



2025 VAU PDS Annual Program Statement

Venezuela Affairs Unit, Department of State

Opportunity number: 2025VE-001

Application deadline: June 30, 2025

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**U.S. Department of State
Venezuela Affairs Unit (VAU)
Public Diplomacy Section (PDS)
2025 Annual Program Statement**

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	VAU PDS 2025 Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number	2025VE-001
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	June 30, 2025
Assistance Listing Number	19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Length of performance period	Up to 12 months
Number of awards anticipated	Four awards (dependent on amounts)
Award amounts	Up to \$25,000
Total available funding	\$100,000 pending funding availability
Type of Funding	FY25 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds
Anticipated program start date	October 1, 2025

The VAU of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce the **2025 VAU PDS Annual Program Statement** to strengthen people-to-people ties between the United States and the people of Venezuela through programs that highlight shared values and make American safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

This is an Annual Program Statement, outlining our funding priorities, the strategic themes, and the procedures for submitting requests for funding. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant agreement

Program Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 12 months or less. The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

This notice is subject to the availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

VAU PDS invites proposals that focus on higher education cooperation between the United States and Venezuela, highlighting shared values and building networks that make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

Priority Region: Venezuela

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov as well as a valid registration on SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

C. Program Description

Proposals that focus on higher education cooperation between the United States and Venezuela, highlighting shared values and building networks that make America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

Priority Program Areas:

VAU PDS will prioritize grant proposals that address the following themes:

- Building university partnerships and/or higher-education exchanges, focusing on:
 - Curricula Development;
 - Research Capacity Building;
 - Post-Graduate Career Services; and/or
 - Intellectual Property.

PLEASE NOTE:

1. All programs must include an American component, conveying an element of U.S. culture, history, and/or shared values. This must be a concrete element that

establishes or strengthens ties between people in Venezuela and the United States. For example, competitive proposals will include a connection with U.S. experts, organizations, or institutions that promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives and/or increased cooperation that continues after the conclusion of the program that makes America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.

2. Grant proposals from individuals will not be accepted. All proposals must be submitted by educational and/or registered non-profit institutions that have the capacity to receive U.S. government funding, in the name of the entity applying for funds.

Participants and Audiences:

Venezuelans in Venezuela and their U.S. counterparts in the sectors represented in the priority program areas listed above.

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.

D. Application Contents and Format

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

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, and
- All pages are numbered.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms (available at www.Grants.gov)

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)
- SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs) (note: the SF-424B is only required for organizations exempt from registration, and for organizations not required to fully register in SAM.gov)

2. Summary Page (optional)

Cover sheet stating the applicant name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

3. Proposal (10 pages maximum)

The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

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

- xi. **Future Funding or Sustainability:** If applicable, applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period without U.S. government funding or the availability of other resources.

4. Budget Justification Narrative

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

5. Attachments

- 1-page Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- Letters of support from project partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- 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 at www.Grants.gov

Department of State Contacts

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact VAU PDS at: VAUPublicEngagement@fan.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 overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the completion of the entire proposal review process.

2. 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 the NOFO.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that subrecipients 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 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 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 follow the below instructions:

Step 1: 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 follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

NCAGE Homepage:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

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.

3. Submission Dates and Times

Applications may be submitted for consideration at any time before the **closing date of June 30, 2025**. No applications will be accepted after that date.

All application materials must be submitted by email to VAUPublicEngagement@fan.gov.

IMPORTANT: Please label your email submission **“VAU PDS APS”** in the subject line.

4. Funding Restrictions

i. Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to provide any payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

ii. Prohibition on Funding Activities that Encourage Mass-Migration Caravans towards the United States Southwest Border. None of the funds awarded under this grant may be made available to encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass-migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. Funds may not be made available for legal counseling on the United States asylum process; and/or for referrals to legal representation in the United States.

Funds may only be used for cash cards for use in the country in which they are provided or to facilitate assisted voluntary returns and other purposes that do not encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass migration caravans towards the United States southwest border.

- iii. Certification Regarding Compliance with applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws

None of the funds awarded under this agreement may be used for any initiatives or programs, or any activities that do not comply with Executive Order 14173 titled Ending Illegal Discrimination and Restoring Merit-Based Opportunity.

By signing the SF-424 or SF-424I Application for Federal Assistance, the Applicant certifies the following:

- 1) Its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code and;
 - 2) It does not operate any programs promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws.
- iv. Certification Regarding Compliance with 20 U.S.C. 1011f and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements
 - Applicants are advised that institutions of higher learning (IHEs) must certify the following at the time of award, and that this certification requirement must be included in any subaward agreements to IHEs:
 - Its compliance in all respects with section 1011f of title 20, United States Code, and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements is material for purposes of section 3729 of title 31, United States Code, and for receipt of appropriate Federal grant funds.

F. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 30 points: The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points: The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Budget – 10 points: 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 – 15 points: Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides 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 – 10 points: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

3. Risk Review

Risk factors

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:

- a. Financial stability
- b. Management systems and standards
- c. History of performance
- d. Audit reports and findings
- e. Ability to effectively implement requirements

G. Award Notices

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

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

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

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by email.

Payment Method:

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

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:

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).
- [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 what reports are required and how often these reports must be submitted.

I. Other Information

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel and Fringe Benefits: 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, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. 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 \$10,000 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 \$10,000 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 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1.

“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.

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

Safety Protocols: Organizations that have their proposals for funding recommended for funding by the VAU grants review panel will be asked to submit safety protocol and procedures for addressing formal complaints of sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, sexual assault, stalking, misconduct, and retaliation during the life cycle of any Federal Assistance Award made under this notice. This plan must include addressing complaints against both project implementing staff and beneficiaries as well as how the plan will be presented to beneficiaries. Organizations will be asked to submit information on pre-employment screening mechanisms to prevent hiring of individuals with convictions or pending criminal charges, including mandatory screening for applicants with a history of rape, child sexual abuse, molestation, child pornography, and other related crimes.