

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

**Funding Opportunity Title:** U.S. Embassy Ghana Public Affairs Section Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI): Annual Program Statement

**Funding Opportunity Number:** DOS-ACC-RSOI-2021-01

**Deadline for Applications:** February 28, 2021

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

**Total Amount Available:** \$200,000

**Maximum for Each Award:** \$25,000

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact PAS Accra at: [pasaccragrant@state.gov](mailto:pasaccragrant@state.gov)

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for questions about the content of this NOFO.

## **A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Ghana Public Affairs Section (PAS Accra) of the U.S. Department of State announces a Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) from organizations interested in applying for funding for program proposals that strengthen ties and build relationships between the United States and Ghana. PAS Accra invites organizations interested in potential funding to submit SOI applications outlining program concepts that reflect this goal. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

The submission of a Statement of Interest (SOI) is the first step in a two-part process. Applicants must first submit a SOI, which is a concise concept note (*maximum 3 pages*) that describes your program idea and its objectives before the development of a full proposal application. Upon review of eligible SOIs, PAS Accra will invite selected applicants to expand their ideas into full proposal applications. SOIs may be submitted for consideration by February 28, 2021.

**Background:** PAS Accra is soliciting proposals for small grants from Ghanaian non-profit institutions, non-governmental organizations, or non-profit private or public academic institutions. These proposals must focus on one or more of the priority areas specified below.

The purpose of this small grants program is to **strengthen ties and build relationships between the United States and Ghana** through activities that highlight shared values, goals and cooperation. All proposed projects must have **a strong, central, American element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s** (separate and beyond any involvement with the U.S. Embassy or its American Corners), and have as a primary goal **the promotion of increased understanding of American values, perspectives, and policies and relationship building between Americans and Ghanaians.**

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

Academic or professional speaker programs involving an American speaker, either in person or virtual;

Artistic and cultural programs, joint performances or exhibitions involving the work of American artists or American subject matter;

Programs that expand PAS American Corners and American Spaces activities;

Programs developed by an alumnus/a of a U.S.-government sponsored educational or professional exchange program;

Roundtables, panels, and workshops;

Media training.

**Note: These programs may take place virtually or in-person with public health protocols in place, or a combination of both.**

### **Priority Program Areas:**

- Improve Governance, Strengthen Democratic Institutions, and Promote Accountability (this may include programs on press freedom/professionalism; increasing transparency in the public sector, and anti-corruption efforts.)
- Promote Opportunity and Development by Investing in People (this may include programs on public health and educational opportunities.)
- Maintain and bolster peace and security (this may include programs on capacity building, community-driven programs on PVE/CVE and GBV, strengthening the judicial sector, and cybersecurity trainings.)
- Spur Sustained Economic Growth, Trade, and Investment (this may include programs on entrepreneurship, capacity-building, business incubators, and opportunities to convene investors with businesses.)

### **Participants and Audiences:**

Programs may be geared to a variety of audiences, depending on the topic, though generally PAS Accra's intended participants and target audiences are youth (above age 14) and adults in Ghana. Proposals will be evaluated on a well-reasoned strategy for the intended audience, as well as appropriate inclusivity, whether based on gender, religion, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

### **Funding Restrictions**

#### **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.

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period: 12 - 18 months

Number of awards anticipated: 8 to 10 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$15,000 to a maximum of \$25,000

Total available funding: \$200,000

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2021 Public Diplomacy Funding

Anticipated program start date: On or before September 30, 2021

### **This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

PAS Accra 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.

**Funding Instrument Type:** Grant or Fixed Amount Award.

**Competition Format and Timeline:** This announcement requests concept notes from qualified organizations. After a technical review and a merit review, concept notes that are determined to have met the criteria explained in this notice will be invited to submit full proposals. Additional guidance and detailed instructions will be provided in the request for a full proposal.

- February 28, 2021 – SOI submission deadline
- March 19, 2021 - invitations sent to selected applicants to submit a full proposal
- April 18, 2021 - full proposals due from selected applicants
- May 17, 2021 - notification of selected proposals

**Performance Period:** Proposed projects should be completed in 18 months or less.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

PAS Accra encourages applications from Ghanaian:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions
- Governmental institutions

Applicants should be able to document their experience implementing similar projects. For-profit businesses or commercial entities are not eligible to apply.

### **Cost Sharing or Matching**

Inclusion of cost share is not a requirement. Optional in-kind contributions will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

## **Registrations**

Organizations are not required at this stage to have a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number (also referred to as a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number), an NCAGE code, and an active SAM.gov registration to apply for this SOI. However, if a SOI is selected, these will need to be obtained before an organization is able to submit a full application. They are free of charge.

Step 1: UEI (DUNS) application: <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

Step 2: NCAGE application: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>

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

Step 3: System for Award Management (SAM) application: <https://www.sam.gov>

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

### **Application Package**

This Request for Statements of Interest (RSOI) and any amendments and supplementary information can be found at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) (search by Opportunity Number) or on the U.S. Embassy Ghana's website at: <https://gh.usembassy.gov/education-culture/public-affairs-small-grants/>

### **Application Deadline**

PAS Accra will accept SOI proposals from the date this NOFO is posted until February 28, 2021. A grants committee will review eligible applications received by February 28 at 11:59pm GMT.

**Please follow all instructions below carefully.** Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement will not be considered.

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### **Application Submission Process**

Applications should be submitted by email to [pasaccragrant@state.gov](mailto:pasaccragrant@state.gov). The Subject Line of your email begin with: "SOI 2021" followed by the name of the proposed program.

### **Technical Requirements**

- Please send only one Word or PDF document in your application email, which should meet the following requirements:

- 3 page maximum concept note, which contains:
- All of the required elements listed under “Content of Application” below.

Only applications meeting these technical requirements will be considered for review.

### **Content of Application**

Concept Notes should be well written and concise, and contain all of the following information:

**Heading:** Organization name, Program Priority Area(s) listed above that are addressed by the proposed project; your unique project title; the location(s) of the project; the length of the project; the total amount of funding that will be required.

**Project Synopsis:** Describe the proposed project, its objectives, key activities, intended audiences and/or participants, project partners (if any), and expected results.

**American Content:** Describe the American content and how the project will promote a better understanding of the U.S. and/or build relationships with Americans.

**Budget Estimate:** Outline how the funds being requested will be allocated and in approximately what amounts, using U.S. dollar amounts.

**Organization background:** A brief description of your organization demonstrating its experience, capacity, and ability to carry out the project and manage a U.S. government award.

### **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

A Grant Review Committee will review all eligible applications. Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

**Project Idea:** Does the concept meet one or more of the Program Priority Areas; does it offer an original and impactful idea; does it have the potential to reach key audiences; does it have a strong American component?

**Project Plan:** Is the project realistic and feasible; is there a logical implementation plan, supported by activities along a reasonable timeline and with measurable results; does the implementation plan align with the proposed budget estimate and allocations?

**Ability to Achieve Objectives/Institutional Capacity:** does the organization demonstrate that it has the experience and capacity to carry out the project; does it offer added value such as relationships with partners and particular expertise and knowledge?

Successful SOI applicants will be notified of the decision to present a full submission by March 19, 2021. Instructions on the requirements of a full application submission will be provided at that time.

**Please note, an invitation to present a full submission does not guarantee funding.**

**FAPIIS**

*[This section applies to applicants who have other U.S. government grants.]*

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.

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **Federal Award Notices**

The grant 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.

The Federal government is not obligated to make any Federal award as a result of the announcement. 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. The U.S. government also reserves the right to make an award in excess of the award ceiling.

### **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/>.

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit regular narrative program reports and financial reports. The award document will specify how often and in what format these reports must be submitted.

**Branding Requirements:** As a condition of receipt of a grant award, all materials produced pursuant to the award, including training materials, materials for recipients or materials to communicate or promote with foreign audiences a program, event, project, or some other activity under an agreement, including but not limited to invitations to events, press materials, and backdrops, podium signs, etc. must be marked appropriately with the relevant U.S. Embassy branding in a size and prominence equal to (or greater than) any other logo or identity.

## **G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PAS Accra at: [pasaccragrant@state.gov](mailto:pasaccragrant@state.gov).

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