

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY, Yerevan
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: Track II Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding Initiatives
Funding Opportunity Number: Track-II-FY23-ARM-1
Deadline for Applications: July 5, 2023; 11:59 PM local (Armenia)
Assistance Listing Number: 19.900; 19.040
Total Amount Available: \$650,000 (pending funds availability)

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Yerevan Public Diplomacy Section of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to implement programs to advance reconciliation efforts between the people of Armenia and Azerbaijan, and to support normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkiye. Proposed programs may include initiatives with such elements as people-to-people programs, exchanges, dialogues, research, education, training, awareness-raising, and confidence-building measures. Two (2) separate projects are set forth in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). The overall objectives of these initiatives are to support progress toward a sustainable, long-lasting peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and to advance regional cooperation, reconciliation and normalization of relations in the region.

Program Objectives:

This NOFO comprises two (2) separate projects. Applicants must have the experience and resources to reach the target objectives.

Project 1: Supporting Civil Society Efforts Towards the Normalization of Relations between Armenia and Turkiye

Project ceiling: \$300,000

For this project, the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan seeks innovative proposals to advance the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkiye by supporting civil society efforts to address reconciliation and build public confidence in normalization. Projects might focus on the following: Utilizing creative dialogue and the arts to envision a shared future; Reconciliation skill-building initiatives; Exchanges or Training programs that build networks between young leaders on shared challenges and issues; and/or Initiatives that empower participants to tell stories of reconciliation and shared history and culture that highlight human dignity and empathy. The scope of this NOFO is purposefully kept broad to encourage innovative approaches to reconciliation and confidence-building efforts. Proposals must include participation of citizens of Armenia and citizens of Turkiye.

Objectives

- To strengthen and expand the network of civil society leaders who are advancing reconciliation efforts and confidence building in the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkiye.
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the current landscape and potential for engagement in the present environment.
- To contribute to improving public perceptions of the Armenia-Turkiye normalization process.
- To promote respect for human dignity and enhance mutual understanding, utilizing people-to-people contacts, informal networks, and mechanisms to educate and involve broader society in each country.
- To explore the potential for new models of interaction to advance regional cooperation.

Project 2: Supporting Armenia-Azerbaijan Peacebuilding and Conflict Resolution Initiatives

For this project, the U.S. Embassy seeks innovative proposals to support conflict resolution between Armenia and Azerbaijan by supporting civil society peace building and reconciliation efforts. Projects might focus on the following: Capacity building for peacebuilding institutions and organizations; Utilizing creative dialogue and the arts to envision a shared future; Mediation and conflict resolution skill-building initiatives; and/or Exchanges or Training programs that build networks between young leaders or peacebuilders, and/or empower

participants to tell stories of conflict resolution that highlight human dignity and empathy. The scope of this NOFO is purposefully kept broad to encourage innovative approaches to peacebuilding and conflict resolution. Participants must include participation of citizens of Armenia and citizens of Azerbaijan.

Project ceiling: \$350,000

Objectives

- To strengthen and expand the network of civil society leaders who are advancing peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- To increase knowledge and understanding of the current landscape and potential for engagement in the post-conflict environment.
- To contribute to changing public perceptions about the relationship between Armenia and Azerbaijan.
- To promote respect for human dignity and enhance mutual understanding, utilizing people-to-people contacts, informal networks, and mechanisms to educate and involve the broader civil society in each community.
- To explore the potential for new models of interaction to advance regional peace.

Participants and Audiences:

The audience and participants for these projects is civil society, with a priority focus on youth, women, journalists, academics, artists, and/or other opinion leaders, depending on the project envisioned. Projects that utilize U.S. experts or partners are encouraged. We will give special consideration to proposals which incorporate the following elements as techniques or tools for meeting the strategic goals: Cooperation in project implementation between two peacebuilding organizations; Alumni of U.S. government supported programs and exchanges (This could include building upon previous programs or launching new initiatives with alumni from past projects); Grassroots elements that support underserved communities.

NOTE: We are NOT seeking proposals for Track “1.5” dialogues or approaches that involve a mix of government and non-governmental experts.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: up to 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: up to 4 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$50,000 to a maximum of \$350,000.

Total available funding: \$650,000

Type of Funding: FY22/23 AEECA Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act and *FY23 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds*

Anticipated program start date: October 1, 2023

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: U.S. Embassy Yerevan anticipates awarding grants and/or cooperative agreements. Cooperative agreements involve “substantial involvement” or greater U.S. government participation in the project. U.S. Embassy Yerevan will undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement. Examples of substantial involvement can include, but are not limited to:

- Active collaboration with the recipient in the implementation of the award;
- Approval of sites and participants;
- Approval of agendas and speakers for strategic events;
- Approval of finalized deliverables of the project;
- Participation in the selection of beneficiaries for the major components of the project(s).

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs 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.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

Each proposal must have a substantial monitoring and evaluation component that will evaluate the outcomes of the project and enable the recipient to make data-based decisions. Proposals should describe the applicant's theory of change and how the applicant believes the project serves this goal as part of the proposal. The work plan should identify clear problems related to the strategic goals described herein, and propose feasible solutions based on a concrete and coherent methodology to address the problems identified. We encourage proposals that show creative approaches.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

Armenian, U.S. and International not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is encouraged but not required. Matching is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order 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 AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants can find application forms and other materials needed to apply on GRANTS.gov:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html> and U.S. Embassy Yerevan’s website (<https://am.usembassy.gov/embassy/jobs/>) under the “Track II” program (funding opportunity number – Track II-FY23-ARM1).

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

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

Organizations with relevant expertise in both project areas may apply for both projects. Organizations may also submit for only one of the two projects. Organizations may not submit more than one proposal per project. Any organization that submits more than one proposal per project will be considered ineligible for funding.

Applicants **MUST** submit a separate Application Summary Coversheet for each application that clearly outlines under which of the two (2) projects the application is submitted. Please note that applicants who do not label their proposal and which project they are applying for will not be considered for funding. Applicants must have the experience and resources to reach the target audiences and locations.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Calibri font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- **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 individuals and for organizations not registered in SAM.gov)**

The forms are available at: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>

2. Summary Page: 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 (15 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 program, including program 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 U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program 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 Program 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?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Budget 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 H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions below for further information.

5. 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 your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.
- Official permission letters, if required for program activities

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.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

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.
- **Please note that as of November 2022 and February 2022 respectively, 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 or CAGE code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove a CAGE or 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 a CAGE or 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 if:

- An applicant's identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization's status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.
- For an applicant, if the Federal awarding agency makes a determination that there are exigent circumstances that prohibit the applicant from receiving a unique entity identifier and completing SAM registration prior to receiving a Federal award. In these instances, Federal awarding agencies must require the recipient to obtain a unique entity identifier and complete SAM registration within 30 days of the Federal award date.

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

Applications are due no later than **July 5, 2023; 11:59 PM** local (Armenia) time.

5. Funding Restrictions

The funds requested under this program CANNOT fund: partisan political activity; humanitarian aid and charities or charitable activities; scientific research; fundraising campaigns; commercial projects; trade activities; conferences and individual trips abroad; projects aimed primarily at the institutional development of the organization. Please note that award funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages.

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to yerevangrants@state.gov.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 40 points: The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 30 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.

Budget and Sustainability – 15 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. Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

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.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications

3. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov (formerly, FAPIIS)

i. The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

ii. An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. Currently, federal agencies create integrity records in the integrity module of the Contractor Performance Assessment and Reporting System (CPARS) and these records are visible as responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov;

iii. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates August 31, 2023.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

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

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

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

Payment Method:

Payments will usually be made in two segments. An initial segment will be authorized to initiate the project. The applicant must provide an interim report about the use of the first segment of funds before the second segment is

released. A small portion of the funds may be reimbursed once all Final reports/Documents are received and approved by the PDS.

2. 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:

- 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

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: NOTE:

- Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:

- Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
- Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
- 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 in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is the required form for financial reports. The performance progress reports must: include a narrative as described below; reflect the focus on measuring the project's progress on the overarching objectives; and be compiled according to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs of the project. An assessment of the overall project's impact should be included in each performance progress report. Where relevant, performance progress reports should include the following sections:

- Relevant contextual information (limited);
- Explanation and evaluation of significant activities of the reporting period and how the activities reflect progress toward achieving objectives;
- Any tangible impact or success stories from the project, when possible;

- Copy of mid-term and/or final evaluation report(s) conducted by an external evaluator; if applicable;
- Relevant supporting documentation or products related to the project activities (such as articles, meeting lists and agendas, participant surveys, photos, manuals, etc.) as separate attachments;
- Any problems/challenges in implementing the project and a corrective action plan with an updated timeline of activities;
- Reasons why established goals were not met;
- Additional pertinent information, including analysis and explanation of cost overruns or high unit costs, if applicable.

The recipient is responsible for monitoring the activities, performance, and expenditures of any subrecipient(s). The recipient must have monitoring tools in place to ensure that subaward(s) is used for authorized purposes, and that the subrecipient(s) is complying with applicable regulations and the terms and conditions of the subaward (2 CFR §200.332).

Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in 2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

Recipients will be required to conduct a gender analysis with clear integration of the findings throughout the recipient’s program design and implementation; and include gender-sensitive indicators and sex-disaggregated data in the applicants monitoring, evaluation, and learning plans.

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.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

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

H. 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 \$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 modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

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

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