A NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY
Global Engagement Center – Annual Program Statement

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Global Engagement Center – Annual Program Statement

Section A. Funding Opportunity Program Description

Announcement Type: Grant and/or Cooperative agreement
Funding Opportunity Title: Global Engagement Center – Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0008867
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.040
Funding Amount: Up to $500,000 - Amount of award and number of awards will depend on availability of funds

Key Dates:
1. Application must be submitted by 11:59 P.M. Eastern Time (ET) on May 30, 2022 or August 31, 2022 or December 31, 2022.
2. Notification of project approval and award signing expected within one year of application deadline.

Executive Summary:

The Global Engagement Center (GEC) at the Department of State (DoS), announces the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for its Annual Program Statement. The agreement awarded will use U.S. Fiscal Year 2022/23 Public Diplomacy Funds or Economic Support Funds.

Eligibility is limited to U.S. non-profit/nongovernmental organizations, foreign non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and commercial entities.

Applicants may submit one proposal per threat actor, per submission deadline. See section A2 for a list of threat actors.

Proposals which have been submitted to the GEC within the past 12 months will be considered ineligible.

Grants or cooperative agreements for up to $500,000 U.S. dollars (USD) in FY 2022/23 Public Diplomacy or Foreign Assistance Act will be awarded for work that will support the GEC’s overall mission to recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign state and foreign non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts. The initial period of performance will be for up to 12 months. Funding authority rests under FY2022/23 Diplomatic and Consular Programs funds, as authorized by the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act or Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

Contact Person: The Global Engagement Center
GEC-PROGRAMS@state.gov
Please read the entire solicitation package carefully, including Section D. Application and Submission Information. There are steps that you should take immediately in order to make your submissions by the deadline.

A1. Background

As mandated by law, the GEC directs, leads, synchronizes, integrates, and coordinates efforts of the Federal Government to recognize, understand, expose, and counter foreign state and foreign non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts aimed at undermining or influencing the policies, security, or stability of the United States and United States allies and partner nations. GEC carries out eleven specific functions, among them to lead, direct, synchronize, integrate, and coordinate international efforts to track and evaluate counterfactual narratives abroad that threaten the policies, security, or stability of the United States and United States allies and partner nations.

As needed, the GEC supports the development and dissemination of fact-based narratives and analysis to counter the propaganda and disinformation of state and non-state actors directed at the United States and United States allies and partner nations. The GEC also identifies current and emerging trends in foreign propaganda and disinformation in order to coordinate and shape the development of tactics, techniques and procedures to expose and refute foreign propaganda and disinformation. In addition, the GEC coordinates with United States allies and partner nations in order to amplify the Center’s efforts and to avoid duplication.

The GEC engages through partners to carry out these and other functions and to work toward associated policy goals. The GEC does not address United States domestic audiences, nor engage in domestic discussions of United States policy. Therefore, no activities supported under this Notice of Funding Opportunity shall be directed toward U.S. persons. Any such engagement, if determined by the GEC to have been intentional may constitute grounds for termination for cause of this award.

A2. Program Objectives

Below are the GEC’s overarching objectives for programming. In your proposal, your activities must align to one or more of the program objectives and identify which threat actor’s propaganda and disinformation the proposed activities are intended to counter; the People’s Republic of China (PRC), Russia, or violent extremist organizations (VEOs).

1. Expose foreign state and foreign non-state actors' tactics and efforts that spread propaganda and disinformation to foreign audiences.
2. Increase global resilience and reduce vulnerability to foreign state- and foreign non-state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation.
3. Strengthen civil society voices and independent media that deny foreign state and foreign non-state propaganda and disinformation from controlling the narrative.
4. Lead and coordinate messaging activities that preempt and counter violent extremist disinformation, propaganda, and ideology.
5. Inoculate vulnerable audiences and build resilience to violent extremist propaganda and ideology.
A3. Expected Outcomes, Outputs, and Activities

In your proposal, you will list the expected outcomes, outputs, and activities for each objective above and explain how they logically lead to one another in a results chain. See Appendix 3 for details on developing your results chain and definitions. Before completing the results chain, please review the outcomes, outputs, and activities below.

Outcomes:

An outcome is the result, change, or effect that is caused by or attributable to project activities implemented and their outputs. Outcomes describe the changes in participants’ knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that are necessary preconditions for the objective to be realized. Each objective listed will have its own unique outcomes that are required to achieve the objective. Applicants should propose specific outcomes that logically align to the objective they are meant to help achieve in line with their theory of change. Outcomes should be SMART (see definition below). The following outcomes are illustrative of the potential changes that may result from implementing your proposed project activities and of the types of projects that the GEC implements.

1. Increase country capacity to identify and counter foreign propaganda and disinformation by facilitating collaborative relationships between (1) partner countries that have developed expertise in identifying and countering propaganda and disinformation and (2) partners and allies that lack this expertise so that those with expertise share their skills and technical capability with those seeking to gain expertise.
2. Increase resilience to foreign propaganda and disinformation among civil society, independent media, and other public influencers.
3. Raise awareness of and/or counter threat actors’ propaganda and disinformation through sustainable information-sharing networks.
4. Increase trust and rapport between governments host governments, independent media organizations, and constituencies leveraging whole-of-society approaches to counter propaganda and disinformation.
5. Contribute to the best practices literature for informing future GEC activities by designing, implementing, and measuring performance of innovative programming that identifies, exposes, and/or counters threat actors’ propaganda and disinformation in countries with information environments that have not yet been researched that have evidence of state-sponsored active disinformation or propaganda campaigns.
6. Build a lasting public information architecture that demonstrably increases the utilization of tools and technologies to counter propaganda and disinformation among vulnerable target audiences.
7. Increase the use of innovative tools and technologies that address foreign propaganda and disinformation.
8. Demonstrate an increase in media literacy among target audiences through activities that encourage discernment of information through education activities (e.g., gamification or activities that encourage critical thinking skills).
9. Diminish the appeal of violent extremist organizations (VEOs) and foreign malign influence.
Outputs:

An output is a short-term, immediate result of a program, project, or process that leads to a longer-term outcome. Outputs are the products, goods, and services which result from activities. There can only be one output that results from an activity. Applicants should propose specific outputs that will contribute to achieving the outcomes above in line with their theory of change. Below are illustrative examples of the kinds of outputs that GEC projects may develop.

1. Reports on threat actors’ methods for disseminating and amplifying propaganda and disinformation.
2. Workshops, meetings, or summits convening civil society and government communicators.
3. Trainings or workshops building the capacity of journalists and/or influencers.
4. Engagements with campaign content (likes, shares, retweets, etc.).
5. News articles and exposés about disinformation.
6. Program participants that attended training.

Activities:

An activity is an action undertaken over a period to produce a specific output. Each activity should be aligned to only one output and its associated outcome and objective. In your proposal, you will list and describe the proposed activities that you plan to implement, and how each activity will produce the expected output and outcome. Applicants should propose specific activities that will produce their desired outputs in line with their theory of change. However, some example activities which may apply to the intended expected outcomes listed above include:

1. Projects that facilitate collaborative partnerships between countries that have developed expertise in identifying and countering propaganda and disinformation and those that have not (Outcome 1).
2. Projects that build resilience among civil society, independent media representatives, and influencers (Outcome 2).
3. Projects that create information-sharing networks to raise awareness of threat actors’ propaganda and disinformation activities and provide sustainable support to those networks (Outcome 3).
4. Projects that establish or enhance local fact-checking organizations in countries where capacity is insufficient. Activities can include recruitment and training of fact-checking volunteers, including local journalists; training of software developers; creation of tailored ChatBots to respond to local fact checking requests at scale; completion of local needs assessments; collaboration with international communities of practice, such as the International Fact-Checking Network (Outcomes 3 & 6).
5. Projects that establish whole-of-society/government approach between the host government, local media, and constituencies (Outcome 4).
6. Projects that provide data-driven programming that exposes and/or counters threat actors’ propaganda and disinformation tactics through hypothesis-development and hypothesis-testing. Proposed research must be approved by the GEC (Outcome 5).
7. Projects that can help build a lasting public information architecture and increase the sustainability of technology programs (Outcome 6).
8. Projects that identify, assess, test and implement technologies against the problems of foreign propaganda and disinformation (Outcome 7).
9. Projects that help build audience literacy awareness to propaganda and disinformation activities through gamification or other evidence-based education activities (Outcome 8).
10. Dissemination of derogatory information about VEOs (e.g., their leaders, their narratives, the suffering they inflict, etc.), particularly among vulnerable populations (Outcome 9).
11. Dissemination of information, (i.e., via radio, film, social media, and/or other means) featuring evidence that challenges VEO narratives or malign influence (Outcome 9).

Directions:

In appendix three, you will find an objective with the space for outcomes, outputs, and activities that need to be achieved to reach the objective. In your proposal, add as many objectives as needed to successfully complete the project. We recommend that each objective has at least two outcomes and that each outcome has at least two outputs. Each output can only have one or more activities. It should be clear to the reader how an activity will result in an output, how multiple outputs lead to the outcome, and how multiple outcomes will achieve an objective.

A4. Performance Indicators

The project should monitor and report on performance indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, and timebound. Establish performance baseline data and expected performance targets for each expected result and include details on what sources of data will be used to document performance, how the indicators will be measured, frequency of measurement, and units of measure. Where applicable, indicators should also allow for relevant disaggregation (gender, country, cohort, etc.).

Potential indicators for this project could include:

Whole-of-Society/Resilience
- Percent of program participants with a measured increase in ability to identify disinformation.
- Percent of program participants with a measured increase in ability to recognize violent extremist organization propaganda and disinformation.
- Percent of surveyed population that demonstrate the ability to reject tools and tactics employed by violent extremist organizations to manipulate and mislead.

Whole-of-Society/Resilience - Networking
- Number of individuals actively participating in a network.
- Number of organizations actively participating in a network.
• Number of participants at networking events.
• Number of new network connections.
• Percent of network members that declare intent to continue to participate in network.

Whole-of-Society/Resilience - Training
• Number of individuals trained.
• Percent of training participants that demonstrate an increase in subject matter knowledge.
• Percent of training of the trainer participants that lead subsequent trainings.
• Percent of training participants that publish content as a result of training.

Whole-of-Society/Resilience - Fact-Checking
• Number of facts checked.
• Number of requests to fact-checking organization for fact checking.

Whole-of-Society/Resilience - Media Capacity
• Percent change in media organization or journalist capacity per GEC capacity assessment.
• Percent of trained journalist utilizing their new skills to publish investigative content.
• Percent of participating media organizations or journalists that demonstrate an increase of the reach of their content after capacity building.

Messaging and Content Creation
• Proportion of factual narratives to disinformation narratives on messaging campaign themes/topics.
• Reported audience reach for digital platforms or offline media.
• Number of online engagements (like, share, retweet).
• Percent of impressions generating an interaction (share/like/retweet).
• Number of target audience that agree with the campaign message (have positive sentiment).
• Proportion of target audience that agree with the campaign message (have positive sentiment).
• Number of target audience that has unprompted campaign issue awareness.
• Proportion of target audience that has unprompted campaign issue awareness.
• Average length of time spent on campaign site or platform.
• Number of target audience that reports a change in attitude about campaign topic.
• Proportion of target audience that reports a change in attitude about campaign topic.
• Number of citations or references to content.

Refer to Appendix 1 for a full set of potential performance indicators and disaggregates. All applicable output and outcome metrics should be included in the proposal and, subsequent to the award, routine, periodic reporting on all indicators will be required.

The State Department takes into consideration the quality of data reported by recipients as part of the award activities, therefore applicants should be aware that recipients will be subject to data
quality assessments, which may require the sharing of draft survey and interview questions, raw data, and a review of indicator performance.

A5. Substantial Involvement

Substantial involvement in this project will include but may not be limited to:

- Review and approval of one stage of work before another can begin
- Joint preparation and/or presentation of results with the recipient
- Approval of international travel before travel commences
- Approval of M&E tools
- Approval of training curricula/materials
- Assisting in coordination with other relevant entities including U.S. government agencies
- Review, input, and approval of other proposed activities or products associated with this CA.

Section B. Federal Award Information

B1. Available Funding

Overall grant-making authority for this project is contained in the FY2020 Diplomatic and Consular Programs funds, as authorized by the 2017 National Defense Authorization Act, as amended. The initial period of performance will be 12 months. Depending on the quality of performance and other factors, GEC may consider additional supplemental funding to continue activities and extend the period of performance, if funds are available and GEC and the Recipient mutually agree.

Summary of Award Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Award</th>
<th>Grant and/or cooperative agreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fiscal Year Funds</td>
<td>FY 2022/23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate Total Funding:</td>
<td>$500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate Number of Awards:</td>
<td>Dependent on availability of funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated Award Date:</td>
<td>September 30, 2023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anticipated Project Completion Date:</td>
<td>September 29, 2024</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Timeline for Award Adjudication
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deadline for Applications</th>
<th>May 30, 2022; August 31, 2022; December 31, 2022</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Notification of Project Approval/Disapproval and Notice of Award Signing</td>
<td>Within one year of application deadline</td>
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**B2. Award Management**

The successful applicant awarded under this NOFO will need to routinely collaborate with relevant U.S. Government agencies, including relevant U.S. diplomatic posts and State Department regional and functional bureaus.

The Recipient must ensure that all funds are used in a manner consistent with U.S. Government laws on the use of Public Diplomacy or foreign assistance funds, including any applicable restrictions on funding.

**Section C. Eligibility Information**

**C1. Eligible Applicants**

Eligibility is limited to U.S. non-profit/nongovernmental organizations, foreign non-profit organizations, educational institutions, and commercial entities.

Technically eligible submissions are those which arrive electronically to SAMS Domestic by the designated deadline; have heeded all instructions contained in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), including length and completeness of submission; and do not violate any of the guidelines stated in the solicitation and this document.

**C2. Cost Share**

Cost share is not required for this application.

**C3. Other – Eligibility Criteria**

N/A
Section D. Application and Submission Information

D1. Address to request Application Package

Please read the entire announcement carefully and follow the guidelines below before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Applicants may submit one proposal per threat actor, per submission deadline. Submission in excess of this from the same applicant will result in all proposals being rejected as technically ineligible. Re-submissions of proposals submitted to another GEC NOFO within the past 12 months will not be considered.

Once the NOFO deadline has passed, GEC staff may not discuss this competition with an applicant until the proposal review process has been completed.

D2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should submit them by email to GEC-Programs@State.gov. Please refer to the funding opportunity number. Any updates about this NOFO will also be posted on SAMS Domestic.

Applicants must include the following in the proposal submission. All submissions must be in English.

- Table of Contents that lists application contents and attachments (if any)
- Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A and SF424B, as directed on SAMS Domestic. The Certifications and Assurances that your organization is agreeing to in signing the 424 are available at https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html
- If your organization engages in lobbying activities, a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form is required.
- Letter of Disclosure for proposed consultants/personnel (if applicable) of potential conflicts of interest, employment with a local/state/federal government
- Letter(s) of Institutional Support to indicate that your organization’s leadership is providing their support of the application. See sample letter in Appendix 2.
- Proposal Narrative (see Narrative Components below)
- Summary and detailed line-item budget and budget narrative (see Budget Components below)

Please note: Other items NOT required for submission, but which may be requested if your application is selected to move forward in the review process include:

- Copies of relevant human resources, financial, or procurement policies
- Copies of other relevant organizational policies or documentation that would help the Department determine your organization’s capacity to manage a federal award
- Completion of a pre-award organizational information sheet to determine what financial controls and standard operating procedures an organization uses to procure goods and services, hire staff and track time and attendance, pay for grant-related travel, and execute
other financial transactions that may be necessary to undertake the activities in your application

- GEC reserves the right to request any additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposal.

An important part of the application is the Proposal Narrative. The Proposal Narrative is not to exceed 20 pages and should be single-spaced, with 12-point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins in Microsoft Word. It should be organized using the section headings as listed below in the “Proposal Narrative Components” and “Budget Components” sections. Additional content will not be considered. Please see Section E for more information on point values for the below sections.

**Proposal Narrative Components**

1. **Executive Summary**

A one-page summary that includes the name and contact information for the project’s main point of contact; the project’s purpose; targeted countries; target audience; program length (dates/duration); total funding requested (indicate any sub-grants proposed); project’s goals, primary objectives and expected results (highlighting any aspects of innovation, sustainability and impact of the project); involvement or use of any NGO’s or civil society organizations; expected results and sustainability; and a one-paragraph program description. Countries of implementation are those countries or participants from countries that will receive financial or technical support as a result of this project.

2. **Organizational Capacity and Past Performance**

This section of the application provides information about the applicant organization. It provides evidence that the applicant can successfully carry out the program activities of the agreement.

- Provide a description of the applicant organization – including its general purpose, goals, annual budget (including funding sources), and major past and current activities and projects undertaken.
- Discuss the applicant’s experience on recognizing, understanding, exposing, and/or countering foreign state and foreign non-state propaganda and disinformation efforts.
- As an attachment (which does not count as part of the page limit), please provide at least one past performance reference which describes any contracts, grants, cooperative agreements which the applicant organization has implemented involving similar or related programs over the past three years. Please provide the reference in an attachment and include the following information: name and address of the organization for which the work was performed; current telephone number and email address of responsible representative from the organization for which the work was performed; contract/grant name and number (if any), annual amount received for each of the last three years and beginning and end dates; brief description of the project/assistance activity and key project accomplishments/results achieved to date.
3. Program Strategy

- Propose a clear, realistic, and timely implementation plan to significantly address the Program Objectives in Section A2.
- The proposal should further outline the expected results for the project which could include suggestions in Section A3. It should also outline the relevant and appropriate Main Activities to accomplish the objectives, which could include those found in Section A4. Explain the assumptions on which the success of the project depends, and the involvement of other stakeholders. Include mitigation plans for each of the assumptions.
- In table format, please present a brief, one- to two-page work plan matrix (which does count as part of the 15 pages), with a timeline including target dates for activities for the life of the agreement, which reflects the overall program approach, and objectives. The following timeline below is provided as an example.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Activities, Deliverables, and/or Milestones</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Etc.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Monitoring Plan (may be requested within 30 days after the start of the activity)</td>
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<td>Activity 1.1</td>
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<td>Activity 1.2</td>
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<td>Activity 2.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Etc.</td>
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<td>X</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- The proposal should clearly explain how progress toward the program objectives will be sustained after the end of the period of performance.
- The proposal should clearly explain how the program strategy is innovative, unique, or otherwise adds special value.

4. Performance Management, Project Assessment, and Evaluation

- Discuss how progress towards the stated results will be measured and managed, as outlined by the Performance Indicators in Section A5. Identify how performance indicators will be measured and how data on these indicators will be collected, analyzed, and used for performance management. Present indicators linked to specific project objectives in table format and include the anticipated source of the data and proposed frequency of collection.
• Proposals must include a detailed plan on how the project’s impact and effectiveness will be monitored for performance and assessed throughout the period of performance of the project. Successful performance monitoring and evaluation depends on:
  o Writing objectives that are clear, attainable, measurable, and can be achieved during the period of performance.
  o Linking project activities to stated objectives.
  o Developing performance indicators that are quantifiable, have realistic targets, and are categorized into outputs or outcomes. The recipient will be required to develop outcome indicators that capture behavior and sentiment changes among the target audience as a result of the project.
  o The recipient will be required to report to GEC on progress made towards indicator targets.
  o See the full list of potential Performance Indicators in Appendix 1.

5. Communications and Outreach Plan

• Discuss how project assessment information, results, and success stories will be collected and disseminated throughout the life of the project.
• Discuss how project activities will be communicated to stakeholders to encourage continued engagement with the project.
• Identify primary channels of communication, key communication platforms, primary and secondary audiences, and communications products.
• Identify existing resources available for communications and outreach and discuss how these will be applied or improved for use in the host country.
• Discuss how project activities will be coordinated between the Recipient organization, U.S. government, host government, and other stakeholders.

6. Management Plan

• Describe the proposed management structure for this project and provide a project organizational chart in the attachments. Include in the narrative a description of the responsibilities of all principal organizations and staff involved, reporting relationships, authority and lines of communication within and between each of these organizations, as well as communications with GEC and other USG offices as listed in section B2 of this announcement.
• Include job descriptions and CVs of key staff (Project Director, etc.) as attachments (do not count as part of the 15-page limit), which demonstrate that the proposed key staff are consistent with the requirements and needs of the project. The project should have a designated Project Director who will be expected to have lead responsibility for communicating with GEC. Note the location where key staff will be based.
• Include details of any public communications or outreach activities

Budget Components
• Refer to the Excel Budget Template for guidance on compiling a budget and associated budget narrative.

• Summary Budget in USD, in Excel, printable on letter-sized paper, using the format in the provided Excel Budget Template.

• Detailed Budget in USD in Excel, printable on letter-sized paper, using the format in the provided Excel Budget Template:
  • The budget should be for the entire project period. Successful applicants may be asked to provide a year-by-year budget after the award is signed.
  • All sub-award costs should be listed under Line F, “Contractual,” and should also be broken out and organized according to the subcategories. All sub-awardees must be organizations with unique entity identifier (DUNS) numbers (certain exceptions apply). Individual contractors should also be listed under Line F and should each be listed separately from sub-grantee line items.

• Budget Narrative (not to exceed 10 pages) that includes an explanation for each line item in the spreadsheet, as well as the source and description of all cost share offered.

• If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a pdf file. Organizations that have previously established indirect cost rates must submit timely indirect cost proposals to the cognizant agency as required by Appendix III & IV of 2 CFR 200. If indirect cost proposals have not been submitted for re-negotiation as required, out-of-date NICRAs may not be considered.

• A PDF file copy of your organization’s most recent program (A-133 /2 CFR 200) audit, if applicable. If not, please include a copy of your most recent independent audit, if available.

Before grants are awarded, the GEC reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the GEC’s program needs and availability of funds.

The Budget Components will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Budget Appropriateness

   • Budgeted items are necessary to the achievement of the goals and activities as presented in the proposal.

2. Cost-effectiveness

   • Proposals keep estimated overhead and administrative costs as low as possible and have proposed expenditures that are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities and reflect the applicant’s understanding of the allowable cost principles established by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 2 CFR 200. Amount of funding contributed by the applicant, sub-awardees, and other partners shows a commitment to the success of the project.

   • As per Section C2 cost-share is not required, however, should applicants incorporate cost-share, this can be achieved through leveraging existing projects, partnering, and/or providing in-kind goods and services.
D3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM)

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal awarding agency that is excepted from those requirements under 2 CFR §25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal awarding agency under 2 CFR §25.110(d)) is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier (UEI) in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency.

The Federal awarding agency may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

In addition, if the organization plans to sub-contract or sub-grant any of the funds under an award, those sub-awardees must also have a UEI (certain exceptions apply). UEIs can be obtained from SAM.gov without completing a full registration.

**Required Registrations:**

All organizations applying must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- NCAGE/CAGE code
- Active SAM.gov registration
- SAMS Domestic Registration

Step 1: Submit a UEI registration and apply for an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously):

- Obtain UEI: [https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration](https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration)
- NCAGE application: Application page here: [https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/CageTool/home](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/CageTool/home)
  Instructions for the NCAGE application process: [https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/Support/en/Products/NCAGE/](https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/Codification/Support/en/Products/NCAGE/)
  Email ncage@nspa.nato.int for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: Register in SAM by logging onto [https://www.sam.gov](https://www.sam.gov). SAM registration must be renewed annually. Entity registration typically takes between a few hours to 2 days to become active. The status tracker can be found here: [https://sam.gov/content/status-tracker](https://sam.gov/content/status-tracker)
Step 3: SAMS Domestic Registration:

SAMS Domestic provides the only portal through which applications to this opportunity will be accepted. Please refer to SAMS-Domestic at https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com/ilms/portal_login.do to register and apply.

D4. Submission Dates and Times

Applicants are urged to begin the application process well before the submission deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps. All applications must be submitted by 11:59pm Eastern Time (ET) on May 30, 2022; August 31, 2022; December 31, 2022. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

D5. Funding Restrictions

The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement:

- Social welfare projects
- Paying to complete activities begun with other funds (however, new activities that build from lessons learned as the result of an earlier project are acceptable)
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns
- Exchange programs (however, reasonable international travel incidental to the accomplishment of project objectives will be considered)
- One-time events, such as stand-alone conferences and one-off round tables (however, a series of workshops within a larger programmatic concept are acceptable)
- Medical research and clinical studies
- Cultural presentations, cultural research, cultural clubs, or festivals, etc.
- Entertainment (e.g., social activities, ceremonies, alcoholic beverages, guided tours).

D6. Other Submission Requirements – Proposal Format Requirements

The GEC requires proposals be submitted electronically SAMS Domestic (https://mygrants.service-now.com).

To register to use SAMS Domestic, an organization must complete several steps, which include those registration requirements listed in D3. Completing these steps can take up to 4 weeks, especially for an international organization. Additionally, SAMS Domestic requires multi-factor authentication.

Section E. Application Review Information

E1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and scored using a 100-point scale by a committee of Department of State and other experts, as appropriate.
Proposal Narrative: The committee will score each of the five sections of the Proposal Narrative based on how completely they address the bulleted points described in the Proposal Narrative Guidance in Section D2. The importance of each section is indicated by the maximum score as follows:

- Executive Summary – 5 points
- Organizational Capacity and Past Performance – 20 points
- Program Strategy – 25 points
- Performance Monitoring and Evaluation – 15 points
- Communications and Outreach Plan – 10 points
- Management Plan – 5 points

Budget: The committee will also review the budget components in order to assign up to 20 points for the overall project budget and cost-effectiveness. Proposals should keep estimated overhead and administrative costs as low as possible and have proposed expenditures that are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed project activities and reflect the applicant’s understanding of the allowable cost principles established by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in 2 CFR 200. Amount of funding contributed by the applicant, sub-awardees, and other partners shows a commitment to the success of the project.

- Budget Appropriateness – 10 points
- Cost-effectiveness – 10 points

E2. Review and Selection Process

Applications will be reviewed by a technical review panel. The applications will be scored based on the strengths and weaknesses of the aforementioned categories and for consistency with the project objectives and key areas of interest as contained in this NOFO.

Section F. Federal Award Administration Information

F1. Federal Award Notices

The award shall be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer subsequent to the panel review and selection of proposals. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the Recipient electronically through SAMS Domestic. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing. Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government, nor does it commit the Government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the Government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.
F2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Prior to 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, as well as the certifications and assurances and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available through the State Department’s procurement website at: https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/

Applicants should plan to coordinate with GEC throughout the course of the agreement to ensure assistance is provided only to eligible participants.

Banking Requirements

If the award is approved, payments may be made through the online Payment Management System (PMS). Please consult with GEC regarding how to proceed with PMS registration.

F3. Reporting

The Recipient, at a minimum, shall provide GEC with the following reports. All data collected, supporting documentation, and contact information must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the GEC upon request.

Financial Reports

The Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial reports throughout the project period, using Form FFR SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form, as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative. If payment is made through the Payment Management System, all financial reports must be submitted electronically through the Payment Management System. The grantee is also required to upload to SAMS Domestic a pdf version of all financial reports (Federal Financial report) they have submitted in the Payment Management System. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found on OMB’s website here: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/post-award-reporting-forms.html#sortby=1

Financial reports are due on/before 30 days after the end of each quarter.

Progress Reporting

The awardee is required to upload all progress reports to the award file in SAMS Domestic. Progress reports must be submitted quarterly. Awardees can use the Performance Progress Report (Form SF-PPR), signed, and completed as a cover page to progress reports, which should be compiled according to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs of the project as outlined in the statement of work below, consistent with the project proposal and monitoring and evaluation and sustainability plans (Optional cover sheet for progress reporting on awards). Reports should also include an update on expenditures during the quarter. The awardee is expected to anticipate the reporting due dates by tracking implementation, outcome and financial progress throughout the reporting period. At minimum, it is expected that the quarterly progress reports will include:
• Significant activities of the period and how activities reflect progress toward achieving goals
• Evaluation of progress on goals/objectives with quantitative and qualitative data, as appropriate
• Any problems/challenges in implementing the project and a corrective action plan
• Any changes to the project timeline
• Evaluation of accomplishments with quantifiable information on goals and objectives to date as available, including reporting on agreed-upon indicators
• An update on expenditures during the reporting period; and
• Supporting documentation or products related to project activities (such as surveys, travel, etc.)
• Performance indicator results and supporting documentation
• Project Spotlight highlighting a significant area of progress under the agreement as well as photos of implementation

Quarterly progress reports should also reflect the awardee’s continued focus on measuring the project’s impact on the overarching goals or problems the project set out to address. An assessment of the overall project impact, as appropriate, should be included in each quarterly project report.

Final Report

The final report will be due no later than 120 days after the end date of the award or termination of all project activities. The Final Report shall include the following elements: executive summary, successes, outcomes, best practices, how the project will be sustained, final indicator data, and a final financial report. Additional guidance may be provided prior to the award end date.

Section G. Federal Awarding Agency Contact

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should email them to GEC-PROGRAMS@state.gov.

Note that once the Request for Proposals deadline has passed, State Department staff in Washington DC and overseas at U.S. Embassies/Missions may not discuss this competition with applicants until the review process has been completed.

Section H. Other Information

H1. Conflict of Interest

In accordance with applicable Federal awarding agency policy, applicants must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to the Federal awarding agency or pass-through entity.
H2. Applicant Vetting

Applicants are advised that proposals will be evaluated against the potential risk that federal funds may inadvertently be passed to the wrong hands and that funds may benefit terrorist groups or their supporters. Applicants may be asked to submit information required by DS Form 4184, Risk Analysis Information (attached to this solicitation), about their company and its principal personnel. Vetting information is also required for all sub-award performance on assistance awards identified by DOS as presenting a risk of terrorist financing. When vetting information is requested by the Grants Officer, information may be submitted on the secure web portal at: https://ramportal.state.gov, via email to RAM@state.gov, or hardcopy to the Grants Officer.

Questions about the form may be emailed to RAM@state.gov. Failure to submit information when requested, or failure to pass vetting may be grounds for rejecting your proposal.

H3. Marking Policy

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients of Federal assistance awards are subject to the State Department’s Marking Policy. More information on this policy can be found on: https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/

H4. Evaluation Policy – Only for Foreign Assistance Funds

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients of Federal assistance awards funded with Economic Support Funds are subject to the Department of State Evaluation Policy. More information on this policy can be found here: http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/rls/evaluation/2015/236970.htm. Further, recipient organizations are encouraged to conduct their own and/or independent evaluations on their Department of State funded programs and projects to assess performance and outcomes.

H5. 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 project, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the project.

Fringe benefits: Calculate any allocable fringe benefits for personnel to be working directly on the project. Fringe benefits must be justified by an organization’s written HR policies or NICRA.

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this project. If the project involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the project, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the project), 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 project. 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. This includes independent consultants. Also describe any sub-awards to partners that will help carry out a substantial portion of the scope of work.

Other Direct Costs: Describe any other costs directly associated with the project, 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 project 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. For-profit entities with a formally established overhead rate may apply that rate.

“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.
## APPENDIX 1 – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Below is the full set of potential performance indicators and disaggregates. All applicable output and outcome metrics should be included in the proposal. Subsequent to award, periodic reporting of all indicators will be required.

The State Department takes into consideration the quality of data reported by recipients as part of the award activities. Applicants should be aware that recipients will be subject to data quality assessments, which may require the sharing of draft survey and interview questions, raw data, and proof of indicator performance.

Applicants must fill out this table and insert it into the proposal document (rows may be deleted for those indicators that do not pertain to the grant project). Additional indicators may be added by adding rows to the chart. All selected and added outcomes and indicators will be required to be reported upon, in keeping with the programmatic reporting due dates to be determined under the final agreement. Applicants may use smaller but legible font size in tables.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>Related Activities</th>
<th>Quarterly Targets</th>
<th>Cumulative Total Target</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List indicators relevant to the project</td>
<td>Describe related activity(ies) that contribute to these results</td>
<td>FYX X Q1</td>
<td>FYX X Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EX Outcome 1.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Add rows for additional indicators or delete rows for fewer indicators)
APPENDIX 2 – SAMPLE LETTER OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT

Global Engagement Center
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

[applicant Institution Letterhead]

Date:

[name of higher executive supportive of the proposal submission]
Street Address
State, and zip code

Attention:  Global Engagement Center
           U.S. Department of State

RE: Letter of support for Application SAPPxxx

[Name of the applicant institution] is happy to endorse the proposal’ entitled “XXXXXXX” in response to the NOFO# entitled XXXXXXX. Our organization has been working in this area for the last X years and has developed extensive expertise in selected countries/region. If you have established contacts, describe those. Briefly explain why you are interested in committing your organizational resources such as staffing and in-kind contribution in support of the NOFO goals.

If your project intends to engage in collaborative efforts through sub-awards, please explain the rationale and your institution’s objective for sub-awarding funds to local organizations. Please indicate if you have worked with relevant staff and explain the areas of collaborative work.

Sincerely,

[Sr. officer of the institution]
Signature of President or
Executive Office
APPENDIX 3 – EXAMPLE RESULTS CHAIN AND GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Below you will find an example of a results chain to support the construction of your own results chain in the NOFO application or proposal. The results chain is a critical process to follow and a necessary component of your project’s overall logical framework.

The logical framework is what drives planning, performance monitoring, and evaluation, which makes it one of the most important documents in this project’s lifetime. The logical framework outlines the logic of the project’s theory of change, or your hypothesis of how your project activities will cause the desired change in the environment or target audience.

For instructions on how to construct a results chain, please review the detailed guidance under Section A, A1-A4 in the NOFO template.

Note: Country names and activities below are fictional and illustrative.

The main purpose of the example project is to increase the resilience of Ravkan society against state-sponsored information operations and drive institutional change towards strategic communication in Ravka by supporting and facilitating a whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach. Please see below for the results chain that would support this project.

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Integrate a whole-of-government approach into Ravkan state policies and practice of key government sectors in strategic communication efforts.

Outcome 1.1: Ravkan government institutions have increased understanding of how to develop joint coordination mechanisms to conduct planning and execution of strategic communication and counter disinformation efforts.

• Output 1.1.1: Desk research reports.
  o Activity 1.1.1.1: Assessment of Ravkan government institutional and structural capacities and gaps in conducting joint strategic communications efforts through open-source desk research.
• Output 1.1.2: Key-informant interviews conducted.
  o Activity 1.1.2.1: Implementer conducts structured interviews with key personnel in Ravkan government institutions to determine counter disinformation and strategic communications planning, cooperation, and coordination needs and challenges.
• Output 1.1.3: Social media monitoring reports produced.
  o Activity 1.1.3.1: Implementer collects social media monitoring data on key Ravkan governmental institutions’ response capabilities to countering Fjerdan disinformation and produces a report with the findings at the beginning and end of the project.
• Output 1.1.4: Briefings with government stakeholders to share research findings
Activity 1.1.4.1: Conduct 3 briefings with government stakeholders to discuss research findings, implications, and recommendations.

Outcome 1.2: The capacity of Ravkan governmental institutions to design and implement strategic communication campaigns is increased.

- Output 1.2.1: Opinion polls that assess current attitudes and perceptions.
  - Activity 1.2.1.1: Implementer conducts public opinion polling and teaches Ravkan officials to increase their understanding of attitudes and perceptions of their audiences.

- Output 1.3.1: Series of message testing focus groups.
  - Activity 1.3.1.1: Ravkan government officials will test their developed messaging and campaign concepts in a series of conducted focus group discussions to evaluate the reception and impact of their messaging and make any adjustments to the counter disinformation campaign narratives.

- Output 1.4.1: Series of experimental tests in cooperation with leading strategic communication experts on narrative-building.
  - Activity 1.4.1.1: Implementer will cooperate with leading strategic communication experts to use their evidence-based techniques to assess patterns in public attitudes and provide tailored recommendations on narrative building to Ravkan government officials.

**GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS & DEFINITIONS**

Below, you will find a glossary of key terms and definitions critical to the Monitoring and Evaluation development process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>An activity is an action taken under a specific period of time (period of performance) to produce a specific output. Each activity should be aligned to only one output and its associated outcome and objective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assumptions</td>
<td>Factors which must be assumed for the success of the activities, outputs, and outcomes. These are hypotheses that are accepted as truths at the start of a project or program, but they may turn out to be false.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baseline</td>
<td>The status of services and outcome-related measures of knowledge, attitudes, norms, behaviors, and conditions before a project begins. Baselines provide a measure against which project or program progress can be assessed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td>The individuals, groups, or organizations that benefit from a project, program, or process. These will often be participants in the project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual Assumption</td>
<td>Those factors directly pertinent to the project that must remain the same for the project’s logic to remain valid.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data</td>
<td>Quantitative or qualitative information used to measure indicators, project activities (such as surveys), and project outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>The Department of State defines evaluation as the “systematic collection and analysis of information about the characteristics and outcomes of programs, projects, and processes as a basis for judgments, to improve effectiveness,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
and/or inform decision-makers about current and future activities.”
Evaluation focuses on why changes did or did not occur, as well as question of relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, and impact.

<p>| Goal | The highest-order outcome or end state to which a program, project, process or policy is intended to contribute. These are the significant and long-term changes that are anticipated from the cumulative effects of projects or programs. Goals differ from objectives in that they will not necessarily be accomplished during the period of performance of a project. |
| Impact | A result or effect that is caused by or attributable to a program, project, process, or policy. Impact is often used to refer to higher-level effects that occur in the medium or long term and can be intended or unintended and positive or negative. |
| Indicator | A qualitative or quantitative variable that provides a valid and reliable metric of if the project or program achieved the expected objective, outcome, or output and is used to measure actual results against expected results. This should be a clearly defined, observable, measurable, and verifiable. |
| Logical Framework | What drives planning, monitoring, and evaluation, which makes it one of the most important documents in this project’s lifetime. The logical framework outlines the logic of the project’s theory of change, or your hypothesis of how your project activities will cause a desired change in the environment or target audience. |
| Method | The means of acquiring data for an indicator, such as key informant interviews, surveys, focus groups, content analysis, expert panels, direct observation, etc. |
| Monitoring | The collection of real-time information on context, implementation, and results to assess progress against established objectives and to inform programmatic decisions. |
| Objective | The changes a program, project, or process seeks to achieve Within the project’s period of performance. Like outcomes, objectives are usually envisioned in chains of early, middle, and high-level desired changes. Objectives should be SMART (see definition below). |
| Outcome | The result, change, or effect that is caused by or attributable to project activities implemented and their outputs. Outcomes describe the changes in participants’ knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs that are necessary preconditions for the objective to be realized. Each objective listed will have its own unique outcomes that are required to achieve the objective. Therefore, all outcomes must align logically to the objective they are meant to help achieve. Outcomes should be SMART (see definition below). |
| Output | A short-term, immediate results of the program, project, or process that leads to longer-term outcomes. Outputs are the products, goods, or services which results from conducting activities and are typically things that can be counted, such as reports, workshops, and campaign plans. There can only be one output that results from one or more activities. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Performance Standard</strong></th>
<th>An articulation of what constitutes quality work by those implementing the activity.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td>Includes the outputs, outcomes, and impact of your project. Any product or change that occurs due to project activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results Chain</strong></td>
<td>The part of your logical framework that outlines the project’s objectives; the outcomes as the changes that must occur for the objective to be achieved; the outputs, or what needs to be created or completed to cause the outcomes to occur; and the activities, or what you plan to do over a period of time to create the respective outputs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk</strong></td>
<td>The potential that project or program events will not occur as was assumed which may be an impediment to the success of the project or program. Known risks are those that can be identified at the start of the project or program and mitigated. Unknown risks are those that are not foreseen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SMART (indicators, outcomes, objectives)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
  - *Specific* – there is a clear degree of change intended to occur within a stated population  
  - *Measurable* – there is only one change in the indicator, and it is feasible to collect data on this factor in a reasonable amount of time and in a cost-effective manner  
  - *Accurate* – the indicator is a direct signal of the change, which is often context-specific  
  - *Reliable* – different people would all be able to draw a similar conclusion through data collection and/or interpretation of the indicator’s language (do not provide jargon without definitions)  
  - *Time-Bound* – the indicator includes a specific timeframe |
| **Target**              | The amount of change expected within a specific timeframe. Targets are usually applied to indicators and are a benchmark of what the project hopes to achieve. |
| **Target Audience**     | The specific group which a project or intervention seeks to affect in order to change the knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and beliefs of the group. The better defined a target audience is, the more likely the project is to accomplish its objectives. |
| **Theory of Change (TOC)** | The hypothesis of how your project activities will cause a desired change in the environment or target audience. The TOC contains the casual and contextual assumptions on which the project’s logic rests. The TOC should draw on current knowledge about how such changes unfold, adapted to the project context. The hypothesis and the assumptions you make in your project’s design need to be tested throughout the life of the award to ensure the project is having the desired effect. |