

Notice of Funding Opportunity

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

U.S. Embassy Baghdad

Public Affairs Section

Funding Opportunity Title: Visiting American Professionals Program for Iraq.

Funding Opportunity Number: DOS-Baghdad-PD-2023-0012

Deadline for Applications: Iraq Time, 08/18/2023 (11:59 P.M.)

Assistance Listing Number: 19.021

Total Amount Available: \$500,000.00

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Baghdad of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a program to develop and implement the Visiting American Professionals Program for Iraq. Through this program, the Public Diplomacy section in Baghdad seeks to enable U.S. experts to engage with Iraqi audiences, in person and via virtual platforms, on a variety of topics in accordance with Mission Iraq goals. The Visiting American Professionals Program for Iraq will promote an understanding of U.S. strategic priorities, policies, and institutions, as well as build linkages between U.S. and Iraqi experts and institutions. Proposals should be developed to include programmatic events for 4-6 visiting speakers (in-person) to Iraq and 20-24 virtual speakers throughout the 12-month timeframe, depending upon security conditions. Please follow all instructions below.

The **Visiting American Professionals Program for Iraq** will connect U.S. experts (U.S. citizens only) with Iraqi audiences and institutions. This program will recruit American experts to engage with Iraqi audiences in person or virtually through lectures, workshops, and seminars, through appearances in foreign media, and in a consultancy capacity. Speakers will address topics identified by U.S. Mission Iraq. Participating speakers and experts can be programmed with a variety of professional audiences in a wide range of disciplines; however, English language teaching and the performing arts are specifically excluded. Performing artists may participate in programs as speakers or consultants but will not be recruited for performances or exhibitions. In addition, speakers will not teach university courses as part of this program.

Mission priority goals include, but are not necessarily limited to:

- a. Fostering Stability and Economic Growth
- b. Bolstering Democracy and Governance
- c. Ensuring Iraq's Sovereignty and Security

Recipient's Role – Project Activities: Based on detailed strategic priority parameters provided by the mission, the recipient will:

- Identify American Speakers who are willing to travel to Iraq to participate in speaker programs; or, if not possible, conduct virtual programs with Iraqi audiences. Programming should be concurrent and scheduled throughout the year, with 20-24 virtual speakers and 4-6 visiting speakers during the 12 months of the program. Programming should be scheduled during each month of the program, with a virtual program, a visiting speaker program, or both scheduled for every month. Visiting speaker programs may be dependent upon security conditions and

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local holiday schedules.

- Contact U.S. professional organizations, review biographical information of candidate speakers, conduct online searches (e.g., YouTube videos, LinkedIn, Twitter, online articles, etc., that provide evidence of speaking/presentation abilities or skills) and check references.
- The recipient will provide names, biographies/resume, and official photographs of recommended speakers, along with justifications for their participation, to PD Baghdad for review and approval.
- Once PD approves a speaker or list of speakers, the recipient will conduct all necessary planning and logistical arrangements for the speaker as directed by PD. This includes, but is not limited to, the tasks listed below.

Both Virtual and In-Person Programs:

- Coordinate the planning and implementation of each program; work with PD staff to identify cities for each event, possible venues and partner organizations, and duration of each program.
- Coordinate with American Corners, Alumni Associations, and U.S. Embassy Baghdad to Iraq partner organizations, and/or Mission Iraq-managed public engagement platforms to ensure that best use of existing programmatic lines of effort are utilized.
- Translate speaker's biography in Arabic and share with potential partners ahead of the program.
- Provide translation/interpretation during program events and as needed.
- Provide program/event handouts and translated CVs/biographies to participants during the sessions.
- Provide Mission Public Diplomacy staff with background information on institutions, partners and participants that will be involved in each city where the program will take place.
- Provide and send program reports in accordance with the guidelines provided by PD Baghdad and using Embassy provided format within two (2) weeks of program completion.
- As directed by Mission Public Diplomacy staff, organize pre-program or follow-on activities, such as Facebook posts, web chats, short videos with the speakers, post-trip press events, and other similar amplification events.
- Provide miscellaneous administrative support for speakers as requested.

Virtual Speakers Program (specific):

- Schedule 20 to 24 virtual speaker programs. A typical program would be 60-120 minutes in length.
- Identify suitable online platform(s) to host online presentations to audiences in Iraq.

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- Coordinate technical logistics with Iraqi partner organizations; test online platforms in advance of the live presentation to resolve any technical issues.
- Provide technical assistance to the American speaker before and during the presentation.
- Provide technical support and facilitator for virtual speaker programs in approved venues.
- Attend the live event (online) to assist the American speaker, monitor online questions from the audience in Iraq, and provide other support as needed.
- Record the presentation, if appropriate, and provide access to an online platform where the recorded presentation can be accessed by other Iraqi audiences.
- Coordinate with Iraqi partner organizations and PD staff to promote the live event; with the approval of PD Mission staff, create flyers, handouts, Facebook postings, etc., that can be used to promote the online event to Iraqi participants.

In-Person Speakers Program:

- Schedule 4 to 6 in-person speakers. For the visiting speakers, a typical program would be between 4-7 days in length (including in-country travel time), and consist of activities in Baghdad, Erbil, and possibly other locations within Iraq, depending upon security conditions.
- Coordinate venues and audiences/participants for each event in each selected city.
- Coordinate with selected and approved speakers to ensure their availability; provide a notional schedule and program details (cities, event dates, time, venues, and participants).
- Prepare final program schedule for approval by PD staff and speakers.
- Arrange for visa, international and Iraqi domestic travel (both air and ground transportation), lodging, per diem, cash advances, and other logistics for security. Changes to itineraries might occasionally occur at the last minute. Flight tickets must be purchased in accordance with the Fly America Act, as directed or approved by the Grant Officer.
- Share the approved program schedule and the flight itineraries with selected U.S. speaker (s); provide them with useful information about Iraq to help them prepare for their trip and to tailor their remarks and activities.
- Meet visiting speakers upon arrival in Iraq and escort them during the program; provide them with a welcome kit that has general information about Iraqi culture and life, a map of Iraq, representational book on Iraq, and a final copy of the approved program schedule.
- Take photographs at events suitable for online posting and traditional printing and make those available to PD staff.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 12 to 18 months

Number of awards anticipated: 1 award.

Total available funding: \$500,000.00

Type of Funding: FY23 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

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Anticipated programs start date: September,2023

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement.

Public Diplomacy (PD) Baghdad will be involved in this project, including, but not limited to:

- Approving the selection of speakers from a short list of candidates provided by the recipient, coordinating the arrival and departure dates for each participating post (i.e., Erbil and Baghdad) within Iraq, approving program duration and schedule, and identifying constraints such as local holidays or weekends.
- Explaining the purpose of each program and desired outcomes; confirming topics and types of events at which the speaker will participate, identifying cities/ provinces the speaker will visit as well as the duration of stay in each city.
- Communicating and coordinating with the recipient on speaker's professional background and expertise, as well as proposed programmatic events, meet post expectations.
- Clearing on all programmatic details to ensure that post priorities, audience goals, and community needs match speaker's qualifications.
- Coordinating with the recipient about the participation of U.S. Embassy & Erbil Consulate staff in the proposed events.
- The U.S. Mission in Iraq will not provide the following support for this program; a) air or ground transportation to and from Iraq; b) air or ground transportation in country, b) security (PSD) support for speakers, d) or accommodations/access to U.S. Government facilities other than for programmatic purposes. The grantee is expected to provide all transportation, accommodation, and security (PSD) requirements needed to implement the program.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Be a U.S. non-profit organization meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c) (3).
- Have demonstrated experience developing and administering similar programs.
- Have the capacity to operate in Iraq and have active partnerships with organization(s) operating in Iraq needed to support the program.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

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Indicate whether cost share is required and how it will be evaluated during the merit review. Note also that cost share can only be required if the underlying statutory authority for the funding explicitly allows the Department to require cost share (ex. not PD funding). Note also that cost sharing may be considered in the merit review only if the funding announcement specifically addresses how, it will be considered, e.g., assigning a certain number of additional points to applicants who offer cost sharing or using cost-sharing to break ties among applications with equivalent scores after evaluation against all other factors. Note that excessive reliance on cost-sharing during the merit review may unfairly favor larger, better funded organizations.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via www.SAM.gov as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at embassy website, www.grants.gov or by request from baghdadpdgrants@state.gov.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission:

Please 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 ineligible.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity.
- All documents are in English.
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars.
- All pages are numbered.
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.
- Public Diplomacy Grants Program Application form is recommended and available on grants.gov.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)

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

3. Proposal (12 pages maximum): The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed.
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The "goals" describe what the program is intended to achieve. The "objectives" refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- **Proposed Program Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles, and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Budget Justification Narrative: After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate file to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

5. Attachments:

- 1-page 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, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.

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- Official permission letters, if required for program activities

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations:

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the 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.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUN'S number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

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 number 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 number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, 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 or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket ("incident") with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: "I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE or 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:

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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):

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

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.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than Friday August 18, 2023.

5. Other Submission Requirements

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

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

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Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 20 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Program activities and implementation plan (25 points): 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 and provide milestones to indicate progress toward NOFO-stipulated goals. The review panel will be viewing the implementation plan in terms of how well it addresses the goals and objectives, feasibility of the proposed activities and their timeline for completion, and the extent to which the impact of the project will continue beyond the conclusion of the funding period.

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

Organizational Capability (15 points): Proposals should demonstrate the ability to develop and implement programs in the areas covered by the NOFO. Applicants must demonstrate how their resources, capabilities, and experience will enable them to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

Budget – 15 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.

Key Personnel – 5 points: The review panel will consider the appropriateness of the selected project key personnel; in view of the roles and responsibilities those individuals will play in guiding the project through implementation to completion. While it is preferable to name project personnel and provide their resumes, position descriptions submitted in lieu of the resumes will be reviewed for the appropriateness of the qualifications and skills identified.

Support of Equity and Underserved Communities – 5 points: Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

3. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov (formerly, FAPIIS)

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- i. The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that a federal awarding agency previously entered. Currently, federal agencies create integrity records in the integrity module of the Contractor Performance Assessment and Reporting System (CPARS) and these records are visible as responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.
- iii. The Federal awarding agency 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 §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

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.

2. 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:

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- [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: NOTE:

- [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).

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports on quarterly basis.

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Foreign Assistance Data Review: As required by Congress, the Department of State must make progress in its efforts to improve tracking and reporting of foreign assistance data through the Foreign Assistance Data Review (FADR). The FADR requires tracking of foreign assistance activity data from budgeting, planning, and allocation through obligation and disbursement. Successful applicants will be required to report and draw down federal funding based on the appropriate FADR Data Elements, indicated within their award documentation. In cases of more than one FADR Data Element, typically program or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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

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 \$5,000 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 \$5,000 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

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copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

“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.