Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):
Annual Program Statement 2025
U.S. Embassy, Pretoria, Department of
State
Opportunity number: PAS-ZAF-FY25-02
Application deadline: **11:59 p.m. SAST on: May 9, 2025, July
11, 2025.).**

Annual Program Statement 2025
U.S. Embassy, Pretoria, Department of State

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Annual Program Statement 2025
Funding Opportunity Number	PAS-ZAF-FY25-02
Announcement Type	Initial announcement
Deadline for Applications	May 9, 2025, July 11, 2025
Assistance Listing Number	19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Length of performance period	12 to 24 months
Number of awards anticipated	up to 10 (depending on proposal amounts)
Award amounts	Under $25,000 (Amount of each award and total number of awards will depend on availability of funds)
Total available funding	$200,000
Type of Funding	FY 2025 Smith-Mundt public diplomacy funds
Anticipated project start date	On or before September 30, 2025

Funding Instrument Type:
Grant, cooperative agreement, or fixed amount award. Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that U.S. government staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

Project Performance Period:
Proposed projects should be completed in 24 months or less. The U.S. Mission will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the project, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Government.

Priority Region: South Africa

------------------------This notice is subject to availability of funding. ------------------------

2. Executive Summary

The U.S. Mission to South Africa Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce its **Annual Program Statement (APS)** for Fiscal Year 2025. Awards will be approved for amounts less than $25,000 each, based on funding availability.

NOTE: Applicants who submitted concept notes based on the previous APS and prior to the first deadline in February 2025 are not required to re-submit. Your proposal will automatically be moved to the new cycles, with the deadlines of May 9, and July 11, 2025.

The application process includes two phases: In the first, streamlined phase, applicants should submit project ideas in the form of concept notes. Following review of each concept note, the U.S. Mission will invite applicants with promising concept notes to submit full project proposals for further consideration. Specific instructions will be provided to those applicants selected for submission of a full proposal.

Please read this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) carefully. It outlines PDS funding priorities, the strategic lines of focus, and the procedures for submitting funding proposals.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants
Only **non-profit organizations** are eligible to apply. This includes civil society/non-governmental organizations, non-profit public and private educational institutions, non-profit think tanks, etc. South African applicants with a proven track record may be given priority.

Proposals from for-profit entities will not be considered.
Applicants may be asked to provide proof of their non-profit status if such status is unclear to the selection committee.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching
Cost-sharing (including non-cash contributions) is permitted but not required. Cost effectiveness of a proposal will be a significant factor in the selection process.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements
Applicants are not required to have an active registration on SAM.gov for the initial stage of application. However, to be considered as a finalist, all applicants must be registered with SAM.gov without any exclusions. Please see Section F below for information on how to obtain this registration, which applicants for this preliminary phase may choose to initiate early, as the process may take two or more months to complete.

C. Program Description

Bottom Line Up Front:
- This is a funding opportunity for which only **non-profit organizations** are eligible.
- All proposals must include a **significant American component**, such as (but not limited to) building connections with U.S. experts, organizations, or projects that promote an increased understanding of U.S. policy, perspectives, institutions, history, or culture.
- **Funds are limited**. The Mission receives many proposals each year, but resources allow only a limited few to be funded, even though many are high quality. Applicants should create proposals with realistic budgets and should not expand their budgets beyond what is required for the requested activities.
- **Merit review of proposals takes time**. Applicants whose concept notes are selected to submit full proposals will be notified within one month of each quarterly deadline. If an applicant submits a concept note and does not hear from the Mission within three months, their project was not selected for further consideration as a full proposal. While some applicants may be notified earlier, all applicants invited to submit full proposals will be notified by October 15, 2025 if their proposals were selected for funding or not. Due to the large number of submissions and to avoid the perception of favorable consideration for any single applicant over others, organizations whose proposals are not selected should not expect detailed feedback explaining the decision.

Goals and Objectives
Successful proposals will align with the strategic priorities of the U.S. Mission to South Africa as defined below. Their overall goal will be to develop and strengthen partnerships and knowledge sharing between U.S. citizens and South Africans, as well as institutions in both countries. Project activities must take place principally in South Africa. Proposals mostly focused on cultural activities (e.g. concert or other performances, festivals or similar events) without a significant linkage to advancing shared priorities are unlikely to be considered.

U.S. Mission to South Africa Nationwide Strategic Priorities and Initiatives

Connect U.S. and South African expertise related to science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education, focused on growth industries – particularly working in partnership with TVETs.
- This initiative's goal is to find innovative approaches to Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education, including in partnership with technical and vocational education and training institutions (TVETs), particularly in under-resourced and disadvantaged communities and schools and to populations overcoming historical challenges to accessing STEM education.
- This initiative may also include projects designed to connect private sector employers with vocational and technical educational institutions to improve the employability of graduates in the STEM fields and to connect them with U.S. approaches to technical fields and education.

- Projects in line with the priorities above that also focus on empowering women and girls through activities supporting entrepreneurship, innovation, creativity, and leadership are also encouraged.

Develop or strengthen lasting linkages between U.S. and South African universities and other institutions of higher and technical/vocational education.
- This initiative's goal is to identify new efforts to create sustainable partnerships between higher education institutions — especially TVETs/Community Education and Training colleges (CETs) — to promote exchange on topics of priority; support student-led exchange and cooperation – including related to entrepreneurship and media literacy; create new shared curricula; and focus on increasing private sector linkages; increase and improve commercialization of research; etc.
- Projects highlighting best practices in higher education governance policies and the role of governing bodies in developing academic programs to meet community needs are also welcome.
- Priority may be given to projects involving institutions serving communities facing high levels of unemployment, crime or insecurity, educational or other challenges.

Strengthen U.S. government-sponsored exchange alumni networks and help alumni effect positive change in their communities.
- This initiative's goal is to strengthen networks and skills among alumni of U.S. government exchange programs to implement results-focused activities in their fields of expertise and that benefit their communities and share aspects of their U.S. experience.

Address the further professional development of fact-based professional media, particularly by connecting U.S. and South African community, citizen, and student journalists for meaningful exchange, cooperation, and learning.
- This initiative's goal is to improve media literacy and fact-based reporting -- particularly among community, citizen, and student journalists – and to encourage peer cooperation and engagement/network development among emerging journalists and community media outlets. Activities may include professionalized reporting and the practice of accurate citizen, student, or community journalism, among others.
- Projects connecting U.S. and South African student and/or community media outlets for knowledge sharing, joint or shared reporting, and/or exchange of best practices are of particular interest.

Broaden Entrepreneurship Skills to Expand Economic Opportunities.
- This initiative's This initiative's goal is to increase support for entrepreneurs that work with women and youth by creating connections with American peers and experts to share resources, innovative techniques, and other tools to strengthen and grow their businesses while expanding their networks and markets. This initiative can also focus on helping aspiring South African entrepreneurs explore mutually beneficial bilateral and multi-lateral export trade opportunities.

Advance Community Security.
- This initiative seeks to empower communities with platforms for dialogue, collaboration and capacity building. These proposals should foster exchange between U.S. and South African thought leaders, researchers, civil society leaders, and public policy experts who focus on issues of community cohesion that create a healthier, safer, and more prosperous society in both nations.

Additional Regional Strategic Priorities and Initiatives

Organizations in KwaZulu Natal may additionally submit applications that fall into these subject areas:
- empower entrepreneurship and bilateral exchange within KZN's creative economy, blue economy, and tourism and agri-business sectors.
- address challenges specific to the KZN as a coastal region with a vibrant blue economy, transatlantic port, and agricultural sector.
  highlight lessons learned from U.S. experience relevant to social violence. Priority will be given to projects that bring a U.S. partnership and perspective to these issues.

Organizations in the Eastern Cape, Western Cape and Northern Cape may additionally submit applications that fall into these subject areas:
- Projects that empower South African creatives, producers, youth, community activists, and/or emerging entrepreneurs to improve their messaging, audience engagement, story-telling, and public education skills and techniques through exchange or exposure to U.S. models, experts and/or peers.
- Projects that build capacity and create networking opportunities for small community-based organizations ad local leaders working to improve and engage their communities and local governance through exchange or exposure to U.S. experts, models, and/or peer engagement.

Organizations in Gauteng, Free State and North West may additionally submit applications that fall into these subject areas:
- Programs that improve understanding of the business of creative industries and/or foster partnerships between South African and U.S. creative producers in film, television, or fashion industries.

Organizations in Pretoria, Limpopo and Mpumalanga may additionally submit applications that fall into these subject areas:
- Development of programs that build connections between South African educators and practitioners and U.S. experts in the fields of agriculture, agri-business, and agricultural education.

Participants and Audiences

Proposals must identity a **clearly defined target audience** that the project seeks to engage and influence and should specify the **changes** in attitudes or behaviors the project aims to realize – and how the implementer intends to **measure** these outcomes.

Project activities must principally take place in **South Africa** and be directed at South African audiences/participants. Proposals should specify the **main geographic location(s)** of the project. We welcome proposals that reach multiple provinces or engage in areas outside the metropolitan areas of Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban, and Cape Town, including townships, rural areas, and other historically underserved areas. Proposals should reflect the applicant's proven organizational capacity to implement the activities as outlined and in the geographic areas indicated.

The following types of projects are NOT eligible for funding:
- Projects relating to partisan political activity or advocacy.
- Projects solely dedicated to research.
- Projects with elements of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
- Projects focused on gender identity.
- Charitable or development activities.
- Activities with a profit motive.
- Construction projects.
- Support for social or health services.
- Projects that support specific religious activities.
- Fund-raising campaigns.
- Lobbying for specific legislation or projects.
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization.
- Projects that duplicate existing projects.
- Travel to the United States for family or social purposes.
- Travel to the United States for purposes of amplifying South African cultural initiatives.
- Travel to the United States for purposes unconnected to a larger project or initiative.
- Scholarships or tuition assistance.
- Events of a purely social nature.
- Prizes and competition awards without a programmatic linkage.

Following your review of the above information, please send any queries you might have to **PretoriaGrants@state.gov.**

D. Application Process, Contents and Format

Application process:

Please prepare a **concept paper** that describes your project, your estimated total budget, and its intended outcomes, and upload it together with the cover sheet created by completing the information at this link: APS Google Form.   Submitted concept papers will be reviewed by a Merit Review Panel, which will recommend which applicants should be invited to submit a full proposal.

Concept note:
The concept paper, which should be no more than two pages, should be a clear and concise description of the project in plain English: who, what, why, when, and how, as well as a budget estimate (in U.S. dollars). Intended beneficiaries and outcomes should be clearly described for the Merit Review Panel's assessment.
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:
- All documents are in **English**; materials submitted other languages will not be considered.
- All budgets must be submitted in **U.S. dollars,** using an appropriate and reasonable exchange rate.

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Submission date and time:
- Concept papers will be reviewed and considered on a rolling basis as received.
- If a concept paper is selected for further consideration the applicant will be notified by the U.S. Mission within **one** month of each quarterly submission deadline, and the organization will be invited to submit a full proposal. A deadline for submission of a full proposal and additional instructions on what is required will be provided at that time.
- 11:59 p.m. SAST on May 9, and July 11, 2025, will be the last date in each submission cycle to submit concept papers, but note that this funding opportunity will only be available for as long as funding is available, so applicants are encouraged to submit concept papers as soon as possible starting now.
- *Note – the U.S. Mission may accept concept papers outside these dates on a case–by – case basis.

Certification Regarding Compliance with applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws

None of the funds awarded under this agreement may be used for any initiatives or programs, or any activities that do not comply with Executive Order 14173 titled Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity.

The Recipient shall submit, prior to award or upon request from Grants Officer, a certification that confirms:
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.

Department of State Contacts:
If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact:
PretoriaGrants@state.gov

Application review information
Each technically eligible application will be evaluated and scored by a Merit Review Panel based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.
- Clearly articulated and compelling American component.
- Strong linkages to Mission South Africa strategic priorities as outlined above.
- Creativity and innovation in addressing the subject matter.
- Clearly described and realistic specific activities directly related to achieving the stated goals and objectives of the project.
- Demonstrated organizational capability to achieve the outcomes proposed.

Review and Selection Process
A review committee will evaluate all technically eligible applications.

The Merit Review Panel will recommend to the U.S. Mission to South Africa's Country Public Affairs Officer which applicants should be invited to submit a full proposal.

If an applicant is invited to submit a full proposal, the applicant will be notified by the U.S. Mission and additional instructions on what is required will be provided at that time.

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants submitting concept notes will not always receive formal notification, but if an applicant has not been contacted within 3 months of submission of their concept note, they have not been selected. Applicants who were invited to submit a full proposal that was not selected for funding will be notified no later than **October 15, 2025.**

F. Additional Requirements and Deadlines for Phase Two Applicants (Future Requirement – Not Required for Submission of Concept Notes)

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 Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket ("incident") with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: "I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain an NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated."

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD in addition to Department of State should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

> NCAGE Homepage:
> https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx
> NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):
> NCAGE Code Request Tool (nato.int)

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](2 CFR 25.110) for a full list of exemptions.

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

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 or representation in the United States.

G. Award Notices

The award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and countersignature. 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.

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

H. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

Administrative and National Policy Requirements
Before applying, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

    In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will

review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following: NOTE:

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:
    - o 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),
    - o 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),
    - o 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
    - o Terminating agreements pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

- [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)
- [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
- [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)
- [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE)](#)
- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
- [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)

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](#).

I. Other Information

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel and Fringe Benefits: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least $10,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than $10,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

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

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes.

All "Other" or "Miscellaneous" expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1.

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

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