

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB)**

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	4
Section A: Funding Opportunity Description	5
A1. Background	5
A2. Program Goals and Objectives	5
A3. Expected Results.....	6
A4. Main Activities	6
A5. Performance Indicators	9
A6. Substantive Involvement.....	10
Section B: Federal Award Information.....	11
B 1. Available Funding.....	11
B2. Award Management.....	11
Section C. Eligibility Information.....	11
C1. Eligible Applicants:.....	11
C2. Cost Share.....	12
C3. Other Eligibility Criteria	12
Section D: Application and Submission Information.....	13
D1. Address to request Application Package.....	13
D2. Content and Form of Application Submission	13
D3. Unique entity identifier (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)	13
D4. Submission Dates and Times.....	14
D5. Funding Restrictions	15
D6. Other Submission Requirements	16
Section E: Application Review Information.....	16
E1. Criteria.....	16
E2. Review and Selection Process	18
E3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information Systems.....	18
Section F: Federal Award Administration Information.....	19
F1. Federal Award Notices	19
F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements	20
F3. Reporting	21
Section G: Federal Awarding Agency Contact.....	22
G1. Contact	23

Section H: Other information.....	23
H1. Conflict of Interest.....	23
H2. Applicant Vetting.....	24
H3. Marking Policy	24
H4. Evaluation Policy.....	24
H5. Monitoring Site Visits.....	24
H6. Privacy Disclosure	24

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)
BUREAU OF ECONOMIC AND BUSINESS AFFAIRS (EB)

Announcement Type:	New
Funding Title:	Global Telecommunications and Emerging Technology Training
Assistance Instrument Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number:	SFOP0008129
Funding Type:	Discretionary
Assistance Listings Number:	19.700
Funding Amount:	\$3,106,476 U.S. Dollars
Funding Authority:	Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended
Source of Funding:	FY 2020 Economic Support Funds (ESF)
Funding Activity Category:	Economic Growth
Cost Sharing Requirement:	Not Required
Number of Awards:	One (1) award
Project Duration:	36 months
Key Dates:	1. Application must be submitted by 11:59 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on July 12, 2021 . 2. Questions must be submitted by 11:59 P.M. Eastern Standard Time (EST) on June 28, 2021 . 3. Notification of winning proposal expected by early August 2021.
Application Submission:	Application must be submitted through www.grants.gov .
Electronic Requirement:	Yes.
Eligibility Category:	-U.S. private institutions of higher education (universities and colleges). -U.S. public and state-controlled institutions of higher education (universities and colleges). --Public International Organizations (PIOs). -U.S.- based non-profit/non-governmental organizations having a 501 (c)(3) status with the IRS.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400, it is a U.S. Department of State policy not to award profit under federal assistance instruments. For-profit and commercial firms are **not** eligible to apply in response to this NOFO. No exceptions.

Type of Applicant:	Organizations only. Individuals are not eligible to apply.
Number of Applications:	One (1) per applicant organization.

Executive Summary

The Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP) at the Department of State announces this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to conduct a series of classes/trainings on information and communications technology (ICT) policy, Internet and telecommunications regulation, cybersecurity, digital trade, critical and emerging technologies, and digital economy policy to government officials, policymakers, and emerging leaders and influencers in the ICT industry in their respective ESF-eligible countries. These individuals will likely be in positions that enable, regulate, and oversee the telecommunications sector and digital economy in their countries, including for example, telecommunication regulators, trade ministers, and policymakers responsible for communications infrastructure and other relevant policy and regulatory functions. Emerging leaders and influencers may be academic leaders, skilled graduate students in disciplines like ICT policy, critical and emerging technologies or cybersecurity, civil society, business or trade association leaders and other professionals that have, or are growing into, influential positions in their respective countries.

Technology is an essential tool in our daily lives and is a foundation for economic growth, security, and transparent governments. It is essential that societies around the globe are educated in the areas of open, interoperable, reliable, and safe ICT networks, critical and emerging technologies, and subscribe to US aligned standards and establish transparent regulations and policies that encourage open and reliable operating environments. If the U.S. establishes a global training program to meet the needs of the global stakeholders and emerging leaders, and establish a sustainable community of practice then countries are more likely to realize the tremendous economic benefit of the digital economy

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the application package has been received by www.grants.gov in its entirety; there are steps that you should take immediately in order to make your submissions by the deadline. 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. Department of State bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes associated with electronic submissions via www.grants.gov. Incomplete application packages will not be considered.

The Federal award is signed by the Department of State Grants Officer. The Grants Officer is a USG official delegated the authority by the DOS Procurement Executive to award and administer the award. The award Agreement is the only authorizing document and will be issued electronically through the State Assistance Management System (SAMS Domestic).

Section A: Funding Opportunity Description

A1. Background

The Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP) is a global, multi-year initiative co-led by the U.S. Department of State and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to promote an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable internet. We provide foreign assistance to target countries in order to encourage the adoption of information and communication technologies (ICT) to promote economic growth and innovation, to advocate for the free flow of data, strengthen cybersecurity and mitigate against premature regulatory efforts aimed at emerging technologies. DCCP programs are implemented unilaterally, bilaterally with like-minded partners, and through multilateral international fora. DCCP was launched in 2018 to help provide credible alternatives to top-down, authoritarian approaches to internet governance, promote the deployment of secure, next generation ICT infrastructure, and build the cybersecurity capacity of our partners in order to enable nations to realize the tremendous economic benefits of the digital economy.

The DCCP program outlined here is to provide university quality coursework to officials and policy makers in ESF-eligible countries that promotes U.S. models of ICT and digital economy management; promotes the growth and expansion of open, interoperable, reliable, and secure communications networks; encourages the adoption of digital trade and ICT policies that support long-term, sustainable growth, private sector investment, and developing country self-reliance; improves the resilience and security of communications infrastructure; build a vibrant community of practice within the alumni network; and as a tertiary benefit, create opportunities for increased trade for U.S. businesses.

A2. Program Goals and Objectives

Program Goal

National security and economic prosperity depend on the security and integrity of our communications and information infrastructure. This NOFO will address three DCCP core objectives:

- **Build Connections:** Expand and increase secure Internet access in targeted emerging markets.
- **Advance an Open Internet:** Work with partner countries to adopt policies and regulatory positions that foster and encourage open, interoperable, reliable, and secure Internet.
- **Enhance Cybersecurity:** Work with partner countries to build cybersecurity capabilities and adopt best practices.

Program Objectives

Provide targeted training by relevant experts from the private sector, U.S. government, and academia through universities to:

- Build the institutional capacity of partner countries' relevant government officials and representatives to address ICT challenges and support secure and interoperable ICT ecosystems.
- Inform and align foreign decision-makers with U.S. approaches to secure ICT network deployments, critical and emerging technologies, and cybersecurity best practices to support countries' economic and national security.
- Inform and align foreign decision-makers on U.S. approaches to economic and information and communications technology (ICT) policies, thereby reducing barriers to trade, and creating more open business environments.
- Encourage participant government officials, emerging leaders and influencers to adopt and promote policy and regulatory environments that advance, or are aligned with, U.S. policy priorities to support an open, interoperable, reliable, and secure internet.
- Provide government officials, emerging leaders and influencers with a common lexicon and foundation for engagement with partners or in multilateral fora, such as at the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).
- Build a Community of Practice comprised of alumni and other like-minded professionals.

A3. Expected Results

Based on the goals and objectives of the program, expected results include, but are not limited to the following:

- Targeted government officials are more likely to adopt and support ICT policies, regulatory standards and equipment that support an open, interoperable, secure, and reliable Internet. We also expect targeted government officials to support similar policies in multinational organizations and standards developing organizations.
- Through the adoption of ICT policies, regulatory standards and equipment, targeted countries have increased digital capacity, are better integrated into the global economy, and can better realize the tremendous benefits of the digital economy.
- A network of program alumni within the ICT policy and regulatory community maintain and increase technology engagements and cooperation in the future.
- Targeted countries increase workforce knowledge and capacity in both government and non-government sectors and increase government-community relations.

A4. Main Activities

Program Description

This training program will provide specialized, technical ICT-related coursework to designated officials, emerging leaders, and influencers primarily from, but not limited to, developing countries that are key stakeholders or emerging leaders in ICT policy in their respective countries, or regional or multilateral institutions.

Prospective students may be officials working at telecommunications regulatory bodies or ministries of ICT that enable, regulate, and oversee their national communications infrastructure and are responsible for managing and regulating the digital economy. Students may also include emerging leaders from academia, the business community, civil society, or trade associations that have or are growing into positions of influence in ICT policy in their respective countries. Students may also include those skilled in areas such as cybersecurity, technology, computer science, artificial intelligence, mobile network operations, radio network/radio access engineering, spectrum allocation and management, or telecommunications technology that show the promise or potential to hold future leadership positions in ICT, cyber, or emerging technology industry.

This coursework will be designed to develop a cadre of current and future leaders and influencers in the relevant ministries, regulatory bodies and society that cover these topics, as to advance U.S. policy interests.

The key activities of this project include:

- Develop and implement intensive modular courses offered in both an on-campus, executive format, and remote distance-learning classrooms on a range of ICT issues for students to take on a part- or full-time basis **to encourage strong U.S. aligned telecommunications ICT policy and regulatory foundations in target countries and to develop a diverse, professional base to regulate, operate and/or maintain future ICT systems.**
- Develop and implement intensive modular courses offered in both on-campus, executive format, and remote distance-learning classrooms and workshops for students to take on a part- or full-time basis, **to identify common challenges and provide intellectual tools needed to develop digital strategies and promote the deployment of secure networks to strengthen the digital ecosystem of beneficiary countries.**
- Develop and implement applicable modular courses offered in both on-campus, executive format and remote distance-learning classrooms and workshops for students to take on a part- or full-time basis on common real-time challenges **to enable students to respond to and apply new skills and technical knowledge to address real-time needs.**
- Develop a plan to reach and target appropriate training candidates. Establish alumni network both on-campus, executive format and through distance interactive platforms for students **to continue high level engagement and knowledge sharing in a community of practice.**

This training program is intended to take place in the United States and in other countries, depending upon partner country interest. While the training is for participants from every region of the globe for ESF eligible countries, past and current DCCP countries include: Bangladesh, Brazil, Cambodia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Guatemala, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Mexico, Panama, Peru, Poland, South Africa, Tunisia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, and Vietnam.

Required topics:

- Telecommunication Policy and Regulation
 - An overview of telecommunications policymaking, and an introduction to U.S. government approaches to regulation, internet governance, and policymaking to include with a discussion of the benefits and risks of emerging tech.
- Wireless technology
 - Mobile Broadband: Technology and policy frameworks that foster the deployment of national broadband networks.
 - Satellite Communications: Technical and regulatory fundamentals of satellite communications and services.
 - 5G Networks: Telecommunications policy and regulatory frameworks that promote secure, trusted 5G and other next generation networks in developing countries, including Open RAN solutions.
 - Cybersecurity Policies and Strategies: A sequence of courses that will focus on key questions of policy and implementation related to cybersecurity and best practices.
- Digital Inclusion
 - Digital Divide and Adoption Gaps: Effective policy and business approaches for bridging the digital divide, so that marginalized, disadvantaged, and rural populations, including women and those in insecure environments, have opportunities to access, use, and afford digital connectivity services, in order to support development and humanitarian purposes.
 - Innovative Connectivity Models: Innovative business models and approaches for advancing last-mile connectivity in unserved and underserved areas, such as community networks, flexible spectrum policy and frameworks, open access frameworks, and universal service obligations or subsidy programs.

Additional topics could include:

- Spectrum Management: Spectrum planning, auctions, and other related policymaking, including the various elements required to plan, establish, organize, manage, and operate an effective spectrum management agency.
- Emergency Communications: Courses that cover telecommunications system needs for mitigating the effects of natural and man-made disasters.
- Standards Development: Courses that cover how to promote a private industry-led approach and strategy, including multi-stakeholder engagement with international Standard Development Organizations (SDOs).
- Multilateral Conferences: The Applicant will also need to be able to host specialized seminars for priority countries in preparation of key International Telecommunications Union (ITU) conferences, assemblies, and relevant meetings. (These courses may be proposed to be consistent with multilateral conference schedules, such as the ITU quadrennial cycle).

The Department of State encourages Applicants to consider critical and emerging fields and technologies, unmet needs, and other factors and to apply their expertise and experience when designing a proposed course curriculum while ensuring that they have included all required topics.

In-Person and Distance Learning Ability

The Applicant must describe and demonstrate how it can successfully implement both in-person and remote training and be cognizant of the realities of global and virtual engagement and training (including realities of time zones and languages).

Participant Recruitment and Selection

The Applicant will recruit, determine a selection process, and recommend a list of finalist participants/students for review and approval by the Department of State. The Applicant will collaborate closely with EB to identify and select well-placed government officials, representatives, and/or industry leaders from around the globe to participate in these training programs. The Applicant must demonstrate the ability to recruit diverse candidates, screen and select high-caliber candidates from all regions of the globe, and do so in close coordination with EB. The Applicant should provide diversity numbers on its students *and* staff and provide a gender/diversity statement on providing accommodations for non-traditional and a world-wide student base.

Accommodating a World-Wide Student Base

The Applicant should describe how it will accommodate students from around the world, including considerations around language, method of instruction (identifying a hybrid method of online or in-person instruction), and platforms it will utilize to teach these courses. Please outline any other considerations your organization will make (e.g., international partners/organizations to work with to enhance student learning, ability to meet learning and/or disability needs, etc.).

Language Translation

As necessary, the Applicant will ensure that all training content be translated into relevant languages for regionally focused trainings. As appropriate, the Applicant will need to provide training sessions in both English and the relevant language, either by means of a translator or by offering language-specific courses on the same topic.

Travel and Logistics

The Applicant will describe how it will manage candidates' visas, accommodation, and safety for any in-country coursework (if applicable). The Applicant will also describe how it plans to fulfill the overseas training components.

A5. Performance Indicators

Applicants should identify potential indicators relevant to the scope and expected results of the training articulated in this NOFO. If/when an award is made, the USG will work with the final selected Applicant to develop a holistic set of indicators that includes some provided by the USG

and some suggested by the Applicant. Indicators should be relevant to the goals or objectives of the program and may include, but are not limited to:

- Number of people participating in training, as well as disaggregated information about participants' sex, organization, topics on which they are being trained, their status as a new or returning trainee, or other relevant information specified by the USG.
- Number of training events held, and the topics covered by the training, such as:
 - Crafting US-aligned laws, policies, or strategies
 - Developing open tender processes
 - Digital economy
 - Digital inclusion (addressing the digital divide, last-mile connectivity)
 - ICT sector environmental safeguards
 - Wireless technology
 - Spectrum management
 - Multi-stakeholder models of governance
 - Preparing for multilateral conferences
- Longer-term outcomes of the training, such as participants influencing the following areas in their countries or within their home organizations:
 - US-aligned laws, policies, regulations, or strategies for telecom/ICT or cybersecurity
 - Voting in multilateral for US-aligned laws, policies and regulations
 - Strengthening the cybersecurity workforce
 - Strengthening internet privacy or governance standards
 - Cybersecurity awareness campaigns
 - Restricting the use of untrusted vendors
 - Building public-private partnerships
 - Strengthening non-government-owned internet governance institutions
 - Improving the capacity of non-government organizations to participate in internet governance
 - Mitigating the influence or effects of malign actors
- Number of participants that demonstrate improved knowledge or skills from the training, assessed through participant pre- and/or post-tests developed by the Applicant in consultation with the USG.
 - Attrition and retention rates of the cohort in community of practice.
 - Program elements completed on time and within budget.

A6. Substantive Involvement

This potential award will be a cooperative agreement requiring substantial involvement on the part of the Department of State (DOS), awarding bureau, EB/CIP/BA, including, but not limited to, close collaboration and approval of each phase of the project before moving to the next, to include participant/beneficiary selection.

Section B: Federal Award Information

B 1. Available Funding

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 as amended, (Economic Support Funds) and several funding restrictions apply, to include country-applicant restrictions.

The Department of State reserves the right to fund any or none of the proposals submitted and reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase the budget in accordance with the needs of the project and the availability of funds.

The Department of State may consider continuing the program funded under this award beyond the initial period of performance 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 and USG.

B2. Award Management

The Applicant should designate a Performance Monitoring Plan contact for quarterly assessments. Key indicators will be developed by the Department of State. There will be regular meetings on the Applicant's progress, emerging topics, etc.

The successful applicant must ensure that all funds are used in a manner consistent with any applicable restrictions on funding. See D5 below for funding restrictions.

Section C. Eligibility Information

C1. Eligible Applicants:

See page 3, Eligible Category.

Technically eligible submissions are those which: 1) arrive electronically to www.grants.gov by the designated deadline 2) have heeded all instructions contained in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI), including registrations, length and completeness of submission; and 3) do not violate any of the guidelines stated in this document.

The Applicant will need to demonstrate through previous experience and/or specific skill sets, a successful track record of developing and providing high-quality training to students on a broad range of technology, telecommunications, regulatory, internet-related, or other similarly complex policy topics.

The Department of State will issue an award to the Applicant whose application represents the best value to the U.S. Government based on technical merit, efficient use of U.S. Government funds, and satisfactory organizational capacity. The Department of State reserves the right to make an award based on the initial application received with or without discussion or negotiations. Therefore, applications should contain the Applicants' best terms from both cost and technical standpoints. Applicants should demonstrate expertise in training individuals from diverse backgrounds. Applicants should also demonstrate in-depth understanding of a wide range of governance structures.

C2. Cost Share

Not required. Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility requirement for this NOFO and will not be factored in during the merit review process.

Note: If cost-share is included in the budget, the Applicant must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the applicant does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the applicant's budget, DOS contribution may be reduced in proportion to the Applicant's contribution.

C3. Other Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.sam.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Applicants, including U.S. affiliates of international organizations, must provide a valid Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS), and **completed** www.sam.gov registration when submitting application on www.grants.gov in response to this NOFO. **Applicants that do not have a valid DUNS number and completed www.sam.gov registration will NOT be eligible for consideration. Implementing partners/sub-applicant organizations are required to have a valid DUNS number.**

Applicants listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) are 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." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

Organizations must have a commitment to equal opportunity employment practices and to non-discrimination practices regarding beneficiaries, without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.

Organizations may only submit one application per organization. If more than one application is submitted by an organization, only the first application received will be reviewed for eligibility and funding.

Courses must be taught by experts in the areas of policy listed above and should strive to provide a well-rounded perspective that includes industry, government, and academic perspectives. Courses must be taught at state-of-the-art, high-tech facilities, suitable to the course subject matter.

Section D: Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to request Application Package

Applicants can find application forms on www.grants.gov under the announcement title and funding opportunity number provided above.

Please refer to the **Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)** for additional application submission instructions, including information on required documents and format. Please follow both, the PSI and the NOFO, to ensure that the proposal package submission is in full compliance with the requirements. Proposal submissions that do not meet all the requirements outlined in this NOFO and the associated PSI will **not** be considered.

Once the NOFO deadline has passed, DOS may not discuss this competition with any applicant until the proposal review process has been completed.

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should submit them by email to the contacts listed in Section G. Please refer to the funding opportunity number and title.

Any updates about this NOFO will also be posted on www.grants.gov.

D3. Unique entity identifier (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)

Required Registrations:

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
- www.SAM.gov registration

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

Applicants must have an active registration in SAM (www.sam.gov) prior to submitting an application, must prove a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, formerly referred to as a DUNS number, and must continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by the U.S. government. If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to applying, the application will be deemed ineligible. Note: The process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

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 obtain a UEI number and register in SAM.gov.

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 and to also maintain its active registration in SAM.gov.

An exemption from this requirement may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if the applicant's identity must be protected due to possible endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant. Organizations requesting an exemption should email the point of contact listed in Section G of this NOFO.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission deadline as stated on page 3.

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

Grants.gov automatically log the date and time an application submission is made, and the Department of State will use this information to determine whether an application has been submitted on time. Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered.

D5. Funding Restrictions

The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement (this list is NOT exhaustive):

- Construction or renovations is not an allowable activity under this award;
- Expenses made prior to the approval of a proposal or unreasonable expenditures will not be reimbursed;
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
- Projects seeking funds for personal use;
- Projects that require a participation fee;
- Administration of a project that will make a profit;
- Expenses incurred before or after the specified dates of award period of performance (unless prior written approval is received);
- Projects designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction;
- Alcoholic beverages;
- Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities,

and any associated costs, are unallowable, except where specific costs that might otherwise be considered entertainment have a programmatic purpose and are authorized either in the approved budget for the federal award or with prior written approval of the Grants Officer.

Representation by Organization Regarding a Delinquent Tax Liability or a Felony Criminal Conviction: In accordance with section 7073 of Division K of the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2014 (Public Law 113-76) none of the funds made available by that Act may be used to enter into an assistance award with any organization that –

- (1) Was “convicted of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within the preceding 24 months, where the awarding agency has direct knowledge of the conviction, unless the agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government”; or
- (2) Has any “unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, unless the Federal agency has considered, in accordance with its procedures, that this further action is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government.”

For the purposes of Section 7073, it is the Department of State’s policy that no award may be made to any organization covered by (1) or (2) above, unless the Procurement Executive has made a written determination that suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the U.S. Government.

D6. Other Submission Requirements

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in Grants.gov and that an application has been received by the system in its entirety. DOS bears no responsibility for disqualification that results from applicants not being registered before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes. Additionally, you must save a screen shot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Section E: Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

The Department of State will issue an award to the applicant whose proposal represents the best value to the U.S. Government based on technical merit, efficient use of U.S. Government funds, and satisfactory organizational capacity. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability to be measured by a responsibility determination.

Applications should contain the applicants' best terms from both cost and technical standpoints. The implementing partners (sub-recipients) of the primary recipient will be subject to Department of State approval.

Eligible applications will be evaluated by an independent review panel consisting of subject matter experts from other DOS bureaus/or offices, U.S. Embassies, and/or other U.S. Government agencies. Final approval resides with the DOS Grants Officer.

The decision for the final eligibility and award determination rests with the Grants Officer.

The following criteria will serve as a standard which all **eligible** applications will be evaluated against. Each eligible Application will be evaluated and scored on the review criteria using a 100-point scale.

The review panel will apply the following criteria when rating proposals:

Quality of Project Idea (20 points)

- Proposal responds to the NOFO and demonstrates the Applicant's knowledge of the policy topics discussed above and the appropriate context for those policy topics in target countries;
- Application demonstrates an interdisciplinary approach to the training, which includes experts from industry, academia, and government;
- Proposal directly connects proposed activities with the desired outcomes (goals and objectives);
- Proposal demonstrates a plan to accommodate a world-wide student base including making foreign language and time zone considerations;

- Proposal includes an outline of the proposed curriculum, title, description, number of credit hours;
- Proposal describes the method of delivery (and ability to occur both online and in-person), number of instructors, etc.

Project Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives (25 points)

- Proposal provides a detailed work plan of proposed project activities and includes a clear articulation of how these activities will contribute to the overall project's goals and objectives;
- Project activities are specific, measurable, attainable, and placed in a reasonable time frame (SMART).

Institutional Capability and Record of Performance (20 points)

- Proposal must demonstrate ability to recruit, engage, and retain a diverse array of experts from the private sector, academia, and U.S. government to contribute to interdisciplinary training, technical assistance on the courses, or similar activities.

Project Management and Evaluation (15 points)

- Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Plan includes a narrative explaining how monitoring and evaluation will be carried out. The plan should summarize the Applicant's recruitment, implementation, and evaluation plans and how they will be used to achieve program goals.

Financial Capacity and Cost Effectiveness (10 points)

- Proposal budget, including salaries and honoraria, are explained and justified for the work involved;
- Proposed costs are reasonable, necessary, linked to program objectives, and demonstrate efficient use of U.S. Government funds.

Sustainability of Impact/Multiplier Effect (10 points)

- Proposal clearly articulates how desired objectives will be achieved and methods used to ensure sustainability of the program and clearly delineates how impact will be sustainable beyond the life of the cooperative agreement.

Cost Review

Costs will be reviewed for **reasonableness, allowability, allocability**, and cost-effectiveness of the use of USG funds. The review of cost-effectiveness will include an examination of the application's budget detail to ensure it is a realistic financial expression of the proposed project and does not contain estimated costs that are not **allocable, reasonable, or allowable**. Applications that have more efficient operational systems that reduce operation costs will be favorably considered on that factor. Final approval of the budget resides with the Grants Officer.

Applications that maximize direct activity costs and minimize administrative costs are encouraged. Other considerations are the completeness of the application, adequacy of budget detail, and consistency with elements of the technical application. In addition, the organization must demonstrate adequate financial management capability to be measured by a responsibility determination.

E2. Review and Selection Process

Applications will first be reviewed to determine technical eligibility.

All technically eligible applications will move forward to the merit review panel. Applications will be reviewed against the same criteria, listed above. Applications will be scored based on the strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned categories and for consistency with the program goals and key areas of interest as contained in this NOFO.

The Merit Review Panel may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of US Government funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

E3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information Systems

The Department of State, 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 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313).

The applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.

The Department of State 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 §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

Applicant organizations must demonstrate adherence to equal opportunity employment practices and commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and political affiliation.

Applicants are reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. law prohibits transactions with or support to individuals or organizations associated with terrorism.

- Proposals that reflect any type of support for any member, affiliate, or representative or a designate to terrorist organization or narcotics trafficker, including elected members of government, will NOT be considered. This provision must be included in any sub-awards/sub-contracts issued under this award.
- U.S. Applicant organizations must demonstrate adherence to equal opportunity employment practices and commitment to non-discrimination with respect to beneficiaries. Non-discrimination includes equal treatment without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and political affiliation.
- Applicants under DOS-funded projects are responsible for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state, and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for project participants.

Section F: Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

Successful applicant will be notified via email. This email may include a request for the applicant respond to panel conditions and recommendations. This notification is **not** an authorization to begin activities and does not constitute formal approval or a funding commitment.

Additional information that successful applicants may be required to submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

- Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the Review Panel and awarding bureau;
- Completion of the Department's Financial Management Survey, if receiving EB funding for the first time or requested by the Grants Officer;
- Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System (PMS) managed by the Department of Health and Human Services if receiving EB funding for the first time. PMS registration is bureau-specific;
- Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

Final approval is also contingent on Congressional Notification requirements being met and final review and approval by the Department's warranted Grants Officer.

The award shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer subsequent to the panel review and selection of proposals. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the sole authorizing document, and it will be provided to the Recipient electronically through SAMS Domestic. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

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

Furthermore, an award cannot be issued until funds have been fully appropriated, allocated, and committed through internal DOS procedures. While it is anticipated that these procedures will be successfully completed, potential applicants are hereby notified of these requirements. All preparation and submission costs are at the Applicant's expense.

Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.400(g), it is U.S. Department of State policy **not** to award profit under assistance instruments.

2 CFR §200.501 requires domestic/US non-federal entities that expend \$750,000, or more, in federal assistance during organization's fiscal year to have a single or program-specific audit conducted for that year. In addition, the entity must report the collected audit data elements on the form SF-SAC and submit it to the FAC. Any findings such as material weaknesses, significant deficiencies, or material noncompliance are reported on the SF-SAC.

F2. 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 programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following:

- The President’s September 2, 2020 memorandum, entitled *Memorandum on Reviewing Funding to State and Local Government Recipients of Federal Funds that Are Permitting Anarchy, Violence, and Destruction in American Cities*;
- *Executive Order on Protecting American Monuments, Memorials, and Statues and Combating Recent Criminal Violence* (E.O. 13933); and
- [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).

Applicants should plan to coordinate with EB/CIP throughout the course of the agreement to ensure assistance is provided only to eligible participants.

F3. Reporting

Financial Reports

The Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial reports (unless stipulated otherwise in the final Agreement) throughout the project period, using form SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form. If payment is made through the Payment Management System, all financial reports must be submitted electronically through the Payment Management System. The Recipient is also required to upload to SAMS Domestic a pdf version of all financial reports (Federal Financial report) they have submitted in the Payment Management System. Form (SF-425) can be found here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1>

Progress Reporting

The awardee will be required to upload all progress reports to the award file in SAMS Domestic. Progress reports must be submitted quarterly unless otherwise stipulated in the Agreement; the frequency will be determined by DOS prior to award.

Progress reports should also reflect the awardee's continued focus on measuring the project's impact on the overarching goals or problems the project set out to address. An assessment of the overall project impact, as appropriate, should be included in each quarterly project report.

The Applicant should produce performance monitoring plans, including quantity and quality of the curriculum, participants' progress reports, and pre- and post-training communications. The quarterly reports should be in narrative form which highlights the project's progress (such as the number and type of students, events, ongoing engagements, etc.), achievements, lessons learned, adaptive management changes, and any regulatory reporting required. Further, the project, data collection, and report should also include information on post-class contact between students and staff.

Final Reports

The final report will be due no later than 120 days after the end date of the award or termination of all project activities. The Final Report shall include the following elements: executive summary, successes, outcomes, best practices, how the project addresses gender issues and marginalized communities, how the project will be sustained, and a final financial report (FFR). Additional guidance may be provided prior to the award end date.

Please note: delays in reporting may result in delays of payment approvals and failure to provide required reports may jeopardize the recipients' ability to receive future U.S. government funds.

EB/CIP reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial project information during the award period of performance.

NOTE: It is the Department of State policy that English is the official language of all award documents. If reports or any other supporting documents are provided in both English and a foreign language, it must be stated in each version that the English language version is the controlling version. U.S. dollar is the controlling currency. Financial reports must be submitted in U.S. dollars.

Section G: Federal Awarding Agency Contact

G1. Contacts

Helena Saele
Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP)
Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs
SaeleH@state.gov

And

Richard Holliday
Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP)
Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs
HollidayRS@state.gov

G2. Questions

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO must email them to the contacts listed above with the subject “[Applicant Name] [NOFO title].” To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, EB/CIP will not answer substantive NOFO questions except when posting questions and answers to the announcement page as described below.

All questions must be submitted via email to contacts listed above by the deadline stated on page 3. EB/CIP will periodically create a document of submitted questions with answers and upload it and post them in grants.gov. Prospective applicants are advised to regularly review the announcement page in grants.gov for any updates. Note that once the NOFO deadline has passed, DOS staff in Washington, D.C. may not discuss this completion with applicants until the review process has been completed.

With the exception of technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff shall not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process has been completed and an award has been made.

The information in this NOFO is binding and may not be modified by any awarding bureau representative.

Explanatory information provided by any awarding bureau that contradicts this language will not be binding.

Section H: Other information

H1. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with applicable Federal awarding agency policy, applicants must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity.

H2. Applicant Vetting

N/A

H3. Marking Policy

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients of Federal assistance awards are subject to the State Department's Marking Policy. More information on this policy can be found in Section N of the Department of State's Standard Terms and Conditions:

<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/U.S.-Department-of-State-Standard-Terms-and-Conditions-10-21-2020-508.pdf>

H4. Evaluation Policy

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients of Federal assistance awards are subject to the Department of State Evaluation Policy. More information on this policy can be found here: <https://www.state.gov/guidance-for-the-design-monitoring-and-evaluation-policy-at-the-department-of-state/>

H5. Monitoring Site Visits

A monitoring site visit, at least once during the lifetime of a grant, may be conducted by Department of State personnel. The site visit is conducted to gather additional information on the recipient's ability to properly implement the project, manage DOS funds and share substantiating document for programmatic and financial reporting. Specifically, the site visit may involve the review of the programmatic progress (progress on activities, sub-recipient/consultant work, etc.) as well as administrative and financial management and controls. This may include observing classroom modules virtually or in person and visit applicant's headquarters and regional offices to observe operations.

H6. Privacy Disclosure

DOS understands that some information contained in applications may be considered sensitive or proprietary and will make appropriate efforts to protect such information. However, applicants are advised that DOS cannot guarantee that such information will not be disclosed, including pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) or other similar statutes.

Mandatory disclosures (2 CFR 200.113)

Non-federal entity, applicant or applicant for a federal award must disclose, in a timely manner, in writing to the federal awarding agency or pass-through entity all violations of federal criminal law involving fraud, bribery, or gratuity violations potentially affecting the federal award. Non-federal entities that have received a Federal award including the term and condition outlined in

Appendix XII of the 2 CFR 200—Award Terms and Conditions for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters -- are required to report certain civil, criminal, or administrative proceedings to www.sam.gov .

Failure to make required disclosures can result in any of the remedies described in §200.338 Remedies for Noncompliance, including suspension or debarment.

The Department of State will issue an award to the Applicant whose application represents the best value to the U.S. Government based on technical merit, efficient use of U.S. Government funds, and satisfactory organizational capacity.

The Department of State reserves the right to make an award based on the initial application received with or without discussion or negotiations. Therefore, applications should contain the Applicants' best terms from both cost and technical standpoints.

It is Department of State policy that English is the official language and U.S. dollar is the controlling currency. Applications and related supporting documents must be written in English and the accompanying budget must be presented in U.S. dollars.

DISCLAIMER:

The Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. Renewal of an award to increase or decrease funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of the Department of State and availability of funding.

Attachments:

1. Budget Template for New Awards (FY2021)
2. Budget Guidelines
3. Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)