U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Embassy Accra
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: Empowering Female Community Leaders in Countering Violent Extremism in Upper West Region
Funding Opportunity Number: DOS-ACC-NOFO-2024-02
Deadline for Applications: 19 July 2024, 23:59 Ghana time
Assistance Listing Number: *19.222*
Total Amount Available: $50,000

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Accra announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a project to train community leaders on leadership, conflict resolution, and preventing violent extremism. Please follow all instructions below.

Priority Region: Upper West Region

Project Objectives:

The Empowering Female Community Leaders project will train female and male community leaders in vulnerable Upper West Region communities to strengthen their skills in conflict resolution and prevent violent extremism. As a result, female leaders will gain leadership skills and will be empowered to resist the threat of violent extremism growing from community conflicts along with their male counterparts. **The trainings will focus on female community leader inclusion to empower women to take a larger role in community leadership.**

Communities in the Upper West Region of Ghana experience intermittent farmer-herder conflicts and intra-community conflicts over chieftaincy and land tenure issues. These conflicts weaken community cohesion, prevent development, and leave communities susceptible to influence from violent extremist organizations. Many communities in the area rely on traditional authorities and other community leaders to manage conflicts. Research shows that when women are included in conflict resolution, peace and stability are more likely to be achieved and is longer lasting.

Objective 1: By March 2026, 80% of targeted female community leaders will have acquired knowledge and skills about the early signs of radicalization, conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and communication skills, to actively become key agents of peace and countering violent extremism in the region.

Objective 2: By March 2026, 50% community and administrative actors will have understood the role of female community leaders in promoting peace and fight against violent extremism and the drivers of radicalization and prevention measures.

Objective 3: By March 2026, 50% of targeted female community leaders will have access to dialogue platforms on peacebuilding and prevention of radicalization in the Upper West Region.

Participants and Audiences:
The successful applicant will work with members of the Upper West Regional Queen Mothers Association (the Association) who participated in the Training of Trainers on Preventing Violent Extremism and Leadership Project funded by the United States in 2023. The Association will conduct peer-to-peer training for community leaders using the skills and knowledge they gained through their previous training. The project implementor will use project funds for costs to coordinate and facilitate the peer-to-peer trainings. Project sites will be in the Upper West Region. The project implementor will use data on community conflict to select high impact training sites. Within the training sites, the implementor will partner with the Association to identify and select for training qualified female leaders to participate in the trainings.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 12 months
Number of awards anticipated: 1 award (dependent on amounts)
Award amounts: maximum of $50,000
Total available funding: $50,000
Type of Funding: FY23 Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act
Anticipated project start date: 1 October 2024

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 12 months or less.

C. ELIGILIBITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

Not-for-profit organizations, including civil society/non-governmental organizations are eligible to apply.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

This funding opportunity has no requirement for cost sharing. Cost sharing will not be taken into consideration in evaluating proposals.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via www.SAM.gov as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at grants.gov

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity.
- All documents are in English.
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars.
- All pages are numbered.
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **<u>required</u>**:

1. **Mandatory application forms**
   - **SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)** or **SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals)**
   - **SF-424A *(Budget Information for Non-Construction projects)***

2. **Summary Page:** On a cover page or on the first page of the application, make a summary of the proposal including:
   - Organization name
   - Project manager name, phone/WhatsApp number, email address
   - Project Title
   - Project location
   - Date the proposal was completed.
   - Total project cost, with:
   - Total grant request
   - Total value of the community contribution (if community contribution exists)
   - A short description of the project

3. Proposal: The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with the project will understand exactly what the applicant wants to do with the grant funds. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below. Proposals are limited to eight pages.

- **Introduction to the Organization Applying**: A description of past and present operations showing ability to carry out the project, including information on previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.

- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the problem. Describe the problem using information about current conditions in the communities. Use data if available.
- **Project Goal:** The project goal shows how the project will address the problem described in the Problem Statement. Use data to show direct and indirect beneficiaries.
- **Project Activities**: Describe the project activities and how they will achieve the project goal. Show who will be responsible for completing and monitoring each activity. Activities should be related directly to items in the budget and described in the budget narrative.
- **Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the project activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the project. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this project?
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees if applicable.
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Show how activities will be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the project be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goal of the grant.
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the project beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Budget Justification Narrative: After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate file to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

5. Required Attachments:

- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the project. If an individual for this type of position has not been identified, the applicant may submit a 1-page position description, identifying the qualifications and skills required for that position, in lieu of a résumé.

- Letters of support from project 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, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.
- Official permission letters, if required for project activities

6. 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 with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. Registration through www.SAM.gov is free of charge.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.

- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.

- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, 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 or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or 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 a CAGE or 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. If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application could be deemed **ineligible**.

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):

Exemptions
An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.

- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

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

3. Funding Restrictions

The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement:

- Construction is not an allowable activity under this award.
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns.
- Military assistance of any kind, including weapons buy-back or rewards programs.
- Purchase of firearms, ammunition, or removal of unexploded ordnances.
- Para-police (i.e., militias, neighborhood watch, security guards) and prison-related projects. This restriction includes no funding of any secondary need in a law-enforcement organization.
- Payments for any partner government, military, or civilian government employee salary or pension.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than 21 June 2024.

5. Other Submission Requirements

Application materials may be submitted electronically through Grants.gov, or by email to AccraPOLGrants@state.gov

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Idea (10 points): The project idea is well developed, with detail about how project activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants (10 points): 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. The organization demonstrates that it has a clear understanding of the underlying issue that the project will address.

Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives (10 points): Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget (10 points): The budget justification and narrative are detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

Monitoring and evaluation plan (10 points): Applicant demonstrates it can measure project success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The project includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability (10 points): The project proposal describes clearly the approach that will be used to ensure maximum sustainability or advancement of project goals after the end of project activity.

Support of Equity and Underserved Communities (10 points): Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the project will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in project administration, design, and implementation.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee of U.S. Embassy personnel will evaluate all eligible applications or, in the event of a large number of applications received, Embassy staff will rank applications and the review committee will review the top ranked. All submissions are screened for technical eligibility. If a submission is missing any required forms/documents listed above in Section D, it will be considered ineligible and will not be reviewed by the grants review committee. The review panel will review eligible proposals based upon the criteria noted in this NOFO.

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

i. The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

ii. An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. Currently, federal agencies create integrity records in the integrity module of the Contractor Performance Assessment and Reporting System (CPARS) and these records are visible as responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov;

iii. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity,

business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

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

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply.

These include:

- 2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT

- 2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION
- 2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS
- 2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE)
- 2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY
- 2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS
- U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific projects, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following: NOTE:

- Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
    - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the project objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
    - Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
    - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
    - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and

- Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the project goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit quarterly financial reports and project reports. Progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final certified programmatic and financial reports are due 120 days after the close of the project period.

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 project or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the funding opportunity or grant application process, please contact: AccraPOLGrants@state.gov

Applicants should not expect an email response to questions, as questions received will be answered in a question-and-answer document and posted at https://grants.gov/.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Budgets shall be submitted in U.S. dollars and final grant agreements will be conducted in U.S. dollars.

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 project, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the project.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this project, for project staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the project 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 project, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the project), and costs at least $5,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the project. If an item costs more than $5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the project activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the project, 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 project activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.

Branding Requirements

As a condition of receipt of a grant award, all materials produced pursuant to the award, including training materials, materials for recipients or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under an agreement, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, and backdrops, podium signs, etc. must be marked appropriately with the standard, rectangular U.S. flag in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity. Note: Exceptions to the branding requirement are allowable under certain conditions. If an applicant is notified that their award has been chosen for funding, the Grants Officer will determine, in consultation with the applicant, if an exception is applicable.