



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**  
**U.S. Embassy Ethiopia Public Diplomacy Section**  
**Notice of Funding Opportunity: Statement of Interest**

**Funding Opportunity Title:** U.S. Embassy Ethiopia PD Request for Statement of Interest

**Funding Opportunity Number:** PDS-004-FY2024

**Second Round - Date Opened-:** April 02, 2024

**Second Round - Deadline for Applications:** April 30, 2024

**CFDA Number:** 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs (Smith-Mundt)

**Total Amount Available:** Approximately \$200,000, pending funding availability.

**Award amounts:** Awards may range from a minimum of \$25,000 to a maximum of \$100,000. Exceptional proposals above \$200,000 may be considered pending funding availability.

**Federal Agency Email:** [AddisPASAPSGrants@state.gov](mailto:AddisPASAPSGrants@state.gov)

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Ethiopia Public Diplomacy (PD) section of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations or individuals to submit a statement of interest (SOI) to carry out a public engagement program. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of the SOI is the first step in a two-step process. Applicants must first submit a concise (**2-page maximum**) SOI designed to clearly communicate program idea, objectives, and an estimated budget. This is not a full proposal. The purpose of the SOI process is to allow applicants to submit program ideas for evaluation prior to requiring the development of a full proposal application. Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their program idea by submitting a full proposal application. Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decisions are made.

**Purpose of Small Grants:** PD Ethiopia invites proposals for programs that strengthen cultural ties between the United States and Ethiopia through cultural, media, and exchange programs that highlight shared values and promote bilateral cooperation. All programs must include an American cultural element or connection with U.S. experts, organizations, or institutions that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policies, values, and perspectives.

Examples of PD grant programs include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars, and speaker programs
- Artistic and cultural workshops, performances, and exhibitions
- Programs developed by alumni of U.S.-sponsored exchange programs
- Programs that strengthen relationships between Ethiopian and U.S. universities, businesses, and/or organizations
- Media training



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**The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:**

- Programs relating to partisan political activity
- Charitable or development activities
- Construction programs
- Programs that support specific religious activities
- Fund-raising campaigns
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs
- Scientific research
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;  
or
- Programs that duplicate existing programs.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is intended to inform individuals, non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and academic institutions about opportunities from the Public Diplomacy section to support projects in at least one of the following thematic areas:

- Efforts to support Ethiopia's economic and political reforms, including support for civil society, democracy, and governance, and/or election processes
- Helping media professionals, media educators, and the public learn how to discern reliable sources of information and identify mis- and disinformation. etc.
- Promoting economic growth, especially via entrepreneurship, innovation, and promoting education about Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM)
- Engaging emerging and under-represented populations, including youth, women, and persons with disabilities through leadership, education, English language, culture, and other programs
- Promoting tolerance and peace through reintegration and reincorporation of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs)
- Promoting fair and peaceful elections
- Promoting effective leadership and civic engagement
- Promoting sustainable policies to protect the environment.

**Authorizing legislation, type, and year of funding**

Funding authority for this grant program is Smith-Mundt. This Public Diplomacy Statutory Authority helps promote a better understanding of the United States in other countries. The source of funding for the program is FY2024 Public Diplomacy Funding.



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**B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

**Length of performance period:** 12 to 18 months

**Number of awards anticipated:** Three awards per round (anticipated total of six awards)

**Award amounts:** Awards may range from a minimum of \$25,000 to a maximum of \$100,000.

Exceptional proposals above \$200,000 may be considered pending funding availability.

**Type of Funding:** FY24 Smith-Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds.

**Anticipated programs start date:** October 2024

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.** The U.S. Embassy Ethiopia PD section reserves the right to award less or more than the funds described in the absence of worthy applications or under such other circumstances as it may deem to be in the best interest of the U.S. Government. All projects are subject to negotiation by the Grants Officer before final award.

**Funding Instrument Type:** Grant or Cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that embassy staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

**Program Performance Period:** Proposed programs should be completed in **12 -18 months**.

***The Department of State or U.S. Embassy Ethiopia Public Diplomacy section retains the right to execute non-competitive continuation amendment(s). Any amendment(s) is based on performance, subject to availability of funds, and not guaranteed.***

**C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

1. Eligible Applicants

The Public Diplomacy section encourages applications from U.S. and Ethiopian:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions
- Individuals will be considered, but priority is given to registered organizations and educational institutions with a proven track record of success.

For-profit or commercial entities, including for-profit media organizations, are not eligible to apply.



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2. Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

***Applicants are only allowed to submit one concept note per organization. If more than one concept note is submitted from an organization, none of the concept notes from that institution will be considered for funding.***

**D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

1. Application Package

Statements of interest (SOIs) must be submitted on the attached concept note form.

<https://apply07.grants.gov/apply/isf/opportunity/synopsisAttachment.faces?oppld=353308>

**Upon a merit review of eligible SOIs, selected applicants will be invited to expand on their program idea(s) by submitting a full proposal application and fill in the mandatory application forms available at [grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family](http://grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/sf-424-family). Full proposals will go through a second merit review before final funding decision are made.**

2. Content and Form of Application Submission.

Please follow all instructions in the attached concept note form carefully. SOIs that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

3. Submission Dates and Times

The Public Diplomacy Section will accept SOIs in two cycles:

- SOIs received between April 1 and April 30, 2024, will be reviewed in May with responses going out in June 2024.



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**4. Other Submission Requirements**

All application materials must be submitted by email to [AddisPASAPSGrants@state.gov](mailto:AddisPASAPSGrants@state.gov).

**Please see below for information about registrations required for all organizations applying for funding.**

**E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

**1. Criteria**

Each SOI will be evaluated and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.

**Quality of Program Idea – 50 points:** The SOI is responsive to program framework. The idea is communicated well and is feasible. SOIs that promote creative approaches to address program objectives are highly encouraged. The proposed timeline and budget are reasonable. Embassy priority areas/target audiences are clearly addressed.

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

The support of underserved communities will be part of the review criteria for this opportunity. Therefore, proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

**Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 35 points:** The SOI should clearly articulate proposed program activities and expected results towards achieving program objectives and goals.

**Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants –15 points:** The SOI should demonstrate the organization's expertise and previous experience in administering programs. If a local partner is to be engaged, the SOI should briefly describe the partner's role and experience.

**\*\* The same criteria will be used to evaluate the full proposals.**



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2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible SOIs. ***All eligible SOIs will be reviewed against the criteria listed above. SOIs are reviewed individually against the criteria and not against competing SOIs. For a balanced review, all panelists will review each SOI up to the maximum two-page limit and no further. The panel may provide conditions and/or recommendations on SOIs to enhance the proposed program. Conditions must be addressed, and recommendations should be addressed in the full proposal application.***

3. Following the review, any successful SOI applicants will be contacted and instructed to submit full applications. A full application will include:
- **SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations) or SF-424-I (Application for Federal Assistance --individuals)**
  - **SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)**
  - **SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) for individual or organization exempted from registering in SAM.**
4. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) **(for organizations only)**

**Required Registrations:**

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov) registrations. All are free of charge:

***Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)***

All applying organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov before applying. U.S. Embassy Ethiopia may not review applications from or make awards to applicants that have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM.gov requirements. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

**Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance Applications.**

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



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**Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.**

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Please note that as of 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](http://www.fsd.gov) to seek guidance on how to do so.

All applying organizations must also continue to maintain active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or application under consideration by a Federal award agency. SAM.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov and to maintain that active registration. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements at the time of application, the applicant may be deemed technically ineligible to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Please refer to 2 CFR 25.200 for additional information.

**Note:** SAM.gov is not the same as SAMS Domestic. It is free of charge to register in both systems, but the registration processes are different.

Information is included on the SAM.gov website to help international registrations. Navigate to [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov), click “HELP” in the top navigation bar, then click, “Explore” and “New to SAM.gov?” for general information. Please note, guidance on SAM.gov and the guidance on GSA’s website is being updated to reflect the change in NCAGE requirement. Applicants should review the website frequently for the most up-to-date guidance.





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***Exemptions***

An exemption from these requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if:

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

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

***Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) & SAM.gov registration***

Step 1: Register in SAM by logging onto: <https://www.sam.gov>. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

Step 2: Retrieve Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number also from <https://www.sam.gov>.

**To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>.**

Since April 2022, the UEIs are assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov). **Organizations should renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant organization to ensure it has an active SAM registration.**

**If a SOI is accepted for a full proposal application, the organization must obtain a UEI and have an active SAM.gov registration before submitting its full proposal application. Therefore, we recommend starting the process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration as soon as possible. The process can take several weeks. Please note there is no cost associated with UEI or SAM.gov registration.**





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**F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting the SOI, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply if a full proposal application is requested and awarded, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.

**G. FEDERAL AWARDDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the SOI application process, please contact: [AddisPASAPSGrants@state.gov](mailto:AddisPASAPSGrants@state.gov).