

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

**BUILDING LEADERS IN CUBAN CIVIL SOCIETY
PROGRAM**

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
BUILDING LEADERS IN CUBAN CIVIL SOCIETY PROGRAM**

Section A. Funding Opportunity Description

Announcement Type:	New
Funding Title:	Building Leaders in Cuban Civil Society Program
Assistance Instrument type:	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number:	SFOP0009044
Funding Type:	Discretionary
Assistance Listing Number:	19.750
Funding Amount:	\$543,125
Funding Authority:	Department of State Basic Authorities
Source of Funding:	Economic Support Funds
Funding Activity Category:	Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance
Cost-Sharing Requirement:	Not Required
Number of Awards:	One award
Project Duration:	12-18 months
Key Dates:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Application must be submitted by 11:59 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EDT) by July 22, 20222. Questions must be submitted by 11:59 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EDT) by July 11, 20223. Notification of winning proposal expected by mid-to-late August 2022
Application Submission:	Application must be submitted through www.grants.gov
Electronic Requirement:	Yes
Eligibility Category:	<p>U.S. non-profit/nongovernmental organizations subject to section 501 (c) (3) of the U. S. tax code and U.S. institutions of higher education (public and private). Eligible applicants must provide proof of their 501(c) (3) eligibility status, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service.</p> <p>Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400, it is a U.S. Department of State policy not to award profit under federal assistance instruments.</p>
Type of Applicant:	Organizations only. Individuals are not eligible to apply
Number of Applications:	One (1) per applicant organization

Executive Summary:

U.S. foreign assistance for Cuba seeks to empower Cubans to freely determine their own future by increasing human capacity, promoting community-level engagement, and expanding civil society networks. Since 1996, the United States has provided assistance to increase the flow of information on democracy and human rights to Cuba through a variety of U.S. and foreign non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The U.S. Department of State has engaged with independent civil society groups on education, communication, and civic issues. The Department of State's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) seeks to build upon these earlier, successful capacity-building efforts and provide professional development opportunities to emerging civil society and community leaders through, among other options, short term off-island training and site visits. Individuals involved in civil society in Cuba have had few models to follow as they grow to serve the needs of their communities.

To support further progress, the U.S. Department of State has allocated \$543,125 in funds appropriated under the Economic Support Fund heading of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2021 (Div. K, P.L. 116-260) for a project that supports emerging Cuban leaders by training and elevating the skillsets of independent actors in Cuba to coordinate among themselves on the island, to advocate for democratic principles, and to convey the needs of the Cuban people to a broader audience. Assistance to Cuba is governed by a complex series of statutory and other restrictions. The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (also referred to as the "Helms-Burton Act," P.L. 104-114) authorizes the furnishing of assistance and other support for individuals and independent NGOs to support democracy-building efforts for Cuba. All activities must be implemented in accordance with the relevant legislation. These funds cannot support or fund Cuban government entities' involvement in the program implementation. The individuals who apply to participate in this professional development program should be made aware of the program's sponsorship and funding source.

This funding opportunity is posted on www.grants.gov and may be amended. Answers to questions from eligible interested organizations will be posted as attachments to this NOFO. Applicants should regularly check the www.grants.gov website for the most recent information pertaining to this funding opportunity.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application package has been received by www.grants.gov in its **entirety**; there are steps that you should take immediately in order to make your submissions by the deadline. Incomplete applications will be considered **ineligible**. Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

Department of State bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions via www.grants.gov. Incomplete application packages will not be considered.

The Federal award will be signed by the Department of State Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is a USG official delegated the authority by the DOS Procurement Executive to award and administer the award. The award Agreement is the only authorizing document and will be issued electronically through the State Assistance Management System (SAMS Domestic).

A1. Background

The Building Leaders in Cuban Civil Society project will support the participation of cohorts of young emerging leaders from Cuban civil society in a professional development project, ideally for four to six months with an alumni follow-on component. The project will include bringing two to three small cohorts of civil-society leaders and/or young professionals to a third country, for no longer than three weeks per cohort, for in-depth training in required skillsets for fostering grassroots civil society in Cuba as a means of developing the skills needed to build up Cuban democracy. Such skills may include, but are not limited to, communications for spreading democratic ideals, presenting democracy-building and human rights ideas to audiences, and starting or growing community-level organizations related to democracy-building. Targeted skills to develop could include reaching remote areas to spread ideas related to democracy or democratic principles, presenting a program or project idea to potential NGO partners related to democracy-building, learning international communication tools and operating in the international organization community, and/or assessing unmet community needs, leadership and team building, strategic communications, office skills, organizational effectiveness, practical application of skills, or other topics consistent with the LIBERTAD Act.

Given ongoing travel restrictions for Cubans, the proposal should include contingency activities that can be conducted virtually and on-island, as deemed appropriate by the implementer and WHA.

Once completed, the participants would conduct a follow-on project to enhance the democracy-building ideas from the training project and/or develop small-group trainings to pass on the skills learned through the project. Through participation in the project, participants will develop a set of leadership and communication tools and skills to manage and grow civil society organizations that will actively support democratic principles in Cuba.

A2. Program Goals and Objectives

The purpose of the WHA-supported Building Leaders in Cuban Civil Society Leaders project is to allow the participants to establish themselves in Cuba as professional resources for grassroots efforts in democracy and human rights promotion, and further open communications and coordination across the island and internationally. Project alumni will have the tools to promote causes by attracting wider audiences, communicating messages effectively to other leaders and partners, and mobilizing independent actors within civil society to promote freedom of expression and assembly.

Program Objectives

WHA seeks project proposals that will develop the skills and abilities of a new generation of independent leaders to bolster Cubans' abilities to develop independent civil society communities and express ideas regarding human rights and democracy to peers and those outside Cuba. This cadre of professionals will model effective leadership of civil society organizations that effectively advocate for public interests, promote community engagement, support diversity, and further democratic practices in Cuba.

In order to fulfill this purpose and meet this goal, this project will build the professional capacity of 15-20 Cubans, ages 25-45, to advance community-focused causes related to human rights and democracy. The project will provide in-depth training and a skills-development project in Cuba (virtually and in-person, as deemed appropriate by implementer and WHA) and in a single third country for up to three cohorts. On island training will support participants before and following their third country training. The alumni follow-on component will provide additional networking and professional development opportunities for

up to six months, or the end of the period of performance, following the training. At this time, no project activities should be planned to take place in the United States. Cohort activities will last no more than six months in duration, with activities outside of Cuba lasting no more than three weeks in duration. The alumni follow-on component will last up to six months following the training. Participants will learn to function professionally and effectively, communicate new ideas to diverse audiences, and learn training skills in order to conduct future training among their peers. Project proposals should outline processes to ensure that opportunities align with the specific thematic interests of applicants from a broad cross-section of civil society, such as journalists with a media outlet, political activists with party campaigns, community organizers with grassroots organizations, etc.

Project proposals must be centered on furthering democracy and governance goals but may be customized to best suit the proposing organization's project and participant age-group and must include the elements outlined below.

A3. Expected Results

Desired Outcome

Participants will complete an in-depth and dynamic training and skills-building project that includes workshops and a capstone event, as well as a plan for a follow-on project for participants to engage with the Cuban public. The project will allow the participants to establish themselves in Cuba as professional resources for grassroots efforts in democracy promotion across the island and internationally. Alumni will have the tools to promote causes by attracting broad audiences, communicating messages effectively, and mobilizing independent actors within civil society to promote freedom of expression and assembly.

Target Population

Project participants will be Cubans who demonstrate an interest in promoting a more democratic society. Potential candidates need not necessarily self-identify as dissidents but should be advocates who promote universal rights, social inclusion, and individual, non-governmental opportunity. As emerging leaders, participants will be between 25 and 45 years of age and will be young professionals. Many will speak only Spanish; therefore, the orientation and training must be conducted in Spanish (or interpreted for select components). If the training instructor/speaker speaks a language other than Spanish, the cost of language training and/or interpretation must be included in the proposal. The implementing organization must actively recruit women and minorities.

A4. Main Activities

Program Description

Participants will take part in virtual and in-person trainings, preferably conducted in Spanish, for up to three cohorts between 12-18 months. Cohorts need not be the same size. Project should include specialized training and site visits, as deemed appropriate by the implementer and WHA, to familiarize group with democratic practices across the world and if third-country training can occur, assist Cubans to adjust to way of life off the island. The implementer can also arrange workshops, either with its own staff or working in tandem with other organizations the partner proposes. These workshops should each address a unique challenge faced by young Cuban leaders and foster the skills necessary to overcome that challenge.

As a culmination of the project, participants will write a short paper and prepare a presentation for their interest area proposal. A successful presentation will incorporate the skills participants learned over the course of the project and allow for networking among potential future partners/donors/implementers that can continue to work with the participant in their interest area. Participants will also develop a plan of action to implement in Cuba that includes organizing their own project and/or training sessions to pass on the skills learned. The implementer must provide follow-on support to participants,

Finally, Proposals should include an outline of and timeline for follow-on alumni programming, a plan for its coordination, and a plan to foster and sustain longer-term linkages with alumni. Perhaps through a mentorship program developed with civil society actors across Latin American countries.

Recruitment and Selection

Applicants for the administration of this project will propose a robust recruitment and selection plan that will include:

- a) Outreach that will generate a strong pool of qualified participant candidates
- b) Promotional materials that will be developed and disseminated
- c) Details on engaging geographically, racially/ethnically, and socio-economically diverse candidates
- d) Participant selection criteria and a candidate screening process

Staff of the implementing organization **should not plan to travel to Cuba** to conduct on-island recruitment. Therefore, applicants must provide detailed plans to recruit and interview Cuban candidates from the United States or a third country. Prior to final participant selection, the implementing organization will recommend the principal and alternate participants to WHA.

Participants

Project participants will be Cuban citizens and residents who demonstrate an interest in communications, technology, and/or other leadership roles. As emerging leaders, participants may be young professionals. Participants must demonstrate a stated desire to work in the management of independent organizations and/or activities in Cuba. The implementing organization's recruitment plan must actively seek a candidate pool representing gender, racial, socio-economic, and geographic diversity in Cuba.

Location of Activities

Activities can be virtual and held in Cuba as deemed necessary by the implementer and WHA. While the implementer should plan off-island training in a third country, for up to three weeks, the project should have the flexibility to conduct activities in Cuba (virtually and in-person) with location of project staff and potential sub-implementers identified by the applicant.

A5. Performance Indicators

The applicant will develop a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) with annual and end-of-project targets and results anticipated for key performance indicators. The following table shows required indicators that must be measured, as well as illustrative targets, that the implementing organization will be responsible for monitoring and reporting during and after the project. The applicant should propose additional outputs, indicators, and/or targets as necessary. WHA will regularly monitor the project's performance to assess whether project activities are on track and targets are being achieved.

Outcome indicators required for the project are provided below. As part of the proposal, the applicant is expected to identify targets for these indicators that can reasonably be achieved within the performance period of the project, based on the expected overall project results described above.

<i>Required Outcome Indicators</i>	<i>Targets:</i>
Number of individuals who report acquiring a robust body of knowledge about multiple facets of democratic advocacy.	TBD
Number of individuals who utilize their international experience to elevate independent organizations and civil society across Cuba and in the international community.	TBD

Required output indicators and targets that should be used for the project are provided below. The applicant should review these and either confirm the targets or propose alternative targets, as appropriate.

<i>Required Output Indicators</i>	<i>Targets:</i>
Pre- and post-activity surveys conducted to assess participants' development	Two per cohort
Number of people who have completed USG-assisted civic education projects	At least 15
Number of participants who conduct follow-on activities in Cuba to further train colleagues in media literacy skills.	At least 15

The implementing organization will be required to collect baseline data for all the PMP indicators during the first year of the project, as well as pre- and post-activity surveys with each cohort to determine the change in each participant's knowledge, understanding, and skill set. In addition, applicants should define certain terms included in the outcomes and indicators at the very beginning of the project so that it is possible to measure the change during and at the end of the project. Such baseline information will be critical for both monitoring and evaluation of project progress and results.

A6. Substantial Involvement

Not applicable

Section B. Federal Award Information

B1. Available Funding

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Foreign Relations Authorization Act FY1990 and 1991, Public Law 101-246, 101st Congress, 104 STAT.42 Section 47 (February 16, 1990). It states, “The Secretary of State may make grants to post-secondary educational institutions or students for the purpose of increasing the level of knowledge and awareness of, and interest in employment with the Foreign Service, consistent with section 105 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. To the extent possible, the Secretary shall give special emphasis to promoting such knowledge and awareness of, and interest in employment with the Foreign Service among students.”

Utilization of a cooperative agreement for this program is authorized in the Grants and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Public Law 95-224, 95th Congress, 92 STAT.5 Section 6 (February 3, 1978) which states, “Each executive agency shall use a type of cooperative agreement as the legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the Federal Government and a State or local government or other recipient whenever (1) the principal purpose of the relationship is the transfer of money, property, services, or anything of value to the State or local government or other recipient to accomplish a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by Federal statute, rather than acquisition, by purchase, lease, or barter, of property or services for the direct benefit or use of the Federal Government; and (2) substantial involvement is anticipated between the executive agency, acting for the Federal Government, and the State or local government or other recipient during performance of the contemplated activity.”

The Department of State reserves the right to fund any or none of the proposals submitted and reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase the budget in accordance with the needs of the project and the availability of funds.

The Department of State may consider continuing the program funded under this award beyond the initial period of performance on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State and USG. Pending successful implementation of these programs and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, the Department of State may renew the cooperative agreement for a period of two additional fiscal years before openly competing the program again. As each year adds new fellows to the program, applicants will need to demonstrate the ability to handle multiple years of cohorts.

B2. Award Management

The successful applicant awarded under this NOFO will need to routinely collaborate with WHA.

The successful applicant must ensure that all funds are used in a manner consistent with any applicable restrictions on funding. See D5 below for funding restrictions.

Section C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants

See page 1, Eligibility Category.

Preference will be given to organizations with at least three years of experience in administering a fellowship program of this size, nature, and complexity.

Technically eligible submissions are those which: 1) arrive electronically to www.grants.gov

by the designated deadline; 2) have heeded all instructions contained in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), including registrations, length and completeness of submission; and 3) do not violate any of the guidelines stated in this document and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)

C2. Cost Share

Not required. Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility requirement for this NOFO and will not be factored in during the merit review process.

Note: If cost-share is included in the budget, the award Recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, DOS contribution may be reduced in proportion to the Recipient's contribution.

C3. Other Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (UEI), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Applicants, including U.S. affiliates of international organizations must provide a valid Unique Entity Identification (UEI), and **completed** www.sam.gov registration when submitting application on www.grants.gov in response to this NOFO. **Applicants that do not have a valid UEI and completed www.sam.gov registration will NOT be eligible for consideration. Implementing partners/sub-recipient organizations are required to have a valid UEI number.**

Applicants listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) are not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

Organizations must have a commitment to equal opportunity employment practices and to non-discrimination practices with regard to beneficiaries, without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.

Organizations may only submit one application per organization. If more than one application is submitted by an organization, only the first application received will be reviewed for eligibility and funding.

Section D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to request Application Package

Applicants can find application forms on www.grants.gov under the announcement title and funding opportunity number provided above.

Please refer to the **Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)** for additional application submission

instructions, including information on required documents and format. Please follow both, the PSI and the NOFO, to ensure that the proposal package submission is in full compliance with the requirements. Proposal submissions that do not meet all of the requirements outlined in this NOFO and the associated PSI will **not** be considered.

Once the NOFO deadline has passed, DOS may not discuss this competition with any applicant until the proposal review process has been completed.

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should submit them by email to the contacts listed in Section G. Please refer to the funding opportunity number and title. Responses to applicant questions will be posted on www.grants.gov within 24-48 hours from the date of the receipt of questions.

D3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Required Registrations:

The Unique Entity Identifier (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. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to obtain a UEI number and register in www.sam.gov

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in www.SAM.gov to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

Starting April 2022, DUNS has been replaced by UEI which will be assigned by www.sam.gov. UEIs will be assigned to organizations that will have to register for/or renew it this year. As a reminder, www.sam.gov needs to be renewed yearly. <https://sam.gov/content/home>

CAGE is assigned domestically to U.S. organizations when they register in www.sam.gov. CAGE must be renewed every 5 years. Site for CAGE : <https://cage.dla.mil/Home/UsageAgree>

NCAGE is assigned to overseas organizations and has to be renewed every 5 years.

Site for NCAGE: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/CageTool/home>

It is in the organization's best interest to check if their CAGE/or NCAGE codes are active. Organizations are required to register/or renew their CAGE or NCAGE codes **prior** to registering or renewing

www.sam.gov . Both registration and renewals for both CAGE and NCAGE can take up to 10 days. Organization's legal address in NCAGE/CAGE must mirror www.sam.gov.

www.sam.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in www.sam.gov

If an organization plans to sub-contract or sub-award any of the funds under an award, those sub-recipients must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number).

If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application will be deemed **ineligible**. All organizations applying for federal assistance awards (except individuals) must obtain these registrations, the latter are free of charge.

Note: The process of obtaining a www.sam.gov registration may take anywhere from 2-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible. Numerous errors require correction such as an address mismatch and can delay final registration. After 90 days of original registration/or renewal submission, if the application is not corrected it will be deleted and the organization will need to re-start the process.

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the **submission deadline as stated on page 3**. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

Grants.gov automatically log the date and time an application submission is made, and the Department of State will use this information to determine whether an application has been submitted on time. Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered.

If ultimately provided with a notification of intent to make a Federal award, applicants typically have two to three weeks to provide additional information and documents requested in the notification of intent. The deadlines may vary in each notification of intent and applicants must adhere to the stated deadline in the notification of intent.

D5. Funding Restrictions

Grant funds may not be used for expenses related to participant spouses, children, or family relocation or reunification, including for family costs related to the global pandemic.

Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction: In accordance with section 7073 of Division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76) none of the funds made available by that Act may be used to enter into an assistance award with any organization that –

(1) Was “convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the conviction, unless the agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government”; or

(2) Has any “unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless the Federal agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.”

For the purposes of Section 7073, it is the Department of State’s policy that no award may be made to any organization covered by (1) or (2) above, unless the Procurement Executive has made a written determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.

D6. Other Submission Requirements

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in Grants.gov and that an application has been received by the system in its entirety. DOS bears no responsibility for disqualification that results from applicants not being registered before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes. Additionally, you must save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Section E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

The Department of State will issue an award to the applicant whose proposal represents the best value to the U.S. Government on the basis of technical merit, efficient use of U.S. Government funds, and satisfactory organizational capacity. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability to be measured by a responsibility determination.

Applications should contain the applicants’ best terms from both cost and technical standpoints. The implementing partners (sub-recipients) of the primary recipient will be subject to Department of State approval.

Eligible applications will be evaluated by an independent review panel consisting of subject matter experts from other DOS bureaus/or offices, U.S. Embassies, and/or other U.S. Government agencies. Final approval resides with the DOS Grants Officer.

The decision for the final eligibility and award determination rests with the Grants Officer.

The following criteria will serve as a standard which all eligible applications will be evaluated against. Each eligible application will be evaluated and scored on the review criteria using a 100-

point scale.

The review panel will apply the following criteria when rating proposals:

- **Quality of Project Idea:** The proposal responds to the NOFO and is appropriate in the country context. Exhibits originality but is feasible. Directly connects proposed activities with the desired outcomes (goals and objectives). **25 points**
- **Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives:** The proposal provides a detailed work plan of proposed project activities and includes a clear articulation of how these activities will contribute to the overall project's goals and objectives. The proposal articulates project activities that are specific, measurable, attainable, and placed in a reasonable time frame (SMART). Includes contingency plans for potential difficulties in executing the original work plan, including for COVID-19. **20 points**
- **Organizational Capability and Record of Performance:** The proposal demonstrates an institutional record of previous successfully implemented projects in the target country outlined in this NOFO, or demonstrates the potential capacity to do so. The proposal articulates past performance and experience in working with relevant host governments, local organizations, and communities, or if a new implementer, that the organization has the capacity to do so. The proposal clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of primary staff under this project. The proposal describes the division of labor among the implementing organization and potential implementing partner organization(s) and identifies local partner organization(s) that would assist with implementation, where appropriate. Proposal addresses the plan to engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders. **20 points**
- **Cost Effectiveness:** The administration of the proposal budget, including salaries and honoraria, are explained and justified for the work involved. Proposed costs are reasonable and necessary and linked to program objectives and demonstrate efficient use of U.S. Government funds. **NOTE:** This NOFO does not require cost-share. Applicants may voluntarily offer cost share; however, cost share will not be factored in during proposal review. **20 points**
- **Performance Monitoring Plan:** Narrative explaining the plan to conduct monitoring and evaluation and the individuals responsible for monitoring and evaluation activities (including potential contracted monitoring and evaluation experts). **10 points**
- **Sustainability of Impact:** Clearly delineates how impact will be sustained beyond the life of the grant. **5 points**

If the applicant organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include the latest NICRA as a pdf file. Organizations that have previously established indirect cost rates must submit timely indirect cost proposals to the cognizant agency as required by Appendix III & IV of 2 CFR 200. If indirect cost proposals have not been submitted for re-negotiation as required, out-of-date NICRAs may not be considered.

E2. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be reviewed to determine technical eligibility.

All technically eligible applications will move forward to the merit review panel. Applications will be reviewed against the same criteria, listed above. Applications will be evaluated based on the strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned categories and for consistency with the program goals and key areas of interest as contained in this NOFO.

Both the Merit Review Panel and the awarding bureau (WHA) may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of US Government funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

E3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)

The Department of State, 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 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

The applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

The Department of State will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

Section F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicants will be notified via email. This email may include a request for the applicant to respond to panel conditions and recommendations. This notification is not an authorization to begin activities and does not constitute formal approval or a funding commitment.

Additional information that successful applicants may be required to submit after notification of intent to make a federal award, but prior to issuance of a federal award, may include:

- Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the Review Panel and awarding bureau;
- Completion of the Department's Financial Management Survey, if receiving WHA funding for the first time or requested by the Grants Officer;
- Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System (PMS) managed by the Department of Health and Human Services if receiving WHA funding for the first time;
- Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a federal award.

Final approval is also contingent on Congressional Notification requirements being met and final review and approval by the Department's warranted Grants Officer.

The award shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer subsequent to the panel review and selection of proposals. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the sole authorizing document and it will be provided to the Recipient electronically through SAMS Domestic. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

Issuance of this NOFO and negotiation of applications received does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government, nor does it commit the USG to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the USG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

F2. 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:

- [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 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:

- The President's September 2, 2020, memorandum, entitled *Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds that Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities*;
- *Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence* (E.O. 13933); and
- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:

- Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
- Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
- 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 in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

Applicants should plan to coordinate with WHA throughout the course of the agreement to ensure assistance is provided only to eligible participants.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

The Recipient will be required to submit quarterly financial reports (unless stipulated otherwise in the final Agreement) throughout the project period, using Form FFR SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form. If payment is made through the Payment Management System, all financial reports must be submitted electronically through the Payment Management System. The Recipient is also required to upload to SAMS Domestic a pdf version of all financial reports (Federal Financial report) they have submitted in the Payment Management System. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found here:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1>

Progress Reporting

The Recipient will be required to submit quarterly progress reports (unless stipulated otherwise in the final Agreement) throughout the project period; the frequency will be determined by DOS prior to award. The awardee will be required to upload all progress reports to the award file in SAMS Domestic. Progress reports should also reflect the awardee's continued focus on measuring the project's impact on the overarching goals or problems the project set out to address. An assessment of the overall project impact, as appropriate, should be included in each quarterly project report.

Final Report

The final summary FFR and progress reports will be due no later than 120 days after the end date of the award or termination of all project activities. The Final Report shall include the following elements: executive summary, successes, outcomes, best practices, how the project addresses gender issues and marginalized communities, how the project will be sustained, and a final financial report. Additional guidance may be provided prior to the award end date.

Please note: Delays in reporting may result in delays of payment approvals and failure to provide required reports may jeopardize the recipients' ability to receive future U.S. government funds.

WHA reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period of performance.

Section G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact

G1. Agency Contacts

Lucy Jilka
Deputy Director
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
Office of Policy, Planning, and Coordination
JilkaLM@state.gov

Nate Falk
Program Manager
Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs
Office of Policy, Planning, and Coordination
FalkNJ@state.gov

G2. Questions

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO must email them to the contacts listed above with the subject “[Applicant Name] [NOFO title and Funding Opportunity number].” To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, WHA will not answer substantive NOFO questions except when posting questions and answers to the announcement page as described below.

All questions must be submitted via email to contacts listed above by deadline stated on page 3. WHA will periodically create a document of submitted questions with answers and upload it to the announcement page in grants.gov. Prospective applicants are advised to review the announcement page in grants.gov for any updates. Note that once the NOFO deadline has passed, DOS staff in Washington, D.C. may not discuss this completion with applicants until the review process has been completed.

For questions about SAMS Domestic accounts and technical issues related to the system, please contact the ILMS help desk by phone at 1-888-313-4567 (toll charges for international callers) or through the Self Service online portal that can be accessed from <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>. Customer Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except for federal holidays.

With the exception of technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas shall not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process has been completed and an award has been made.

The information in this NOFO is binding and may not be modified by any awarding bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by awarding bureau that contradicts this language will not be binding.

Section H. Other Information

H1. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with applicable Federal awarding agency policy, applicants must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity.

H2. Applicant Vetting

N/A

H3. Marking Policy

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients/implementing partners of Federal assistance awards are subject to the State Department's Marking Policy. More information on this policy can be found in Section N of the Department of State's Standard Terms and Conditions:

<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/U.S.-Department-of-State-Standard-Terms-and-Conditions-10-21-2020-508.pdf>

H4. Evaluation Policy

Recipient will be expected to develop and conduct an annual survey of the cohort to elicit opinions on effectiveness of program components and program administration.

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients of Federal assistance awards are subject to the Department of State Evaluation Policy. More information on this policy can be found here:

<https://www.state.gov/guidance-for-the-design-monitoring-and-evaluation-policy-at-the-department-of-state/>

H5. Monitoring Site Visits

A monitoring site visit, at least once during the lifetime of a grant, may be conducted by Department of State personnel. The site visit is conducted to gather additional information on the recipient's ability to properly implement the project, manage DOS funds, and share substantiating document for programmatic and financial reporting. Specifically, the site visit may involve the review of the programmatic progress (progress on activities, sub-recipient/consultant work, etc.) as well as administrative and financial management and controls.

H6. Privacy Disclosure

DOS understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that DOS cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.