

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA
Public Affairs Section
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: American Corners Malaysia Disinformation Exhibit
Funding Opportunity Number: SMY300-FY2022-ACDisinformation
Deadline for Applications: Sunday, August 21, 2022 at 11:59 p.m. Malaysia time
Assistance Listing Number: 19.040
Total Amount Available: USD 140,000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for a cooperative agreement to plan, develop, design, and implement an interactive traveling exhibit on disinformation, media literacy, and deepfake technologies aimed at youth audiences with a supplemental programming plan (workshops, lectures, activities, etc.), and a companion online experience.

The proposed traveling exhibition will support U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur's messaging on media literacy, misinformation, and disinformation, demonstrate the capability of image and video manipulation, discuss the virality of disinformation on social media and messaging apps, and provide audiences with the knowledge and tools to verify the authenticity of the information they are consuming.

The exhibit should also highlight initiatives and policies by U.S.-based entities that are designed to enhance media literacy and counter disinformation. The campaign will be executed under American Corners branding and its intended audiences include middle school, high school, and university students, as well as the general public.

The proposed traveling exhibit is to be hosted in (at minimum) six locations across Malaysia, including at the five American Corners in Penang, Kedah, Kelantan, Kuala Lumpur and Sarawak, as well as at a third-party venue in Sabah.

Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Priority Region: Malaysia

Program Objectives:

Background: U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur's American Spaces (AS) network in Malaysia consists of five spaces, each called American Corners (AC), which are located in Penang, Kedah, Kelantan, Kuala Lumpur and Sarawak. At these American Spaces, audiences can engage with American resources, learn and share ideas, express thoughts and participate in programs that build a range of critical thinking skills. It is also a place to promote interaction among local communities and Americans in support of U.S. Embassy goals.

For the past several years, the yearly programming slate at the American Corners in Malaysia has been underpinned by a major exhibit and campaign. In 2019 and 2020, the *Beyond the Moon* exhibits celebrated the 50th anniversary of the moon landing and included hands-on workshops on robotics and coding, STEM career talks, and additional activities by venue partners. In 2022, the American Corners and other venues hosted two exhibits - *Virus Hunter*, an exhibit on public health, how disease spreads globally, and the fight to combat that spread; and *Planet Us*, an exhibit that encompasses themes such as climate change, sustainability, and reducing carbon emissions.

This funding opportunity is to develop a traveling exhibit, online experience, and associated campaign with media literacy and countering disinformation as its main theme, and integrating concepts including deep fake technology and the virality of social media messages. The campaign should begin in the first quarter of calendar 2023.

Problem statement: Malaysia has among the highest number of social media users in Southeast Asia, and users are increasingly obtaining their news through social media platforms. However, most Malaysians have not had access to the types of media literacy content or curriculum that could assist them in identifying reliable sources of information and determining the authenticity of imagery and video content being circulated on social media or through messaging applications. Like users across the world, social media users in Malaysia may also not be aware of how quickly unverified information can spread online and that there are tools and resources that can help them to determine the veracity of online messages. This funding opportunity is designed to meet the following program goals and objectives.

Program goal & objectives:

- Increase audience awareness and vigilance as they consume online content, both through social media and traditional online information portals.
- Make audiences aware of the types of actors forwarding disinformation content and for what purpose and benefit.
- Help audiences to realize how advancements in audio and video technologies are resulting in deep fake content that can be very difficult to distinguish from authentic content.
- Provide audiences with tools and resources to help determine the authenticity of online messages and news.
- Signal to Malaysian leadership at all levels in all sectors that countering disinformation content should be a priority.
- Highlight American leadership from public, private, and non-profit sectors in promoting media literacy to the public, including its expertise in detecting fake content, while maintaining media freedom.
- Promote related fields such as journalism, media law, and technology as a viable education option and career path.
- Promote study abroad and exchange opportunities in the US on media literacy, advocacy and freedom of the press; coordinate with EducationUSA advising team to include resources and content, as applicable.

- Where possible, highlight Malaysian alumni of U.S. government exchange programs (YSEALI, IVLP, Fulbright, YES, etc.), their initiatives, and their stories in advocating for stronger media literacy while affirming the necessity of media freedom.

Program specifics:

- Physical exhibition consisting of approximately ten panels, available in both English and Malay, focusing on issues related to media literacy in general, deepfake technologies, and viral messaging. The exhibit should, to the extent possible, utilize compelling videos and visuals to draw audience attention.
- The traveling exhibit should reside in each location for at least 10 days and also incorporate workshops, talks, dedicated tours and interactive sessions for student classes, and other interactive activities that attract visitors.
- An interactive online version of the exhibition to be freely accessible by the target audience and available in both English and Malay.
- The digital version should include an interactive version of the physical exhibition as well as a classroom kit which will be used as a guide for teachers to get participation from their students while browsing the online exhibition.
- The entire project, to include the traveling exhibit and online experience, should have cohesive branding that is used to promote the project.
- Grantee should either have trainers/experts on site at each location or conduct a train-the-trainer workshop for all venue partners (or other partner organization) prior to the exhibition dates at each location.
- Number of physical exhibition panel sets is flexible depending on program scheduling.

Program proposal should include a plan to evaluate program efficacy, such as a pre- and post-exhibition survey to measure the overall effectiveness of the exhibition as well as any changes to the participants'/visitors' knowledge of the exhibition themes/topics.

The recipient is expected to develop exhibition contents and supported programs along with the exhibition such as hands-on activities, workshop, seminar, and panel discussion. Recipients will also coordinate with all venue partners including the five American Corners, on the logistics arrangement, installation, and dismantling of the exhibition. Recipients should also reach out to potential stakeholders such as media agencies, local government agencies, private sectors and NGOs in Malaysia to ensure the exhibition and its objectives are met.

The recipient is expected to design a digital and media engagement strategy to promote both physical and digital versions of the exhibition for social media audiences, including live video or live online engagement during the period of exhibition display.

Social media plan to promote access to both physical and digital versions of the exhibition which should include proposed hashtags to use by visitors and participants.

Participants and Audiences:

Targeted audience for this interactive exhibition will be youth aged 13-35 years old. Malaysian secondary school students from both public & private schools, universities students, young professionals and emerging leaders who are interested in the U.S. and in participating in American Spaces programming; women and youth interested in media literacy, journalism, media law, and technology.

The exhibition and workshop will be in both English & Bahasa Malaysia.

The recipient will be responsible for arranging and using cooperative agreement funds to cover all elements related to participant and staff travel including domestic flights, travel to and from airports, accommodations, per diem, meals during the program, insurance, etc.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 12 to 18 months

Number of awards anticipated: One, up to three awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$75,000 to a maximum of \$140,000

Total available funding: \$140,000

Type of Funding: FY22 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

Anticipated program start date: January 2023

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement

The U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur will have substantial involvement in the development, content, and schedule of the travel exhibition. In consultation with the coordinating U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur, the award recipient must actively engage with relevant officers to the selection of the locations for the traveling exhibition and its package.

Working closely with U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur, the recipient of this cooperative agreement shall develop a robust program such as hands on workshop following the exhibition; schedule the event at a mutually agreed upon locations; develop the agenda and content for the workshop; recruit trainers and speaker(s); manage all travel logistics for participants from schools and speakers; and generate content for social media and other publicity. The recipient is expected to provide all design files, photos and video recorded, as well as a promotion-ready, U.S. Embassy-approved photo album and a video series of the exhibition and programs after completion.

Regular, transparent communication via email, phone, and video conference calls and face-to-face meetings (as appropriate) with the Grants Officer, Grants Officer Representative, and Program Officer throughout the period of performance is critical to the success of this cooperative agreement. All major elements of the program and its content require advance approval by U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur, including, but not limited to:

- Options of dates, locations, and program package following the exhibition;
- Titles, format, and content of the exhibition and other elements in the program package activities;
- Design and content of all marketing materials, publicity, and media products.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 18 months or less. The U.S. Embassy Kuala Lumpur will consider 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. Embassy Kuala Lumpur.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- U.S. public and private educational institutions
- U.S. not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks
- Foreign public and private educational institutions
- Foreign not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required for this funding opportunity.

3. 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.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.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at grants.gov

2. 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 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)** at Grants.gov
- **SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)** at Grants.gov
- **SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs)** at Grants.gov (**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: 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?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Budget Justification Narrative: After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate sheet of paper 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

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations:

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

- www.SAM.gov registration which will generate a UEI
- NCAGE/CAGE code

Any applicant with an exclusion in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension."

The Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to register in SAM.gov.

Starting April 2022, the UEI will be assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at www.SAM.gov. To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew its sam.gov registration annually.

US-based organizations: A CAGE code will be automatically assigned when the U.S. organizations registers in www.sam.gov. CAGE must be renewed every 5 years. Site for CAGE: <https://cage.dla.mil/Home/UsageAgree>. Grantees may be asked for more information to finalized and must comply.

Foreign-based organizations: Must apply for a NCAGE code before registering in SAM.gov. Go to: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/CageTool/home> to apply for a NCAGE code. NCAGE codes must be renewed every 5 years.

It is in the organization's best interest to check if their CAGE/or NCAGE codes are active. Organizations are required to register/or renew their CAGE or NCAGE codes **prior** to registering or renewing www.sam.gov. Both registration and renewals for both CAGE and NCAGE can take up to 10 days. Organization's legal address in NCAGE/CAGE must mirror www.sam.gov.

www.sam.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov.

If an organization plans to issue a sub-contract or sub-award, those sub-awardees must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). Those entities can register for a UEI only at SAM.gov.

If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application will be deemed **ineligible**. All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations, the latter are free of charge.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time before the final closing date of **August 21, 2022**. No applications will be accepted after that date.

5. Funding Restrictions

- Projects relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Projects that support specific religious activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;

- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs
- Illegal activities

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to PublicAffairsKL@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 – 25 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 – 20 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.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIS)

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 on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

- i. That 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 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- iii. That 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: The award document will specify the payment method and how often payment requests can be submitted.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

These include:

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

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

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
 - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),

- Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
- Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

In accordance with the [Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Underserved Communities](#), proposals should demonstrate how the program advances equity with respect to race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability. The proposal should also demonstrate how the program will further engagement in underserved communities and with individuals from underserved communities. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing racial equity and underserved communities will enhance the program's goals and objectives, as well as the experience of participants.

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.

3. 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.

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](#).

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:
PublicAffairsKL@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 the 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.