



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Emergency Assistance for Human Rights Defenders

Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor - Department of State

Opportunity number: DFOP0019749

Application deadline: September 8, 2026 11:59 PM ET

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**U.S Department of State
Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Emergency Assistance for Fundamental Freedom Defenders
Funding Opportunity Number	DFOP0019749
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	September 8, 2026 11:59PM ET
Assistance Listing Number	19.345
Length of performance period	12 to 18 months
Number of awards anticipated	One award
Award amounts	\$983,500
Total available funding	\$983,500
Type of Funding	FY25 Democracy Fund
Anticipated project start date	October 1, 2026

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 18 months or less. The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under this award beyond the initial budget and performance period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

Priority Region: Global

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of State Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) seeks to make available on-demand, emergency support for individuals and organizations that face imminent threat due to their work to promote and defend fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of speech, peaceful assembly, and association articulated in the United States' founding documents. The program will provide assistance to defenders who are facing threat of attack, arbitrary arrest, detention, prosecution, or are otherwise at imminent risk of harm, through a program that provides short-term emergency funding to enable them to continue their work pressing for democratic government and reform and respect for human rights.

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations *are eligible to apply*:

- U.S.-based non-profit organizations/NGOs with or without 501(c)(3) status
- Private, public, or state institutions of higher education
- For-profit organizations or businesses
- Foreign-based non-profit organizations/nongovernment organizations (NGO)

The Department of State does not allow for-profit or commercial organizations to make a profit from its assistance awards. Profit is defined as any amount more than allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs for commercial organizations is determined by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR 30, Cost Accounting Standards Administration, and 48 CFR 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not required for this NOFO and will not improve competitive ranking of an application. Any budget items proposed for cost share must be allowable per 2 CFR 200, Subpart E—Cost Principles.

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 D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, only the first time-stamped proposal from that institution will be reviewed for technical eligibility.

Program Description

Threats, attacks, and killings perpetrated against human rights defenders chill the exercise of fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly and association, worldwide. These attacks silence independent journalists and whistleblowers who expose corruption that creates an uneven playing field for American workers and businesses. Non-state actors such as gangs and narcotraffickers frequently target individuals who work to expose their illicit activities that harm Americans at home and abroad. Repressive governments perpetrate reprisals against dissidents to maintain their grip on power and intimidate others from engaging in peaceful dissent or advocacy on behalf of human rights and democratic principles of government.

Supporting individuals who seek to advance fundamental freedoms challenges the ability of repressive governments to oppress their citizens and oppose U.S. interests. Supporting defenders under threat reinforces U.S. credibility as a global leader willing to act on its stated values of

promoting and defending free speech, maintaining the global free flow of reliable information, and countering foreign adversarial propaganda, all goals articulated in the 2025 National Security Strategy. Furthermore, American leadership in support of defenders of shared values strengthens alliances, attracts partners, and distinguishes the United States from adversaries who actively target civil society for repression and reprisal. Emergency assistance to human rights defenders under threat is a strategic investment in individuals whose work advances U.S. interests by challenging hostile regimes, promoting freedom of expression, and sustaining the conditions for a world favorable to American leadership.

The project will provide individuals and organizations facing immediate threats with flexible, short-term, emergency financial support so they can continue their critical efforts to advance respect for fundamental freedoms in their own societies. To ensure rapid emergency assistance makes sustainable progress in the defense of fundamental freedoms, the program will also provide referrals for medium-term services to defenders, such as pro-bono legal support, digital security assistance, and resources for maintaining physical security.

This program will provide a range of support options and technical assistance directly to individuals to enable them to address urgent threats or other needs. This should include, but is not limited to: cash transfers, individual grants, in-kind assistance, accompaniment, legal support, safehouses/safe havening, trauma and psychosocial assistance, counseling, equipment replacement (including computers, phones, and other devices that may have been confiscated), food and hygiene kits to unjustly detained political prisoners and visits by family members and legal counsel. Larger grants will be made to local or regional organizations that can connect at-risk defenders with emergency financial support or with referrals to service providers. Grants to organizations can also be used to enhance an organization's own safety and security. The program provides assistance to potential beneficiaries in any geographic area outside of the United States. At this time, this program is not expected to work in Iran or the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK).

This program is designed to be flexible and effective, as called for by the Agency Strategic Plan, which states the Department should “be more agile in our assistance programming so as to more quickly and opportunistically take advantage of competitive dynamics, market conditions, and unfolding geopolitical events.”

1. Goals and Objectives

Goal: Individuals and organizations that face threat of attack; arbitrary arrest, detention, or prosecution; or are otherwise at imminent risk or harm, have access to short-term emergency funding and critical services that enable them to survive repression and continue their work to promote and defend fundamental freedoms in their home countries.

Objective One: Individual defenders of fundamental freedoms who are threatened or attacked have the short-term resources they need to resume their work promoting or defending the fundamental freedoms that align with America’s founding values.

Objective Two: Emergency assistance is available to civil society organizations and groups, so they can withstand risk, threats, and attacks, enabling them to continue promoting and defending fundamental freedoms that align with America’s founding values.

Illustrative Activities:

- Identify defenders under threat or suffering reprisal by engaging with local and regional civil society organizations, global protection networks, the Department of State, and governments that share U.S. values.
- Offer a variety of options to provide bespoke support to individuals and organizations so they can return to their operations, including, but not limited to: cash transfers, in-kind assistance, accompaniment, legal support, safehouses/safe havens, trauma counseling, replace computers, phones or other devices confiscated, food and hygiene kits to unjustly detained political prisoners and visits by family members and legal counsel.
- Transfer funds to beneficiaries through a variety of means in a timely manner to address urgent needs, regardless of geographic location.
- Maintain, develop, and engage with new and existing coalitions, alliances, and referral networks of civil society organizations and partners that work on emergency response, protection support, and that facilitate and contribute to the communities of protection at the national, regional, and international levels; contribute sharing on best practices and strategies for providing emergency support.
- Reference network: Not all support needs to come from this program. Implementer should be prepared to refer beneficiaries to other established networks or organizations that can provide pro-bono legal support in cases where fundamental freedoms have been abridged, digital security support against cybersecurity threats or incidents, psychosocial support networks that can help defenders to endure and recover from severe trauma, and organizations that can provide services such as shelter or housing in beneficiaries’ home countries.
- Assess the digital security posture of targeted fundamental freedom defenders under threat and provide assistance in remedying deficiencies or provide referrals to partner or non-partner organizations with the ability to do so.

Program Requirements:

- Global program: The applicant must provide assistance to potential beneficiaries in any geographic area outside of the United States.
- Beneficiaries will be determined on a rolling and as-needs basis, largely by the Department of State, over the life of the project. DRL anticipates 50 percent of cases will be at the Department’s request.
- Illustrative Beneficiary Eligibility Criteria:
 - Individuals must have a demonstrated history of work, generally defined as six months or longer, defending fundamental freedoms using nonviolent methods.

This may include, but is not limited to, advocacy, writing and publication, participation in non-violent demonstrations, and leadership or active participation in civil society organizations. Non-traditional human rights defenders, such as journalists, whistleblowers, judges, and artists who can demonstrate that they have faced threats or reprisals for their work to advance fundamental freedoms also will be eligible. These criteria could change following mass crackdown events (i.e., mass arrests following organized mass protests following a coup), or other compelling circumstances, should the Department determine there is a policy imperative to expanding support in strategic locations.

- Civil society organizations that work to advance human rights, democratic values, and fundamental freedoms are also eligible to apply for assistance.
- Eligibility criteria are subject to change based on negotiation and modification to the award agreement.
- Referral Pathways
 - The successful applicant will contact beneficiaries referred by the Department of State within 12-24 hours to begin the intake and vetting process. At least 50 percent of funding should be set aside for Department of State referrals; the final allocation will be determined during negotiations with DRL.
- Beneficiaries must be vetted through open-source research in appropriate languages; include searches of relevant public and private databases such as LexisNexis, OFAC Sanctions List Search, and SAM.gov; and triangulate information through reference checks as appropriate.
- Department of State approval is required for all beneficiaries (individuals or organizations) participating in this program.
- Be ready to provide on-demand support to the first beneficiaries within 90 days of program start date.
- **What this program will not do:** Provide assistance in seeking asylum to participants or provide long term support to individuals or organizations facing repressive conditions.
- DRL will approve, on an annual basis, the recipient's detailed work plan and timeline of activities for this program. The first year's work plan is due to DRL within 45 days of the award and annually thereafter. Requirements for the work plan will be addressed at the initial orientation meeting. The next year's draft work plan shall be due at least 30 days before the commencement of the next 12-month period of implementation of the award.
- DRL will approve the recipients Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning plan. A detailed MEL plan will be due to DRL within 100 days of the award.
- "The organization will submit to DRL for approval Key Personnel proposed for this award, demonstrating how the individual(s) qualifications align to the criteria of Key Personnel positions. Key personnel position titles are to be submitted at the time of application. "
- DRL will approve a Security and Risk Management plan, which will include a crisis communications plan. The recipient will provide a draft security and risk management plan within 60 days of the award start date.

In addition, competitive proposals will meet the following criteria:

- Applicants should demonstrate how they will reach beneficiaries in closed or highly restrictive country contexts. Note: At this time, the program is not expecting to support human rights defenders in Iran or the DPRK.
- Applicants should describe teaming and partnership agreements it will use to meet the global requirements of this program; applicants may apply as a consortium or include subgrants. Prioritize keeping defenders near their home country/region and maintaining their personal support networks; this program should supplement, not replace, existing support networks.
- Describe the capabilities for a rapid program start up and how the program will come to scale over the life of the award.

Substantial Involvement

The Department of State will be substantially involved in carrying out the following various aspects of this cooperative agreement. Examples of substantial involvement may include but are not limited to:

- **Approval of Work Plans and Major Activities:** The Department of State will review and approve detailed annual work plans, including specific activities, timelines, and budgets. Any significant changes to approved work plans must receive prior written approval from the Grants Officer or Grants Officer's Representative (GOR).
- **Review of Program Materials and Content:** The Department will review and provide input on key program materials, including training curricula, advocacy strategies, and public-facing content, prior to document finalization, to ensure alignment with U.S. foreign policy objectives and program goals.
- **Eligibility Criteria:** The Department of State will determine all emergency assistance eligibility criteria for beneficiaries and may adjust due to changing policy priorities or contextual trends in threats against defenders.
- **Participation in Key Program Activities:** Department representatives may participate in or observe major program activities, such as training workshops, convenings, or other significant events, as appropriate and feasible.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Oversight:** The Department will work collaboratively with the recipient to monitor program progress and evaluate outcomes. This may include joint site visits (where security conditions permit), review of monitoring data, and input on evaluation methodologies.
- **Security and Risk Management Coordination:** Given the sensitive nature of this programming and the high-risk operating environment, the recipient will coordinate closely with the Department on security protocols and plans, risk assessments, and incident reporting. At start up, DRL will review and advise upon the recipients proposed digital and physical security practices, including content of risk assessments, secure communications, and other protocols to protect beneficiary and staff identities and safety.

Protocols will be collaboratively reviewed and may be revised over the life of the award to meet changing operational contexts and participant practices.

- **Strategic Guidance:** The Department may provide strategic guidance on program direction, particularly in response to changing political conditions that may affect program implementation or beneficiary safety.

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.

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 fit 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals) <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs), as applicable (note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals, organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov)

2. Summary Page (optional)

Cover sheet stating the applicant's name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

3. Proposal (15 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 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.
- **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:** 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.
- **Proposed Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Proposed titles, roles, and experience/qualifications of key personnel positions involved in the program, including the expected proportion of time the position will support the program. Please do not include resumes of proposed personnel at this time, provide only criteria for which the program proposes to use over the life of the grant for key positions.
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Project 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?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability:** Applicant’s plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Itemized Budget

Submit a detailed, itemized budget information according to the OMB cost categories (see SF-424A). Budget expenses should be submitted preferably as one Excel workbook and include three (3) columns describing the request to the Bureau, any required or voluntary cost sharing, and the total budget. Costs must be in whole U.S. dollars. The attached “Budget Template FY26 with MTDC Calculation_Final”) is the preferred format for submission. Detailed itemized budgets for sub-grantees should be included as additional tabs within the Excel workbook (if available at the time of submission).

5. Budget Justification Narrative

After filling out the itemized budget, use a separate file to document the purpose each of the budget expenses in detail. Do not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the detailed 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. 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.

6. Attachments

- A line-item budget, expanding upon the summary categories found in the SF-424A. Subgrantee budgets, if known at time of submission, should also be included as tabs (please see template attached to NOFO).
- Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- 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.
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities.
- Key personnel position descriptions and criteria. Please do not include CVs at this time.

B. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required above are available at <https://www.grants.gov/forms/>.

2. Department of State Contacts

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: DRL-PRU-Solicitation@state.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. 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 War (DoW) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoW 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 War. 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 DoW 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 DoW 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](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-I/subchapter-B/part-25/subpart-1/section-25.110) for a full list of exemptions.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than
September 8, 2026 at 11:59 PM ET

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

If the place of performance or delivery of any award made under this NOFO will be within the United States, applicants are advised that they will be required to certify the following at the time of award:

- 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. A program promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion means a program whose purpose is to promote preferences based on race, color religion, sex, or national origins, such as in training or hiring.

iv. Certification Regarding Compliance with 20 U.S.C. 1011f and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements.

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

- 1) 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.

v. Certification of Trafficking in Persons Compliance and Compliance Plan

Applicants are advised that they will be required to certify the following at the time of award for awards where the estimated value of services to be performed outside the United States exceeds \$500,000:

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- 1) To the best of the Recipient's knowledge, neither the Recipient, nor any subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor of the Recipient or any agent of the recipient or of such a subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor, is engaged in any of the activities described in 2 CFR 175.105(a);

The recipient has implemented a Trafficking in Persons compliance plan to prevent activities described in 2 CFR 175(a) and is compliant with this plan; and the compliance plan must follow the minimum requirements described in 2 CFR 175(b)(5).

- 2) That the Recipient has and will implement procedures to prevent activities described in 2 CFR 175.105(a) and to monitor, detect, and terminate any subrecipient, contractor, subcontractor, or employee of the recipient engaging in these activities.

Recipients do not need to submit a copy of the plan. However, they must provide it to the Grants Officer upon request, and as appropriate, must post the useful and relevant contents of the plan or related materials on their website and at the workplace. Recipients must re-certify on an annual basis for the entire award period of performance.

vi. Prohibition on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Manufactured or Assembled by American Security Drone Act-Covered Foreign Entities

(a) *Definitions.*

American Security Drone Act-covered foreign entity means an entity included on a list developed and maintained by the Federal Acquisition Security Council (FASC) and published in the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov>

FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system means an unmanned aircraft system manufactured or assembled by an American Security Drone Act-covered foreign entity.

Unmanned aircraft means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

Unmanned aircraft system means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft) that are required for the operator to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system.

(b) *Prohibition.* Recipients of funding under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (including subawards and subcontracts issued by the recipient) will be prohibited from:

(1) Delivering any FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system, which includes unmanned aircraft (i.e., drones) and associated elements;

(2) Operating a FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system in the performance of the award; and

(3) Using Federal funds for the purchase or operation of a FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system.

c) *Exemptions, exceptions, and waivers.* The prohibitions described above will not apply if the agency determines that an exemption, exception, or waiver applies, and the award indicates that such a determination has been made. [See sections 1823 through 1825 and 1832 of Public Law 118-31 ([41 U.S.C. 3901](#) note prec.) for statutory requirements pertaining to exemptions, exceptions, and waivers.].

vi. Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance (PHFFA)

Applicants for foreign assistance awards should be aware of requirements in 2 CFR Part 602, 603, and 604.

These policies are referred to collectively as the Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance (PHFFA) Policy.

[602](#): The award term imposes certain abortion-related requirements on foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United States NGOs, public international organizations, foreign governments, and parastatals.

[603](#): The award term imposes certain requirements relating to gender ideology on foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United States NGOs, international organizations, foreign governments, and parastatals.

604: The award term imposes certain requirements relating to discriminatory equity ideology on foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United States NGOs, international organizations, foreign governments, and parastatals.

The Department recognizes there are costs associated with these policies. Potential one-time and recurring costs the Department identifies for recipients and grantees are for familiarization with the policy, development and delivery of organizational training and implementation guidance, routine compliance monitoring, and recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Applications must be submitted electronically through www.Grants.gov or MyGrants.

C. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

The proposal will not be compared against other proposals. However, it will be reviewed to ensure that it is sufficiently strong in the following areas to merit funding:

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea: The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The proposal does not include any activities contrary to any standing Executive Orders. For a full list, see <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants: The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account. If sub-awards are proposed, applicant demonstrates experience managing subawards.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives: Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget: The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation Plan: Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

2. *Indirect Costs*

If two or more applications receive equivalent ratings based on the evaluation criteria outlined in this NOFO, preference will be given to the applicant with the lower indirect cost rate, as consistent with Executive Order 14332, Section 4(b)(iii). This preference will only be applied as a tie-breaking mechanism and does not supersede the primary evaluation criteria.

3. *Review and Selection Process*

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

4. *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

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.

D. 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 email.

Payment Method: Payments under this award will be made through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS) or by completing form SF-270—Request for Advance or Reimbursement and submitting the form. Final determination will be made in conjunction with the Grants Officer. Unless otherwise stipulated, the Recipient may request payments on a reimbursement or advance basis. Instructions for requesting payments via PMS are available at: <https://pms.psc.gov/>. Instructions for requesting payments via SF-270 are available at: <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/post-award-reporting-forms>.

Recipients may not draw down funds without the affirmative authorization of the Department of State. In addition, recipients must submit, with each payment request, a detailed explanation justifying the request.

E. 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:

- [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). For the avoidance of doubt, the Department has sole discretion over the determination that an award no longer effectuates program goals or agency priorities, and this provision permits awards to be terminated at the Department's convenience, including when it determines that the award no longer advances the national interest.

- [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](#)
- Recipients must comply with all applicable Executive Orders A searchable list can be found in the Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/>

2. **Reporting**

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify what reports are required and how often these reports must be submitted.

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](#).

3. Branding and Marking

The Department of State, its programs, and U.S. Government funding and assistance should be easily identifiable to the Department's global audiences.

Recipients of federal assistance awards must follow the branding guidance published at [Guidance for Contracts and Grants - U.S. Department of State Brand System](#). Branding policy exceptions are outlined in the U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual [10 FAM 416, Policy Exceptions](#).

For more information, visit: <https://brand.america.gov/>