U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy Prague, Public Affairs Section
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Title: Bridging Opportunities: Empowerment for Young Roma through English Language and Soft Skills Training in the Czech Republic
Funding Opportunity Number: PAS-005-FY2024
Deadline for Applications: June 5, 2024, midnight (Prague time)
Assistance Listing Number: 19.900 - AEECA/ESF PD Programs
Total Amount Available: $100,000 USD (Subject to availability of funds)
Length of performance period: Up to 24 months

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
The U.S. Embassy in Prague Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce an opportunity for not-for-profit organizations/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or academic institutions to submit project proposals to carry out a program of empowering young Roma individuals in the Czech Republic through the development and implementation of a comprehensive English language training program, complemented by soft skills training tailored specifically for this demographic.

The overarching goal of this program is to address the critical need for enhanced English language proficiency and the cultivation of essential soft skills among the Roma youth population. This program aims to create pathways for improved access to education, expanded employment opportunities, increased social integration for Roma youth across the Czech Republic, and greater capacity to participate in international exchanges and collaborate with international NGOs.

Priority Region: Czech Republic, with particular emphasis on activities outside the capital of Prague

Program Objectives: The program objectives are: (1) measurably increase the English language ability of Roma youth (ages 15-25); and (2) participants in the program acquire soft skills that increase their employment opportunities and strengthen their overall educational performance.

Project Activities: Project activities, which can be carried out directly by the primary implementing organization or which may include sub-awards to partner organizations, should include all the following components:

> **English Language Proficiency Enhancement:** Develop a dynamic and interactive English language curriculum catered to the specific needs and backgrounds of young Roma individuals. Develop a schedule of courses that utilize innovative teaching methodologies, multimedia resources, and culturally relevant content to create a supportive and engaging learning environment.

Soft Skills Development: Develop and provide comprehensive and age-appropriate training modules focusing on essential soft skills, which may include topics such as communication, teamwork, problem-solving, job interviews, public speaking, computer skills, and leadership. Through experiential learning activities, role-playing scenarios, and real-world applications, participants should gain the necessary skills and confidence to navigate academic, professional, and social contexts effectively.

Empowerment and Opportunities: Offer mentorship opportunities, networking, and access to resources aimed at holistic personal and professional development. This includes guidance on career pathways, educational opportunities, and strategies for overcoming societal barriers faced by Roma youth.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track the progress and impact of the program. Regular assessments, feedback sessions, and qualitative analysis will ensure continuous improvement and accountability throughout program implementation. Proposals should note how many students will participate, expected completion rates, and how progress on skills will be measured, including whether participants will receive any kind of certification for completing the program.

Applicants should include in their budgets all costs necessary to implement the proposed English language and soft skills training, such as:

- Designing (or adjusting existing) curriculum for courses
- Hiring and/or contracting English language instructors
- Hiring and/or contracting instructor assistants
- Implementation and oversight of courses
- Costs to publicize courses, recruit and select students
- Testing of course participants (in the course of the program and at the graduation of participants).
- Evaluation of impact
- Travel costs
- Rent of training spaces if necessary

Participants and Audiences: The program targets young Roma individuals aged 15-25 residing in the Czech Republic, with a particular emphasis on reaching those facing socio-economic barriers to education and employment opportunities. Competitive proposals will create program cohorts in more than one Czech city. Proposals should include information on which specific cities will be targeted for courses, how many students will be enrolled, and what age cohorts within the target will be included in the proposed programs.

Selection Criteria: The U.S. Embassy in Prague will evaluate proposals based on the following key criteria (see section E1 for further detail):

- Overall quality and feasibility of the proposed program plan with a strong instruction plan and effective strategies for student recruitment and retention throughout the program's duration.
- Clear program planning, and clarity and specificity of project goals, ensuring they are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound (SMART).
- Demonstrated experience in executing comparable educational initiatives, and capacity of the organization to carry out a program of this scale.
- Robust connectivity with Roma communities through collaboration with NGOs or experts specializing in Roma support across the country, to ensure optimal participant selection, participation, and retention for the training program.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: Up to 24 months
Number of awards anticipated: 1 award
Award amount: $100,000
Total available funding: $100,000
Type of Funding: Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia (AEECA)
Anticipated program start date: September 2024
This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement. The U.S. Embassy (PDS) expects to be substantially involved in consulting with the selected partner on final programming, locations for programs, and approving all final public communication or advertising designs and placements. The U.S. Embassy also may be able to connect the selected partner with our network of six American Centers across the country as possible locations for program activities.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 24 months or less.

C. ELIGILIBITY INFORMATION

C1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply*:*

- Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations (Czech or U.S.)
- Public educational institutions (Czech or U.S.)

C2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost-sharing is not required but encouraged.

C3. 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 as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.2 for more information.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

D1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at www.grants.gov and the U.S. Embassy Prague website: https://cz.usembassy.gov/education-culture/small-grants-program/

D2. 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 proposal should not exceed ten (10) pages (not including mandatory forms).

The following documents are **required**:

1. **Mandatory application forms**
   - **SF-424** ***(Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)*** at www.grants.gov and the U.S. Embassy Prague website: https://cz.usembassy.gov/education-culture/small-grants-program/
   - **SF-424A** ***(Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) at*** www.grants.gov and the U.S. Embassy Prague website: https://cz.usembassy.gov/education-culture/small-grants-program/

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

3. Proposal (10 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 program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Problem Statement, Project Goals and Objectives:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and how the program will address the problem. Include program goals that describe what the program is intended to achieve and objectives to describe specific accomplishments on the way to the goal. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities**: Describe the specific program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives. This should include details on the proposed curriculum for both English classes and soft skills classes; the proposed number of locations for courses; how class cohorts will be organized; the duration of the overall class schedule; the plan for recruiting and retaining students/ensuring high participant attendance; and how completion of the program will be recognized.
- **Program Outputs and Outcomes:** Describe expected program outputs (number of people reached with program, number of activities to be carried out, etc.), as well as expected outcomes (what change in performance, behavior etc. you expect to see as a result of the program).
- **Proposed Program Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program planning and activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events to the greatest extent possible.
- **Introduction to the Organization 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.
- **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 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?
- **Budget and Budget Justification**
    a. **Budget Justification Narrative**: After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate file to describe each of the budget expenses in detail.
    b. **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.
    c. **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.

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

4. Attachments (not included in 10-page limit):

- 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

5. 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 with the 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.

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

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 number 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 number prior to registering in SAM.gov.

- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket ("incident") with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: "I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain a CAGE or NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated."

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

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

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

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

NCAGE Homepage:
https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

Exemptions
An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

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.

D3. Submission Dates and Times

Proposals are due no later than June 5, 2024, midnight (Prague time)

All application materials must be submitted by email to grantsprague@state.gov with the subject line "Empowerment for Young Roma through English Language". Applications submitted after the deadline will not be considered.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E1. Criteria

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Program: The program is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The program includes effective strategies for student recruitment and retention.

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.

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.

Cultural Competence with Roma Community: The organization has experience with or strong connectivity to Czech Roma communities, either independently and/or through collaboration with other NGOs or partners to develop a culturally sensitive and relevant curriculum and program plan, as well as to ensure robust recruitment and participation.

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.

E2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications and select the proposal(s) that best meets the selection criteria.

E3. 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

F1. 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: Payments will be made in at least three installments, as needed to carry out the program activities. The first installment of 60% shall be requested at the execution of the grant agreement. The second installment of 20% will be reimbursed at the mid-point of the grant period of performance. The final installment of 10% will be reimbursed upon successful completion of the grant.

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 200, 2 CFR 600, all of which are available at https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm

Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

F3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports, including a mid-term report and a final report. The award document will specify when these reports must be submitted.

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.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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