

Statement of Interest (SOI)

Promoting Ties Between the United States and Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu and/or Nauru

U.S. Embassy Suva, Department of State

Opportunity number: PDS-SUVA-FY25-01

Application deadline: June 23, 2025 at 11:59 pm Fiji time

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Statement of Interest

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Promoting Ties Between the United States and Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu and/or Nauru
Funding Opportunity Number	PDS-SUVA-FY25-01
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	June 23, 2025 at 11:59pm Fiji time
Assistance Listing Number	19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Length of performance period	Proposed programs should be completed in 18 months or less
Number of awards anticipated	Up to 3 awards (dependent on amounts)
Award amounts	awards may range from a minimum of \$10,000 to a maximum of \$25,000
Total available funding	\$50,000 pending funding availability
Type of Funding	Fiscal Year 2025 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funding (subject to availability of funding)
Anticipated project start date	Between October 1 and December 30, 2025

The U.S. Embassy Suva Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations/individuals to submit a statement of interest (SOI) to carry out a project. Please carefully follow all 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, fixed amount award (FAA), or cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements include substantial involvement of the bureau or embassy in program implementation of the project. An FAA can also include substantial involvement. Examples of substantial involvement are included in section C below.

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 18 months or less.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

The U.S. Embassy Suva Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State invites proposals for programs that strengthen ties between the United States and Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, and/or Tuvalu through programming that promotes U.S. interests and bilateral cooperation. All programs must include an American element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s in a specific field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with a physical presence in Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, or Tuvalu
- Public and private educational institutions with a physical presence in Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, or Tuvalu
- Individuals
- Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions with a physical presence in Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru or Tuvalu.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

C. Program Description

1. Goals and Objectives

Applicants should choose only one of these goals as a focus of their statement of interest:

- Promote regional security cooperation, including countering transnational threats, such as narcotics use and trafficking.
 - Programs may emphasize youth engagement and education as a means to prevent involvement in criminal activities or drug use. Initiatives that equip young people with life skills, mentorship, and leadership opportunities to serve as positive influencers in their communities are eligible. Activities that encourage cross-border collaboration, information sharing, and partnerships with U.S. counterparts are especially encouraged.
- Promote U.S. and Pacific Islanders' prosperity by advancing and deepening our bilateral economic and commercial partnership.
 - Programs may increase support for entrepreneurs by creating connections with American peers and experts to share resources, innovative techniques, and other

tools to strengthen and grow their businesses while expanding their networks and markets.

- This initiative can also focus on helping aspiring Pacific Islander entrepreneurs explore mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral export trade opportunities.
- Connect experts from the United States and Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru and/or Tuvalu related to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education, focused on growth industries – particularly working in partnership with technical and vocational education and training institutions (TVETs).
 - This initiative’s goal is to find innovative approaches to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education, including in partnership with TVETs.
 - This initiative may also include projects designed to connect private sector employers with vocational and technical educational institutions to improve the employability of graduates in the STEM fields and to connect them with U.S. approaches to technical fields and education.
- Promote greater understanding of American values and culture, especially around innovation and opportunity.
 - Activities may highlight U.S. achievements in science, technology, business, and agriculture, and show how these contribute to global progress. Leading up to America’s 250th anniversary in 2026, programs can use film, music, sports, and shared history to strengthen people-to-people connections.
 - These initiatives can also spotlight the United States’ role in major upcoming global events, such as the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and help international audiences better understand American society, creativity, and leadership on the world stage.

Participants and Audiences:

The intended project participants and/or beneficiaries should have a connection with Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, and/or Tuvalu. Priority audiences include youth, students over age 14, entrepreneurs and educators.

The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:

- For-profit projects or proposals from businesses;
- Requests with that do not contain a Pacific Island component;
- Requests that do not contain a U.S. component;
- Individual academic or scientific research;
- Projects with elements of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)
- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Construction programs;
- Programs that support specific religious activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs;
- Scientific research;

- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization; or
- Programs that duplicate existing programs.

2. Substantial Involvement

If this award will be a cooperative agreement or an FAA with substantial involvement, PDS Suva will be substantially involved in the project. Examples of substantial involvement are:

- Active collaboration with the recipient in the implementation of the award.
- Review and approval of one stage of work before another can begin.
- Joint preparation or presentation of results with the recipient.
- Involvement in the selection of participants or program venues.
- Specific programmatic involvement in the award, beyond normal monitoring.

D. Application Contents and Format

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Applicants may wish to use the **concept note template** provided, but are not required to do so. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

1. SOI (three pages maximum), which must include:

- Heading: applicant name, address, and contact details; category of eligibility (see C.1 above); proposed start and end date of your project.
- Description of your project idea: what activities it will include, which objectives it will meet; over what period of time, where it will take place, and how you will carry it out. Include specific examples to illustrate your concept.
- Who will be your target audience, and how many you will reach over your proposed time period.
- How you will measure the impact or success of your project.
- Brief background on your organization or yourself and other key team members who will be involved in the project. Include your experience in managing similar projects and funds.
- The anticipated total budget amount (in U.S. dollars).

Technical specifications of the SOI:

- Documents must be fully in English.
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.
- Either Microsoft Word or converted to a PDF file.
- Please do not include photos, graphics, cover pages or appendices.

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. Department of State Contacts

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

2. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations

Not applicable at this stage.

Submission Dates and Times

All SOI materials must be submitted by email to PDSuva@state.gov no later than June 23, 2025 11:59 pm Fiji time.

3. Funding Restrictions

i. 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).

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

None of the funds awarded under this agreement may be used for any initiatives 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.

iii. Certification Requirements for Institutes of Higher Education (IHE)

1. Applicants are advised that IHEs must certify the following at the time of award, and that this certification requirement must be included in any subaward agreements to IHEs:

Its compliance in all respects with section 1011f of title 20, United States Code, and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements is material for purposes of section 3729 of title 31, United States Code, and for receipt of appropriate Federal grant funds.

2. If you are not an IHE, this provision is not applicable. This provision must be included in any sub-award agreement to an IHE. This provision is only required for qualifying recipients and subrecipients located in the United States, as per the definition of IHEs in 2 CFR 200.1 and 20 U.S.C. 001.

F. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

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

Quality of Program Idea – 50 points: The SOI is responsive to program framework. The idea is communicated well and is feasible. SOI's that promote creative approaches to address program objectives are highly encouraged. The proposed timeline is reasonable.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants –35 points: The SOI should demonstrate the organization's expertise and previous experience in administering programs. If a local partner is identified SOI should briefly describe the partner's role and experience.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: The SOI should clearly articulate proposed program activities and expected results towards achieving program objectives and goal(s).

2. 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.

3. 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:

- a. Financial stability
- b. Management systems and standards
- c. History of performance
- d. Audit reports and findings
- e. Ability to effectively implement requirements
- f. If there are any program specific risk factors that will be considered, describe them here.

G. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. 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](#) (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
- 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