We live in an era when digital platforms have revolutionized how we connect virtually. There are plenty of benefits to people integrating these platforms into their daily lives. Staying in touch with family and friends has never been more convenient, and business entities can connect with their target audience much more authentically. Content creators can build, create, and share their content online seamlessly, even sometimes monetizing their content. Digital platforms play a vital role in our daily lives and are here to stay, but users must utilize the platforms responsibly. Being responsible for your usage, being aware of the reasons for engagement, and limiting time online can help create a healthy balance for both physical and mental well-being in the long run.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy Niamey

Notice of Funding Opportunity

Post believes all youth should be prepared to be good citizens in digital environments, just as they are expected to be good citizens in the physical world.

Funding Opportunity Title: Promoting Safe and Responsible Use of the Internet in Today's Digital Age.

Funding Opportunity Number: PDS-Niamey-FY23-American Spaces

Deadline for Applications: September 12, 2023

Assistance Listing Number: 19.441 - ECE - American Spaces

Total Amount Available: Up to $22,800, pending availability of funds.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Embassy Niamey announces an open competition for organizations and individual to submit proposals to develop and implement a national program to promote the safe and responsible use of the internet in today's digital world. This program will be designed to provide Nigerien influencers with instructions on safe and appropriate uses of technology and on digital citizenship and internet safety. The successful candidate will develop a series of training courses on responsible and efficient use of the Internet, as well as computer tools in general.

Please follow all instructions below. This NOFO is subject to the availability of funding.

Regions (training sites): Niamey, Zinder.

Program Objectives:

Proposals for projects must focus on one or more aspects of the responsible use of internet specified below:

- Know the legal environment that governs the use of the internet
- Know how to take advantage of the internet
- Become a responsible cyber-citizen
- Think critically about all kinds of media messages, including those associated with hate speech, violence, etc.
- Evaluate the credibility and motivation of the sources of messages received.
- Better recognize dangerous situations on the internet.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should:

- Be Nigerien citizens between the ages of 18 and 45
- Be known as "influencers" and be very present on social media
- Be enthusiastic about sharing what they have learned with their followers.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

This notice is subject to availability of ECA American Spaces funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement.

In the case of this program, Embassy Niamey's Public Diplomacy Section will be significantly involved in the set up and execution of the program. The Director of Public Diplomacy, the Public Diplomacy Officer, the Public Engagement Specialist, the Strategic Content Specialist and the American Spaces Director will work closely with the recipient to establish an array of training sessions on the responsible use of internet.

Program Performance Period: Proposed program activities should be implemented throughout the year.

The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of ECA Am spaces 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.

C. ELIGILIBITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not a requirement. However, the panel will consider voluntary cost-sharing during its evaluation. If there are two proposals of about equal strength the tiebreaker will likely favor the organization that provides at least some cost-sharing.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

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

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

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Applications must be in English.
2. Applications must be sent to NiameyPD@state.gov

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. If you would like, you may include a CFA equivalent.
- All pages are numbered.
- All documents are formatted to 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**:

Summary Page: Cover sheet stating the applicant's name and university, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

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.

- 1-page CV or resume and bio of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner

Required Registrations:

Applicants must complete and submit the following forms:

For organizations:

- Federal Government Assistance Form: SF424
- Budget Information Form: SF424A
- Assurances: SF424B
- Budget Narrative Attachment form:

For Individuals:

- SF424 I
- SF424A
- SF424B

Forms are available at the U.S. Embassy in Niger's website: https://ne.usembassy.gov/

Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than 23:59 Niamey Time on Tuesday, September 12, 2023

Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for activities where the primary audience members are U.S. Citizens.

Other Submission Requirements

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

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

Sustainability – 25 points: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program, and the implementer is likely to be able to transition the American Corner to official status.

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 20 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 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 proposed activities.

Monitoring and evaluation plan – 10 points: Applicant demonstrates ability 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.

Reminder: Cost sharing is not a requirement. However, the panel will consider voluntary cost-sharing during its evaluation, and if there are two proposals of about equal strength the tiebreaker will likely favor the organization that provides at least some cost-sharing.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee of both U.S. and Nigerien embassy employees will evaluate all eligible applications.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant 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.

Payment Method: Frequency and method of payment will be negotiated with the recipient prior to the award.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Before applying, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply.

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. The proposal must include monthly reporting related to number of attendees and types and frequency of events held. A final year-end report is also required.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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