



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Global Rapid Response Fund for Advancing Fundamental Freedoms

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

Opportunity number: DFOP0019705

Application deadline: August 31, 2026 11:59 PM ET

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

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Advancing Fundamental Freedoms: Global Rapid Response Fund
Funding Opportunity Number	DFOP0019705
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	August 31, 2026 11:59 PM ET
Assistance Listing Number	19.345
Length of performance period	18-24 months
Number of awards anticipated	One award
Award amounts	\$9,569,050
Total available funding	\$9,569,050
Type of Funding	FY25 Democracy Fund
Anticipated project start date	October 1, 2026

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 24 months or less. The Department of State will entertain applications for cost amendments funded under this award beyond the initial budget and 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.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

Priority Region: Global

Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of State Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) will award a cooperative agreement for a new program that responds to unexpected events, policy challenges, and political opportunities affecting U.S. interests in advancing fundamental freedoms and democratic values. The program will provide timely, short-term interventions that respond to threats to fundamental freedoms and/or seize openings that improve conditions for the exercise of same. For cost-effectiveness and higher impact, program interventions will primarily be led by organizations that are rooted in the affected communities and countries.

The program will be used in situations such as developing crises or political transitions of interest to the United States that merit a fast, flexible responsive program to prevent serious deteriorations in conditions for the exercise of fundamental freedoms and/or to seize opportunities to promote significant improvements in such conditions. This program aligns with U.S. interests to be agile in assistance programming, so we are better positioned to shape unfolding geopolitical events.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations *are eligible to apply*:

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

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

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

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov as well as a valid registration in SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

Program Description

Political transitions, contested elections, sudden crackdowns and escalations of abuses against populations, and other fast-moving events can open—and just as quickly close—narrow windows in which modest, well-timed support can meaningfully affect whether a country moves forward to greater respect for fundamental freedoms or backward to entrenched repression that is contrary to U.S. interests and values. Traditional multi-year grant cycles are often too slow to allow us to capture these moments. The Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) therefore sees the need for a standing mechanism that can deploy resources within days or weeks of an unfolding event, rather than the months that are typically required to design, compete, and award a new program.

This cooperative agreement will fund a single implementing partner (or consortium) capable of managing a flexible, rapid-response grant-making facility. The award will function as a ready reserve of expertise and funding that DRL can activate when a qualifying threat or opportunity arises—whether it is a disputed election, an abrupt legal assault on independent media, an outbreak of destabilizing violent repression and civil unrest, or it is an opening for civil society

following a change in government, or another unanticipated inflection point affecting fundamental freedoms and democratic governance.

The awardee will maintain the internal systems, vetting protocols, and standing relationships necessary to identify, assess, and fund its efforts on an accelerated timeline, ensuring that DRL resources can be applied while an opportunity is still viable. Funded efforts will be implemented primarily by organizations that are rooted in the affected communities and countries, which lends credibility to their work, reduces program costs, and increases speed of response and effectiveness by building on such organizations' existing knowledge and networks. Already being rooted in the affected community and country also helps the implementers' efforts be accepted as authentic and not rejected as the work of an external actor trying to impose its will. Awards under this mechanism will be narrowly scoped and time-limited, designed to seize a specific opportunity or blunt a specific threat rather than to sustain long-term institutional development, which remains the province of DRL's other programming. Throughout, the awardee will provide DRL with rapid situational analysis to ensure that efforts are well-targeted and have measurable impact within the available window.

This program directly advances priorities set out in the November 2025 National Security Strategy (NSS). The NSS identifies as a priority interest the defense of the natural rights that belong to all persons, particularly free speech, freedom of religion and conscience, and the right of citizens to choose and steer their own government, stating that the United States "will oppose elite-driven, anti-democratic restrictions on core liberties." A rapid-response mechanism gives the Department a concrete tool to use when liberties are at imminent risk or an opening to secure them arises instead of having to wait for the next standard funding cycle thus missing the moment.

1. Goals and Objectives

Goal: Fundamental freedoms are protected and advanced through timely efforts by implementers rooted in affected communities and countries who defend against emerging threats to fundamental freedoms and capitalize on windows of opportunity for democratic progress.

To support both objectives, the awardee should maintain:

- **A standing rapid-assessment capability** to evaluate emerging situations against standardized criteria for activation (e.g., severity of threat, viability of the opportunity, feasibility of on-the-ground implementation).
- **A pre-vetted network of local partner organizations and subject matter experts** across priority regions and issue sets to minimize onboarding delays once a threat or opportunity arises.
- **Streamlined sub-award and in-kind support mechanisms** capable of disbursing funds within days, rather than taking the months typical of standard grant cycles.
- **After-action reviews** to capture lessons learned and refine the rapid-response model over time.

Objective 1: At-risk civil society organizations, independent media, and civic institutions withstand acute threats and sustain their work in defense of fundamental freedoms

Illustrative Outcomes:

- Civil society organizations and independent media outlets continue functioning despite legal, financial, and/or administrative pressure intended to shut them down.
- Restrictive laws, regulations, and/or administrative actions targeting civil society and/or independent media are challenged, delayed, or rolled back.
- State-sponsored propaganda campaigns against civil society, independent media, or disfavored religious, ethnic or racial groups are identified and publicly countered.
- International attention and diplomatic pressure are mobilized in response to a significant act or surge of repression, increasing the reputational and political cost of continued crackdowns.
- Civic and media institutions strengthen their organizational resilience against future acute threats, including administrative, legal, and cyber-enabled pressure.

Illustrative Activities:

- Fund rapid legal and policy analysis to identify threats posed to the exercise of fundamental freedoms by proposed or newly enacted laws and regulations (e.g. repressive anti-NGO laws and unduly restrictive media licensing rules) and support local coalitions in mounting a coordinated legal or legislative challenge.
- Support strategic litigation brought by local organizations against government actions that unduly restrict the fundamental freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association or religion or belief.
- Provide rapid grants to independent media outlets and civil society organizations to maintain institutional operations (e.g., organizational-level digital security upgrades, alternative distribution platforms, contingency communications infrastructure) when facing shutdown, deplatforming, or funding cutoffs.
- Fund rapid-response research and documentation efforts to produce credible, publishable evidence of undue restrictions of fundamental freedoms, or of reprisals against individual for exercising them, that can be used to support advocacy and accountability.
- Support coordinated public information campaigns that counter state-sponsored propaganda accompanying a crackdown, amplifying accurate information through trusted local and diaspora media networks.
- Convene or support existing coalitions of local civil society organizations to present a unified, organized response to a specific threat, strengthening their collective leverage and public visibility.
- Fund rapid engagement with governments, professional associations, and/or business communities to generate outside pressure against a specific repressive action.
- Provide short-term organizational capacity support (e.g., crisis communications training, financial contingency planning, board governance support) to help institutions—not individuals—withstand and recover from acute pressure. (Note that long-term capacity building will not be the focus of this funding.)

Objective 2: Emerging political openings result in durable, institutionalized gains for the exercise of fundamental freedoms and democratic governance.**Illustrative Outcomes:**

- Local reform-minded actors successfully leverage a political transition to secure concrete improvements in law, policy, or practice affecting fundamental freedoms.
- Civil society and independent media play an active role in shaping a transitional or post-transition environment.
- Newly opened civic space is institutionalized through local advocacy before it can be closed by resurgent authoritarian actors.

Illustrative Activities:

- Deploy rapid grants to local coalitions advocating for legal or constitutional reforms during a transition period.
- Support independent election monitoring and civic education efforts tied to a specific electoral window.
- Fund local organizations engaging newly formed governments or transitional bodies to institutionalize protections for freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, association and religion or belief.
- Provide technical assistance to local partners drafting or advocating for legislation that expands or protects civil liberties in the immediate aftermath of a political opening.

In addition, to be competitive, proposals will include the following:

- The applicant must demonstrate how its teaming approach will bring a variety of knowledge, skills, and abilities to implement the activity.
- The applicant should describe its capacity to:
 - a) evaluate country conditions and draw on theory, experience, and lessons learned to design innovative, effective, and workable projects within their respective areas of expertise as new opportunities and challenges unfold on the ground;
 - b) effectively and efficiently manage projects, including the capability to place them in the field quickly with all necessary support and to start project activities rapidly;
 - c) build and maintain relationships with other organizations, including at the local levels, and with key stakeholders; and
 - d) monitor and evaluate project implementation, results, and impacts, solve problems, and make course corrections when necessary.
- The applicant must describe its grantmaking and subgrant management abilities, including the expected speed in which grants and subcontracts can be made to meet immediate opportunities and the Department's requests.
- Applicant must describe its approach for working with informal, non-registered networks and coalitions, including those that gather for a specific but temporary purpose but are not expected to coalesce into a more permanent entity.
- For cost-effectiveness and higher impact, program efforts should primarily be led by organizations that are rooted in the affected communities or countries.

Program Specific Requirements:

- Individual projects may be implemented directly by the prime implementer/consortium members, or through subawards to local or regional organizations.

- Grantmaking: DRL envisions up to 40 percent of funds provided as grants to international and local organizations for activities that are responsive to political opportunities. While some prospective partners should be included in the proposal, DRL seeks the flexibility to grant to subpartners identified over the life of the award, with subgrantees identified by the Department and the implementer. Funds will be prioritized for activities and actions that are requested by embassies. DRL anticipates a range of grantmaking – from \$10,000 up to \$100,000.
- Support, to include, but not be limited to, logistical support, software licenses, and use of staff time, office space, conference room space, or other resources.
- Provide on-demand advisory support such as strategic communications, and legal support.
- Provide grant management guidance on compliance with 2 CFR 200 and other federal laws and regulations, financial management expertise, and sustainability and revenue diversification strategies for civil society.
- Hosting conferences and/or meetings to convene civil society organizations and other stakeholders to discuss issues pertaining to human rights and fundamental freedoms
- Organizing individual or group travel for civic leaders and dissidents to attend key advocacy events or influential gatherings. DRL prefers to fund activities in target countries, but the implementer should be prepared for DRL to request U.S.-based study tours, scholarships, or exchange projects, should a pressing policy need arise.
- Conduct research on demand that can contribute to the effective implementation of projects that address the challenges and opportunities in the advancement of fundamental freedoms and democratic values.
- Security risk and mitigation support for activists targeted for their work promoting fundamental freedoms and democratic values [note: DRL does not anticipate this to be the focus of this program, but the implementer should be prepared to provide emergency/crisis response financial and advisory support if needed].
- The organization will submit to DRL for approval a Monitoring & Evaluation Narrative to describe the organization's approach to monitoring and evaluation, including proof and verification of results outlined in the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan and methodologies for internal and external evaluations.
- The organization will submit to DRL for approval the CVs of any Key Personnel proposed under the award.
- The organization could be subject to annual site visits by the programming monitoring team.
- Grantees must notify their Grants Officer Representative and their Technical Program Officer prior to any international travel, even if pre-approved in the grant budget. Grantees must also notify their Grants Officer Representative and their Technical Program Officer regarding any travel-related incidents resulting from any programmatic activities under any project or grant, USG or otherwise.
- The organization will submit to DRL for approval any evaluation, research or survey methodologies.
- The recipient will work closely with DRL to design in a timely fashion targeted projects that address a myriad of issues in various ways. DRL may approach the recipient with an idea for a project or the recipient may propose a project idea to DRL, but the two will work together to design the project that the prime implementer or subawardee will

implement or oversee. Individual projects implemented under the mechanism will be approved based upon guidelines and processes established by DRL once the cooperative agreement is awarded.

- At least 14 days in advance of in-person activities or advocacy events in all countries other than the United States, the recipient will secure written DRL approval. DRL will in turn suggest and provide relevant points of contact across the Department, civil society, and other networks as needed to ensure maximal program effectiveness and impact.

Substantial Involvement

The award will be a cooperative agreement. The organization that this program is awarded to will collaborate with DRL on overall programmatic planning and implementation and report programmatic challenges as they arise through all phases of the project. The Department of State will be substantially involved in carrying out various aspects of this cooperative agreement. Examples of substantial involvement may include but are not limited to:

- DRL will work with the implementer to co- develop subgrants and in-kind assistance to be funded under this program.
- DRL will work with the implementer to co- develop workshop(s) and events including selection of participants, training topics, and location(s).
- DRL will provide guidance to ensure all activities remain consistent with the Foreign Assistance Act and applicable State/Foreign Operations appropriations provisions.
- DRL will provide technical assistance on Performance Indicator Tracking Table, monitoring an evaluation narrative, and accompanying monitoring and evaluation plan or offers guidance on methodology or approach.

Application Contents and Format

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

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals) <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family>
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)

- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) , as applicable (note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals, organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov)

2. Summary Page (optional)

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

3. Proposal (15 pages maximum)

The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed project, including project objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the State Department and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Project Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Project Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Project Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- **Proposed Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Proposed titles, roles, and experience/qualifications of key personnel positions involved in the program, including the expected proportion of time the position will support the program. Please do not include resumes of proposed personnel at this time. Provide only criteria for which the program proposes to use over the life of the grant for key positions.
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability:** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Itemized Budget

Submit a detailed, itemized budget information according to the OMB cost categories (see SF-424A). Budget expenses should be submitted preferably as one Excel workbook and include three (3) columns describing the request to the Bureau, any required or voluntary cost sharing,

and the total budget. Costs must be in whole U.S. dollars. The attached “Budget Template FY26 with MTDC Calculation_Final)” is the preferred format for submission. Detailed itemized budgets for sub-grantees should be included as additional tabs within the Excel workbook (if available at the time of submission).

5. Budget Justification Narrative

After filling out the itemized budget, use a separate file to document the purpose each of the budget expenses in detail. Do not simply repeat what is represented numerically in the detailed budget, i.e. salaries are for salaries or travel is for travel. If the detailed budget includes sub-awards, please include a separate budget narrative for each sub-award budget. Provide details on the purpose of costs, reasonability of costs, cost price analysis, allocation methodology, explain any yearly variances in unit prices, and tie expenses to program activities and/or objectives where appropriate. Provide information on considerations such as translations, multi-media approaches as also described in the proposal narrative, procurement by local vendors or the need to import due to unavailability, specific needs of different audiences, costs related to country limitations, etc.

6. Attachments

- A line-item budget, expanding upon the summary categories found in the SF-424A. Subgrantee budgets, if known at time of submission, should also be included as tabs (please see template attached to NOFO).
- Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a PDF file.
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities.
- Key Personnel position descriptions and criteria.

C. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. Address to Request Application Package

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

2. Department of State Contacts

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: DRL-PRUSolicitation@state.gov.

3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration in SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. An applicant must maintain an active registration while it has a proposal under review by the Department and must continue to keep the registration active for the entire duration of the period of performance of any Federal award that results from this NOFO.

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

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

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a UEI prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- **Organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of War (DoW) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoW foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of War. I do not wish to obtain an NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

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

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

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

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

NCAGE Homepage:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

[NCAGE Code Request Tool \(nato.int\)](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx)

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis. See [2 CFR 25.110](https://www.fds.gov) for a full list of exemptions.

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

4. *Submission Dates and Times*

Applications are due no later than *August 31, 2026 at 11:59 EST*.

5. *Funding Restrictions*

i. Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to provide any payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

ii. Prohibition on Funding Activities that Encourage Mass-Migration Caravans towards the United States Southwest Border:

None of the funds awarded under this grant may be made available to encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass-migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. Funds may not be made available for legal counseling on the United States asylum process; and/or for referrals to legal representation in the United States.

Funds may only be used for cash cards for use in the country in which they are provided or to facilitate assisted voluntary returns and other purposes that do not encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. The provision of humanitarian assistance is permitted.

iii. Certification Regarding Compliance with applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws

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

- 1) Its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code and;
- 2) It does not operate any programs promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws. A program promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion means a program whose purpose is to promote preferences based on race, color religion, sex, or national origins, such as in training or hiring.

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

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

- 1) Its compliance in all respects with section 1011f of title 20, United States Code, and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements is material for purposes of section 3729 of title 31, United States Code, and for receipt of appropriate Federal grant funds.

- v. Certification of Trafficking in Persons Compliance and Compliance Plan

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

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

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

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

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

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

(a) *Definitions.*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

vi. Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance (PHFFA)

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

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

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

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

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

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

6. *Other Submission Requirements*

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

D. Application Review Information

1. *Review Criteria*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

2. Indirect Costs

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

3. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

4. Risk Review

i. Risk factors

Under the merit review as required by 2 CFR 200.206, prior to making a Federal Award the Department will review and consider the following risk factors:

- a. Financial stability
- b. Management systems and standards
- c. History of performance
- d. Audit reports and findings
- e. Ability to effectively implement requirements

ii. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov

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

An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Department will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

E. Award Notices

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

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

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

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email.

Payment Method: Payments under this award will be made through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS).

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

F. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

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

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an impartial process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
 - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
 - Terminating agreements pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340). For the avoidance of doubt, the Department has sole discretion over the determination that an award no longer effectuates program goals or agency priorities, and this provision permits awards to be terminated at the Department's convenience, including when it determines that the award no longer advances the national interest.
- [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)
- [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
- [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)

- [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE \(FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\)](#)
- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
- [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)
- Recipients must comply with all applicable Executive Orders A searchable list can be found in the Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/>

2. *Reporting*

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

Foreign Assistance Data Review: As required by Congress, the Department of State must make progress in its efforts to improve tracking and reporting of foreign assistance data through the Foreign Assistance Data Review (FADR). The FADR requires tracking of foreign assistance activity data from budgeting, planning, and allocation through obligation and disbursement. Successful applicants will be required to report and draw down federal funding based on the appropriate FADR Data Elements, indicated within their award documentation. In cases of more than one FADR Data Element, typically program or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in [2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters](#).

3. **Branding and Marking**

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

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

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