

Notice of Funding Opportunity FY17-09

U.S. Department of State

Embassy of the United States of America in Chisinau, Moldova
Public Affairs Section

Funding Opportunity Number: PAS-CHISINAU-FY17-09

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.040

CFDA Title: Public Diplomacy Programs

Program: English Language Grants Competition

Announcement Type: Open Competition

Announcement Date: 2017-03-10

Deadline for submission of proposals: 11:59 PM, Moldova Time, May 16, 2017

Agency Contact: MoldovaGrants@state.gov

I. Funding Opportunity:

The purpose of this announcement is to inform interested parties about funding opportunities through grants.

Organizations that submit applications in response to this announcement acknowledge and accept all of the requirements contained herein. This announcement serves as notice to select interested parties to have equal opportunity to submit project proposals for funding consideration. All submissions in response to this announcement are voluntary and do not obligate the Department of State to fund any proposal or proposal preparation costs.

II. Background Information

The English Language Grants Competition is a high-profile public diplomacy initiative that provides applying organizations, as well as government agencies, NGOs, private language schools, and universities, an opportunity to demonstrate the United States support and commitment to improve education and English teaching worldwide.

The main purpose of this call for proposals is to encourage applying organizations to help develop English teaching capacity throughout Moldova by funding programs that will promote English teaching all over Moldova and to implement different teaching methods and techniques in their classes, thus improving the quality of English teaching.

III. Program Objectives:

Grants must support initiatives such as: improving the quality of English language teaching and learning in the country (including Transnistria and Gagauzia); identifying key factors that promote innovative teaching methods; encouraging educators to promote and exchange ideas that increase the quality of English teaching; training new generations of English language teachers and teachers of other fields, who teach in English and encouraging them to remain dedicated educators; developing initiatives that will encourage new and soon to be graduating English teachers to continue to stay and teach in Moldova, and generating projects that help teachers and students to become community leaders.

Applicants are encouraged to develop partnerships with relevant stakeholders including the public and/or private sector as well as local organizations, where applicable. All proposals must include an evidence-based description of (i) the problem the applicant seeks to address, (ii) the implementation context, including any relevant details on the socio-political environment and the target beneficiaries of the project, and (iii) the project's theory of change, i.e., the means by which the proposed project will contribute to one of the program objectives.

Strong proposals will also define how their programs are "innovative," which could include one or more of the following elements:

- ☐ Presents a new model or a creative way of scaling and building upon successful approaches;
- ☐ Capitalizes on an emerging opportunity or responds to an emerging challenge;
- ☐ Organizes actors or activities in a novel way so as to increase efficiency or effectiveness;
- ☐ Introduces a new method or technology that can be replicated, scaled, and sustained.

In identifying the specific target populations, proposals must demonstrate a commitment towards the support and inclusion of marginalized communities (including disability status, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, whether they live in a rural or urban setting, etc.)

IV. Eligibility Information

Eligibility is limited to not-for-profit organizations (NGOs), government agencies, private language schools, and universities officially registered in the Republic of Moldova.

Direct funding for U.S. and third-country institutions is not available under this funding opportunity. Organizations without Moldovan registration can apply only as partners through an eligible organization.

Organizations submitting proposals must meet the following criteria:

- Organizations pursuing grants of a total amount of \$5,000 or more must also include in the proposals a plan and a budget, to conduct surveys and focus groups on actual and future English teachers. The purpose of the survey is to determine what has motivated and what would motivate the teachers stay in Moldova. The results of the survey will help in the development of new policies of the Ministry of Education and of the new projects of the U.S. Embassy and its partners.
- Organizations should have existing, or demonstrate the capacity to develop, active partnerships with in-country entities and relevant stakeholders including the public sector, private sector, and civil society, as relevant to the proposed program objectives.
- Organizations may form consortia and submit a combined proposal. However, one organization should be designated as the lead applicant.
- Interested organizations may submit several proposals.
- Public Affairs Section reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.
- Please note: the Department of State prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations. No funds will be paid as profit to any recipient. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The permissibility of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal

Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR Part 31, Cost Accounting Standards, and Part 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures. Program income earned by the recipient must be deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

- Please note: no entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM) is eligible for any assistance or can participate in any activities under an award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR Part 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR Part 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM (www.sam.gov) to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

The English Grants Competition **cannot** fund:

- Organizations with affiliation to elected officials, political parties or religious groups
- Scientific research;
- Individual trips abroad

V. Federal Award Information

Funding Instrument Type: Grants
Funding per grant: \$1,500-\$20,000

Through the announced competition the U.S. Embassy anticipates funding up 1-6 projects totaling up to \$20,000.

Expected award date is August 1.

The Department also reserves the right to award more or less funding as deemed in the best interest of the U.S. Government. The performance period for funded projects will be for up to 12 months. Recipients of funding under this announcement will be subject to the Department of State terms and conditions found at: <https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/TermsandConditions.aspx> and the terms set forth in this announcement. Additional terms and conditions may apply as warranted. Quarterly or Semi-annual technical and financial reports may be required during the term of the project. A final assessment at the end of the project is mandatory for all grants.

Award recipients must comply with Executive Order 13224, Blocking Property and Prohibiting Transactions with Persons who Commit, Threaten to commit, or Support Terrorism. Information about this Executive Order can be found at <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2001-09-25/pdf/01-24205.pdf>.

VI. Cost Sharing or Matching

Applicants are not required to include funding from other donors. However, applications that include additional in-kind and/or cash contributions from non-U.S. Government sources will be given extra consideration, since cost-sharing demonstrates a strong commitment to the planned activities and greater cost effectiveness.

Cost sharing may be a certain percentage or amount, or may be in the form of contributions of specified items or activities (e.g., provision of equipment).

VII. Proposal Submission and Deadline:

Applicants are requested to submit a completed proposal package that includes all mandatory documents, per the solicitation instructions below.

Note: Unsolicited appendices will not be read and should not be submitted for this award.

To meet the announcement deadline, complete proposals with attachments must be emailed to MoldovaGrants@state.gov. Applications submitted after May 16, 2017 11:59 PM Moldova Time will not be accepted.

The U.S. Embassy will determine if the application has been submitted before the deadline by checking the 'received date' on the email message. Please take into consideration any possible delays that may occur between the sent and received time.

The applicant will receive a notification when the application is entered into the Grants Management System (usually within 48 hours of receipt). We strongly encourage applicants not to call to inquire about receipt of applications on the day of the deadline.

Do not archive documents in RAR, ZIP or other archive formats. The documents should be attached as individual files and sent in one email before the deadline. Do not send the application package more than one time.

It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure that proposals have been submitted on time to Moldovagrants@state.gov. U.S. Embassy bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Proposal Requirements:

This section outlines requirements for the proposal package and also includes detailed instructions on budget, budget narrative, and monitoring and evaluation plan submission. All materials must be written in English.

Each proposal submission should clearly demonstrate the relationship to the Program and address at least one of the program objectives described in this announcement.

We encourage the applicants to use the downloadable application form and project format. If the internet access is limited contact us to arrange an alternative way of receiving the application package.

A complete application must contain the following mandatory elements:

1. Signed SF424 Application Coversheet Form (pdf format)
2. Project Format in .doc format (original doc format)
3. Detailed Budget (Excel Spreadsheet)
4. Budget Narrative
5. Monitoring and Evaluation plan
6. Project Timeline
7. CVs of the paid staff and experts

Other Submission Requirements

Do not send any other documents except those required by the program (See Application and Submission Application).

Please use only Microsoft Word to fill out the project form. Using OpenOffice, LibreOffice or other alternatives may break the format and render the forms unusable. If you do not have Microsoft Office software, feel free to use the computers at the American Resource Center (find address on the Embassy's website) or any other public access center (Novateca's, Internet Café's, etc.)

Please contact us at moldovagrants@state.gov if you experience technical problems or are unable to submit an electronic version of the application.

Application Review Information

Criteria

The English Grants Competition will fund the proposals that best address the goals enumerated above and reflect the values of the United States and the mandate of the Embassy and the English Grants Competition. Successful proposals will contain accurate and well-developed implementation plans and clear explanations of how the project goals will be achieved.

Project selection is competitive. Proposals are judged on the following criteria:

1) Quality of Program Idea

Proposals should be responsive to the solicitation and exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to Embassy's mission.

2) Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Long and Short Term Goals

A relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity of the organization. The work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Objectives should be ambitious, yet measurable and achievable. For complete proposals, applicants should provide a monthly timeline of project activities.

3) Multiplier Effect/Sustainability

Proposed programs should address long-term institution building with an emphasis on moving towards sustainability, garnering other donor support, or demonstrating capacity-building results.

4) Program Evaluation Plan

Programs should demonstrate the capacity for engaging in impact assessments and providing long and short-term goals with measurable outputs and outcomes. Applicants should also identify long and short term project goals. Projects that propose an independent evaluation with a clear plan will be deemed highly competitive in this category.

5) Institution's Record and Capacity

The Embassy will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful program administration, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's goals. Roles and responsibilities of primary staff should be provided.

6) Cost Effectiveness

The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals that include cost sharing will be given special consideration.

Review and Selection Process

The English Language Grants Competition Review Committee is made up of representatives from the Public Affairs Section and the Regional English Language Office based in Kyiv. The panel has at least 10 working days to read the projects and then convene to review and discuss the project proposals and recommend selected projects for funding.

Federal Award Administration Information

Federal Award Notices

Applicants will be notified electronically about selection results. An email message will be sent to the email account included in the application form. Grants Program Staff may also contact the applicants to request additional information or clarify certain aspects of the application documents; therefore it is important to provide accurate contact information.

Successful program applicants will have to sign a Notice of Award (grant agreement) before receiving the funds. No costs should be incurred by the applicant prior to signing a Notice of Award. The notice of Federal award signed by the grants officer is the authorizing document.

Unsuccessful program applicants will receive an email notification. The grants program may provide a signed rejection letter upon request; however, the Grants Program will not provide reasons for rejection. The Grants program is highly competitive and may not be able to fund all good applications.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Reporting

During the grant implementation the recipient will have to inform the Embassy about the events and activities carried out under the grant.

The recipient will have to provide a final performance report (narrative) submitted in electronic format in English via email at the end of the project, however, often the Embassy may choose to request semiannual or quarterly reporting. The U.S. Embassy reserves the right to request other proofs such as photos from events, participants' lists, copies of publications, etc., as well as request access to financial information related to the grant.

FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT(S)

Grants Specialist: Stelian Rusu

Email: Rusus@state.gov

Email: moldovagrants@state.gov

Telephone: 022 851706; 022 851707

OTHER INFORMATION**Disclaimer**

Issuance of this Request for Proposals does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State.