Statement of Interest (SOI)

Advancing U.S.-Oman Partnerships

U.S. Embassy Muscat, Department of State

Opportunity number: PAS-MUSCAT-25-001

Application deadline: 06/24/2025

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**U.S Department of State
*U.S. Embassy Muscat***

**Annual Program Statement**

### **Basic Information**

##### ***Overview***

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| **Funding Opportunity Title** | Advancing U.S.-Oman Partnerships  |
| **Funding Opportunity Number** | PAS-MUSCAT-25-001 |
| **Announcement Type** | SOI |
| **Deadline for Applications** | 06/24/2025  |
| **Assistance Listing Number** | 19.040 |
| **Length of performance period** | 3 to 12 months |
| **Number of awards anticipated** | 1-3 awards (dependent on amounts) |
| **Award amounts** | Awards may range from a minimum of $5,000 to a maximum of $100,000 (**subject to availability of funds**) |
| **Total available funding** | $100,000 (**subject to availability of funds**) |
| **Type of Funding** | FY25 and/or FY26 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds  |
| **Anticipated project start date** | September 2025 |

The U.S. Embassy Muscat of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations and individuals to submit a SOI application to carry out a project (or projects) **to advance the U.S.-Oman partnership in the following priority fields: cultural and artistic exchange, English language education, entrepreneurship and economic development, and Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and innovation.** Please carefully follow all the instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a concise (***3-page)*** statement of interest designed to clearly communicate projects idea and objectives. This is not a full proposal and will not result in a federal assistance award at this step.

The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit project ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their project idea(s) by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decision(s) are made.

**Funding Instrument Type:** Grant

**Project Performance Period**: Proposed projects should be completed in **12 months** or less. The Department of State will consider applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period 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

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

##### ***Executive Summary***

**Priority Region:** Oman

**Executive Summary**

U.S. Embassy Muscat’s Public Affairs Section invites proposals for programs that strengthen cultural, educational, professional, and scientific ties between the United States and Oman through programming that highlights shared values, strengthens people-to-people ties and institutional linkages, and promotes bilateral cooperation. Competitive proposals should focus on at least one of the grant priority areas outlined below. Proposals that do not address one of the grant priority areas outlined below will not be considered for funding. All proposed programs must include an American cultural element or connection with American expert(s), organization(s), or institutions in a specific field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policies, values, and perspectives.

**Grant Priority Areas:**

* **Cultural and Artistic Exchange:** Programs that highlight shared cultural heritage, support artistic collaboration, or promote mutual appreciation through music, art, literature, or other creative expressions. These initiatives may also include efforts to preserve and revitalize cultural heritage, both tangible and intangible.
* **English Language and Education:** Initiatives to enhance American English language skills, improve teaching methodologies, and foster collaboration between educational institutions in the U.S. and Oman.
* **Entrepreneurship and Economic Development:** Programs that encourage innovation, support small business development, promote workforce readiness, and enhance trade relations with the United States.
* **STEM and Innovation:** Projects that promote science, technology, engineering, and mathematics education, foster innovation, and facilitate joint research and technological collaboration with the United States or American companies.

### **Eligibility**

##### ***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

##### Individuals

##### Eligible 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. Please see Section E.3 for more information. 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.

### **Program Description**

##### ***Goals and Objectives***

**Background**
The U.S. Embassy Muscat Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) aims to strengthen the ties between the United States and Oman through programs that foster mutual understanding and cooperation.  These programs are designed to address shared challenges, build people-to-people connections, and promote collaboration in areas of mutual interest, including cultural exchange, education, entrepreneurship, and scientific advancement.

**Program Goal**
To foster sustainable partnerships and strengthen bilateral ties through innovative programs that align with the U.S. Embassy’s mission goals and Oman Vision 2040, as detailed in the grant priority areas.  Programs should encourage institutional linkages, highlight U.S. values, and support innovation-led growth.

**Program Objectives**

1. **Increase People-to-People Engagement:**
Facilitate meaningful interactions between American and Omani participants that lead to sustainable connections and long-term collaboration.
2. **Promote Shared Values and Understanding:**
Advance appreciation of U.S. values and perspectives while encouraging dialogue about shared goals and challenges.
3. **Develop Skills and Knowledge:**
Enhance participants’ professional, educational, and leadership capabilities in targeted fields, such as STEM, entrepreneurship, or cultural preservation.

**Examples of Activities or Programming Components:**

* Workshops, seminars, or training sessions featuring U.S. experts or practitioners.
* Cultural or artistic collaborations that engage diverse audiences.
* Study tours, exchanges, or site visits to showcase best practices and encourage institutional linkages.
* Joint research initiatives or projects that address shared challenges.
* Public performances or exhibitions that highlight U.S.-Omani partnerships.

**Examples of Activities that Cannot be Funded**

* Partisan political activities.
* Charitable donations or direct aid (e.g., food drives, scholarships).
* Construction, renovation, or purchase of property.
* Purchase of alcoholic beverages.
* Profit-making ventures.
* Entertainment (e.g., receptions, parties, purely social events).
* Equipment purchases unrelated to program activities.
* Projects promoting religious doctrine or practices.
* Fundraising campaigns.
* Lobbying or influencing legislation.
* Excessive or unapproved travel costs.
* Academic research without programmatic goals.
* Projects unrelated to Embassy/DoS mission goals.
* Duplication of funding from other U.S. government sources.

### **Application Contents and Format**

Please follow all instructions below carefully. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

##### **Mandatory application forms**

* Grant Proposal Narrative
* Grant Proposal Budget

##### **SOI (3 pages maximum)**

**Content of SOI must include:**

* A brief project description summarizing goals, objectives outcomes, performance indicators, beneficiaries, and proposed timeline.
* A clear statement of the applicant’s organizational capacity to carry out the proposed activity and manage U.S. Government funds.
* A budget with a narrative description of each category
	+ Documents fully in English
	+ The anticipated total budget amount (in U.S. dollars)
* All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

### **Submission Requirements and Deadlines**

##### ***Address to Request Application Package***

##### Application forms required above are available at Embassy Website and Grants.gov.

##### ***Department of State Contacts***

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

##### ***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 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”)](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsd.gov%2Fgsafsd_sp%3Fid%3Dgsafsd_kb_articles%26sys_id%3Dc81018e71b1601d0937fa64ce54bcb57&data=05%7C01%7Cfjeldkk%40state.gov%7C0cc4e2b471f44abcd32308db093ecead%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C638113937577534024%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=W2ShcazZBQbanYGj0cLOTnUJwv%2BGL4xfwr83%2BycQY2E%3D&reserved=0) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at [www.fsd.gov](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.fsd.gov%2F&data=05%7C01%7Cfjeldkk%40state.gov%7C0cc4e2b471f44abcd32308db093ecead%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C638113937577534024%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=t32ANWzgpiB93pMWoq%2BFCSHz4YJY9QF1S1iQzCsS6RM%3D&reserved=0) 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](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Feportal.nspa.nato.int%2FAC135Public%2Fscage%2FCageList.aspx&data=05%7C01%7Cfjeldkk%40state.gov%7C0cc4e2b471f44abcd32308db093ecead%7C66cf50745afe48d1a691a12b2121f44b%7C0%7C0%7C638113937577534024%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=v3TLT8F%2FNfk5SuTcI2zw7SMhV4HK542OhP9XDx4ln%2BY%3D&reserved=0)

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

[NCAGE Code Request Tool (nato.int)](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/CageTool/home)

**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](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/subtitle-A/chapter-I/part-25/subpart-A/section-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.

##### ***Submission Dates and Times***

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time before the closing date of ***06/24/2025.*** No applications will be accepted after that date.

##### ***Funding Restrictions***

1. Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to provide any payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

1. Certification Regarding Compliance with applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws

None of the funds awarded under this agreement may be used for any initiative or programs, or any activities that do not comply with Executive Order 14173 titled Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity.

By signing the SF-424 or SF-424I Application for Federal Assistance, the Applicant certifies the following:

1. Its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government’s payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code and;
2. It does not operate any programs promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.

##### ***Other Submission Requirements***

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

### **Application Review Information**

##### ***Review Criteria***

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

* **Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea** – 30 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** – 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.
* **Sustainability** – 10 points: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

##### ***Review and Selection Process:***

A review committee will evaluate all eligible SOI applications. All eligible SOIs will be reviewed against the criteria listed above. SOIs are reviewed individually against the criteria and not against competing SOIs. For a fair review, all panelists will review the first page of the SOI up to the page limit and no further. The panel may provide conditions and/or recommendations on SOIs to enhance the proposed program. Conditions must be addressed, and recommendations should be addressed, in a full proposal application.

Following the review, any successful SOI applicants will be contacted and instructed to submit full applications. A full application will include:

* SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals)
* SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
* SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) – the SF424B are only required for individuals, organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov.

##### ***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:

* 1. Financial stability
	2. Management systems and standards
	3. History of performance
	4. Audit reports and findings
	5. Ability to effectively implement requirements
	6. If there are any program specific risk factors that will be considered, describe them here.

### **Post-Award Requirements and Administration**

##### ***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:

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](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5) (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](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.25&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.170&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.175&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE)](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.182&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.183&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2chapterVI.tpl)
* [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/)