

**Department of State
Embassy of the United States in Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

Program Office: Public Diplomacy Section, U.S. Embassy Tashkent

Funding Opportunity Title: Alumni Outreach Small Grants (AOG) Program

Announcement Type: Grant

Funding Opportunity Number: TASHKENT-PDS-FY24-002

Deadline for Applications: February 29, 2024

April 30, 2024

Assistance Listing Number: 19.900 – Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia

Total Amount Available: \$100,000

CONTACT INFORMATION

- For questions relating to Grants.gov, please call the Grants.gov Contact Center at 1-800-518-4726.
- For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, please contact Tashkent-Alumni@state.gov.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION AND PURPOSE

The Alumni Unit of the U.S. Embassy Tashkent Public Diplomacy Section is pleased to announce the availability of funding through its Alumni Outreach Small Grants (AOG) Program. This is an Annual Program Statement, outlining our funding priorities, strategic themes, and the procedures for submitting requests for funding. Applications must be submitted electronically via Tashkent-Alumni@state.gov.

This funding opportunity is designed for past participants (“alumni”) of U.S. Government-funded and U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs and invites proposals for projects that strengthen cultural ties between the United States and Uzbekistan through academic and professional programming that highlights shared values and promotes bilateral cooperation.

Note to applicants: All programs must:

- 1) include an American cultural element, or connection with applicants’ U.S. exchange experience in a specific field.
- 2) promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives.

Priority Program Areas:

- Develop enduring ties by strengthening the understanding and appreciation of U.S. culture and values.
- Strengthen Uzbekistan's ability to address security and criminal threats bolster regional stability, and cooperation.
- Bolster Uzbekistan's ability to address transnational health threats and mitigate the effects of climate crises.
- Advance economic reforms that deliver a sustainable, inclusive, and equitable market-based economy.
- Better the lives of the people of Uzbekistan through improved public health and education services.

Examples of alumni small grants projects include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars, training sessions, and speaker programs.
- Advancement of women's role in peace, security, and governance.
- Advancement of the nascent Women in STEM movement in Uzbekistan.
- Advancement of disability rights and awareness.

Below are examples of specific alumni grant projects funded by the Embassy:

- **IT Skills Development for Women and Girls in Fergana:** the project sought to equip the participants with IT and English language skills through a training course at a university.
- **Platform to Help Improve Public Speaking & Debating Skills:** the grant recipient implemented a training course designed to teach young professionals journalistic writing skills relying on his exchange experience at George Washington University.
- **Summer Camp on the Advocacy of Volunteerism:** the eight-day summer camp helped spur volunteerism while focusing on issues such as human trafficking, illegal migration, and safe Internet surfing.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: *One to 12 months*

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$10,000

Total available funding: \$100,000

Number of Awards: 10-15

Anticipated program start date: September 2024

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, cooperative agreement, or Individual grant

Support for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA): All programs should consider strategies for expanding the pool of individuals/organizations/beneficiaries to afford

opportunities for as diverse and inclusive population as is feasible to bring diverse perspectives based on religion, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, national origin, and age to implementation of the program.

The Public Diplomacy Section reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described under circumstances deemed to be in the best interest of the U.S. government, pending the availability of funds and approval of the designated Grants Officer.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants:

- *Individual alumni.*
- *Not-for-profit organizations based in Uzbekistan.*
- *Civil society/non-governmental organizations based in Uzbekistan.*
- *Thinktanks based in Uzbekistan.*
- *Public and private not-for-profit educational institutions based in Uzbekistan.*

Note: *For-profit entities, even those that may fall into the categories listed above, are **not** eligible to apply for this NOFO. Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal at a time.*

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

“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. Cost sharing or matching is **not** required for this funding opportunity.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

For organizations: 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 begin the registration processes immediately to ensure the registrations are completed well in advance of the submission deadline.**

The process can require several **weeks** for the registrations to be validated and confirmed. Please see Section D for more information.

Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application package has been received in its entirety. Incomplete applications will be considered ineligible.

Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission

deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

4. This opportunity will not support:

- Projects relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Construction projects;
- Projects that support specific religious activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs
- Scientific research or surveys;
- Commercial projects;
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
- Projects that duplicate existing projects;
- Illegal activities

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at: <https://uz.embassy.gov> and <https://www.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.

Applicants must ensure:

- Proposal clearly addresses the goals, audiences, and objectives of this notice.
- All documents are in English.
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars.
- All applicant authorized signatures are provided where indicated on the various, required forms.

The following documents and components are **required and must be included in the applicant's submission:**

Section 1. Mandatory application forms

- AOG Application Form
- SF-424A (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)
- SF-424B (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*) (*note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals and for organizations not registered in SAM.gov*)

All submissions must include the AOG Application Form, SF-424A, and SF-424B. These forms and the instructions for completing them are available at <https://uz.embassy.gov>

NOTE: The SF-424B is required only for those applicants who have not registered in SAM.gov. An authorized signature by the applicant must be provided on the SF-424B form.

Section 2. AOG Application Form (Attachment 1): 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:

- **Project Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Applicant Information:** Applicant name, exchange program name and dates, address, phone number, and email.
- **Alumni Team Member Information:** If applying as an individual, please check “No other alumni will be involved.”
- **Target Audience:** Please define your target audience and the number of individuals to be reached.
- **Primary Location of Project:** If the project is taking place in multiple cities or regions, please specify all locations.
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** Please define the problem you are planning to address. What will the project achieve? What is the expected long-term effect of the project?
- **Impact and Evaluation:** Proposals from **individuals** should reflect the difference the project will make to the target audience and explain how the impact and success of the project will be measured.

Proposals from **organizations** must include a draft Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP). The M&E PMP should show how applicants intend to measure and demonstrate progress towards the project’s objectives and goals. Applicants should describe how they intend to monitor and evaluate the activities of their award and collect data that tracks award performance. The PMP should also contain If-Then statements to illustrate how project activities will lead to intended outcomes. In addition, the applicant must complete a short table outlining their proposed activities and chosen indicators.

Attachment X of this funding opportunity contains a template that may be used to fulfill this requirement. While the grantee is free to create their own template,

completing Attachment X will ensure a thorough PMP.

Attachment X of this funding opportunity contains a list of suggested indicators on the Standard Indicator Sheet you can consider using as you build your PMP.

The selected applicant(s) will be required to obtain approval on their M&E PMP before an award is signed.

- **Project Dates:** Please state the length of the project as well as the start date and end date.
- **Grants Received:** Please provide information on all U.S. Government funding, including the amount, you have received in the past.

Section 3. — Detailed Budget (Page 4 of the AOG Application Form)

- Detailed Budget - Applicants must submit a detailed line-item budget. Applicants are encouraged to utilize the template provided in the application. Line-item expenditures should be listed in the greatest possible detail. The budget must identify the total amount of funding requested, with a breakdown of amounts to be spent in the following budget categories: personnel; travel; equipment; supplies; consultants/contracts; other direct costs. **Budgets must be submitted in U.S. dollars** and final grant agreements will be conducted in U.S. dollars.

Section 4. - Required Attachments:

- a. **Key Personnel Resumes:** A résumé, not to exceed one page in length, must be included for the proposed key staff persons, as well as any speakers or trainers (if applicable). 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.
- b. **Letters of support from program partners:** Letters of support should be included for sub-recipients or other partners. The letters must identify the type of relationship to be entered into (formal or informal), the roles and responsibilities of each partner in relation to the proposed project activities, and the expected result of the partnership. The individual letters cannot exceed 1 page in length.
- c. **Proof of Registration:** A copy of the organization's registration should be provided with the proposal application.

Other items NOT required/requested with the application submission, but which *may* be requested if your application is approved to move forward in the review process include:

- a. Copies of an organization or program audit within the last two (2) years

- b. Copies of relevant human resources, financial, or procurement policies
- c. Copies of other relevant organizational policies or documentation that would help the Department determine your organization's capacity to manage a federal grant award overseas.
- d. Information to determine what financial controls and standard operating procedures an organization uses to procure goods and services, hire staff and track time and attendance, pay for grant-related travel, and identify other financial transactions that may be necessary to undertake the project activities
- e. The Embassy reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registration: All *organizations* applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain a SAM.gov registration as well as a Unique Entity Identifier Number (UEI). Registration through www.SAM.gov is free of charge.

The Unique Entity Identifier (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. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to register in SAM.gov.

Starting April 2022, the UEI will be assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at www.SAM.gov. To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew its sam.gov registration annually.

www.sam.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov.

If an organization plans to issue a sub-contract or sub-award, those sub-awardees must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). Those entities can register for a UEI only at SAM.gov.

If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application could be deemed **ineligible**. All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations, the latter are free of charge.

Please note: Any applicant with an exclusion in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that

implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.”

5. Submission Dates and Times

The Public Diplomacy Section Alumni Unit will accept proposals according to the following schedule:

- Proposals received between December 25, 2023 and February 29, 2024 will be reviewed by *March 1, 2024, with responses going out by March 5, 2024.*
- Proposals received between March 10 and April 30, 2024, will be reviewed by *May 25, with responses going out by May 30, 2024.*

Application Submission Process:

Alumni must submit applications electronically via Tashkent-Alumni@state.gov and state the Funding Opportunity Title and Funding Opportunity Number in the subject line of the email.

6. Funding Restrictions:

Pre-award costs are not an allowable expense for this funding opportunity.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria: Each application submitted under this announcement will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the criteria enumerated below. The criteria are designed to assess the quality of the proposed project, and to determine the likelihood of its success.

- **Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 25 points:** The program idea should be innovative and well developed, with sufficient detail about how project activities will be carried out. The proposals should demonstrate originality and outline clear, achievable objectives. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The project scope is appropriate and clearly defined. Proposals should also demonstrate how the program will support diversity, equity, inclusion and accessibility (DEIA) principles and engage underserved communities in their program’s administration, design, and implementation.
- **Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 25 points:**
 - The project proposal demonstrates that the organization has sufficient expertise, skills, and human resources to implement the project.
 - The organization demonstrates that it has a clear understanding of the underlying issue that the project will address.

- The organization demonstrates capacity for successful planning and responsible fiscal management. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.
 - Applicants who have received grant funds previously have been compliant with applicable rules and regulations.
 - Where partners are described, the applicant details each partner's respective role and provides curriculum vitae (CVs) for persons responsible for the project and financial administration. Proposed personnel, institutional resources, and partners are adequate and appropriate
- **Project Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 20 points:** The project plan is well developed, with sufficient detail about how activities will be carried out. The proposal specifies target audiences, participant recruitment, and geographic areas of implementation. The proposal outlines clear, achievable objectives. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The project scope is appropriate and clearly defined.
 - **Budget – 10 points:** The budget and narrative justification are sufficiently detailed. The budget demonstrates that the organization has devoted time to accurately determine expenses associated with the project instead of providing rough estimates. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The results and proposed outcomes justify the total cost of the project. Budget items are reasonable, allowable, and allocable.
 - **Monitoring and Evaluation - 10 points:** There is a complete and thorough draft submission of a M&E Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP). This will include a list of proposed project activities, corresponding milestone, output, and outcome indicators, a description of data collection methods, and a timeline for collecting such information. The proposal presents a clear theory of change on how the program will address that problem. Further, if the project requires selecting participants, or beneficiaries, the proposal should articulate how the selection will be done in an equitable way. Use of the suggested template (Attachments 3 & 3.1) will satisfy these requirements. Funded projects will have their plans finalized during the negotiation phase, and monitoring plans may be subject to periodic updates throughout the life of the project.
 - **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.

2. Review and Selection Process

- a. Acknowledgement of receipt. Applicants will receive acknowledgment of receipt of their proposal.
- b. Review. All submissions are screened for technical eligibility. A technical review panel will review eligible proposals based upon the criteria noted in this NOFO.
- c. Follow up notification. Applicants will generally be notified within 60 days after the specified deadlines regarding the results of the review panel.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

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.

The Federal government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement. 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. The U.S. government also reserves the right to make an award in excess of the award ceiling.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions:

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 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 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program 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 program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility

The Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA) prioritizes inclusive and integrated programs that address barriers to access for individuals and groups based on their religion, gender, disabilities, ethnicity, or sexual orientation and gender identity. In accordance with the [Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Underserved Communities](#), proposals should demonstrate how the program will advance principles of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) related to race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or disability.

Proposals should demonstrate how addressing racial equity and/or the status of underserved communities will enhance the program’s goals and objectives, as well as the experience of participants.

The support of underserved communities will be part of the review criteria for this opportunity. Therefore, proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance

equity and engage underserved communities in the program's administration, design, and implementation phases.

Definitions:

Diversity:

The term "diversity" means the practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of a community.

Equity:

The term "equity" means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as ethnic minorities, and indigenous persons, members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Inclusion:

The term "inclusion" means the recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of persons of all backgrounds.

Accessibility:

The term "accessibility" means the design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can fully and independently use them.

Underserved communities:

The term "underserved communities" refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the preceding definition of "equity."

Reporting

Recipients are required to submit program progress and financial reports throughout or upon conclusion of the project (depending on project duration). 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.

All reports are to be submitted electronically via Tashkent-Alumni@state.gov.

Awardees that are deemed to be high risk may be required to submit more extensive and frequent reports until their high-risk designation has been removed.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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

H. 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 \$5,000 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 \$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 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 10% of the 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.

Copyrights and Proprietary Information

If any of the information contained in your application is proprietary, please note in the footer of the appropriate pages that the information is Confidential – Proprietary. Applicants should also note what parts of the application, program, concept, etc. are covered by copyright(s), trademark(s), or any other intellectual property rights and provide copies of the relevant documentation to support these copyrights.

STEP Enrollment

U.S. citizens who travel to Uzbekistan are encouraged to enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) available at: <https://step.state.gov/step/>. Enrollment enables citizens to receive security-related messages from the Embassy and makes it easier for us to locate you in an emergency. The Embassy also recommends that all travelers review the State Department's [travel website at travel.state.gov](https://travel.state.gov) for the Worldwide Caution, Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and Uzbekistan Specific Information.