

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**U.S. EMBASSY IN THE PHILIPPINES**  
**Public Affairs Section**  
**Notice of Funding Opportunity**

<b>Funding Opportunity Title:</b>	2025 Academy for Women Entrepreneurs Philippines
<b>Funding Opportunity Number:</b>	FY25-PHL-AWE
<b>Deadline for Applications:</b>	January 13, 2025 (Monday, 11:59 p.m. PH time)
<b>CFDA Number:</b>	19.022 -- Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs Appropriation Overseas Grants
<b>Maximum Award:</b>	\$35,000

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

***Goals and Objectives***

The U.S. Embassy in the Philippines is pleased to announce the call for FY2025 proposals to implement the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE), a hybrid course giving women the knowledge, networks, and access they need to launch and scale successful businesses. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs established AWE in 2019 and directly supports the U.S. National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality. AWE has empowered an estimated 25,000 women entrepreneurs in more than eighty countries.

AWE uses a hybrid model that combines the online platform DreamBuilder, developed through a partnership between Arizona State University's Thunderbird School of Global Management and global copper mining company Freeport-McMoRan, with in-class mentoring and facilitation. Through AWE, participants learn core business skills, then get together as a class to discuss the material with experienced implementers, local mentors, and U.S. Exchange Alumni. Partnerships with local NGOs, universities, and chambers of commerce offer women the opportunity to amplify their newly learned business skills and network with other businesspeople through speed mentoring, pitch competitions, and entrepreneurship fairs. AWE is only available in English and Spanish, though partners may conduct mentoring and facilitation in local languages.

In the Philippines, the U.S. Embassy's American Center Manila launched AWE in 2020. There are currently 456 AWE graduates in the Philippines with programs in Bacolod, Baguio, Bohol, Cebu, Manila, Marawi, Puerto Princesa, Quezon city, and Zamboanga del Sur. AWE graduates include women from internally displaced communities, fisherfolk, and victims of violence and

natural disasters. AWE graduates also include sustainable development and eco-product innovators, agricultural researchers, and tech-based innovators.

The proposals should meet the following objectives:

- Run eight AWE cohorts of approximately 25-30 women. To ensure program sustainability and engagement with AWE graduates, cohorts must be located in Bacolod, Baguio, Bohol, Cebu, Manila, Puerto Princesa, Quezon City, and Zamboanga del Sur. At least five of these eight cohorts will be managed through a sub-award with the U.S. Embassy's American Corners (<https://ph.usembassy.gov/education/american-spaces/>) and AWE alumnae.
- Distribute subgrants to selected American Corners and AWE alumnae to run AWE as follows: eighty percent of funding after submitting a detailed timeline and work plan (including marketing strategy for the project); twenty percent after submitting the final report with detailed project results.
- Design a three to four-month program of activities for eight cohorts, including online and in-person meetups, lectures, seminars, pitching competitions, grade consultation hours, and trade fairs, with mandatory program launch and graduation ceremonies. A calendar of activities for the twelve-month performance period must be provided.
- Identify the target audience for the academy and determine how they can create a ripple effect to advance AWE in their communities, including a detailed recruitment process.
- Identify at least two qualified facilitators per cohort and outline their qualifications for the role.
- Demonstrate how past AWE graduates will be engaged as mentors or resource personnel to showcase the benefits of AWE and inspire the current cohort.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to establish partnerships and collaborative activities with institutions that can contribute to AWE, such as local government units, universities, chambers of commerce, and think tanks.
- Establish a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan that includes key performance indicators, reference point for measuring progress, data collection methods, and reporting and feedback mechanisms.

### ***Substantial Involvement***

The U.S. Embassy will provide the following assistance:

- Organize a virtual training for facilitators that covers the background of AWE, best teaching practices, how to use the online platform, and how to provide online accounts to students.
- Select American Corners to collaborate with the grantee in managing AWE through a sub-award and maintain open communication lines between them.
- Provide a U.S. Embassy representative who will oversee the performance of American Corners by evaluating their engagement levels, program implementation effectiveness, and participant feedback.
- Provide information about the AWE alumnae network and other U.S. Exchange Alumni who can participate in the program as mentors and facilitators.

All major elements of the program and its content require advance approval by U.S. Embassy including, but not limited to:

- Choices of dates, venue, accommodations, and menus.
- Final selection of participants, facilitators, mentors, and speakers.
- Titles, format, and content of workshop sessions and other program activities.
- Design and content of all marketing materials, publicity, and media products.

## **B. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

### ***Eligible Applicants***

- Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- Public and private educational institutions
- Individuals
- Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions

### ***Cost Sharing or Matching***

Cost sharing is not required.

### ***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. 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.

### **C. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

- **Length of performance period:** 12 months
- **Number of awards:** 1
- **Award ceiling:** \$35,000
- **Award floor:** \$30,000
- **Funding Instrument Type:** Cooperative Agreement
- **Anticipated project start date:** September 2025

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

### **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

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 deemed ineligible.

Please ensure that:

- 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.
- 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) accessible at [www.grants.gov/forms](http://www.grants.gov/forms).
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) accessible at [www.grants.gov/forms](http://www.grants.gov/forms).
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) accessible at [www.grants.gov/forms](http://www.grants.gov/forms) (note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals, organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov)
- Summary Page stating the applicant's name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

## **2. Proposal (10 pages maximum)**

- **Proposal Summary**

Summarize your program in five sentences or less by stating the overarching objective of the program. Present a concise summary of key areas of the proposal, i.e., composition of proposed cohort(s), brief mentions of primary facilitator/implementing partner and alumni engagement efforts, involvement of key external partners, and any other notable or innovative programming approaches.

- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual**

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.

- **Program Design**

- Briefly describe the cohort per location. Please include demographic, geographic, and other characteristics of your target audience, including timeline.
- Describe the target audience for the academy and how they can create a ripple effect to advance AWE in their communities, including a detailed recruitment process. Also include their education level, age range, geography, ethnicity, and business sector.
- Describe the facilitators per cohort and outline their qualifications for the role.
- Describe your locations and logistics: where in-person or virtual sessions will be hosted such as the American Corners.
- Design a three to four-month program of activities for eight cohorts, including online and in-person meetups, lectures, seminars, pitching competitions, grade consultation hours, and trade fairs, with mandatory program launch and graduation ceremonies. A calendar of activities for the twelve-month performance period must be provided.
- Describe how subgrants will be distributed to selected American Corners and AWE alumnae to run AWE as follows: eighty percent of funding after submitting a detailed timeline and work plan (including marketing strategy for the project); twenty percent after submitting the final report with detailed project results.

- **Alumni Engagement**

- Demonstrate how past AWE graduates will be engaged as mentors or resource personnel to showcase the benefits of AWE and inspire the current cohort.
- Develop a comprehensive plan to establish partnerships and collaborative activities with institutions that can contribute to AWE, such as local government units, universities, chambers of commerce, and think tanks.

- **Communication and Outreach**

This includes communication strategies for engaging AWE graduates, social media presence, media outreach, and other specific ideas. How will readership and

engagement be monitored? How will you advance the AWE brand in the Philippines and feature success stories of AWE graduates?

- **Monitoring and Evaluation**  
Establish a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan that includes key performance indicators, reference point for measuring progress, data collection methods, and reporting and feedback mechanisms.

### **3. 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 H. Other Information for guidelines.

Please provide an excel sheet with budget breakdown of the following item description specifying the detailed line item, unit cost, quantity, and total cost:

- **Programming personnel:** typically includes honorarium and allowance for speakers, facilitators, volunteers, mentors.
- **Travel costs:** typically includes transportation allowance for students to attend in-person sessions.
- **Lodging:** expenses incurred for accommodation during travel or events.
- **M&IE:** expenses incurred for meals and refreshments during events and meetups
- **Supplies, materials, and equipment:** typically includes office supplies and merch items with AWE branding
- **Others:** typically includes seed funding and prepaid internet allowance for students to access online modules

In the same excel sheet, please create another tab for a budget narrative explaining in detail the proposed costs listed in the itemized budget. Be sure to explain exactly what the costs are, how you calculated them, and why they are necessary for your project.

Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.

### **4. Attachments**

- 1-page Curriculum Vitae (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
- 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.

## D. SUBMISSION INFORMATION AND DEADLINES

- Application forms required above are available at [www.grants.gov/forms](http://www.grants.gov/forms).
- If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: [GrantsManila@state.gov](mailto:GrantsManila@state.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](http://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.

## E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### **1. Criteria**

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

- Program Design: 20 points
- Alumni Engagement: 20 points
- Communications and Outreach: 20 points
- Monitoring and Evaluation: 20 points
- Budget: 20 points

### **2. Review and Selection Process**

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications based on the criteria provided

### **3. Risk Review**

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:

- Financial stability
- Management systems and standards
- History of performance



- Audit reports and findings
- Ability to effectively implement requirements

## **F. 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 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 February 1, 2025.

### **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.

## **G. 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.

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:

- 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**

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.

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.

## **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 \$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.