

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY PANAMA, PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: *U.S. Embassy Panama Public Diplomacy
Small Grants Program*

Funding Opportunity Number: *PAS-PAN-FY21-01*

Application Period Opens: *January 01, 2021*

Deadline for Applications: *March 31, 2021*

CFDA Number and Title: *19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs*

Total Amount Available: *Variable*

Amount Per Award: *\$1,000 to \$25,000*

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy in Panama is pleased to announce that funding is available through its Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This is a Notice of Funding Opportunity, outlining our funding priorities, the strategic themes we focus on, and the procedures for submitting requests for funding. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Purpose of Small Grants: Public Affairs Section PANAMA invites proposals for programs that **strengthen ties between the U.S. and Panama through cultural and exchange programming that highlights shared values and promotes bilateral cooperation.** All programs **must include an American cultural element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s** in a specific field that will promote **increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives.**

Examples of PAS Small Grants Program programs include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars and speaker programs;
- Artistic and cultural workshops, joint performances and exhibitions;
- Cultural heritage conservation and preservation programs;
- Professional and academic exchanges and programs;
- Community engagement or student programs on entrepreneurship, STEM education

Main Objectives of the U.S. Embassy in Panama:

1. Make our Extended Borders More Secure
2. Protect the American Citizen and Business Communities
3. Help Make Panamanian Institutions More Resilient, Transparent and Democratic
4. Promote More Open and Sustainable Economic Growth

Funding is available to support projects in line with the four foreign policy goals listed above that:

Promote U.S.-Panamanian Shared Values –

- Projects that **promote U.S. culture**, including music, history, sports, education, tourism, or the English language
- Activities, workshops and speakers programs that **strengthen our ties** and increase mutual understanding between people in the U.S. and Panama.
- Projects that support educational exchange and partnership particularly those related to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (**STEM**) among Panamanian youth.

Strengthen Prosperity –

- Projects that foster economic growth, improved business climate, **entrepreneurship**, innovation, corporate social responsibility, U.S. businesses, and the protection of Intellectual Property Rights.
- Projects that encourage social development, help **reduce inequality, especially among marginalized populations** outside of Panama City through improvements in health, labor, or educational standards
- Projects that generally support the development of sustainable agriculture, energy, or water management, environmental protection, wildlife conservation.

Reinforce Democracy, freedom and transparency –

- Programs that promote **good governance**, open data and more **transparent**, independent and democratic institutions in Panama
- Projects that support **human rights, racial/ethnic equality, gender equality and women's empowerment, diversity and social inclusion** as part of a strong civil society
- Programs related to **freedom of the press** that improve quality of investigative journalism and transparency

Priority Program Areas:

The Public Affairs Section will prioritize projects that:

- Improve **STEM** and **English** education in Panama
- Reinforce **journalistic standards to counter disinformation** and support freedom of information
- Encourage **inclusion** and **diversity** through engagement with marginalized populations, women, at-risk youth, and minorities to reduce economic inequality

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

- Construction programs;
- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Programs that support specific religious activities;

- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization
- Commercial or for –profit projects

Authorizing legislation, type and year of funding:

Funding authority: Smith-Mundt

The source of funding is Fiscal Year 2021 Public Diplomacy Funding.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: Up to 12 months

Award amounts: \$1,000 to \$25,000

Total available funding: *Variable*

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2021 Public Diplomacy Funding

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, Fixed Amount Award or Cooperative Agreement

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

This notice is subject to availability of funding. The U.S. Department of State is under no obligation to fund any of the proposals submitted under this funding opportunity.

Although each grant proposal will be considered on its individual merit, the grant review process will also seek to exercise responsible stewardship of government resources by maximizing the impact of available funds and balancing the nature and number of policy priorities addressed through the selected grants. In practical terms, two separate grant proposals for \$10,000 may be selected for funding instead of a single, stronger proposal for \$20,000. Grant funding requests should be reasonable and proportional to the scope of the project. Submitting a funding request for a larger amount may disadvantage the application, however the grant review panel may communicate with applicants after receipt of a proposal to adjust the budget or scope of scalable projects prior to making a final decision.

The Public Affairs Section will review applications for continuation of grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

- **Registered not-for-profit organizations**, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Universities and educational institutions
- Governmental institutions
- Individuals are eligible to apply if they have no organizational affiliation and will be the sole person conducting activities. Grants to individuals may not include sub-grants, contracts, or payments to other individuals and typically only consist of expenses for travel and per diem.

For-profit or commercial entities are not eligible to apply.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Encouraged; not required

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, **all organizations must have a NCAGE/CAGE Code, DUNS number** (Data Universal Numbering System) from Dun & Bradstreet, **as well as an active registration on www.SAM.gov**. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations. We recommend following the order NCAGE, DUNS, SAM.gov. **More step-by-step instructions with screen captures are available in our website <https://pa.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants/>** Individuals are not required to have a DUNS number or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required below are available at our website:

<https://pa.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants/>

<https://pa.usembassy.gov/es/education-culture-es/subvenciones/>

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of Application.

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- **All documents are in English.** Applications submitted in Spanish will not be accepted.
 - All budgets are in U.S. dollars

- All pages are numbered

The following documents are **required**:

1) **Mandatory application forms**

- **SF-424** Application for Federal Assistance—Organizations or **SF-424-I** Application for Federal Assistance-Individuals
- **SF424A** Budget Information for Non-Construction programs

SF-424 Forms are available at <https://pa.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants/> and <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html#sortby=1>

2) **Summary Coversheet:** Cover sheet stating the applicant name, organization DUNS number, point of contact, submission date, program title, program start and end date, amount requested and brief summary of the program.

3) **Proposal:** The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. We encourage the use of the **Proposal Template** available at <https://pa.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants/> You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Applicant Introduction:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and Panama will be improved? The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities and Schedule:** Describe the program activities, how they will help achieve the objectives, and the proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?

- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4) **Budget Narrative:** Describe each of the budget expenses in detail. The Budget Narrative should be as detailed as possible with a **breakdown** of all **specific** expenditures, including **all calculations**, the totals, the funding expected from the U.S. Embassy, and the contribution of the recipient organization (Cost Sharing) and other sponsors as applicable. The more information and detail that you provide about the proposed budget the better we can determine the viability and completeness of your proposal. Any figure you provide without a **specific breakout** will be returned for additional information or rejected.

See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

5) **Budget Worksheet:** In addition to the mentioned narrative, **please add an Excel spreadsheet outlining every budget expense.** *Budget Worksheet* available at <https://pa.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants/>

6) **Attachments:**

1-page CV or resume of key personnel involved with the program

For more information about how to write a proposal visit *Fundamentals of Grant Writing*:
<https://ylai.state.gov/online-courses/fundamentals-of-grant-writing/#/>
<https://grantsgovprod.wordpress.com/category/learngrants/grant-writing-basics/>

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

REQUIRED REGISTRATIONS:

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) **must obtain the following registrations:**

- **NCAGE code** (Non-US Organizations) / **CAGE code** (U.S. Based Organizations)
- **DUNS number** (Unique Identifier Number from Dun & Bradstreet)
- **SAM.gov Active Registration**

We recommend following the order NCAGE, DUNS, SAM.gov

!! Important Note !! It is very important that in the registrations in NCAGE, DUNS, and SAM.gov you enter the **exact same name** of the organization and the **exact same address, character for character** (we recommend no symbols, no accents and **using only one address line in NCAGE**). If NCAGE and DUNS do not match exactly, the system will reject the SAM.gov registration.

All registrations are **always free of charge**.

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE/CAGE code and a DUNS number.

NCAGE application: Application page here:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/CageTool/request-new-cage>

Instructions for the NCAGE application process:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf>

For help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423. Toll Free 1-877-352-2255

For help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766

E-mail dlacontactcenter@dla.mil and NCAGE@dliis.dla.mil or contact the Federal Service Desk (FSD) Live Chat <https://www.fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do> for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet, if your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

For technical difficulties, contact SAMHelp@dnb.com

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code and DUNS number (please make sure organization name and address match exactly in both registrations) proceed to register in **SAM.gov** by

logging onto: <https://www.sam.gov>

SAM.gov USER GUIDE available at:

<https://www.sam.gov/SAM/pages/public/help/samUserGuides.jsf>

Non-Federal User Guide, click on *Download PDF* or view online:

[https://www.sam.gov/SAM/SAM Guide/SAM Non Federal User Guide/SAM Non Fed User Guide.html](https://www.sam.gov/SAM/SAM%20Guide/SAM%20Non%20Federal%20User%20Guide/SAM%20Non%20Fed%20User%20Guide.html)

For free help with your SAM entity registration, please contact the Federal Service Desk (FSD) Live Chat at <https://www.fsd.gov/fsd-gov/home.do> or by telephone at 866-606-8220 (toll free) or 334-206-7828 (internationally).

SAM.gov registration **must be renewed annually, free of charge, by logging directly into your account in <https://www.sam.gov>** Please be advised, there are some companies that troll public records of grant applicants and tell them, usually by e-mail, that they have to pay a fee for SAM.gov or some other part of the federal assistance process. This is never the case. The entire process is **free** and does not involve any third-party companies or organizations. Please disregard any such solicitation.

More step-by-step instructions with screen captures are available in our website

<https://pa.usembassy.gov/education-culture/grants/>

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time between January 1st and the **closing date of March 31st, 2021**. The Period of Performance for program activities should begin no earlier than June 1, 2021. Exceptions to this timeline will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

5. Funding Restrictions

Alcoholic beverages, lump sum overhead costs and vague budget line items, such as “Miscellaneous Items” or “Unforeseen Expenses” will not be funded.

Please provide a **detailed budget of every cost** associated with the project. The more information and detail that you provide about the proposed budget, **with a budget narrative**, the better we can determine the viability and completeness of your proposal. **Any figure you provide without a specific breakout will be returned for additional information or rejected.**

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by e-mail to PanCultural@state.gov

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below. The criteria listed are closely related and are considered as a whole in judging the overall quality of an application.

Organizational capacity and performance on previous grants: The organization has expertise in its stated field and PAS is confident of its ability to undertake the program. This includes a financial management system and a bank account. If the organization has previously received grants, performance of those projects will be taken into account.

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Goals and objectives: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Embassy priorities: Applicant has clearly described how stated goals are related to and support U.S. Embassy Panama’s priority areas or target audiences.

Budget: The budget justification is detailed, showing calculations and with all expenditures well broken down and specific. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

Monitoring and evaluation plan: Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators, and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

3. FAPIIS

For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

- i. That the Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- iii. That the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Applications will be reviewed after the competition closes, beginning April 1. The review panel will recommend proposals for funding by May 1 and applicants will be notified by email in early May whether or not their proposal was selected for funding.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

Payment Method: Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities. Recipients can request advance payments, but approval is not guaranteed. In many cases, the final payment is made after receipt of the final reports.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

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

2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State **Standard Terms and Conditions**, all of which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/> Note the **U.S Flag branding and marking requirements** in the Standard Terms and Conditions: *“All programs, projects, assistance, activities, and public communications to foreign audiences, partially or fully funded by the Department, **should be marked** appropriately overseas **with the standard U.S. flag**”*

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit **Financial Reports** and **Performance Progress Reports**. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. The **Performance Progress Report** will compare actual to planned performance and indicates the progress made in accomplishing each assistance award task/goals noted in the grant agreement and will contain analysis and summary of findings, both quantitative and qualitative, for key indicators. The **Financial Reports** provide a means of monitoring expenditures and comparing costs incurred with progress. Recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs claimed as being its contribution to cost participation, as well as costs to be paid by the Department of State. Such records are subject to

audit. The recipient will report the amount of cost sharing contributed under the award in its financial status.

The recipient 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 or extensions to the approved period of performance **require prior written approval from the Grants Officer.**

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in this NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel. Please note that the ***Fly America Act* requires that anyone whose air travel is financed by U.S. Government funds to utilize the economy class services of a U.S. flag carrier.**

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs **at least \$5,000 per unit.**

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. (If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment).

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be **itemized and explained**.

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

“*Cost Sharing*” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.