

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Effectively Strengthening Safety and Security of Biological Research Globally

INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND NONPROLIFERATION
BIOLOGICAL POLICY STAFF, DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Opportunity number: DFOP0017422

Application deadline: August 11, 2025

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**U.S Department of State
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND NONPROLIFERATION
OFFICE OF THE BIOLOGICAL POLICY STAFF
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Activities in support of the Biological Weapons Convention
Funding Opportunity Number	DFOP0017422
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	August 11, 2025 11:59 PM EST
Assistance Listing Number	19.334
Length of performance period	24 months
Number of awards anticipated	1 Award
Award amounts	\$2 Million
Total available funding	\$2 Million pending availability of funds
Type of Funding	FY 2024 Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) and other accounts and focuses on mitigating weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and WMD-related delivery systems proliferation and security threats from proliferator states and non-state actors.
Anticipated project start date	October 2025

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement, Inter-Agency Agreement. Cooperative agreements include substantial involvement of the bureau or embassy in program implementation of the project.

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 24 months or less.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

Priority Regions: Western Hemisphere (WHA), East Asia Pacific (EAP), Global

Executive Summary

While global in scope, engagements with the following countries will be prioritized but not limited to: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Singapore. Thailand, and Vietnam. These funds will be used

to support activities related to national implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). This includes support to build countries' capabilities to implement their BWC obligations, including improving the safety and security of biological research through national policies and other measures – a priority outlined in the recent Executive Order 14292, “Improving the Safety and Security of Biological Research”. This work will advance the safety and security of the United States and Americans at home and abroad by promoting effective implementation of nonproliferation measures to prevent the acquisition, development, and use of biological weapons.

Funds will strengthen the BWC and advance biosafety and biosecurity globally to protect Americans at home and abroad from the development and use of biological weapons and to prevent laboratory accidents that could have harmful consequences for the United States.

In order to safeguard the United States and Americans at home and abroad from biological accidents and biological weapons acquisition, development, and use, these funds will advance BWC implementation in other countries, including support for developing national level policies and practices to ensure the safe and secure operation of high-containment laboratory facilities, strengthening oversight to ensure responsible conduct of research, and implementing data-informed best practices for biological risk management. Activities undertaken will be in the form of workshops and trainings.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply: U.S. for-profit organizations or businesses; U.S.-based non-profit/non-governmental organizations with or without 501(c) (3) status of the U.S. tax code; U.S.-based private, public, or state institutions of higher education; foreign-based non-profit organizations/non-government organizations (NGO); Federally funded research and development centers (FFRDCs); Public International Organizations (PIO); Foreign Public Entities (FPE); and foreign-based institutions of higher education.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility factor or requirement for this NOFO and providing cost share will not result in a more favorable competitive ranking. Per 2 CFR §200.306, items that are proposed for cost share must be allowable per 2 CFR §200, Subpart E—Costs Principles.

Voluntary cost-share: Should the applicant choose to contribute voluntary cost-share but does not meet the minimum amount of the voluntary cost-sharing stipulated in the

applicant's budget, DOS' contribution may be reduced in proportion to the applicant's contribution.

3. 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.

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.

Applicants can submit one application in response to the NOFO. If more than one application is submitted by an organization, only the final application received, and time stamped by grants.gov will be reviewed for eligibility.

C. Program Description

1. Goals and Objectives

Effectively Strengthening Safety and Security of Biological Research Globally

Biosafety and biosecurity measures are a key part of national implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) and are essential to keeping biological laboratories in clinical, research, and industry settings from posing a danger to laboratory workers and the general public. Internationally, biosafety and biosecurity practices and policies have not kept pace with the continued growth in the life sciences sector due to rapid advances in biotechnology, increased interest in pathogen research, and investments in public health capability building. Americans will be safer if the United States leverages its expertise and leadership in the area of biosafety and biosecurity to work with foreign partners to strengthen BWC national implementation through the promotion, development, and implementation of effective biosafety and biosecurity measures. This work in turn promotes implementation of safeguards and nonproliferation measures to prevent biological accidents and the acquisition, development, and use of biological weapons.

This project will take a three-pronged approach engaging policymakers and senior level practitioners (e.g. laboratory directors) to strengthen biosafety and biosecurity:

- 1) Improve the operations and maintenance at high containment laboratories working with dangerous infectious pathogens with a focus on Latin America;
- 2) Strengthen national policies for oversight of potentially dangerous gain of function research globally;

- 3) Convene meetings of the global biosafety research agenda group to improve data-informed best practices for biorisk management.

ISN/BPS seeks project proposals that can address all three of the following priority areas:

Strengthening Biorisk Management at High Containment Laboratories (~40% of funds)

The importance of effective biosafety and biosecurity practices in high containment laboratories is universally acknowledged, but the rapid increase in the number of such laboratories worldwide has not been accompanied by a parallel increase in the development and implementation of policies, regulations, and guidelines for national biorisk management. Consequently, national approaches for biorisk management vary widely around the world and, in many cases, is inadequate. These weaknesses raise the risk that a laboratory accident or the deliberate misuse and weaponization of biology could lead to devastating global consequences.

Effective operation and maintenance of high containment laboratories is resource intensive and is an often-neglected component of strong biorisk management and biosecurity regime. A strong network of laboratory operation and maintenance professionals who can share experiences and best practices will promote sustained safe operation of high containment laboratories and promote U.S. best practices and policies, as well as allow countries to independently improve biosecurity measures. This project will bring together high containment laboratory operation and maintenance professionals in Latin America to establish a robust network for sharing expertise and experience.

This project will convene high containment laboratory operation and maintenance professionals, laboratory directors, and policy makers for a minimum of two regional workshops in Latin America to be able to build connections across areas of expertise, promote the need for strong laboratory operation and maintenance, and begin to establish national policies and other measures related to high containment laboratories.

Promotion of Policies for Research Oversight (~40% of funds)

Research to better understand how pathogens cause disease or transmit more effectively in humans can help prevent and respond to disease outbreaks. Having a robust oversight process for such work is important to ensure that effective biosafety measures are in place and biosecurity considerations are taken into account to prevent biological accidents and ensure the information learned is not available for misuse by nefarious actors. In the United States such research is governed by existing policies on dual-use research of concern and enhanced pathogens with pandemic potential, which are undergoing review and revisions per Executive Order 14292. Globally, few countries, if any, have adopted similar safeguards and level implementation across the international community is a critical biodefense imperative to prevent consequences of a biological accident or deliberate misuse on Americans and our interests. In view of the potential risks, it is

essential to strengthen practices around whether, where, and how this research is done. This global policy gap represents an opening to promote U.S. policies and demonstrate U.S. leadership in biosafety and biosecurity.

From conception to completion, pathogen research involves multiple stakeholders, offering numerous opportunities to ensure that potentially high-risk research is done only when necessary and with all appropriate safeguards in place. Targeted outreach using updated U.S. policies as the model can be done with principal investigators, researchers, government policy makers, academic societies, funders, project reviewers, publishers and institutional leadership, all of which have a role in overseeing risky research. This includes approving and implementing biosafety protocols, validating that the benefits outweigh the risks, and deciding whether and how results of research should be made publicly available.

Engagements to establish best practices and harmonize national policies should be held, including experts and policymakers from countries with existing policies, such as Canada and the United Kingdom, to provide expertise and support policies harmonized worldwide. These workshops should engage a wide variety of stakeholders from government, academia, funders (both national funders and global nongovernmental organizations who fund research), and national academies.

Support for Global Biorisk Research Agenda (~20% of funds)

In 2020, experts from G7 countries recommended that biosafety protocols be strengthened by ensuring the procedures have strong scientific foundations and can be shared and standardized. Existing biosafety practices often lack scientific evidence and are simply based on “what seems to work” rather than informed through scientific evidence. These practices vary widely between laboratories, including those that perform similar types of research. Finally, data-informed biosafety approaches would better inform needs for laboratory infrastructure and practices across resource settings strengthening global practices regardless of location or resource availability. Standards and practices backed by data would keep America safer by strengthening procedures to prevent laboratory accidents domestically, but also from laboratory accidents abroad to negate impacts on the homeland.

This project would be built on the applied biosafety research agenda developed in 2025 by an international group of experts in a Department of State-funded effort. This second phase would focus on coordinating international research efforts based on the agenda to ensure that the data gathered can be effectively used to inform global biosafety practices.

2. Substantial Involvement

The funding office will be involved in the project development and planning. The funding office staff will work closely with the implementer to select participants, grant awards, and review event agendas, curriculum, and all other materials to ensure that they align with the proficiency level, needs and interests of each country and audience. The funding office will approve all foreign participants, advise on training logistical implementation and will consult on all aspects of event logistical planning and all participants including process and lead-time required for obtaining U.S. visas.

D. Application Contents and Format

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.

Each proposal project will include one of the following documents that incorporate information on all proposed projects: SF-424, SF-424A, SF-424B (Optional), SF-LLL (if Applicable), Summary Page, Key Personnel, Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative, and a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan/Tracker. To ensure that all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the review panel will review from the first page of each section up to the page limit and no further. Each proposed project should have a unique set of the following documents: Project Narrative, Detailed Line-Item Budget Document, and Budget Narrative Document.

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 (no cents)
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins. Font sizes in charts and tables, including the budget, can be reformatted to fit within 1 page width.
- All application materials must be submitted through www.Grants.gov unless you are a U.S. Government entity applying for Inter-Agency Agreement (IAA) funding. If you are applying for an IAA please submit proposals to ISN-BPS-DL@state.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)

2. Optional Application Forms

- SF-424B forms (strongly encouraged for for-profit entities and XXX (FPEs/PIOs))
- SF-LLL (Disclosure of Lobbying Activities)

3. Summary Page

Include a table with the organization name, project title, target country/countries, name and contact information for the application's main point of contact, and brief section that clearly outlines the (1) the problem statement addressed by the project (2) research-based evidence justifying the applicant's approach, and (3) quantifiable project outcomes. (Template not provided, not to exceed one (1) page, preferably as a Word document)

4. Key Personnel

Identify staff within your organization or outside of your organization (subgrantee, consultants, contractors), carrying out administrative and/or technical responsibilities, who are integral to the success of each project. Provides names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications, time they will support each project of key personnel involved in each project. Given the limited space, inserting CVs are not recommended but may be submitted in as an attachment. Generally limited to 3-5 individuals. (Template not provided, not to exceed two (2) pages, preferably as a Word document).

5. Program Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative and Plan/Tracker

This is a two (2) component submission requirement. (Template not provided)

(1) Monitoring and Evaluation Narrative: (3 pages maximum)

Preferably a one-page Word document, the narrative outlines how a project's M&E system will be carried out and by whom. It details how the applicant will track the project's performance toward its objectives over time and provides a clear description of the approach and data collection strategies and tools to be employed (e.g., pre- and post-test surveys, interviews, focus groups). The description should include how the applicant will track and document whether activities occurred (outputs) and the results or changes caused by these activities (outcomes). If the project includes work with local partners or sub-partners, explain how M&E efforts will be coordinated amongst these organizations. Explain if an external evaluation will be included. Evaluations, internal or external, should be systematic studies that use research methods to address specific questions about project performance. They should provide a valuable supplement to ongoing monitoring activities. Evaluation activities generally include baseline assessments, mid-term and final evaluations.

(2) Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:

The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plan should draw on the objectives, activities and expected changes outlined in the proposal, and link those areas to indicators. The M&E plan is generally structured as an Excel table with output- and outcome-based indicators. It explains how data will be collected (data collection methods) to measure the effect of

programming against declared objectives. It outlines baselines (where the project is starting) and quarterly targets (what the applicant would like to achieve) for each indicator. Note: If recommended for funding, the panel and/or bureau may negotiate the inclusion of additional Department of State Foreign Assistance indicators. These indicators assist the bureau in tying projects to larger bureau program objectives for Department's Managing for Results framework. More information on this policy framework and access to the foreign assistance master indicator list is on the Foreign Assistance Resource Library. After award issuance, the M&E plan will accompany performance reports to document progress on indicators.

6. Project Narrative (6 pages maximum)

The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. All three sections of the goals and objectives listed about should be included in one project narrative document.

- **Project Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed project, including project 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 State Department and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Project Title:** Please provide a one-sentence project title that succinctly describes the project and outcome.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Project 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.
- **Project Activities and Deliverables:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Project 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.
- **Outcomes:** The results or effects of the objective(s). What are the detailed, measurable statements that outline the end results?
- **Risk Analysis:** Risks are unavoidable – all projects inherently contain both internal and external risks. Please explicitly state known project risks and any actions you will take to mitigate risks in implementation.
- **Proposed Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Future Funding or Program Continuity:** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

- **Nonproliferation Objective and the Project's Role in Meeting this Objective:**
Please provide a specific explanation of how your proposed activities will meet the nonproliferation objectives outlined in the NOFO.
- **Project Budget:** Please include the top line total for the projects and complete the separate budget attachments.
- **Project Point of Contact (POC)**

7. Budget Justification Documents

After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use submit two separate files for each project proposed to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. Please submit See section I. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions below for further information. (Please use the provided template)

(1) Detailed Line-Item Budget Document:

Entities and organizations not recognized as FFRDCs, FPEs, or PIOs are required to submit detailed budget information according to the OMB cost categories (see SF-424A as an example). Budget expenses should be submitted preferably as one Excel workbook and include three (3) columns describing the request to the funding office any required or voluntary cost sharing, and the total budget. Costs must be in whole U.S. dollars. The attached Budget Guidance Template is the preferred format for submission. Detailed line-item budgets for sub-grantees should be included as additional tabs within the Excel workbook (if available at the time of submission).

(2) Budget Narrative Document: (3 Pages maximum)

Entities and organizations not recognized as FFRDCs, FPEs, or PIOs are required to submit narrative information, preferably as a Word document, that explain the methodology considerations for each specific line identified in the Excel document. The budget narrative should support the activities described in the proposal and provide additional information that might not be readily apparent in the detailed line-item budget. Do not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the budget, i.e. salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel. If the detailed budget includes sub-awards, please include a separate budget narrative for each sub-award budget. Provide details on the purpose of costs, reasonability of costs, cost price analysis, allocation methodology, explain any yearly variances in unit prices, and tie expenses to program activities and/or objectives where appropriate. Information should describe prices used when costs have been averaged for the purposes of the calculation; when or if there is a reduction in a typical cost due to leveraging other resources; when costs are inflated due to specific considerations; or when untypical costs are included due to special circumstances. Provide information on considerations such as translations, multi-media approaches as also described in the proposal narrative, procurement by local vendors or the need to import due to unavailability, specific needs of different audiences, costs related to country limitations, etc.

Budget Documents for Foreign Public Entities/Public International Organizations: Entities and organizations recognized as FFRDCs, FPEs, or PIOs are not required to submit detailed

budget information according to the OMB cost categories. (1) A detailed budget, preferably as an excel document broken down by activity may be provided instead. Costs must be in U.S. dollars. (2) A budget narrative, preferably as an Excel workbook, an activity based detailed budget with information identifying lines associated with labor (inclusive of contractual or consultancy staff), participant support costs, travel, and other activity related expenses as appropriate for each activity identified. While 2 CFR 200, Subpart E—Costs Principles does not apply to FFRDCs, FPEs, or PIOs, it should be used as a guide to assist in determining reasonableness. Budget narrative information, preferably as a Word document, should explain the methodology considerations for each activity and other cost considerations or special circumstances that are helpful in determining reasonableness.

8. *Attachments that will be included in evaluation*

- 1-page Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program.
- If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a PDF file.
- Past Performance statement please provide a list of recent USG funded awards (max 10) that have been active in the last twenty-four (24) months with references and award numbers.
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities.

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. *Address to Request Application Package*

Application forms required above are available at grants.gov and [MyGrants](https://mygrants.gov).

2. *Department of State Contacts*

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact ISN-BPS-DL@state.gov

The funding office will not conduct individual meetings to discuss the specifics of a proposal or provide additional information on the needs of the NOFO before they close. The funding office will collect all questions about this NOFO submitted to the distro above and post the questions and answers on an as needed basis as an attachment to the NOFO on [Grants.gov](https://grants.gov)

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 in [SAM.gov](https://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”) 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 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>
NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):
[NCAGE Code Request Tool \(nato.int\)](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx)

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](#) 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.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than *August 11, 2025 at 11:59 PM*.

5. 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. Prohibition on Funding Activities that Encourage Mass-Migration Caravans towards the United States Southwest Border

None of the funds awarded under this grant may be made available to encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass-migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. Funds may not be made available for legal counseling on the United States asylum process; and/or for referrals to legal representation in the United States.

Funds may only be used for cash cards for use in the country in which they are provided or to facilitate assisted voluntary returns and other purposes that do not encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. The provision of humanitarian assistance is permitted.

- iii. 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.

The funding office will not consider applications that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization. Please refer to the link for Foreign Terrorist Organizations: <https://www.state.gov/foreign-terrorist-organizations/>. Consistent with Department guidance on State Funding and the Risks of Terrorist Financing for all State Department funded programs and requirements, Department bureaus must assess the likelihood that the funds or Department funded activities, goods, services, training, expert advice or assistance, or other benefits to be provided, could inadvertently or incidentally benefit terrorist organizations or their members or supporters, and must put in place appropriate risk mitigation measures to mitigate such risk. In accordance with 14 FAM 247, and consistent with 2 FAM 050, Counterterrorism (CT) name-check vetting may be performed in countries and programs designated by the Department.

The Leahy Law prohibits Department foreign assistance funds from supporting foreign security force units if the Secretary of State has credible information that the unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. Per 22 USC §2378d(a) (2017), "No assistance shall be furnished under this chapter or the Arms Export Control Act [22 U.S.C. 2751 et seq.] to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country if the Secretary of State has credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights." Restrictions may apply to any proposed assistance to police or other law enforcement. Among these, pursuant to section 620M of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended (FAA), no assistance provided through this funding opportunity may be furnished to any unit of the security forces of a foreign country when there is credible information that such unit has committed a gross violation of human rights. In accordance with the requirements of section 620M of the FAA, also known as the Leahy law, project beneficiaries or participants from a foreign government's security forces may need to be vetted by the Department before the

provision of any assistance. If a proposed grant or cooperative agreement will provide assistance to foreign security forces or personnel, compliance with the Leahy Law is required.

U.S. foreign assistance for Burma or Burmese beneficiaries is subject to restrictions. This includes restrictions pursuant to section 7043(a)(3) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2020 (Div. G, P.L. 116-94)(SFOAA), on funds appropriated under Title III of the Act for Assistance for Burma. Section 7043(a)(3) provides that such funds “may not be made available to any organization or entity controlled by the armed forces of Burma, or to any individual or organization that advocates violence against ethnic or religious groups or individuals in Burma, as determined by the Secretary of State.” In addition, funds cannot be made available to any individual or organization that has committed serious human rights abuse.

The Department has a legal requirement, established by section 861 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 and implemented through subsequent regulations, to report and account for all contractors working under grants or cooperative agreements in contingency operations outside the United States that involve combat operations. The common database to collect this information, called the Synchronized Pre-deployment Operational Tracker (SPOT), is managed by the Department of Defense. A Department SPOT Program Manager, based in A/OPE/AQM/BOD (AQMops@state.gov) generally enters information provided by the recipients directly into the SPOT system. Currently the Department applies this requirement to awards operating in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement (this list is NOT exhaustive):

- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the applicant organization;
- Projects seeking funds for personal use;
- Administration of a project that will make a profit;
- Expenses incurred before or after the specified dates of award period of performance (unless prior written approval is received);
- Projects designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities, and any associated costs, are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the federal award or with prior written approval of the Grants Officer.

Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction: In accordance with section 7073 of Division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76) none of the funds made available by that Act may be used to enter into an assistance award with any organization that –

- (1) Was “convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the conviction, unless the agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government”; or
- (2) Has any “unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless the Federal agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.”

For the purposes of Section 7073, it is the Department of State’s policy that no award may be made to any organization covered by (1) or (2) above, unless the Procurement Executive has made a written determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the U.S. Government.

Organizations should be cognizant of the restrictions above when developing project proposals. Funding restrictions require appropriate due diligence of program beneficiaries and collaboration with the funding office to ensure compliance. Program beneficiaries subject to due diligence vetting will include any individuals or entities that are beneficiaries of foreign assistance funding or support. Due diligence vetting will include a review of open-source materials.

Due to the determination made under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) for FY 2024, assistance that benefits the governments of the following countries may be subject to a restriction under the TVPA. The Department of State determines on a case-by-case basis what constitutes assistance to a government; the general principles listed below apply.

Assistance to the government includes:

- All branches of government (executive, legislative, judicial) at all levels (national, regional, local);
- Public schools, universities, hospitals, and state-owned enterprises, as well as government employees;
- Cash, training, equipment, services, or other assistance provided directly to the government, assistance provided to an NGO or other implementer for the benefit of the government, and assistance to government employees.

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted through www.grants.gov unless you are a U.S. Government entity applying for Inter-Agency Agreement (IAA) funding. If you are applying for an IAA please submit proposals to ISN-BPS-DL@state.gov

F. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Project Idea – 25 points: The project idea is well developed and responsive to the policy and program objective of the NOFO. The applicant describes the project's potential contribution to solving the problem addressed in the problem statement. The application clearly defines the problem, its causes, stakeholders, existing research/data, the approach taken to solve the problem, realistic milestones to indicate progress.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points: The applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successful projects in the content area proposed. The applicant demonstrates experience (e.g., has previously worked and/or has established contacts/partners) in the proposed country/territory/region. The organization has expertise in its stated field and has adequate staffing to manage the proposed project. The applicant demonstrates capacity for responsible fiscal management of donor funding (e.g., successful management of a previous grant or sub-award).

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results. The applicant proposes activities that are feasible, and are also practical, and/or experiential in nature to encourage innovation. The applicant addresses how the project will engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders and/or identifies local partners. Program logic is sound showing plausible pathways to achieve project outcomes. Key assumptions and risks have been identified and their potential influences described. The applicant acknowledges if activities similar to those proposed are already taking or have taken place previously and provides an explanation as to how proposed new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing/recent activities.

Financial Capacity and Cost Effectiveness (15 points): The budget justification is detailed, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results and provide detail of calculations, including estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, labor in-put and responsibilities, procurement practice and policy information, and other similar

quantitative detail. Applications that maximize direct activity costs and minimize administrative costs are encouraged. Final approval of the budget resides with the Grants Officer.

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 and who will be responsible for them. The applicant clearly details how activities will result in benefits that will continue beyond the funding period.

Continuity and Impact – 10 points: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

2. Review and Selection Process

The Department of State is committed to ensuring a competitive and standardized process for awarding funding. Applications will be screened initially in a Technical Eligibility Review stage to determine whether applicants meet the eligibility requirements outlined in section B and have submitted all required documents outlined in section D. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not advance beyond the Technical Eligibility Review stage and will be deemed ineligible for funding under this NOFO.

All applications that are deemed eligible will move forward to the Merit Review Panel consisting of U.S. government subject matter and/or country-specific experts and will be rated on a 100-point scale. The funding office reserves the right to request the assistance of non-US government Subject Matter Experts (SMEs), if appropriate to the solicitation. Point values for individual elements of the application are presented in F.1, of this part. Panel Reviewers will determine scores based on the strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned categories and for consistency with the program goals and objectives outlined in this NOFO. Panel Reviewers' ratings, and any resulting recommendations, are advisory. Panel Reviewers may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of U.S. Government funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

The funding office reserves the right to make an award based on the initial application received with or without discussion or negotiations. Therefore, applications should contain the Applicants' best terms from both cost and technical standpoints.

Final selection authority resides with the funding office senior level official. Final award decisions will be influenced by whether the application meets the Department of State's

programmatic goals and objectives, how it supports the Department's overarching foreign policy priorities, and the geographic distribution of the top-ranking applications.

3. Risk Review

i. Risk factors

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. Comprehensiveness of Metrics and Evaluation Plan

ii. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov

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)

An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Department will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

G. Award Notices

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

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by **30 November 2025** via email.

Payment Method:

Cooperative Agreement payments under this award will be made through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS).

Grant recipients will be required to request payments by completing form SF-270—Request for Advance or Reimbursement and submitting the form to the Grants Officer.

Inter-Agency Agreements will be required to request disbursements through the G-Invoice system.

H. 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](#)
 - Executive Order 14173: Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity
 - Executive Order 14168: Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government
 - Institutions of Higher Education (IHEs) must certify the following at the time of award and this certification must be included in any subaward agreements to IHEs
 - 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. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Reporting is critical to effective program management and oversight. Reports are required as a means of evaluating the recipient's progress and utilization of resources. They are divided between a performance progress report and a

financial status report submitted on a quarterly basis or as determined by the grants officer. Applicants should be aware that awards will require that all reports (financial and progress) are uploaded to the grant file in MyGrants.

Financial Reports

The Recipient is required to submit financial reports throughout the project period, using Form SF-425, the Federal Financial Report (FFR) form, as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative. If payment is made through the Payment Management System, all financial reports must be submitted electronically through the Payment Management System. The Recipient is also required to upload to MyGrants a pdf version of all financial reports (Federal Financial report) they have submitted in the Payment Management System. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found on OMB's website forms tab: <https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/forms/sample/SF425-V1.0.pdf>

Program Reports

The Recipient will be required to submit quarterly narrative progress reports (unless stipulated otherwise in the final Agreement) throughout the project period to the award file in MyGrants.

Narrative progress reports should reflect continued focus on measuring the project's progress in achieving the overarching goal. Explain and evaluate how activities reflect progress toward expected outcomes and outcomes towards achieving objectives. In addition, attach the M&E Tracker, comparing the target and actual numbers for the indicators. Reports should also include an update on expenditures during the quarter.

Where relevant, progress reports should also include the following:

- Relevant contextual information (limited);
- Any tangible impact or success stories from the project, when possible;
- Copy of mid-term and/or final evaluation report(s) conducted by an external evaluator; if applicable;
- Relevant supporting documentation or products related to the project activities (such as articles, meeting lists and agendas, participant surveys, photos, manuals, etc.) as separate attachments;
- Description of how the recipient is pursuing program continuity, including looking for sources of follow-on funding;
- Any problems/challenges in implementing the project and corrective action plan with an updated timeline of activities;
- Reasons why activities have not been conducted or deliverables were not met in accordance with the timeline;
- Proposed activities for the next quarter; and,
- Additional pertinent information, including analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs, if applicable.

Final Reporting

A final financial and progress report is due no later than 120 calendar days after the expiration date of the award. The Final Progress Report shall include the following elements: executive summary, successes, outcomes, best practices, how the project addresses gender issues and marginalized communities, how the project will be sustained. Additional guidance may be provided prior to the award end date.

NOTE: Delays in reporting may result in delays of payment approvals and failure to provide required reports may jeopardize the recipients' ability to receive future U.S. government funds. The funding office reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period of performance.

It is the Department of State's policy that English is the official language of all award documents. If reports or any other supporting documents are provided in both English and a foreign language, it must be stated in each version that the English language version is the controlling version. The controlling currency is the US dollar. Financial reports must be submitted in U.S. dollars.

Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in 2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

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.

Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in [2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters](#).

I. 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 \$10,000 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 \$10,000 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 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1.

“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.