impact to beneficiaries, project sustainability, and cultivation of lasting and productive relationships between participants from the U.S. and the UK. Ideally, the most competitive proposal would dedicate the largest portion of the budget to the small grants segment.

Authority: 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. The purpose of the Act is “to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and other countries of the world.”

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Applicants must have the demonstrated experience and ability to provide guidance to and monitor projects that would focus on building a more accurate understanding of the United States to include:

- Faculty development and exchange;
- Curriculum development;
- Student exchanges;
- Speaker programs;
- Film or other arts programming; and
- Conferences

In addition, the program implementer will:

- Consult with the U.S. Embassy public affairs section staff on best practices in grant-making;
- Develop a small grants program taking into account the priorities outlined above;

- Develop an application process; publicize it widely in the United Kingdom; and, offer information and coaching sessions on the application process to potential applicants;
- Convene a committee that reflects the geographic diversity of the program, including higher education experts, to review proposals and select projects;
- Seek U.S. Embassy concurrence on selected projects;
- Solicit applications for projects in the \$250 to \$40,000 range. Lead a grant review panel to select and award participating universities based on merit, feasibility of proposed collaboration, impact to beneficiaries, and sustainability. Determine the most appropriate funding mechanism for each program and issue grants or payment to selected recipients;
- Manage small grant administration for selected projects and required reporting;
- Provide quarterly reporting with a budget update to U.S. Embassy London on program activities;
- Serve as the primary point of contact and source of information for American studies programs in the United Kingdom;
- Manage all logistical elements of the program, including facilitating Americans' travel to the UK and British travel to the U.S., should the proposal include such activities.

Selected small grant projects must take place in the United Kingdom though they may include a U.S.-based component.

Subject to the availability of funds, the Embassy expects to select one small grant program implementer for a grant award of up to \$90,000.

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

March 2016: Grant is awarded;

April - May 2016: Selected program implementer develops small grants program through consultations with American Studies community and U.S. Embassy representatives

June 2016: Program implementer conducts program orientation and launches small grants program

August 2016: Deadline for small grant applications

September-October 2016: Applications reviewed; selected partnerships projects are notified. Partnership projects begin.

November 2016 – October 2017: Small grant project implementation period

November 2017: Project completion and final report.

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applications must include all of the information listed in the [Public Diplomacy Grants Program Application form](#). Cost-sharing is strongly recommended. Cost-sharing can take the form of both allowable direct and indirect costs. For accountability, the recipient must maintain records to support all costs claimed as part of the cost-share agreement. Such records are subject to audit. Please refer to 2 CFR 200.306 Cost Sharing or Matching.

The deadline for receipt of applications is March 1, 2016. U.S. Embassy London reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal configurations, budgets, and/or participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program, the availability of funds, and concurrence of the applicant.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

Requests for funding provided by the U.S. Embassy should not exceed \$90,000.

The Embassy Public Diplomacy Grants Committee will use the following criteria to evaluate proposals received in response to this funding opportunity:

Executive Summary: The executive summary must succinctly describe the need for the program with regards to: location, the extent and nature of the program and the population being targeted for the program.

Strategic Objectives and Program Description: A clear overview of the program and its background, as well as goals and objectives of the program should be indicated in the proposal. The Embassy Public Diplomacy Grants Committee will closely consider whether the overall objectives lead to the goals of the program. Applicants should describe what they propose to do and how they will do it. The proposed activities must directly relate to meeting the goals and objectives, and applicants should include information on how they will measure activities' effectiveness. The Grants Committee will evaluate the activities planned in terms of their relevance to the current situation and the program goals and objectives, the feasibility of the proposed activities and their timeline for completion, and the extent to which the impact of the program will continue beyond the conclusion of the funding period.

Budget: Costs should be reasonable and realistic in relation to the program activities. Applicants are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible so that the committee may determine the extent to which the request represents an efficient use of USG resources. The budget should be consistent with the narrative description of the program and should reflect the applicant's understanding of the allowable cost principles established by Title 2 CFR 200.306 (part 230) on cost principles for non-profit organizations.

Cost Sharing: Grantees are encouraged to consider cost-sharing possibilities in order to increase community and stakeholder engagement in the project.

Performance Indicators and Monitoring Plan: Proposals should have a clear monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure proper implementation of the program.

Eligibility: All Federal assistance recipients must have a Dun & Bradstreet Number (DUNS) and a CCR (CAGE) number and an active account with the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to funds disbursement.

To obtain a DUNS number, please follow the steps below:

1. Go to <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp>.
2. Select the country where your organization is physically located. Complete and submit the form. Organizations will need to provide basic information, including physical and mailing addresses, name and title of the chief executive, primary [Standard Industrial Code](#) (SIC), and annual revenue. Typically, organizations can complete this process in one day and have a DUNS number emailed to them. For technical difficulties in obtaining this number, please contact D&B at: govt@dnb.com.

System for Award Management (SAM) - SAM is a U.S.-government wide registry of vendors doing business with the U.S. federal government and requires annual renewal. The system centralizes information about grant applicants/recipients, and provides a central location for grant applicants/recipients to change organizational information. More information about SAM.gov and useful guides for setting-up a new account, updating an existing account, or renewing an expired account can be found at [here](#). Foreign-based applicants are strongly encouraged to review these guides when creating an account with SAM.gov. Further, applicants must maintain an active account, with current information, while its application is under consideration for funding. To keep an active SAM.gov account, Applicants must renew it at least once each year. If an account expires, the Organization cannot submit a grant application until it is renewed. To create a new account, please follow the steps below:

1. Go to <http://www.sam.gov>.

2. Select Create User Account, and then select Create an Account on the left-hand side of the screen under Individual Account Details. Organizations must have DUNS number and a CAGE number (US Domestic Organizations) or a NCAGE number (Foreign Organizations), to create an account.

3. Complete and submit the online form. If the applying organization already has the necessary information on hand (see the [SAM User Guide](#)), the online form takes approximately one hour to complete, depending upon the size and complexity of the applying entity. Because of the different steps in the process, it can take anywhere from three to fourteen days to complete the process of creating an account with the system.

For help with SAM.gov, please visit their support page at: <https://www.fsd.gov> or contact them at: (+1) 334-206-7828.

DISCLAIMER

Applicants can expect to be notified of the status of their application within sixty days of the submission deadline. Issuance of this funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the United States Government. It does not commit the USG to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. The USG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. If a proposal is selected for funding, the U.S. Embassy in London has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Should additional information be required, please contact the U.S. Embassy in London at LondonGrants@state.gov.