

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: PRC Activities in International Organizations

Funding Opportunity Number: IO-CPIF-FY23-DFOP0016772

Deadline for Applications: August 12, 2024, 23:59 EDT (UTC-04:00) by email

Assistance Listing Number: 19.793

Total Amount Available: \$500,000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Bureau of International Organization Affairs of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a program to conduct social science research on the activities of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in support of its policies and positions in international organizations. Please follow all instructions below.

Priority Region: Global (see list of eligible countries in paragraph C.1)

Program Objectives:

The PRC's vision for an alternate system of global governance is at odds with the founding principles of the United Nations (UN), including the UN Charter, and has profound implications for international relations, especially in multilateral fora. The PRC seeks to alter the multilateral system to establish a state-led international order that serves Beijing's political, economic, and security interests. In recent years, the PRC has sought to reshape the norms of the international system from within, championing a worldview that prioritizes PRC state interests above foundational UN principles of human rights and peace and security enshrined in the UN Charter and Universal Declaration of Human Rights. To support this vision, the PRC has introduced signature foreign policy initiatives – the Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, and Global Civilization Initiative, among others – that superficially offer investment and rhetorical support for the needs and priorities of developing countries but come with an implicit expectation to support PRC policy priorities. When a government makes a sovereign decision to pursue a policy aligned with their own interests rather than Beijing's, the PRC often resorts to using political and economic coercion against the government and key domestic industries. Despite PRC promises of "win-win" cooperation, developing countries are forced to choose between their ability to conduct an independent foreign policy free of PRC influence or to compromise their own vital interests to avoid the PRC's coercive tactics.

This program seeks to fund social science research to critically analyze PRC efforts to redesign the international system to serve China's interests. Research topics should focus on the impacts of the PRC's efforts on the ability of developing countries to pursue an independent foreign policy that supports their own political and economic interests, free of PRC coercion. Applicants may submit a proposal for research that contains a nexus to PRC positions in multilateral fora or international organizations.

Example research topics include:

- Use of signature initiatives such as the Global Development Initiative, Global Civilization Initiative, Global Security Initiative, or the Belt and Road Initiative as leverage to coerce governments into supporting PRC foreign policy positions or to undermine international consensus on development, human rights, or peace and security;
- Threatened or actual uses of economic coercion as a result of opposing PRC foreign policy or voting against PRC interests;
- Characteristics of successful mitigation measures meant to limit or reduce PRC influence on the ability of a country to pursue an independent foreign policy;
- How PRC positions influence the dynamics within multilateral blocs;
- Promotion of Xi Jinping Thought and Chinese Communist Party rhetoric to advance the PRC's vision for an alternate international system;
- Impact of a PRC-led international order on individual human rights, sustainable development, and peace and security in a country or region;
- Misuse and mischaracterization of UN General Assembly Resolution 2758 to constrain Taiwan's meaningful participation in international organizations;
- Messaging and disinformation narratives used to promote PRC-friendly concepts of human rights, development, multilateralism, etc.

The examples above are not an exhaustive list of research topics. Applicants are encouraged to propose an original research topic in line with their interests and expertise that meets the objectives outlined above.

The proposed project should feature original research and may include activities to gather data in support of the analysis. **Projects must also include a public messaging component to publicize the results of the research.** Examples of public messaging include the publication of results in an academic or non-academic journal or media; presentation of the results at conferences or events; making results and data available online; and/or holding public events to discuss the results. Funding may be used to support travel, event planning, and participation in public messaging activities subject to the funding restrictions in paragraph D.4.

Participants and Audiences:

The focus of this program is on PRC actions in or directed towards developing economies. Applicants from developing economy institutions are encouraged to apply. Non-profit and for-profit foreign research institutions, think tanks, non-governmental organizations, and individuals from the benefitting countries listed in paragraph C.1 are eligible.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 12 to 24 months

Number of awards anticipated: Number of award(s) will depend on the cost(s) of proposed project(s)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$25,000 to a maximum of \$250,000
Total available funding: \$500,000
Type of Funding: FY23 Economic Support Fund (ESF) - Countering PRC Influence Fund (CPIF)
Anticipated program start date: No earlier than October 1, 2024

This notice is subject to availability of funding. The Bureau of International Organization Affairs does not guarantee availability of funding by receiving applications under this announcement. Only successful applicants will be contacted.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, fixed amount award (FAA), or cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements and some FAAs are different from grants in that bureau or department staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation (“Substantial Involvement”). Substantial involvement may include collaboration on research objectives, organizing peer review of pre-publication results, and consultation on public messaging programs.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 24 months or less. 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 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. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations and individuals from the benefitting countries listed below are eligible to apply:

- Foreign not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- Foreign private organizations
- Foreign public and private educational institutions
- Individuals

Benefitting countries: Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d’Ivoire, Cyprus, Dominica, El Salvador, Fiji, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kuwait, Latvia, Liberia, Lithuania, Dominican Republic, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mexico, Federated States of Micronesia, Mongolia, Morocco, Nauru, Nepal, Oman, Palau, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Rwanda, Samoa, Sierra Leone, Singapore, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Thailand, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Zambia.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not a requirement for eligibility.

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. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at <https://grants.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 documents are single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms (available at <https://grants.gov/forms>)

- **SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance -- individuals)**
- **SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)**
- **SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs)** (note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals and for organizations not registered in SAM.gov)

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

3. 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.

- **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 U.S. government agencies.
- **Research Problem Statement:** Clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the research problem to be addressed, relation to other work, and why the proposed program is needed.
- **Research 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 activities must include a component for public messaging of the research results (e.g., conference presentations, participation in international meetings or events, publication in academic or non-academic media, online publication of data and/or results, op-eds, tv or social media engagements, etc.)
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- **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?

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 applicable.

- 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.
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities.
- Unique Entity Identifier from System for Award Management (SAM.gov) unless the application is for an individual. Due to the length of time required to finish the SAM.gov registration process, a proposal may be submitted before a UEI is assigned. If a UEI has been requested but not received prior to the proposal deadline, include the status of the SAM.gov registration request in the proposal submission.

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 DUNS 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.

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.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than **August 12, 2024, 23:59 EDT (UTC-04:00)** submitted via email to **IO-Funding@groups.state.gov**.

4. Funding Restrictions

Funds may not be used for large durable items or construction projects, venture capital, for-profit endeavors, support for religious or partisan political activity, lobbying for specific legislation, fund-raising campaigns, infrastructure needs that are not sustainable once grant funds are depleted, or alcohol. Funds cannot be used for programs that charge a participation fee.

5. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to **IO-Funding@groups.state.gov**.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Research Program – 40 points: The research program is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out, and addresses a gap in knowledge or data regarding PRC activities. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Research Capacity – 20 points: The organization has expertise in its stated field, has the capacity to conduct credible research on the problem statement, and the standing to be considered an expert on the topic.

Organization Capacity – 10 points: The organization has internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 10 points: Goals and objectives are clearly-stated, and the program approach is likely to achieve the intended results. Activities in support of public messaging are appropriate and likely to impact the target audience(s).

Budget – 10 points: The budget justification is sufficiently 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 its 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.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

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

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.

Payment Method: Funds will be disbursed in increments as needed to implement the project or based on milestones achieved and using the procedure as outlined in the award document.

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:

- [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. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. Applicants should budget adequate personnel time to produce at least quarterly updates on the project.

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: IO-Funding@groups.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 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: Award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.