

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. CONSULATE GENERAL, HONG KONG AND MACAU
PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong and Macau, PAS
Annual Program Statement

Funding Opportunity Number: HKG-NOFO-FY25-01

Deadline for Application: May 16, 2025

Ceiling of Award Amount: \$50,000

CFDA Number: 19.040- Public Diplomacy Programs

References: [Standard Department Terms & Conditions \(English\)](#)

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong and Macau Public Affairs Section (PAS) is pleased to announce that we are accepting proposals for the Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This Annual Program Statement outlines our funding priorities and areas of interest, as well as procedures for submitting requests for funding. Please carefully follow all instructions below. **This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

Purpose of Small Grants: PAS Hong Kong and Macau invites proposals for programs that **strengthen ties between the United States and Hong Kong and the United States and Macau** through cultural and exchange programming that highlights shared values and promotes bilateral cooperation. **All programs must include a U.S. 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 and build partnerships.**

PRIORITY PROGRAM AREAS

Priority will be given to project proposals that further one or more of the U.S. Consulate's goals, including:

- Programs that support STEAM-related activities.
- Programs that promote American English language acquisition.
- Programs that promote economic empowerment, with a priority for under-represented communities.
- Programs that increase public awareness about the environment, sustainability, climate change, and conservation efforts.
- Programs and exchanges that facilitate academic and cultural engagements that highlight and/or discuss American expertise, experience and values, and universal human rights.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to include elements of diversity, equity, inclusion and/or accessibility in their proposals.

PAS Small Grants Program projects may include, but are not limited to, the following types of programs:

- Academic, cultural, civil society/NGO, and professional lectures, seminars, workshops, exchanges and/or speaker programs that present American society, culture or history, and/or advance American values, such as diversity and inclusion, to local audiences.
- Projects that foster shared interest in good governance, strengthening civil society, human rights, combatting human trafficking, media freedom, and media literacy.
- Collaborative projects on environmental sustainability, biodiversity conservation, climate change, sustainability, and conservation.
- The participation of American experts, academics, artists, musicians, performers, and filmmakers in local events.

The following types of projects are not eligible for funding:

- Projects relating to or involving any partisan political stance or activity;
- Charitable or development activities;
- Construction projects;
- Projects that support specific religious activities;
- Fundraising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs;
- International travel, unless specifically justified within the proposal as being integral to the project;
- Commercial activities and projects (including publications);
- Scientific research;
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization; or
- Projects that duplicate existing projects.

Authorizing legislation, type and year of funding:

Funding authority rests in the Smith-Mundt and Fulbright-Hays Acts.

The source of funding is FY2025 Public Diplomacy Funding.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: up to *12 months*

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of *\$3,000* to a maximum of *\$50,000*

Total available funding: *\$300,000*

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year *2025 Public Diplomacy Funding*

Proposals are accepted on a rolling basis from October 24, 2024 until May 16, 2025 and will be reviewed according to the schedule below.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Funding will be provided to selected organizations via a fixed amount award, grant, or cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that consulate staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation.

Project and Budget Periods: Proposed projects generally must be completed within one year or less. PAS will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to the availability of funds,

the 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

1. Eligible Applicants

The Public Affairs Section encourages applications from organizations in the United States, Hong Kong, and Macau, including:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations;
- Public and private educational institutions
- Individuals;
- Public international organizations and Governmental institutions.

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching:

PAS strongly encourages, but does not mandate, that applicants include cost-sharing elements in their proposals.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization per grants panel review. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, the Consulate will ask the submitter to identify the priority proposal.

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

D. APPLICATION

PAS will accept proposals throughout the year and will review proposals according to the following schedule:

- Proposals will be reviewed in January and May, depending on availability of funding. Specific review and response dates are listed in the “Submission Dates and Times” section below.
- Final date for submissions is May 16, 2025

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- [SF-424 \(Application for Federal Assistance – organizations\)](#) | [instructions](#) or [SF-424-I \(Application for Federal Assistance – individuals\)](#) | [instructions](#)
- [SF424A \(Budget Information for Non-Construction programs\)](#) | [instructions](#)
- [SF424B \(Assurances for Non-Construction programs\)](#) | [instructions](#)
(note: the SF-424B is only required for individuals and for organizations not registered in SAM.gov)
- [Project Proposal](#)

2. **Budget Justification Narrative:** After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate sheet of paper to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

3. Attachments:

- 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program;
- Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner (if relevant);
- 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; Official permission letters, if required for program activities.

E. SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required above are available on the [Consulate website](#) and grants.gov.

2. Department of State Contacts

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PAS at: HongKongGrants@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 and consulates overseas — are not permitted to discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.*

3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations: All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. An applicant must maintain an active registration while it has a proposal under review by the Department and must continue to keep the registration active for the entire duration of the period of performance of any Federal award that results from this NOFO.

The 2 CFR 200 requires subrecipients to obtain a UEI. Please note the UEI for subrecipients is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or

directed to a subrecipient.

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

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI number prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities. If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain an NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD in addition to Department of State should apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

[NCAGE Code Request Tool \(nato.int\)](https://nato.int/ncage)

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis. See 2 CFR 25.110 for a full list of exemptions.

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

4. Submission Dates and Times

- The Public Affairs Section will accept FY 2025 proposals until May 16, 2025 and will review proposals according to the following schedule:
 - Proposals received between October 24 and January 10 will be reviewed by

- January 20, with responses going out by January 27, 2025.
- Proposals received between January 10 and May 16 will be reviewed by May 28, with responses going out by June 6, 2025.

5. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted to HongKongGrants@state.gov with “HKG-NOFO-FY25-01” and the applicant organization’s name in the subject line of the email. Proposals that do not meet the requirements above will not be considered.

F. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Review Criteria

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

Organizational capacity and record on previous grants: The organization has expertise in its stated field and PAS is confident in its ability to undertake the program. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea: The program idea is well developed, with details 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.

Consulate priorities: Applicant has clearly described how stated goals are related to and support the U.S. Consulate General Hong Kong and Macau’s priority areas or target audiences.

Budget: The budget justification is detailed. 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 they are 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. Risk Review

Under the merit review as required by 2 CFR 200.206, prior to making a Federal Award, the

Department will review and consider the following risk factors:

- Financial stability
- Management systems and standards
- History of performance
- Audit reports and findings
- Ability to effectively implement requirements

G. AWARD NOTICES

The 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 counter-signature. 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.

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified via email.

Payment Method: Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities. Recipients will be required to request payments by completing form SF-270—Request for Advance or Reimbursement and submitting the form to the Grants Officer.

H. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following:

[Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:

- Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an impartial process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205);
- Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free*

Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341);

- Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322); and
 - Terminating agreements pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).
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- [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)
 - [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
 - [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)
 - [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE \(FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\)](#)
 - [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
 - [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
 - [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)

2. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

Foreign Assistance Data Review: As required by Congress, the Department of State must make progress in its efforts to improve tracking and reporting of foreign assistance data through the Foreign Assistance Data Review (FADR). The FADR requires tracking of foreign assistance activity data from budgeting, planning, and allocation through obligation and disbursement. Successful applicants will be required to report and draw down federal funding based on the appropriate FADR Data Elements, indicated within their award documentation. In cases of more than one FADR Data Element, typically program or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

I. 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.

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. Consulate General Hong Kong & Macau. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers' time and donated venues.

Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages under any circumstances.