**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy Tbilisi, Georgia**

**Notic of Funding Opportunity**

**Funding Opportunity Title:**The Academy for Women Entrepreneurs (AWE)

**Funding Opportunity Number:**PDS-DOS-GEO-FY25-004

**Deadline for Applications**: January 20, 2025

**Assistance Listing Number:**19.022

**Total Amount Available:** $35,000

The Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Embassy Tbilisi announces an open competition for not-for-profit organizations, and Individual alumni of all USG-funded or USG-sponsored exchange programs that are residents of Georgia to submit applications to carry out the 2025 Academy for Women Entrepreneurship (AWE) program. We are seeking the implementing partner that will serve as a liaison with U.S. Embassy Georgia and AWE stakeholders, lead implementation, facilitate communication with AWE participants, encourage their successful completion of the program, monitor and report on progress, promote the program with the public, and amplify the core goals of the initiative in supporting women and economic prosperity in Georgia.

Those who are interested in implementing the 2025 AWE should submit a proposal package to **tbilisigrants@state.gov by January 20, 2025, 11:59p.m.** Applications submitted directly to ECA will not be considered. Please follow all instructions below.

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) established the Academy for Women Entrepreneurs in 2019 to provide women with the knowledge, networks, and access they need to launch or scale successful businesses: <https://eca.state.gov/awe>

By promoting women’s economic opportunities and ensuring that women have the capabilities and resources needed to participate in the economy, the AWE program directly supports the U.S. National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality.

AWE uses a hybrid model that combines the online platform [DreamBuilder](https://dreambuilder.org/) (developed through a partnership between Arizona State University’s Thunderbird School of Global Management and global copper mining company Freeport-McMoRan) with online and/or in-class mentoring and facilitation. Through AWE, participants learn core business skills, then get together as a class to discuss the material with experienced implementers, local mentors, and U.S. Exchange Alumni. Partnerships with local NGOs, universities, and chambers of commerce offer women the opportunity to amplify their newly learned business skills and network with other businesspeople through speed mentoring, pitch competitions, and entrepreneurship fairs.

At a local level, AWE harnesses the power of public-private sponsors, local partnerships, and U.S. Exchange Alumni networks to help women and their businesses grow. By giving women the tools and the confidence they need, the AWE program is generating income and creating jobs in women-led businesses, driving local prosperity in more than 100 countries worldwide.

**Program Objectives:**

* Provide resources for English-speaking female entrepreneurs of Georgia to engage in U.S-style online and/or in-person education with guided facilitation from USG exchange alumni, local business leaders, or other local partners.
* Foster networks that support participants’ access to peer-to-peer mentors, business partners, and scaling opportunities with businesses in the region and in the United States.
* Engage AWE alumni with volunteer, professional, and educational opportunities in ways to promote business expansion.
* Share lessons and practices from the United States with new businesses operating in the Georgian entrepreneurial ecosystems and prepare them for potential collaboration with U.S. clients, customers, and investors.  The project also aims to empower women entrepreneurs in Georgia to fulfill their economic potential, and in doing so, create conditions for a more prosperous society.

**Participants and Audiences:**

Female entrepreneurs of Georgia

**Priority Region:**N/A

**B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: up to 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: one

Award amounts: up to $35,000

Total available funding: $35,000

Type of Funding: FY25 ECA funding

Anticipated program start date: Summer 2025, tentatively.

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

**Funding Instrument Type:**Grant, fixed amount award (FAA), or cooperative agreement.

**Program Performance Period**: Proposed programs should be completed in 12 months or less.

The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

**C. ELIGILIBITY INFORMATION**

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

* Not*-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations*
* Individual alumni of all USG-funded or USG-sponsored exchange programs that are residents of Georgia
1. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost-sharing or in-kind contribution from local organizations, and/or private sector businesses in encouraged, though not mandatory.

1. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov.

 **UEI and SAM.gov Exemptions:**

* **Individuals are always exempt from the requirement to obtain a UEI and register in SAM.gov unless they are operating a sole proprietorship or single member limited liability company.**
* **Foreign organizations or foreign public entities receiving an award less than $500,000 that will be performed outside the United States may be exempted from completing full SAM.gov registration; however, the organization or foreign public entity must still obtain a UEI.**

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.

**D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at U.S Embassy Tbilisi website

1. Content and Form of Application Submission:

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

**Content of Application**

Please ensure:

* The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
* All documents are in English
* All budgets are in U.S. dollars
* All pages are numbered
* All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
* All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Calibri 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)***
* **SF-424A** ***(Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)***
* **SF-424B** ***(Assurances for Non-Construction programs) (note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals and for organizations not registered in SAM.gov)***

**2. Summary Page:**Cover sheet stating the applicant name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

**3. Proposal (max 9 pages):** 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 program, including program 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 U.S. Embassy 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
* **Program 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.
* **Program Activities**: Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
* **Program 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 Program Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
* **Key Personnel:**Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
* **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
* **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame 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?

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

**5. Attachments:**

* 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
* 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, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.
* Official permission letters, if required for program activities
1. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than January 20, 2025*.*

1. Funding Restrictions

This program does not support the following activities or costs, and the selection committee will deem applications involving any of these activities or costs ineligible:

* Activities that take place in the United States and its territories
* Large items of durable equipment or construction programs
* Alcohol, excessive meals, refreshments, or entertainment
* Academic or scientific research
* Charitable or development activities
* Provision of direct social services to a population
* Individual scholarships · Social travel/visits
* Gifts or prizes
* Duplication of existing programs
* Institutional development of an organization
* Venture capital, for-profit endeavors, or charging a fee for participation in project
* Support for specific religious activities · Fund-raising campaigns
* Support or opposition of partisan political activity or lobbying for specific legislation
1. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to tbilisigrants@state.gov

**E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

1. Criteria

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

**Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea** **– 20 points:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

**Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points:** The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds.  This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

**Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Budget – 10 points:** 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 – 15 points:** 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 – 10 points:** Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

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

1. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications

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

*For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold over the period of performance (see §200.01 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants that:*

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

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

iii. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

**F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

* 1. Federal Award Notices

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

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

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

**Payment Method:** EFT

* 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:

* [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.25&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.170&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.175&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE (FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE)](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.182&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.183&rgn=div5)
* [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title02/2chapterVI.tpl)
* [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/)

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

* [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](https://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=81a5f41de81c46a9844617d93a9db081&mc=true&node=pt2.1.200&rgn=div5) (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).

The support of underserved communities will be part of the review criteria for this opportunity. Therefore, proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation. *If using this text, revise one or more of the review criteria in section E.1. above to include mention of it.*

* 1. Reporting

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify 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.

**G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: **tbilisigrants@state.gov**

**H. OTHER INFORMATION**

**Guidelines for Budget Justification**

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

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

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least $5,000 per unit.

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

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

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

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

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