

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs
Office of Assistance Coordination**

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 19.601

Improving Community Security in Syria

Opportunity Number: SFOP0009647

Key Information:

Announcement Type:	New
Date Opened:	April 6, 2023
Deadline for Questions:	April 20, 2023
Application Deadline:	May 22, 2023
Expected Date of Notification:	June 30, 2023
Federal Agency Contact:	NEA-Grants@state.gov

Funding Opportunity Synopsis

NEA/AC seeks proposals for targeted assistance projects to empower civilian security providers in non-regime held areas of northeast (NE) Syria to deliver effective and equitable security services in a manner that serves, and is supported by, the population. Proposals that take a holistic approach to community security and are tailored to the challenges of the Syrian conflict are encouraged. Activities should include efforts to build the capacity of security providers to deliver services in line with the principles of community policing, increase the capacity of local governance actors to fulfil their public safety responsibilities, and empower local communities to identify and respond to their security concerns. As part of NEA/AC's portfolio of stabilization projects, proposals should advance U.S. policy, primarily ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS.

All applications must be submitted in English. Complete information on how applicants can submit proposals for this opportunity can be found in Section VI below.

Applicants should read this NOFO in its entirety before writing their proposal and should refer to the full Evaluation Criteria provided in Section VII while drafting all materials.

Eligible Countries and Territories

In this announcement, we seek to specifically support programming activities in northeast Syria. In the future, DOS might seek to potentially support programming in areas of northwest Syria outside the control of the Syrian regime, therefore applications should focus primarily on the northeast in responding to this NOFO. NEA/AC requires a presence in Berlin, Germany, for operational and donor liaison purposes throughout the award's period of performance. NEA/AC welcomes applicants without a current presence in Berlin, Germany and who meet the eligibility criteria to apply, with the understanding that if selected, the applicant is expected to establish a presence in Berlin, Germany. NEA/AC requires that applicants be in sound legal standing with appropriate government authorities in the country where the project will be managed prior to an award being issued. Key overseas personnel must be co-located, while consideration should be taken for minimizing the need for expatriate and/or Third-Country National staff and operational costs. Award recipients will be required to maintain legal standing throughout the life of the award, including for any sub-grant made under its auspices. Please note: Applications that focus on activities for countries and territories other than those listed will NOT be considered.

Background Information about NEA/AC

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, Office of Assistance Coordination (NEA/AC) offers Federal assistance to groups and individuals striving to bring about positive change in the Middle East-North Africa region. NEA/AC works in 20 countries and territories, partnering with governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), community leaders, youth and women activists, and private sector groups to advance their efforts. Competitively selected projects aim to foster participatory governance, economic reform, and

educational advancement in response to local interest and needs. NEA/AC is committed to advancing equity and support for minority and marginalized populations, including in Syria. All programs should consider strategies for expanding the pool of individuals/organizations/beneficiaries to afford opportunities for as diverse and inclusive a population as is feasible to bring perspectives based on religion, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, sex characteristics, national origin, and age to implementation of the program.

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APPENDIX 4— Application Guidance

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

NEA/AC seeks proposals for targeted assistance projects to empower civilian security providers in non-regime held areas of NE Syria to deliver effective and equitable security services in a manner that serves, and is supported by, the population. Proposals that take a holistic approach to community security and are tailored to the challenges of the Syrian conflict are encouraged. As part of NEA/AC's portfolio of stabilization projects, proposals should advance U.S. policy, primarily ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS as well as advancing a political solution to the conflict in line with UNSCR 2254.

The U.S. Department of State has been supporting community security programing in Syria since 2013. Assistance was initially provided via a multi-donor project, Access to Justice and Community Security (AJACS), designed to support access to justice and community security in areas of northwest (and eventually southwest) Syria controlled by the Syrian opposition. AJACS' primary effort was to support the Free Syrian Police as they delivered community policing services in areas liberated from the Assad regime. AJACS closed in 2018 as Hay'at Tahrir al-Sham (HTS) consolidated power in the territory where the Free Syrian Police had been active.

In October 2018, in support of the U.S. objective to defeat ISIS, and in coordination with the U.S. military and Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS's mission - Operation Inherent Resolve - NEA/AC launched the community security project, Al Rashad. The project currently works in areas liberated from ISIS and controlled by the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), primarily in the governates of Raqqqa, Deir ez-Zor, and Al-Hasakah. Al Rashad has three overlapping lines of effort: 1) assistance to Internal Security Forces (ISF) to develop their capacity to deliver services in line with the principles of community policing; 2) enabling communities to be involved in the identification of, and response to, their security concerns; and 3) building the capacity of civilian governance entities to fulfil their public safety responsibilities. Activities supported by Al Rashad have included: the development of a community policing training capacity within the ISF; various forms of technical and non-lethal material assistance to increase the ISF's capacity to deliver community policing services; programming designed to increase the accountability and responsiveness of the ISFs, such as the development and dissemination of codes of conduct; support for civil society organizations to convene dialogue sessions focused on local community security concerns; support for local governance entities to implement activities, such as the restoration of street lights and traffic safety initiatives, that respond to communities' security concerns; and programming that addresses public safety issues, such as the establishment of an office providing information on individuals who have been detained, community engagement sessions focused on alternative dispute resolution, support for the provision of civil documentation, and assistance in responding to the COVID pandemic.

At this time, NEA/AC assesses that the only areas where community security programing can be delivered are those controlled by the SDF, i.e., SDF-controlled areas of the governates of Raqqqa, Deir ez-Zor, and Al-Hasakah. Proposals should be limited to those areas; however, applicants are encouraged to detail their ability and flexibility to expand programing to new areas if

opportunities arise. NEA/AC programming in northeast Syria aims to support programming that delivers assistance at the governorate level.

Applicants must incorporate plans for how their proposals will complement existing civilian assistance efforts, as well as incorporate NEA/AC in project implementation. All applicants must take into consideration that award activities will be coordinated through the Syria Regional Platform (SRP) – an interagency U.S. government team based in Turkey and Jordan advancing U.S. Syria policy through diplomacy and foreign assistance programming. Applicants should be aware that the majority of NEA/AC’s stabilization projects are currently implemented out of Berlin, Germany for political and operational reasons.

The award will be issued as a cooperative agreement with substantial involvement from SRP and NEA/AC in the recipient’s implementation of this project. As such, SRP and NEA/AC will work closely with the recipient and provide direction regarding the design, development, and implementation of programming as well as guidance on intended beneficiaries of assistance efforts. Such direction will include, but not be limited to, development of project activities and the selection of subrecipient organizations.

Each applicant must present a plan for how it will be flexible and responsive to time-sensitive requirements; monitor and evaluate activities inside Syria; and coordinate activities with NEA/AC, SRP and other relevant U.S. government entities, as well as international donors – including those who manage similar or parallel programming in northeast Syria. Proposals should explain how activities will not duplicate efforts undertaken by other donors and/or projects (and detail how any deconfliction of programming will occur), build on what has been accomplished to date, and articulate an end state appropriate to a stabilization project. It is expected that applicants will consider the context of Syria’s dynamic and challenging operating environment in their proposals, especially in terms of project implementation and monitoring. Applicants must demonstrate the ability to conduct baseline and needs assessments of potential Syrian beneficiaries.

Applicants must have experience implementing programming related to policing, community security, and/or stabilization efforts in Syria or in conflict zones similar to Syria. This experience should include a demonstrated ability to deliver cash cross-border; provide technical assistance and training to police organizations, governance entities, and civil society organizations; manage programming that supports the transition from the provision of security from a military to a civilian context with tact and discretion; produce analytical research on aspects of the security situation informative to a range of stakeholders including project beneficiaries, implementing partner staff, and the donor; manage strategic communications and outreach programming; manage monitoring and evaluation efforts; and adapt programming based on evaluation and learning in addition to evolving dynamics in the conflict and transition process.

Historically, NEA/AC has collaborated with other donors on community security programming in Syria and intends to do so in the future. Applicants must demonstrate the willingness and capability to facilitate such multi-donor efforts in an effective and transparent manner.

Applicants to this NOFO agree and understand that their application and subsequent award agreement, amendments, and any other documentation regarding programming may be shared with potential foreign donors – either those seeking to support the USG-funded mechanism directly or to establish their own focused on community security.

B. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Syrian conflict began in 2011 as peaceful, popular demonstrations calling upon the oppressive Syrian regime led by Bashar al-Assad to reform. The Assad regime’s use of the state security services as a tool of repression was a major driver of these protests. A series of violent escalations by the regime against peaceful protestors marked the beginning of the conflict that has now stretched on for twelve years.

By 2015, Syrian opposition groups had gained control over a significant amount of Syrian territory; however, Russian intervention in September of that year enabled the Assad regime to reassert control over much of the country.

Amidst the raging conflict, ISIS emerged, capturing broad swaths of Syria and Iraq in 2014 and declaring an Islamic “caliphate.” Led by the United States, the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS (the Coalition) partnered in Syria with the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) to pursue a military campaign that destroyed the territorial “caliphate,” liberating ISIS’s last stronghold in Baghouz, Syria, in March 2019. In areas of Al-Hasakah, Raqqa, and Deir ez-Zor governorates liberated from ISIS, the Self Administration of North and East Syria (SANES) currently exercises authority. Turkey subsequently launched a series of campaigns, gaining control of portions of NE Syria and northwest (NW) Syria, either directly or through proxies. In 2023, portions of NW Syria, primarily Idlib governorate, and a wide swath of territory in NE Syria, remain outside Assad regime control. The conflict has resulted in more than half a million deaths, more than a million injured, and more than 13 million internally displaced persons and refugees.

In order to consolidate military gains made by the Coalition, as well as to maintain basic security and stability, the SDF established Internal Security Forces (ISF) - generally organizationally broken down by governorate - to hold areas that had been liberated from ISIS. Following the conclusion of major combat operations, the ISF began transitioning to the provision of civilian security services to the population. ISIS sleeper cells, efforts by the Assad regime and its allies to destabilize the security situation, interference by regional powers, ethnic and tribal grievances, common and organized crime, and corruption all present significant security challenges.

While the security environment in NE Syria continues to present challenges that require a military response, there are a range of security challenges that require civilian solutions. It is NEA’s assessment that a continued holistic approach that delivers security services in a manner that both serves, and is supported by, the population, is necessary to ensure that ISIS does not reconstitute. Maintaining such an environment requires civilian participation, notably the development of policing capacity. Efforts to reintegrate internally displaced persons (IDP),

notably the challenges posed by IDP camps where residents have had significant exposure to ISIS, present specific security challenges. In addition, a sustainable political solution to the Syrian conflict will require reform of the Syrian security apparatus, demonstrating approaches to security that respect human rights and are both responsive and accountable to the population. This NOFO seeks proposals that respond to these needs.

C. ACHIEVABLE OBJECTIVES

A successful project will result in:

Improved security in NE Syria by enabling civilian security providers to provide services in a manner that supports, and is supported, by local communities, and increases security providers' responsiveness and accountability to local communities. This will include:

1. Development of the capacity of internal security forces to deliver policing services in line with community policing principles and practices;
2. Increasing involvement of communities in identifying, communicating, and addressing their security needs; and
3. Improvement of the capacity of local governance actors' capacity to fulfill their responsibilities for public safety.

D. PROJECT DESIGN

This solicitation invites applications that seek to improve the security of communities in areas controlled by the SDF, i.e., the governates of Raqqa, Deir ez-Zor, and Al-Hasakah. Demonstrations of the flexibility to expand to other parts of Syria, should the opportunity arise, are welcome. As a stabilization project, the proposal should be designed to advance U.S. policy objectives, primarily ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS. The proposal should articulate an end-state appropriate for a stabilization project that does not include longer-term goals more appropriate for a development project. As NEA seeks to collaborate with other donors to support community security, the application must demonstrate the capability to facilitate such collaboration in an efficient, transparent, cost-effective manner.

Funds are available to support projects with potential to promote the above-detailed objectives through activities that take a holistic approach to the security challenges presented by the NE Syrian environment. While addressing all elements of the security challenges in NE Syria may require military or para-military capabilities, only activities focused on the civilian elements of these challenges will be considered. The project shall be designed in a manner that facilitates the provision of security in a conflict environment in which major combat operations have decreased and a transition towards the civilian provision of security is underway, but where risks from terrorist organizations, belligerent states, and the resumption of armed conflict persist. Activities should be designed to promote respect for human rights. Development of the ISFs' ability to provide policing services are essential to this effort, and proposed activities should incorporate best practices of community policing. Plans should also include activities

designed to enable local communities to be involved in identifying and addressing their security concerns, and to support the role of local governance entities in providing public safety.

Project activities shall include:

- a. Training on community policing tailored to the environment;
- b. Provision of material assistance to support the delivery of community policing services;
- c. Capacity-building to enable the sustainable delivery of community policing services;
- d. Security-focused community engagement mechanisms;
- e. Activities that enable communities to identify, and respond to, their security concerns;
- f. Efforts to increase the responsiveness and accountability of security providers;
- g. Capacity-building to enable local governance actors to fulfil their public safety responsibilities; and
- h. Clearly articulated end-states appropriate to a stabilization project.

NEA/AC has historically collaborated with other donors on community security programing and intends to do so in the future. Applicants must demonstrate the capability and willingness to facilitate such cooperation. This shall include a commitment that in the event of a decision by NEA/AC to collaborate with another donor(s), the recipient shall: 1) provide transparent accounting of all elements of the different funding streams to all donors; 2) share documents associated with the project with donors with their consent and at their request; 3) include funds provided from another donor as a cost-share under NEA/AC's cooperative agreements if donors make that request and if such request would be in compliance with 2 CFR 200 regulations; 4) collaborate with donors to ensure that project documents (such as theories of change, log frames, and work plans), are aligned; and 5) collaborate with any mechanisms that donors may establish to enable cooperation in the management of community security programing.

Project beneficiaries shall include:

- a. The Internal Security Forces in NE Syria;
- b. Individuals in the communities in the areas in which the project operates; and
- c. Local council committees with responsibility for public safety.

Project activities should include:

- a. Efforts to work with civil society and other stakeholders to improve the relationship between security providers and local communities;
- b. Activities that address issues of civil and criminal procedure that undermine the provision of security services;
- c. Mechanisms to address the security issues related to the reintegration of IDPs in northeast Syrian communities of return and/or security issues within IDP camps, such as al-Hol;
- d. Activities that address the security needs of women and other marginalized populations;
- e. Activities to support access to justice and dispute resolution services that address issues that undermine the security of communities;
- f. Activities that address the issue of drug use and smuggling; and

- g. Provision of services such as street lighting, civil documents, information on detained individuals, alternative dispute resolution that enable authorities to respond to the communities' security concerns.

NEA/AC will require weekly reporting on project activities and standard quarterly reporting (at a minimum) in addition to ad hoc reporting requests.

The following activities and costs are **NOT ALLOWED** under this announcement:

- Exchange activities with other countries or territories;
- Social welfare projects;
- Paying to complete activities begun with other funds;
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns;
- Academic or analytical research (if not necessary as part of a larger project);
- Medical and psychological research and clinical studies;
- Projects of a commercial or profit-making nature;
- Cultural presentations, cultural research, cultural clubs, or festivals, etc.; and
- Entertainment costs (e.g., receptions, social activities, ceremonies, alcoholic beverages, guided tours); these are different than costs for cultural activities integral to programming.

NOTE: Applications that include any of these activities or costs above may be eliminated at the Technical Eligibility Review stage and will not advance to the Merit Review Panel.

E. GENDER AND SOCIAL INCLUSION INTEGRATION

NEA/AC requires that all activities fully address intersectional gender and inclusion considerations, ensuring that individuals of all genders, and diverse backgrounds¹ benefit from support to the extent feasible, and that gender and inclusion awareness is a built-in component of project activities. This should be documented through gender and social inclusion analysis in the project narrative that identifies any relevant gender and inclusion gaps and ways the proposed activities will address those gaps. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing relevant gender and inclusion gaps will enhance the project's goals and objectives. Applicants who are unfamiliar with integrating gender in foreign assistance programming should view the training video located here:

https://encompassworld.com/elearningfiles/DOS/DOS_Gender_Integration_E-Course/story_html5.html

F. DEFINITIONS

The following are **definitions** of activities and terms detailed in this announcement:

¹ Consideration of diversity of race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status.

Diversity:

The term “diversity” means the practice of including the many communities, identities, races, ethnicities, backgrounds, abilities, cultures, and beliefs of a community.

Equity:

The term “equity” means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to underserved communities that have been denied such treatment, such as ethnic minorities, and indigenous persons, members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Inclusion:

The term “inclusion” means the recognition, appreciation, and use of the talents and skills of persons of all backgrounds.

Accessibility:

The term “accessibility” means the design, construction, development, and maintenance of facilities, information and communication technology, programs, and services so that all people, including people with disabilities, can full and independently use them.

Underserved communities:

The term “underserved communities” refers to populations sharing a particular characteristic, as well as geographic communities, that have been systematically denied a full opportunity to participate in aspects of economic, social, and civic life, as exemplified by the list in the preceding definition of “equity.”

Internal Security Forces (ISF):

The term “Internal Security Forces” is used in this document to refer to the entities established by SANES that currently fulfill the role of a police force in NE Syria.

MEASUREMENT OF RESULTS

Applicants shall provide a logic model and a theory of change statement to demonstrate how the proposed project (including activities, the project design, and the surrounding context) will achieve the stated objectives. The logic model and theory of change statements can be generated using the template in Appendix 2. Please see Section VI below for more information.

Successful applicants will work with the NEA/AC program and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) teams to finalize the proposed logic model/theory of change statement and to create a plan based on the finished logic model/theory of change to measure qualitative and quantitative indicators as part of the award negotiations process. The successful applicants will be responsible for collecting data against these indicators, which will be monitored throughout the

period of performance of the award to gauge necessary modifications to the project's design and assess the results of the project's success in meeting expected outcomes.

All projects funded as a result of this NOFO will be required to complete a final evaluation of the project at the end of the period of performance with support from the NEA/AC M&E team.

AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Mechanism Type:	Cooperative Agreement
Estimated Number of Awards:	One (1)
Estimated Total Project Funding:	\$30,000,000
Estimated Base Year Award Ceiling:	\$10,000,000
Estimated Base Year Award Floor:	\$7,000,000
Cost-Sharing or Matching:	Encouraged; NOT Required
Estimated Length of Project Period:	One to Three (1-3) Years

Contingent on the availability of funds, approximately \$30,000,000 in International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement funds for approximately one (1) award will be issued through this announcement. If selected to receive an award, an applicant will be awarded funds for one base year with the potential to be awarded an additional two option years, depending on the activities proposed. The estimated start date for this project is July 1, 2023.

NEA/AC reserves the right to award more or less than the estimated program funding and reserves the right to award funding under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date.

This request for full applications **does not** constitute an award or commitment on the part of the U.S. government to make any awards, **nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of an application.**

Non-Competing Continuation

Continuation grants funded under this award, beyond the initial budget period, will be contingent upon the availability of funds; grantee's progress in meeting grant requirements, including timely submission of required reports and compliance with all terms and conditions of the award; timely submission of a request for additional funding; and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Department of State.

Pending successful implementation of this project for the initial estimated length of time as indicated above, and pending the availability of funds, NEA/AC may extend this award for additional time, not to exceed a three (3) year total project period. Please note that this NOFO requires that applicants submit additional budget materials to plan for potential out-years of non-competing continuations. See Section VI Application and Submission Information for more details.

SUBSTANTIAL INVOLVEMENT

NEA/AC and SRP will be involved in the management of the project under the substantial involvement clause of this cooperative agreement. This will include consultation, technical collaboration, and review and approval of project activities. It is expected that the recipient will remain adaptable to the requests of both NEA/AC and SRP team members.

NEA/AC and SRP Responsibilities

Examples of NEA/AC and SRP's substantial involvement in cooperative agreements include, but are not limited to:

- Collaboration in establishing project objectives and reviewing and revising the theory of change and/or logic model;
- Reviewing and approving or rejecting changes to the project's objectives, theory of change, and/or logic model;
- Participation in the development, and approval, of work plans;
- Collaboration in identifying and developing opportunities to expand programming;
- Collaboration in identifying and designing on-the-ground activities;
- Review and approval of individual activities to be implemented under the award through activity sheets;
- Collaboration in the creation and development of training and other materials;
- Collaboration in the selection of local partners to implement activities;
- Collaboration in the selection of participants for activities;
- Collaboration in identifying stakeholders in community security focused activities;
- Collaboration in the identification of candidates for staffing positions;
- Facilitating coordination with other donors and related projects (including projects funded by NEA/AC and other U.S. entities);
- Collaboration in the management of issues that arise during implementation; and
- Collaboration with the Department of State in areas which the Department of State's technical knowledge would benefit the Recipient's successful accomplishment of stated project objectives.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

All applicants will be screened by NEA/AC to determine whether they meet all of the eligibility requirements detailed below.

NOTE: Applications that do not demonstrate that they meet all of the eligibility requirements in Section A and Section B will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage and may be deemed ineligible for funding under this announcement. Nothing can be added to an application once the competition deadline has passed.

A. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include:

- U.S. or foreign
 - o Non-profit organizations;
 - o For-profit organizations;
 - o Private, public, or state institutions of higher education; and
 - o Small businesses with function and regional experience in the areas of community security in the MENA region.

NEA/AC is committed to an anti-discrimination policy in all of its programs and activities. NEA/AC welcomes applications irrespective of an applicants' race, ethnicity, color, creed, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability. We encourage applications from organizations working with underserved communities, including women, people with disabilities, and youth.

NEA/AC strongly encourages applications from organizations headquartered in the Middle East and North Africa region. International non-governmental organizations with principal bases of operations outside the Middle East and North Africa are also encouraged to apply, but the percentage of total budget spent in the region through local partners may be among the elements of evaluation for this competition.

A.1. Prime Applicant

To be considered for funding under this opportunity, applicants SHALL:

- Have demonstrable previous experience working in Syria, the MENA region, or Afghanistan. This should be addressed within the project narrative section of your application.
- Have experience in conducting risk assessments and monitoring and evaluating projects and sub-recipients in order to document and assess the short- and long-term outcomes of proposed projects.
- Demonstrate the ability to advance Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) through a project team inclusive of Syrian nationals with previous experience managing stabilization programming in the region reflected at all levels of project management.
- Meet ALL of the registration requirements listed below.
- Meet any requirements listed as MANDATORY in *Additional Eligibility Considerations*, below.

Additionally, applicants should:

- Demonstrate experience implementing similar projects in conflict areas.
- Demonstrate institutional subject matter expertise in community policing and/or community security.
- Demonstrate in the project and budget narratives how the assistance mechanism will be managed, monitored, and evaluated to ensure compliance with the project objectives and Federal regulations. The successful applicant will be responsible for overseeing the implementation of all sub-recipients, and/or other direct assistance to ensure completion of activities, programmatic efficacy, institutional strengthening, and financial propriety.
- Demonstrate the ability to accomplish the required activities with efficient staffing and without establishing a dedicated local office in Syria.
- Demonstrate the ability to recruit/hire technical staff with policing and community security subject matter expertise.

A.2. Local Partners

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit projects that include partnerships with local organizations that would work together on specific programmatic objectives or priorities and that utilize local expertise. In particular, NEA/AC strongly encourages applicants not based in the MENA region to partner with local organizations.

B. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

To apply for NEA/AC (Federal) funding, organizations, whether based in or outside the U.S., must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and an active account with the System for Award Management (SAM). Applicants who do not meet all registration requirements are NOT eligible for funding under the opportunity.

UEI Number

All applicants must have a Unique Entity Identification (UEI) number.

On and after April 4, 2022, entities can register in SAM.gov and will be assigned their Unique Entity ID (SAM) within SAM.gov. Entities will no longer obtain or use a UEI (DUNS) for entity registration or reporting.

System for Award Management (SAM)

SAM is a U.S. government wide registry of vendors doing business with the Federal government and requires annual renewal. The system centralizes information about grant applicants/recipients, and provides a central location for grant applicants/recipients to change organizational information.

Further, each applicant must maintain an active account, with current information, while its application is under consideration for funding. To keep an active SAM.gov account, an applicant must renew it at least once each year. If an organization's account expires, the organization cannot submit a grant application until it is renewed.

To create a new SAM account, go to <https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>.

U.S.-based organizations must have a UEI number and a CAGE number. The CAGE code will be issued by SAM.gov. **Please note that as of December 2022, 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 CAGE (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov to seek guidance on how to do so. **Organizations based outside of the U.S. are still required to have a UEI and SAM.gov registration.**

For help with SAM.gov, please visit their support page at <https://www.fsd.gov> or contact them at: 866-606-8220 (U.S.) or +1-334-206-7828 (international).

Note: Obtaining an active SAM.gov registration may take **12-15 business days** to complete the process of creating an account in the system.

C. ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CONSIDERATIONS

C.1 Cost-Sharing or Matching

There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, NEA/AC encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

Cost-sharing or matching is not an evaluation criteria of this NOFO.

While cost-share is not required for this application, in the event that another Donor seeks to collaborate with NEA/AC on community security programming in Syria, and the Donors agree that funding provided under that mechanism should be included as a cost share in support of this project, the applicant will be required to include such funding as a cost-share if determined to meet the requirements in 2 CFR 200.

C.2 Host Country Legal Compliance

NEA/AC requires that applicants be in sound legal standing with appropriate host government authorities prior to an award being issued. If the applicant is not currently based in Berlin, Germany and intends to operate from that location, they should demonstrate the ability to establish a presence there in a timely manner following notification of the award. Award recipients will be required to maintain legal standing throughout the life of the award, including for any sub-grant made under its auspices.

VI. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

A. APPLICATION DOCUMENTS

All applications must include the application components detailed below. **All application documents must be submitted in English.** Applicants may submit only one (1) application. Please refer to Section B below for additional submissions guidance and requirements.

NOTE: Applications that do not include all the required documentation described in Section 1 below will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage. Further, applications that exceed the allowable page limits will not be reviewed by the review panel. **Applicants may not add any materials to an application once it has been submitted and the competition deadline has passed.**

A.1. Required Documents

Federal Assistance Application Forms (SF-424 and SF424a)

Guidance on how to complete the SF-424 and SF424a is provided in Appendix 4.

NOTE: In addition to following all guidance outlined below regarding application materials, applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Application Evaluation Criteria section of this NOFO closely as they prepare their proposal. The Evaluation Criteria section is the rubric by which each application will be scored.

Project Narrative

The Project Narrative describes the efforts the applicant will undertake to address the priorities and goals of this announcement.

This section of the application may be no longer than 10 pages. More details on preparing the Project Narrative are provided in Appendix 4. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Appendix 4 before preparing their Narrative.**

Community Policing & Security Plan

The Community Policing portion of this plan shall describe how the project will build the capacity of civilian security forces to provide policing services in line with the principles of community policing. The Community Security portion of this plan shall detail how the project will work with local governance actors, community representatives, and other stakeholders to improve the security of the communities. The Community Policing and Community Security Plan should demonstrate a holistic approach to civilian security issues that reflects best practices and knowledge of the subject matter. **This section of the application may be no longer than 4 pages.**

Budget & Budget Narrative Submission

Applicants must provide the following three elements as part of their budget submission:

- Summary Budget
- Detailed Line Item Budget
- Budget Narrative

A detailed budget for 12 months is required as well as a notional budget for two additional out (option) years, with each option period being one year. The option periods should be their own detailed tabs (one year per tab) within the budget.

There is no page limit for this section of an application. A sample fillable template can be found in Appendix 1. This template includes three tabs: The first tab includes written guidance on preparing the **Budget Narrative**. Applicants are strongly encouraged to create their Budget Narrative in Word and submit as either a Word Doc or PDF file. Please note that the Budget Narrative should include designations of who is considered Key Personnel for this project. As defined in the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions (for assistance awards, Key Personnel means, "...key professional and supervisory personnel; i.e., the members of the professional staff in a program supervisory position engaged for or assigned to duties under the award." The second tab has the template for the **Summary Budget**. This tab will auto-fill as you complete the Detailed Line Item Budget, which can be found on the third tab. The third tab is where you can fill in the template for the **Detailed Line Item Budget** as stated above. **NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as provided in the template, and to submit summary and detailed line item budgets in Excel form, and the Budget Narrative as either a PDF or Word file.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample. The template, which includes more detailed instructions, can be found in Appendix 1. **Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Appendix 1 before preparing their Budget and Budget Narrative.**

Logic Model and Theory of Change Statement

Applicants shall provide a logic model and a theory of change statement to demonstrate how the proposed project (including activities, the project design, and the surrounding context) will achieve the stated objectives. In the event the proposal is funded, the logic model and a broader theory of change will be reviewed and revised in collaboration with NEA/AC, who will then have the right of approval under the Substantial Involvement clause. In the event that other donors seek to collaborate with NEA/AC on community security programming, the relevant logic models and/or theories of change will be revised to support such collaboration, with NEA/AC again participating in the revision and approval of the documents. A theory of change statement should describe in 2-3 sentences how and why a project is expected to achieve its stated outcomes in support of the project objectives described in section I.B above using if-then language. The logic model and theory of change statements can be generated using the template in **Appendix 2. NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample. **This section of the application may be no longer than 2 pages.**

Results Monitoring Plan

Applicants shall provide a Results Monitoring Plan (RMP). The RMP can be generated using the template in Appendix 3. **NOTE: Applicants are strongly encouraged to use the same format as found in the sample.** If the applicant does not use the template, the applicant must ensure that their submission includes all elements outlined in the sample. The RMP shall be submitted

as a separate document from the Logic Model and Theory of Change statement. **There is no page limit for this section of the application.**

Project Timeline

Applicants must provide an overall breakdown of the order and timeframe in which all project activities will take place. This item should provide a macro snapshot of what will take place from beginning to end of the project. Applicants must ensure that the timeline of activities/events corresponds with details provided in the Project Narrative and Logic Model / Theory of Change. **This section of the application may not exceed 2 pages.**

Security, Risk Mitigation, & Contingency Planning Summary

This item should provide detail regarding the applicant's intended due diligence to assess and mitigate risks and put in place adequate security measures to ensure the safety and well-being of project staff, participants, and partners, if applicable. This should include specific actions by the applicant to ensure risks are adequately and routinely assessed, and that security measures are commensurate with operational concerns specific to the locale. The applicant should also include a contingency plan that highlights potential challenges and limitations to project implementation in the operating environment and propose contingency plans should program activities be impacted. Please note that this section should not be limited to physical security and risk but should cover any applicable factors relevant to the given operating environment.

This section of the application may be no longer than 4 pages.

Project Organizational Chart

The organizational chart outlines the clear lines of responsibility and authority in the applicant organization to include budgeted level of effort listed by each person. All proposed staff for the project shall be included, with location detailed. **This section of the application may be no longer than 1 page.**

Job Descriptions/Biographical Info for Key Personnel Positions

For each position designated as key personnel for this project, applicants must provide the following:

1. If the position is already filled: Provide brief biographical information summarizing the person's qualifications, as well as a brief description of the roles or responsibilities pertaining to this project.

OR

2. If the person to fill a key position has not yet been hired: Provide a brief summary of the job description, which should include a description of the roles and responsibilities pertaining to this project, as well as a description of qualifications of eligible candidates.

NOTE: If an applicant is proposing sub-grant partner(s) as part of their project design, **Key Personnel/Positions of the sub-grantee must also be included. This section of the application may be no longer than 3 pages.**

Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement **NOTE: This item is required only IF applicable.**

Applicants proposing indirect costs in the Budget greater than a 10% de minimis rate must provide a copy of their Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). This item will not be counted toward any page limits.

A.2. Optional Documents

Applicants may submit additional documents for consideration with their application. These documents are not required, though if any are submitted, they will need to be submitted as one attachment. **This section of the application may be no longer than 10 pages.**

NOTE: Applicants must adhere to all maximum allowed page counts. Applications that exceed any of the allowable page limits will not advance past the Technical Eligibility Review stage.

B. APPLICATION FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS

The required font is 12-point, Calibri. All application documents must be single spaced, with all margins (left, right, top, and bottom) of at least one inch each. Also, applicants should ensure all pages in the application package are numbered consecutively and meet the page limit requirements outlined in Section VI above. **The Standard Forms 424 (SF-424, SF-424a, and SF-424b) are excluded from the page numbering.**

It is strongly recommended that applicants submit grant applications using Microsoft Office. If applicants do not have access to Microsoft Office products, Adobe PDF files may be submitted.

C. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Applicants must submit their application electronically using SAMS Domestic. Applications will **NOT** be accepted from grants.gov. SAMS Domestic requires that the applying organization have an account with the system and both require a UEI number and SAM.gov account as detailed in Section V. **It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they have an active account and will be able to submit its application.** NEA/AC is not in a position to grant exceptions to these requirements.

The application process is not complete until the applicant receives notification that its application has been validated and forwarded to the granting agency (NEA/AC). Please allow sufficient time for entering the application into these systems. It is the responsibility of the applicant to monitor its application to ensure that it is successfully received and validated.

SAMS Domestic

SAMS Domestic is a comprehensive grants management system that allows applicants to apply for, manage, and report on the use of U.S. government funds for multiple programs, accessed online at mygrants.service-now.com.

To create an account, go to <https://afsism.servicenowservices.com/ilms/>, and click the “create an account” hyperlink, located above the user name prompt. Users will be directed to a page entitled “User Registration Request;” complete the online form and click the “Submit” button. Users will receive an activation email entitled “Verify Your Grants Account Registration;” click the activation link within the email to receive a username and password.

SAMS Domestic has Quick Tours available to educate users about the system. These documents can be found on the Support tab upon logging into the system.

D. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES

Applications must be time stamped before 17:00:00 eastern time (ET) on May 22, 2023.

There will be no grace period, and any application not received by the application deadline will be deemed ineligible and will not advance to be reviewed. **Each applicant is encouraged to submit an application far enough in advance of the deadline so that the applicant can alert NEA/AC (nea-grants@state.gov) of any technical difficulties and allow sufficient time to resolve difficulties before the deadline.** Although NEA/AC will work with applicants to resolve technical issues, it is not in a position to grant exceptions to the submission requirements outlined in this announcement.

VII. FUNDING LIMITATIONS, RESTRICTIONS, AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

A. AWARDS TO COMMERCIAL FIRMS OR FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

The Department of State prohibits profit under its assistance awards to commercial organizations. No funds will be paid as profit to any recipient that is a commercial organization. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR Part 31. Program income earned by the recipient may be:

- added to the total of the amount of this award, including the required cost sharing or matching, and use it to further eligible project objectives;
- used to meet the Recipient’s cost sharing or matching requirement;
- OR deducted from the total project or program allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

B. AUDIT REQUIREMENTS

Domestic and foreign organizations that expend \$750,000 or more in a fiscal year in federal assistance must perform an independent, recipient-contracted Single Audit or Program Specific Audit. (**Program-specific Audit** means an audit of one Federal award program. **Single Audit** means an audit which includes both the entity’s financial statements and the Federal Awards to be conducted in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards (GAGAS). The audits must be independently and professionally executed in accordance with GAGAS either prescribed by a government’s Supreme Audit Institution with auditing standards approved by the

Comptroller General of the United States, or the host country's laws or adopted by the host country's public accountants or associations of public accountants, together with generally accepted international auditing standards. However, foreign entity audits consistent with International Standards for Auditing or other auditing standards are acceptable with the Grants Officer's approval. More information can be found at <https://www.gao.gov/assets/700/693136.pdf>

For sub-non-Federal entities expending \$750,000 or more in Department of State award funding during their fiscal year, Department of State standard audit provisions require that Prime non-Federal entities certify that audits of sub-non-Federal entities are performed annually and according to the standards described above. The cost of audits required under this policy may be charged either as an allowable direct cost to the award OR included in the organizations established indirect costs in the award's detailed budget.

C. COMPLIANCE WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL FUNDING REGULATIONS AND DOS TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Payment of funds awarded under this Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be disbursed until the DOS has been assured that the Recipient's financial management system will provide effective control over and accountability for all Federal funds in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600 as applicable. Awards issued under this NOFO are subject to the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions (<https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/U.S.-Department-of-State-Standard-Terms-and-Conditions-10-01-2019508.pdf>) and 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600 as applicable.

VIII. APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

A. APPLICATION EVALUATION CRITERIA

Achievable Objectives (20 points)

Each of the project objectives listed above (in Section I) are clearly addressed.

- Impact and Effectiveness: The applicant describes the project's potential contribution to solving the problem addressed in the problem statement and achieving results.
- Timeframe: The applicant describes realistic results to be accomplished within the timeframe of the proposed award.
- Beneficiaries: The applicant clearly identifies the anticipated beneficiaries and explains how the project's objectives will positively affect them.
- Milestones: The applicant provides realistic milestones to indicate progress toward goals and objectives as described in the program announcement.
- MEL: The applicant explains how monitoring, evaluation, and learning activities will be carried out throughout the award's period of performance and who will be responsible for them.

Project Design (25 points)

The applicant clearly describes how each proposed project activity will address each of the objectives outlined in the requested priority area above (Section I).

- Responsiveness to NOFO: The applicant describes how the proposed activities respond to the objectives listed in the NOFO.
- Logic Model and Theory of Change: The applicant details how the proposed Logic Model and Theory of Change clearly links project activities, outputs, and outcomes to objectives. If applicable, findings from the Gender and Inclusion Analysis are clearly addressed within the project design.
- Results Monitoring Plan: The applicant details how they intend to monitor project progress towards outputs, outcomes, and objectives. Indicators include relevant disaggregations to monitor program implementation for diverse populations.
- Support for Multi Donor Programing: The proposal illustrates how the project would enable multi-donor cooperation on programing on community security, including an explanation of how: transparent information on all Donor funds would be provided to all parties; differing Donors legal and cost requirements could be satisfied; and project design and implementation would be coordinated.
- Rationale: The applicant justifies how the proposed activities will achieve the above objectives in this context.
- Project Management: The applicant provides a clear description of how the project will be managed in terms of initiation, planning, implementation, and closing. The applicant should detail experience implementing programming in conflict zones.
- Partnerships and Buy-ins: The applicant addresses how the project will engage or obtain support from relevant stakeholders and identified local partners.
- Feasibility: The applicant proposes activities that are feasible, practical, and/or experiential in nature to encourage innovation.
- Beneficiaries Selection Criteria and Process: The applicant explains how participants will be selected (e.g., criteria for selection, selection process).
- Duplication: The applicant acknowledges if activities similar to those proposed are already taking, or have taken place previously, and provides an explanation as to how proposed new activities will not duplicate or merely add to existing/recent activities, but rather build upon.
- Stabilization End State: The applicant clearly articulates end states appropriate to a stabilization project.
- Contingency Plan: The applicant articulates programming assumptions and potential challenges to project implementation and proposes contingency plans.
- Division of Labor: The application describes the division of labor among the applicant and any partners.
- Marginalized Populations: The applicant identifies and addresses support for marginalized populations and provides specific means for their inclusion.
- Gender Considerations: The applicant includes gender and inclusion analysis in the project narrative that identifies relevant gender and inclusion gaps and ways the proposed activities will address those gaps. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing relevant gender and inclusion gaps will enhance the program's goals and objectives and how the project will benefit individuals of all genders and diverse backgrounds.

- Applicant integrates the Community Policing and Security plan throughout the proposal narrative to demonstrate the rationale of proposed activities.

Community Policing & Security Plan (10 points)

- Community Policing: The applicant provides an explanation of how the project will build the capacity of civilian security forces to provide policing services in line with the principles of community policing.
- Community Security: The applicant provides a clear description of how the project will work with local governance actors, community representatives, and other stake holders to improve the security of communities.
- The Community Policing and Community Security Plan demonstrates a holistic approach to civilian security issues that reflects best practices and knowledge of the subject matter.

Organizational Capacity (20 points)

- The applicant demonstrates experience (e.g., has previously worked and/or has established contacts/partners) implementing programming in either Syria, the MENA region, or Afghanistan.
- The applicant demonstrates experience managing projects in a conflict environment.
- The applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successfully implementing policing and/or community security programs in a conflict environment.
- The applicant demonstrates institutional subject matter expertise in community policing and/or community security.
- The applicant demonstrates capacity for responsible fiscal management of donor funding (e.g., successful management of a previous sub-award or grant).
- The applicant demonstrates the ability to meet monitoring, evaluation, and learning requirements.
- The applicant has adequate staffing and demonstrates the capacity to manage the proposed project.

Staff and Position Specifications (15 points)

- The applicant details pre-identified key staff members with demonstrable experience working on policing programming in conflict environments, specifically Syria, the MENA region, or Afghanistan.
- The applicant provides a description of the roles of each person or position on the project – whether staff, partner, consultant, or volunteer – demonstrating that the project will be sufficiently staffed but will avoid redundancy or duplication of effort.
- The applicant provides detailed job descriptions, including hiring criteria, for each open key position.
- The applicant and/or partner staff have relevant language competencies.
- The applicant details a reasonable staffing pattern to effectively and efficiently implement and manage project activities. The location of staff identified to work on the project is detailed and clearly articulates the necessity for the proposed staffing plan.

- The applicant discusses the proposed office posture for staff, as well as how effective management of staff will occur if a hybrid staffing model and/or remote staff – to include consultants – is detailed.
- The leadership/management and staff proposed by the applicant and partners have relevant language competencies.
- The applicant convincingly details how it will incorporate Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) principles in its approach to staffing.

Budget & Budget Narrative (10 points)

- The applicant proposes a budget with a preponderance of the funding being spent directly on programmatic (sub-award) activities.
- The applicant proposes operational costs that reflect an efficient use of overall available resources.
- The costs proposed are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results, which are clearly explained in the budget narrative.
- The applicant's budget provides details of calculations, including estimation methods, quantities, unit costs, and other similar quantitative detail sufficient for the calculation to be duplicated.
- The budget includes costs dedicated to management, monitoring, and evaluation, and any costs needed for further gender analysis and for addressing gender gaps.
- The applicant proposes adequate travel costs.
- The applicant includes appropriate costs dedicated to management; monitoring, evaluation, and learning; and any costs needed for further gender analysis and for addressing gender gaps.
- The budget accounts for monitoring and evaluation costs.
- The applicant clearly details organizational costs covered by indirect rates, and proposes reasonable direct management costs, if applicable.²

B. REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

NEA/AC is committed to ensuring a competitive and standardized process for awarding funding. Applications will be screened initially in a Technical Eligibility Review stage to determine whether applicants meet the eligibility requirements outlined in Section V and have submitted all required documents outlined in Section VI. Applications that do not meet these requirements will not advance beyond the Technical Eligibility Review stage and will be deemed ineligible for funding under this NOFO.

NEA/AC reserves the right to have all applications deemed to be technically eligible undergo a Subject Matter Expert (SME) review prior to the Merit Review Panel. Applications that do not pass SME review will not proceed to the Merit Review Panel.

All applications that proceed to the Merit Review Panel will be evaluated by U.S. government and non-governmental subject matter and/or country-specific experts and will be rated on a

100-point scale. Point values for individual elements of the application are presented in Section VIII. Panel Reviewers' ratings, and any resulting recommendations, are advisory.

Final award decisions will be influenced by whether the application meets NEA/AC's programmatic goals and objectives, how it supports the Department's overarching foreign policy priorities, and the geographic distribution of the top-ranking applications.

IX. ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

A. AWARD NOTICES

Applicants who do not advance beyond the Technical Eligibility Review stage will be notified 30 business days after the closing of the announcement. The authorized representative and program point of contact listed on the SF-424 will receive the notification via email. If an applicant does not receive such a notification, their submission was put forward for review.

NEA/AC expects to notify applicants who proceeded past the Technical Eligibility Review stage about the status of their application by Click or tap to enter a date. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application. NEA/AC reserves the right to award funding to applicants under this announcement for a period of up to two years after the announcement's close date.

B. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Reporting is critical to effective program management and oversight. Reports are required as a means of evaluating the recipient's progress and utilization of resources. They are divided between a performance progress report and a financial status report.

Recipients will, at a minimum, be required to submit Quarterly Performance Reports (QPR) and a Quarterly Financial Report (QFR). The QPRs will compare actual to planned performance and indicates the progress made in accomplishing each assistance award tasks/goals noted in the grant agreement and will contain analysis and summary of findings, both quantitative and qualitative, for key indicators. The QFRs provide a means of monitoring expenditures and comparing costs incurred with progress.

Recipients must report ***immediately*** when a program faces unplanned delays in implementation, fails to meet program targets or milestones, or costs increase. Any changes or revisions to the approved budget require prior approval from the NEA/AC Grants Officer.

Recipients are required to report program and beneficiary achievements on a quarterly basis (or provide written confirmation that there is no related news for the given quarter) beginning with second quarter's program report.

C. TRAVEL NOTIFICATIONS

Successful applicants will be required to provide prior notification of all international travel as a requirement of their agreement. This includes travel which is already included in the approved budget and Scope of Work. The purpose of this notification is to enable NEA/AC to inform the relevant U.S. Embassy or post of the recipient's intent to travel. The recipient must notify the Grants Officer at least three (3) business days prior to any travel. The Grants Officer reserves the right to advise against specific travel arrangements for security-related reasons.

D. APPLICANT VETTING AS A CONDITION OF AWARD

Applicants are reminded that U.S. Executive Orders and U.S. laws prohibit transactions with, and the provision of resources and support to, certain individuals and organizations associated with terrorism. Applicants proposing activities in Syria are advised that successful passing of vetting to mitigate the risk that funds may benefit terrorists is a condition of the award.

It is the legal responsibility of a recipient and any sub-recipient to ensure that all activities covered under an award issued under this NOFO conform to applicable U.S. laws and related provisions, including Executive Order 13224, and other statutory and regulatory limitations on the provision of material support or resources or other benefit to designated entities and Individuals.

The State Department has implemented a Risk Analysis and Management (RAM) Program to vet potential contractors and grantees seeking funding from the Department of State to mitigate the risk that such funds might benefit entities or individuals who present a national security risk. To conduct this vetting program the Department collects information from contractors, subcontractors, grantees, and sub-grantees regarding their directors, officers and/or key employees through mail, fax or electronic submission. The information collected is compared to information gathered from commercial, public, and U.S. government databases to determine the risk that the applying organization, entity, or individual might use Department funds or programs in a way that presents a threat to national security. The Grants Officer will inform the recipient of when vetting will be initiated and provide the complete details and requirements prior to the issuance of the award.

For awards issued under this NOFO, vetting is required for three general categories of individuals as follows:

1. Prime Awardee

a. All Key Personnel of a Prime Awardee must be vetted.

b. The following Key Individuals must be vetted:

i. All field-based (i.e., Turkey-, Jordan-, or Syria-based) Key Individuals.

- ii. Key Individuals who are based elsewhere but travel to Turkey, Jordan, or Syria for more than 25 percent of the Award's period of performance to deliver trainings and support.

c. For clarity, vetting is not required for Key Individuals based elsewhere who do not travel to Turkey, Jordan, or Syria for more than 25 percent of the Award's period of performance.

2. Sub-Awardee

a. All Key Personnel of a Sub-Awardee must be vetted.

b. The following Key Individuals must be vetted:

- i. All field-based (i.e., Turkey-, Jordan-, or Syria-based) Key Individuals.

- ii. Key Individuals who are based elsewhere but travel to Turkey, Jordan, or Syria for more than 25 percent of the Sub-Award's period of performance to deliver training and support.

c. For clarity, vetting is not required for Key Individuals based elsewhere who do not travel to Turkey, Jordan, or Syria for more than 25 percent of the Award's period of performance.

3. Recipients of Assistance and Participants in Award-Funded Activities

Recipients of award-funded assistance and participants in award-funded activities must be vetted in accordance with the following:

- a. **Training Activities:** Unless otherwise approved in writing by the GO, all participants and Syrian trainers involved in trainings held outside Syria (e.g., in Turkey or Jordan) must be vetted. For training activities taking place inside Syria, unless otherwise determined by the GO, vetting will generally be required for Syrian trainers but not for participants. However, the GO may require additional vetting of participants on a case-by-case basis. The GO will review risk profiles prior to training activities to determine the appropriate level of vetting.
- b. **Recipients of cash or in-kind support:** Vetting of Key Individuals is required when DOS-funded cash (e.g., operational or project funds) or in-kind assistance (e.g., medical equipment, community center users, food baskets) is provided to a recipient entity, whether or not such entity is a Sub-Awardee. For example, vetting would be required for Key Individuals of a local council or other group that receives DOS-funded communications equipment or specific project support via a Sub-Award or other means.

Even if vetting would not otherwise be required under these three categories, on a case-by-case basis, and prior to GO approval of a Sub-Award or project activity, the GO may require additional vetting for specific activities funded under an award.

All individuals meeting these specifications, whether previously vetted or not, must be submitted for vetting. When vetting information is requested by the Grants Officer, RAM

usually requests the vetting information via emails to the recipient's Authorizing Official. The recipient should submit the required information on the secure web portal at <https://ramportal.state.gov>, via email to RAM@state.gov, or hardcopy to the Grants Officer. Questions regarding the form may be emailed to RAM@state.gov. Forms must be submitted no later than five business days after RAM provides the Authorizing Official (identified by the Grants Officer) with a username and password for the secure portal.

Only those individuals for whom vetting is required and who have successfully passed the required vetting may receive assistance or participate in an Award. Individuals refusing to provide vetting data – or who provide false data – will not be eligible to receive assistance. Vetting must be completed 10 business days prior to an activity and may not occur retroactively.

The government reserves the right to terminate awards for convenience based on vetting results. For activities lasting more than one year, in accordance with the vetting policy, the recipient must resubmit required individuals to maintain compliance with this award requirement.

For the lifetime of the award, no funds from Foreign Terrorist Organizations (FTO), Specially Designated Global Terrorists, or other prohibited groups will be used to finance activities or organizations associated with the award, including but not limited to advertising, program performance/support, etc.

To mitigate the risk of prohibited dealings with or for the benefit of terrorists, the recipient must check the System for Award management (SAM) (www.SAM.gov) for all individuals and entities associated with this project.

E. SPECIAL PROVISION FOR PERFORMANCE IN A DESIGNATED COMBAT AREA (SPOT) REQUIREMENTS

Applicants proposing activities in **Syria** are required to adhere to the following:

All recipient personnel deploying to an area of combat operations, as designated by the Secretary of Defense under federal assistance over \$150,000 or performance over 30 days must register in the Department of Defense maintained Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) system. Recipients of federal assistance awards shall register in SPOT before deployment, or if already in the designated operational area, register upon becoming an employee under the assistance award and maintain current data in SPOT. Information on how to register in SPOT is available from your Grants Officer or Grants Officer Representative.

Recipients utilizing personnel who are not performing private security functions must account for personnel within the SPOT system anonymously through the use of the aggregate count functionality. This includes U.S. Citizens, Third Country Nationals (TCN), and Locally-hired Syrian personnel except as noted in the following paragraph.

Recipients utilizing personnel who are performing a private security function; are performing duties as a translator or interpreter; require access to U.S. facilities, services, or support; or desire consideration for refugee or special immigrant status under the Refugee Crisis in Iraq Act of 2007 (subtitle C of title XII of Public Law 110–181) must be entered into SPOT individually with all required personal information. If a Locally-hired Syrian falls into one of these categories, the recipient must enter all of the required identification data into SPOT.

When the Recipient is ready to enter U.S. Citizens, Third Country Nationals (TCN), and/or Locally-hired individuals using the Aggregate Count method, the Recipient will notify the Grants Officer who will contact the Department SPOT Program Manager (A/LM/AQM) to obtain the “Aggregate Count” template. The Recipient will complete the “Aggregate Count” template and return to the SPOT Program Manager who will ensure that aggregate counts are loaded into SPOT.

The Recipient’s SPOT Administrator is responsible for updating the aggregate locally hired national count on a quarterly basis by providing updated information via the “Aggregate Count” template to the GO/GOR for each award who will forward to the Department SPOT Program Manager for SPOT entry.

Recipient performance may require the use of armed private security personnel. To the extent that such private security contractors (PSCs) are required, recipients are required to ensure they adhere to Chief of Mission (COM) policies and procedures regarding the operation, oversight, and accountability of PSCs.

Recipient performance may require the use of armed private security personnel. To the extent that such private security contractors (PSCs) are required, recipients are required to ensure they adhere to Chief of Mission (COM) policies and procedures regarding the operation, oversight, and accountability of PSCs.

As specific COM policies and procedures may differ in scope and applicability, recipients of federal assistance awards are advised to review post policies and procedures carefully in this regard and direct any questions to the Embassy Regional Security Office (RSO) via the Grants Officer Representative (GOR). Any exclusion to these policies must be granted by the COM via the RSO. COM policies and procedures may be obtained from the RSO via the GOR. Recipients of federal assistance awards are also advised that these policies and procedures may be amended from time to time at the post in response to changing circumstances.

Recipients of federal assistance awards are advised that adherence to these policies and procedures are considered to be a material requirement of their award. Recipients of federal assistance awards are reminded that only the Grants Officer has the authority to modify the Notice of Award. Recipients shall proceed with any security guidance provided by the RSO, but shall advise the Grants Officer and the GOR of the guidance received and any potential cost or schedule impact.

F. BRANDING AND MARKING REQUIREMENTS FOR GRANTEES

Grantees awarded under this announcement will be required to make all materials produced under the award with the standard U.S. flag in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity. Materials are defined as but not limited to: training materials, materials for recipients, or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under this award, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, event backdrops, podium signs, etc. In addition, sub-recipients or sub-awardees are subject to the marking requirements and the grantee shall include a provision in the sub-recipient or sub-awardee's agreement indicating that the standard, rectangular U.S. flag is a requirement. Exceptions to this requirement can be discussed with NEA/AC when negotiating an award.

G. UEI NUMBER REQUIREMENT FOR SUB AWARDEES

All sub-awardees are required to have a UEI number. For information on obtaining a UEI number, please see Section V. B. **Proposed sub-awardees are not required to have a UEI number prior to the submission of an application but must have one prior to a sub-award being issued.**

X. AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions regarding this funding opportunity including: completing an application, financial and grants management issues, or technical matters, contact: nea-grants@state.gov

All questions must be submitted in writing to nea-grants@state.gov by April 20, 2023, at 17:00:00 eastern time (ET). All questions should include the opportunity number (SFOP0009647) in the subject of the email. NEA/AC will create a document of the submitted questions along with the answers and post it on SAMS Domestic and Grants.gov. Questions submitted after the deadline will not be addressed.

XI. DISCLAIMER

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the bureau that contradicts public language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements listed in this NOFO.