

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EMBASSY KIGALI
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: Africa Regional Democracy Fund (ARDF) - Supporting Investigative Journalism in Rwanda

Funding Opportunity Number: DOS-RWANDA-PE-2022-02

Assistance Listing Number: 19.225

Deadline for Applications: August 20, 2022

Total Amount Available: Up to \$200,000, depending on availability of funds

A. INTRODUCTION

U.S. Embassy Kigali and the U.S. Department of State announce an open competition for organizations to submit applications to promote responsive governance and accountability with respect to local communities' priorities by providing training and support for more thorough investigative journalism via a variety of platforms. Please follow all instructions below.

Program Objectives:

Journalists sometimes refrain from investigating and reporting on tangible local issues affecting citizens' daily lives because they do not view it as financially sustainable. Funding sources are few and far between, and many journalists lack the financial skills to manage the limited funds available to them. Additionally, reporting on sensitive issues can leave some journalists vulnerable to retaliation. To address these systemic issues, the proposed activity would have the following objective:

Objective 1 – Strengthen the capacity of journalists to engage in safe and sustainable investigative journalism on local communities' priorities

Potential activities may include (but are not limited to): providing training and mentorship to investigative journalists, particularly on good governance and promoting human rights. Funds may also be used to provide direct financial assistance to journalists, sub-grants to local media and investigative journalism organizations, and/or competitive small grants to individual or teams of journalists to engage in civic education and public accountability throughout Rwanda.

All programs should have the potential for sustainability beyond Department of State resources. Preference will be given to proposals with new and creative approaches.

The project proposed must be complete in a twelve-month timeframe. The applicant should budget for any anticipated costs associated with the proposed project for which the applicant seeks funding. Possible costs include equipment, materials, labor, fees, training costs, etc. Funding restrictions are listed below in section D.5.

Participants and Audiences:

This grant opportunity is open to non-governmental organizations.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period	12 months
Number of awards anticipated	1 award
Award amounts	Depending on availability of funding but anticipated up to \$200,000
Anticipated program start date	September 30, 2022

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

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

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Nongovernmental organizations that are registered with the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB).

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required and will not be evaluated during the merit review.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Application forms required below are available at:

- [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
- U.S. Embassy Kigali website at <https://rw.usembassy.gov/embassy/kigali/grants/>

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement may be found ineligible.

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](https://www.grants.gov)
- **SF-424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*) at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
- **SF-424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*) at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) (note: the SF-424B is only required for organizations not registered in SAM.gov)

2. Proposal (four 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:** A short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the NGO 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:** A 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:** A description of 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, as well as the proportion of their time that will be devoted to supporting this program.
- **Program Partners:** The names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** An explanation of how the activities will be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner and how the program will be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant.
- **Future Funding or Sustainability:** The 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:

- Proof of registration with the Rwanda Cooperative Agency or Rwanda Governance Board.
- 1-page CV or resume for each key staff member who will oversee implementation of the proposed program.
- Letters of support from program partners (if applicable) describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner.
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities.

Required Registrations:

- www.SAM.gov registration which will generate a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- NCAGE/CAGE code

***** Please Note:** If an organization does not have the NCAGE and SAM.gov requirements at the time of submitting an application they may still apply while simultaneously actively applying for this registration. NCAGE and SAM.gov registration is required at the time of the award.***

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 at www.SAM.gov. To access SAM.gov, an organization is required to have a Login.gov account, which can be created at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew their SAM.gov registrations annually.

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 at www.SAM.gov. Both registration and renewals for both CAGE and NCAGE can take up to 10 days. The organization’s legal address in NCAGE/CAGE must mirror that listed in 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, unless the organization has obtained an exemption.

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

1. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than August 10, 2022

2. Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for any of the following purposes:

- To pay Rwandan taxes
- To construct a building
- For religious organizations to conduct religious activities
- For military activities
- For activities relating to police, prisons, or other law enforcement
- For toxic or otherwise unsafe products such as pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, or hazardous chemicals
- For revolving loans
- For seed money for new enterprises
- For alcohol

3. Other Submission Requirements

Applications may be submitted by email to KigaliASGP@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 – 30 points: The program idea is well developed, with details about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 20 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and the program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

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 the goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

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.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 15 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.

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 against the criteria listed above.

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: Request for payment will be submitted through a SF-270. Payments shall be disbursed via electronic fund transfer (EFT) upon receipt of a signed SF-270 form and required reporting.

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:

- [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).

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. These will be due quarterly. The financial reports will use form SF-425, which is available on grants.gov, and the programmatic reports will provide a brief narrative on the project's successes, challenges, and next steps and will specify the number of beneficiaries. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: KigaliASGP@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 list the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem 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, 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 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 that are directly associated with the program but do not fit in the other categories. For example, list 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 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.