**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

**BUREAU OF OCEANS AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS (OES)**

**Demonstrating and Supporting U.S. Values and Leadership in the Global Scientific Enterprise**

**Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

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# U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

# BUREAU OF OCEANS AND INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SCIENTIFIC AFFAIRS (OES)

# Demonstrating and Supporting U.S. Values and Leadership in the Global Scientific Enterprise

# Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

# Section A. Funding Opportunity Program Description

Announcement Type: New - Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Title: Demonstrating and Supporting U.S. Values and Leadership in the Global Scientific Enterprise

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0007150

Catalog of Federal Domestic

Assistance (CFDA) Number: 19.017

Funding Amount: One to five cooperative agreements – up to $1,325,000 USD total for five separate lines of effort, respectively, and subject to the availability of funds).

Key Dates:

1. Application must be submitted by 11:59 P.M. EDT on August 10, 2020.
2. Questions must be submitted by 11:59PM EDT on July 27, 2020.
3. Notification of project approval and award signing expected by September 2020.

Eligibility Category: U.S. Non-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) having

a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, or overseas-based non-

profit/non-governmental organizations, and U.S. or overseas

public, state, and non-profit institutions of higher education (See full eligibility criteria below in Section C).

Applicants must provide evidence of meeting this eligibility requirement and demonstrate that they have significant experience in implementing U.S. public diplomacy programs, which comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including in economically diverse countries for foreign audiences. Additionally, applicants must demonstrate a clear understanding of the U.S. and global scientific enterprises, including their practices, leadership, and values.

**Executive Summary**:

The Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs’ (OES) Office of Science and Technology Cooperation (STC) at the U.S. Department of State announces this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) to implement one or more of five separate lines of effort in support of U.S. scientific values and leadership in the global scientific enterprise, including through providing logistical and administrative support.

Comprised of Up to five (5) cooperative agreements for up to $1,325,000 U.S. Dollars total, subject to the availability of funds, in FY 2020 Public Diplomacy Funds (PD) will be awarded. Up to $125,000 will be awarded for the Value Aligned R&D Networks Program, up to $600,000 for GIST Expansion Activities, up to $100,000 for U.S. Science Dialogues and Public Outreach, up to $200,000 for the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions Program, and up $300,000 for Media Resources for Demonstrating U.S. S&T Values. The period of performance for each cooperative agreement awarded is twenty-four months. Funding authority for these projects rests in the U.S. Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948 (“Smith-Mundt” Act) and the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961 (“Fulbright-Hays" Act). All award decisions are contingent upon the availability of funds. Additional funding may be available to continue or expand selected activities funded in this cycle.

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Please read carefully the entire solicitation package if you plan to submit an application; there are steps that you should take immediately in order to make your submissions by the deadline.

## A.1. Background

The norms and values of the global scientific enterprise include transparency, meritocracy, integrity, inclusion and others that have been developed over centuries. These same values underspin the U.S. scientific and R&D enterprises, and form the foundation for the United States’ historic success in science, technology, research, and innovation. Recent global trends in science and R&D, however, highlight that those values are not universal, and are now under threat from the United States’ strategic competitors. This NOFO is being issued to solicit proposals for five lines of effort that OES/STC is planning, subject to the availability of funding, in order to shore-up public support for these values and principles in key countries and regions. Applications may be submitted for all, one, or any combination of the individual lines of effort detailed in this Notice. Background follows about each of the five lines of effort.

1. ***Value Aligned R&D Networks (up to $125,000)***

OES proposes accelerating and magnifying cooperation with likeminded research partners around the world, and using “networks” of values-aligned countries. Funds would be used to catalyze “trusted research networks” of research partners by building connections through bi-directional exchanges and associated workshops with countries that share U.S. scientific values – with a particular focus on scientific areas critical to American security and prosperity, such as precision medicine and biotechnology. The “trusted research networks” would demonstrate American leadership in science to foreign audiences, facilitate more interoperable, core scientific processes that comport with preferred U.S. practices and norms, such as peer review and transparency.

The program will add value to existing federally funded research by reinforcing American scientific leadership with foreign audiences, including universities, and by building linkages to international thought leaders to improve access to a critical mass of international resources for the United States to accelerate discoveries in **precision medicine** (which includes genomics, AI, and computational sciences) and **biomedical technologies** (such as diagnostics and robotics). Advances in biomedicine will be critical to mitigate risks of future outbreaks; in biotechnology, to grow our bioeconomy, as bio-based products and services are estimated to constitute an increasing share of the U.S. GDP. This network will build on naturally occurring partnerships between American and international researchers with DOS contributions focusing efforts with allies and like-minded partners (in terms of scientific norms and values), creating a platform to promote American R&D practices and norms. Through short-term (10-30 day) student, researcher, and principle investigator bidirectional exchanges workshops, seminars, and other types of convenings, scientists will build relationships toward international S&T cooperation. The networks will support the U.S. scientific community in promulgating U.S.-preferred scientific principles and values and draw allies and partners closer to the United States, especially at a time when countries may be looking beyond the United States for collaboration

The program will strategically select research that is already funded by U.S. government science agencies (NSF, NIH, DOE, etc.) and then build connections between these individuals and institutions and international counterparts who are aligned not only in scientific focus, but also with U.S. values. The process should be an open application, where participants are chosen based on scientific merit (i.e., novel research, strong history of productivity, collaborative past projects) as well as clear articulation of scientific values and principles that underpin his or her research objectives. Priority likeminded countries will be those that spend a large amount on R&D or that consider R&D to be a fundamental component of their national and economic security, similar to the United States. Potential countries to engage include the United Kingdom, Japan, Germany, France, Australia, the Netherlands, Sweden, Denmark, and South Korea.

1. ***GIST Expansion Activities (up to $600,000)***

The Department of State-led Global Innovation through Science and Technology (GIST) initiative is a public-private partnership that catalyzes science, technology, and innovation (STI) activities that promote American leadership in innovation and advance American values. GIST utilizes its network of American business leaders, entrepreneurs, and investors to spread American business practices and values, and connect foreign innovators with American businesses. Since 2011, GIST has **reached more than 27 million innovation** community members worldwide and has **mentored over 15,000 startups**. GIST startups have gone on to **generate more than $250 million in revenue and to create over 6,000 jobs (including over 100 jobs in the U.S.),** and created business relationships with American companies like Coca-Cola, Expedia, and Amazon. Over the last year alone, GIST has **leveraged over $1.85 million in resources from the American private sector** to extend American access. Looking forward, GIST is now positioning itself to add a second, distinct component, focused on informing foreign communities of the benefits of the U.S. Innovation Ecosystem, and developing mutual understanding with key leaders in the S&T Entrepreneurial community to advocate for the U.S. model as an international standard. This new line of effort builds upon the positive record of past and ongoing GIST activities, but uses public diplomacy tools and engagements to achieve a different, though complimentary set of goals.

GIST looks to support a modular suite of activities that advance American values and promote American leadership in STI in order to strengthen and grow American ties in Southeast Asia and globally. This suite would include a series of early stage entrepreneurship training opportunities with participants in select economies across Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand). Each entrepreneurship event would bring together 50+ idea-stage innovators to take a one-day masterclasses from American STI business and investor leaders from groups like Angel Capital Association, Amazon Web Services, 1863 Ventures, Deloitte, and Venture Capital Institute. Each training would address women empowerment and the strength of forming diverse teams, build resilience, and help to build a positive narrative around American business partnership. Additionally, at each location this same training team would host a second day of training for 25-30 early stage STI investors to help spur American compatible business and investment norms. These trainings would be reinforced by a network of monthly meetup groups (GIST Innovation Hubs) already in place to support local startup communities in each location funded by OES.

Next, GIST intends to host a startup pitch competition at the Dubai 2020 Expo, to be held in 2021, for scalable STI startups (series A ready) from around the globe in areas like blockchain, health, and energy. These competitors will vie for prizes donated by the American sponsors and GIST public-private partners like Microsoft and Amazon, helping to build ties to American mentors, businesses, and investors. The competition will source participants through an open, merit-based call for applications that will undergo expert review and open public voting to help select the final 15 competitors to travel to the Dubai Expo to compete. This extended format will create a six month window of active engagement with communities worldwide from applications to the Expo components. The on-the-ground impact of the competition will be maximized by hosting preliminary rounds in the American pavilion with the finals and awards being held in the Emeriti hosted stages.

GIST also is frequently able to leverage world stages like the Global Entrepreneurship Summit to demonstrate American leadership in global STI by elevating premier global startups and American private sector partners. Over the last two years GIST has been utilized in the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to promote American leadership and looks to unique partnership opportunities with UNEP to highlight innovation in addressing environmental challenges. The participant selection and event expenses will be covered through other GIST funding, but this funding opportunity would fund travel expenses of entrepreneurs and other GIST participants to-and-from these events.

1. ***Science Dialogues and Embassy Science Fellows Outreach ( up to $100,000)***

OES/STC intends to expand the Science Dialogues Program to help maintain U.S. scientific leadership in the global scientific enterprise. These workshops and meetings would showcase the benefits of collaborating with U.S. researchers by bringing together the best scientific minds to identify joint research and opportunities for reciprocal access to key scientific infrastructures and reaffirm American leadership in key fields, and as the partner of choice for collaboration.

Science Dialogues are a nimble tool to implement science-focused workshops and multi-day programming. When Americans are viewed as a scientific leader, the United States is more likely to attract diverse expertise and resources to work on science questions that advance American national security, economic prosperity, and global leadership.

Prior successes of the Science Dialogue Program include a 2019 Extreme Light Infrastructure (ELI) workshop in Prague that yielded specific, actionable steps to increase U.S. researcher access to the premier world-class laser physics facilities in Europe, laying the foundation for a multilateral agreement, that provides both important messaging opportunities about the importance of Western scientific values like transparency, meritocracy, and integrity. It also increases the likelihood that the United States will save billions of dollars by not having to build a super laser infrastructure of its own.

OES/STC plans to implement 10 workshops in priority scientific fields, such as quantum and artificial intelligence capabilities, health research, overcoming regulatory barriers to collaboration. The program will engage key foreign stakeholders in country, and build networks that will expand U.S. reach in these critical areas. Notional countries include Brazil, India, Indonesia, Israel, the United Kingdom, and select African countries for engagement on women in STEM. Final determination of the topics and countries will be made by OES/STC in consultation with U.S. embassies and consulates abroad.

The Science Dialogues would be supplemented by additional in-country outreach programs featuring Embassy Science Fellows. The Embassy Science Fellows program brings U.S. government scientists to 40+ U.S. Embassies each year for up to three months to utilize their expertise on a specific Embassy-vetted project in conjunction with the host government. Projects expand U.S. government scientists’ access and knowledge in their fields of expertise, build linkages and networks with foreign counterparts, and reinforce core U.S. scientific values. Last year nearly 70 scientists volunteered to participate. Since the program’s initiation in 2001, almost 500 U.S. government scientists from nearly 20 agencies have been assigned to U.S. missions, embassies, and consulates throughout the world. Expanding U.S. science outreach with existing resources like the Embassy Science Fellows further leverages a cost-sharing program into strategic messaging to protect and project American leadership in priority scientific fields and engages key audiences, including early career scientists, youth, and underrepresented groups.

The program would support public outreach event proposals linked to the most effective and inspiring Embassy Science Fellows. Proposed events – selected by OES’ Office of Science and Technology Cooperation (STC) in conjunction with posts – would enable the Department to advance key administration topics in science, technology, and innovation and to further broader U.S. diplomatic objectives. Examples could include a workshop, speaking tour, or other event that would highlight U.S. scientific expertise in a particular area, promote U.S. values and leadership, and engage a vulnerable audience on the importance of Western scientific values like open collaboration.

1. ***APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions (up to $200,000)***

Women’s representation among science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) graduates in the Asia-Pacific region is well below 50 percent and as low as 13 percent in some of the 21 Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies. Many barriers inhibit women’s ability to participate as innovators in the knowledge economy and compete on a global scale and often times core American scientific values of merit-based competition, transparency, and openness are violated when women are excluded from STEM opportunities. Through APEC, in 2019 the United States led the development and finalization of the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions. These Principles and Actions brought together public and private sectors from across STEM fields and APEC economies to acknowledge and amplify the challenges women in STEM face and how those challenges are keeping APEC economies from reaching their full economic potential. Actions to address these challenges were also proposed. The idea is for individual STEM institutions, organizations, or businesses, to voluntarily sign on, signaling long-term agreement not only the Principles, but also to working on actions to support those Principles. The actions are all voluntary and a suite of options. Signatories join a community of shared values, actions, and collaboration to the benefit of the entire Asia-Pacific region. The Principles and Actions support the U.S. Indo-Pacific strategy goal of promoting shared values and opportunities for American businesses in the Asia-Pacific region and promote women’s economic empowerment in line with the Women’s Global Development and Prosperity Initiative (W-GDP Initiative). The Principles and Actions were formally announced at the high-level APEC Women and the Economy Forum in October by White House Deputy Assistant to the President for International Economic Affairs and Deputy Director of the National Economic Council, Kelly Ann Shaw, and senior leaders from Australia and Chile.

Now that the Principles and Actions have been developed and adopted, there is more work to be done to add additional signatories from around the region and to help fill capacity, policy, and communications gaps throughout the region to overcome the barriers identified. The United States, as a leader in this effort and in the global STEM enterprise, can continue to take leadership on this effort through public events. Utilizing both male and female pre-eminent American scientists, the program will conduct four in-person or virtual events in select APEC economies over the next two years. The economies will be selected by OES/STC in coordination with the relevant U.S. embassies and consulates. The events would highlight American efforts to promote women in STEM, promote American leadership, facilitate further connections to the STEM-focused community in that economy, and encourage additional organizations, institutions, or businesses to sign on to the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions. Each event would show a video on women in STEM in the region, feature a keynote from one or more American scientists (to be arranged by the implementer), and provide an opportunity for local U.S. Embassy leadership to speak or lead a panel of local STEM leaders who share our values. Our goal would be for these events to lead to 250 new signatories by the end of 2022.

1. ***Media Resources for Demonstrating U.S. S&T Values ( Up to $300,000)***

The American economy is built on advances in science, technology, and innovation that drive our growth. American leadership is being challenged by those who seek to undermine and exploit the American research enterprise, putting at risk our global scientific leadership as well as economic and national security. However, the United States is not alone and depends on international S&T cooperation to drive our advances at home; malign influence in the global research enterprise puts the United States and our allies and partners at risk. To sustain trust in science, we must engage foreign publics more effectively using a suite of digital and online tools.

Changing public awareness and perception of the threat to the global science enterprise, especially amongst scientists in priority fields, must be a multi-pronged campaign. Novel and comprehensive outreach to non-governmental S&T stakeholders would be a powerful catalyst in changing the mindset of international publics. The generally bottom-up nature of the global scientific enterprise means than messaging at the highest levels is not sufficient; direct messaging must be targeted at a lower level to promising students and researchers in the early stages their careers, in order to engender a broader shift in perception among the scientific communities.

While efforts to engage those key audiences through workshops and dialogues is a powerful and potential tool, limited resources and the current COVID-19 pandemic are hampering OES’ ability to engage publics as much as is needed. To supplement these efforts and reach a broader global audience in a relatable way, OES/STC proposes the development and deployment of a data-driven suite of compelling digital media tools (videos, photos, and infographics) highlighting American science, technology and entrepreneurship leadership in priority areas (e.g. artificial intelligence, quantum information systems, energy). This media suite will focus on amplifying messages from U.S. experts and leaders from a variety of fields and geographic regions in the United States on the critical need to conduct research following American scientific values of openness, transparency, reciprocity, and merit-based competition. A key element to boosting the effectiveness of the materials would be market research study on existing perceptions and effective messages in various target audiences overseas. Potential target markets could include Vietnam, the U.K., Germany, and India.

The market study, filming and graphic development, and packaging of materials should take place over an accelerated schedule over the next year. OES will coordinate with the implementer and relevant posts to deploy these packages, and the implementer will be responsible for tracking their effectiveness through continued research.

*Additional considerations stemming from COVID-19*

Given the ongoing global COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on travel, large meetings, and other gatherings, the implementer will be expected to provide a flexible contingency plan in regards to their work plan and implementation of the award, including potential budget realignments and changes to the scope of work of one or more award.

## A.2. Program Goals

Through the implementation of this cooperative agreement, OES and the Recipient will work to achieve the following goals for each of the respective programs:

1. Value Aligned R&D Networks
   1. Expand networks of values-aligned scientists in the United States and partner countries.
   2. Support the adoption and proliferation of U.S. values in the global scientific enterprise.
   3. Spread awareness of threats to the established norms and values of the global scientific enterprise.
   4. Mobilize future leaders in the global scientific enterprise to take further independent actions in support of U.S. values in the global scientific enterprise
2. GIST Expansion Activities
   1. Support the adoption of U.S. norms, best practices, and values in S&T entrepreneurship in key regions.
   2. Provide the skills and other means for future leaders in S&T entrepreneurship to be successful and help link them to U.S. businesses and investors.
   3. Support the women S&T entrepreneurs in key regions.
   4. Develop long-lasting and mutually beneficial partnerships between U.S. and foreign entrepreneurs, businesses, and investors.
   5. Improve the public image of the United States and U.S. S&T policy in select regions.
3. Science Dialogues and Embassy Science Fellows Outreach
   1. Catalyze and support increased cooperation between U.S. and select foreign scientist in key scientific topics which are at a nexus with U.S. foreign policy interests.
   2. Improve the mutual understanding of the scientific and other interests of the United States and partner countries.
   3. Improve the understanding of select foreign audiences regarding U.S. Scientific leadership, capabilities, and cooperative activities taking place in their country.
   4. Increase positive opinion and appreciation of the United States and U.S. leadership, including in the sciences.
4. APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions
   1. Highlight American efforts in select APEC economies to promote women in STEM, promote American leadership, facilitate further connections to the STEM-focused community in that economy, and encourage additional organizations, institutions, or businesses to sign on to the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions.
   2. Drastically increase new signatories to the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions by the end of 2022.
   3. Improve public opinion of the United States and U.S. S&T policy in select APEC economies.
5. Media Resources for Demonstrating U.S. S&T Values
   1. Improve understanding of existing perceptions among select foreign media markets regarding American scientific and entrepreneurship leadership and values.
   2. Gain insight into what messages and narratives select foreign audiences find compelling.
   3. Develop multipurpose media resources for reaching select foreign media markets to convey the truth about U.S. S&T and entrepreneurial leadership, values, and policy.
   4. Improve public opinion of American scientific and entrepreneurship leadership and values through the distribution and use of those media packages.

## A.3. Expected Results

Each line of effort will be unique and expected results will vary depending on location, target audience, deliverables, objectives etc. Results will include, but are not limited to, the following:

* Recipient will arrange and directly bill all allowable logistical costs and services allowable for the activity in question.
* Recipient will collect receipts and reimburse travel expenses to any covered participants within 30 days of the conclusion of each event.
* Recipient shall provide a summary report of all actual costs to OES within 30 days of the conclusion of each event.

In addition, specific results for each respective line of effort will include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Value Aligned R&D Networks
   1. Ten (10) early/mid-career scientists will engage in short-term (10-30 day) exchanges between the U.S. and partner countries.
   2. One to three (1-3) workshops will take place focused on supporting U.S. values and leadership in the global scientific enterprise. Workshops will include participants from the above-referenced exchanges.
   3. Increased cooperation between the U.S. foreign scientists participating in the exchanges and the seminars, as indicated through publicly attended seminars, workshops, collaborative papers, startups, and patents.
   4. Current and future leaders will be more aware of threats to the established norms and values in the global scientific enterprise. Additionally, they will be willing and able to take concrete and meaningful actions in defense of those norms and values through skills acquired during the exchanges and workshops.
2. GIST Expansion Activities
   1. Three (3) U.S. experts will lead a GIST training program in SE Asia.
   2. 150 early and pre-stage entrepreneurs will be trained.
   3. Participants will gain a better understanding of U.S. S&T and entrepreneurial best practices, and their opinion of U.S. policy and leadership in these areas will commensurately improve.
   4. 21 S&T entrepreneurs will take part in a Women in STEM STI startup competition to take place at either the APEC Small-Medium Enterprise (SME) Summit or the APEC CEO Summit.
   5. Participants will improve the visibility of Women S&T entrepreneurs in their country, improve the understanding of U.S. leadership in Women in STEM, and public opinion regarding the U.S. and Women’s role in stem will commensurately improve.
   6. 15 S&T entrepreneurs will take part in a pitch competition at the Dubai 2020 Expo.
   7. Through the selection and implementation of the competition at the Dubai 2020 Expo, 400 people will be engaged in the application phase, 50,000 votes will be cast worldwide by community members, 15 business connections will be made between global entrepreneurs and American companies, and 15+ world leaders will be exposed to American leadership in STI entrepreneurship
   8. 12 S&T entrepreneurs will attend a 2021 pitch competition in Nairobi, Kenya at UNEP.
   9. Participants will gain a better understanding of U.S. leadership in the global environment and their opinion of U.S. policy will commensurately improve.
   10. Participants in all of the above events programs improve the entrepreneurial skills, develop closer ties to U.S. businesses and investors, and help improve overall S&T and investment relationship between their country and the United States.
3. Science Dialogues and Embassy Science Fellows Outreach
   1. Ten (10) Science Dialogues will be held featuring key topics which align with U.S. foreign policy interests.
   2. Attendees increase their cooperation following the Science Dialogues and gain a better understanding of the scientific and other interests on both sides.
   3. Three to five (3-5) outreach campaigns to foreign audiences take place, featuring one or more U.S. Embassy Science Fellow.
   4. The target foreign audience gains a better understanding of U.S. Scientific leadership, capabilities, and cooperative activities taking place in their country.
   5. The target audience gains a more positive appreciation and opinion of the United States, including in the sciences.
4. APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions
   1. Four (4) in-person or virtual events will be held in select APEC economies to highlight American efforts to promote women in STEM, promote American leadership, facilitate further connections to the STEM-focused community in that economy, and encourage additional organizations, institutions, or businesses to sign on to the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions.
   2. Each event will show a video on women in STEM in the region, feature a keynote from one or more American scientists, and provide an opportunity for local U.S. Embassy leadership to speak or lead a panel of local STEM leaders who share our values.
   3. These events will lead to 250 new signatories to the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions by the end of 2022.
   4. Public opinion of the United States and U.S. S&T policy in the select APEC economies with show significant improvement following these activities.
5. Media Resources for Demonstrating U.S. S&T Values
   1. A market study on existing perceptions regarding American scientific and entrepreneurship leadership and values among four foreign media markets, and compelling messages and narratives for those foreign audiences will be developed.
   2. An adaptable toolkit of media resources for each media market will be developed, including:
      1. 5 short videos (<5 min/video)
      2. 12 video clips for social media (<1 min/clip)
      3. Still photo gallery (~50 high resolution images)
      4. 5 high resolution infographic posters
      5. 12 graphics for social media
   3. Media packages will air on broadcast media, social media, and through other forms of distribution, and public opinion of American scientific and entrepreneurship leadership and values will improve commensurate to their distribution.

## A.4. Main Activities

To achieve the goals and expected results, the implementer must execute the following list of activities, though other activities may be added by the implementer. The implementer will accomplish the following activities in coordination with OES:

* Activity Arrangements: The Recipient shall begin making all necessary arrangements for activities in as timely a manner as possible. This shall include organizing and covering the cost of venue and all associated and allowable costs as directed by OES/STC. In addition, the Recipient shall coordinate with any other co-founders/host organizations to ensure seamless integration of logistics, minimum overlap of duties, and maximum cost effectiveness.
* International and/or Domestic Travel Arrangements: The Recipient shall begin planning and making travel arrangements following instructions from the STC technical officer. The Recipient will arrange for visas, make air travel and hotel reservations, and purchase and distribute tickets for international air and ground travel of participants in the activities, as pre-approved by OES/STC. The Recipient will purchase the tickets at reasonable and cost-effective prices and will be required to compare government and market rates when making the arrangements. The Recipient shall follow the “Fly America” Act, for the transatlantic/or transpacific portion, in booking international flights and shall provide the tickets and/or other travel documents (travel itineraries and meeting schedules) to the participant no later than five days prior to the start of travel. With prior approval from STC, the Recipient is authorized to make hotel, air and car rental changes as the need arises, or to reimburse the participant for said expenses in lieu of making the purchases directly.
* Lodging, Per diem and Honoraria: The Recipient shall provide per diem to participants in the activities, as pre-approved by OES/STC, up to allowable USG per diem rates, including honoraria, subject to the approval of OES/STC, which may be distributed in advance.
* Translation and Interpretation: In consultation with STC, the Recipient organization will provide needed translation of material as well as funding for interpretation expenses.
* Other Direct Costs: The Recipient shall disburse additional funds for other direct costs as indicated in the project budget and pre-approved by STC. These other direct costs may include, but are not limited to, expenses for modest public diplomacy outreach and events in selected countries and other expenses which are essential for the functioning of the program. The amount of other direct costs will be included in the project budget.

In addition, the Recipient will be expected to complete the following specific activities in coordination with OES/STC for each respective line of effort for which they are submitting a proposal:

1. Value Aligned R&D Networks
   1. Recruitment and selection of U.S. and foreign participants in the short-term exchange program.
   2. Administration of the exchange program, including arranging and paying for related travel expenses, in accordance with applicable U.S. government regulations.
   3. Arranging and implementing workshops featuring participation by exchange participants and focused raising awareness of threats to the established norms and values in the global scientific enterprise and equipping participants with the tools needed to actively defend them.
   4. Support for public diplomacy outreach and events.
2. GIST Expansion Activities
   1. Administrative and logistical arrangements for program activities, including travel, venue, and other related needs.
   2. Recruitment and selection of participants in the program activities, including through open, merit-based application with a public voting component in the case of the Dubai 2020 expo pitch competition.
   3. Promotion of the program activities on social and other media, as appropriate.
   4. Support for public diplomacy outreach and events.
3. Science Dialogues and Embassy Science Fellow Outreach
   1. Administrative and logistical arrangements for program activities.
   2. Coordination with OES and relevant U.S. Embassies, Consulates and Agencies, as well as foreign participants for the activities.
   3. Promotion of the dialogues and events on social and other media, as appropriate.
   4. Support for public diplomacy outreach and events.
4. APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions
   1. Administrative and logistical arrangements for program activities, including virtual and/or in person events.
   2. Production and development of women in STEM video(s).
   3. Promotion of the program activities on social and other media, as appropriate.
   4. Support for public diplomacy outreach and events.
5. Media Resources for Demonstrating U.S. S&T Values
   1. The implementer will conduct market research on existing perceptions regarding American scientific and entrepreneurship leadership and values among four foreign media markets, and compelling messages to sway those foreign audiences (reasonable use of a third party contractor for this purpose will not be considered disqualifying).
   2. The Recipient will create reports outlining the results of their market research.
   3. Creation of Media Packages: In consultation with STC, the Recipient will design and create media packages to inform and persuade foreign audiences of the benefits of U.S. scientific values, and U.S. leadership in the global scientific enterprise, as well as other U.S. foreign policy goals at a nexus with science (reasonable use of a third party contractor for this purpose will not be considered disqualifying).
   4. Distribution of Media Packages: In consultation with STC, the Recipient will facilitate the distribution of the media packages to target select foreign audiences. Distribution shall be through a mixture of paid, earned, and social media platforms, as well as any other appropriate channels.
   5. The implementer will continuously evaluate the impact of media engagements and make changes to the packages and/or distribution as appropriate to increase effective advocacy of the issues with foreign publics (reasonable use of a third party contractor for this purpose will not be considered disqualifying).

## A.5. Performance Indicators

Each project should monitor and report on performance indicators that are specific, measurable, achievable, reasonable, and time-bound. Applicants should establish, where possible, 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 possible, indicators should also allow for sex disaggregation.

Potential indicators for this project could include:

* Number of non-U.S. individuals participating
* Number of institutions and research think tanks participating
* Number of people participating
* Number of men participating
* Number of women participating
* Partnership Support
* Media Reach
* Social Media Reach
* Social Media Engagement

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

The State Department takes into consideration the quality of data reported by grant recipients as part of the award activities, therefore applicants should be aware that recipients will be subject to data quality assessments.

# Section B. Federal Award Information

## B1. Available Funding

Overall grant making authority for this project is contained in the Smith-Mundt Act and the Fulbright-Hays Act. OES will make funding available for up to five (5) cooperative agreements of up to $1,325,000 U.S. Dollars total, subject to the availability of funds. Up to $125,000 will be awarded for the Value Aligned R&D Networks Program, up to $600,000 for GIST Expansion Activities, up to $100,000 for U.S. Science Dialogues and Public Outreach, up to $200,000 for the APEC Women in STEM Principles and Actions Program, and up $300,000 for Media Resources for Demonstrating U.S. S&T Values. The initial period of performance for each cooperative agreement will be twenty-four (24) months. Depending on the quality of performance and other factors, OES may consider additional supplemental funding (subject to the availability of funding) to continue activities and extend the period of performance or to support work on additional activities and/or in additional countries if funds are available, and OES and the Recipient mutually agree.

**Summary of Award Information**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Type of Award | Cooperative Agreement |
| Fiscal Year Funds | FY 2020 |
| Approximate Total Funding: | $ 1,325,000 USD |
| Approximate Number of Awards: | 1-5 |
| Anticipated Award Date: | September 30, 2020 |
| Anticipated Project Completion Date: | September 30, 2022 |

Anticipated Timeline for Award Adjudication

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Deadline for Applications | August 10 2020 |
| Notification of Project Approval/Disapproval | September 30, 2020 |

## B2. Award Management

The successful applicant(s) awarded under this NOFO will need to routinely collaborate with relevant U.S. Government agencies, including OES/STC, in order to successfully implement the line(s) of effort for which they have received an award.

The substantial involvement of OES/STC in all the proposed cooperative agreements under this competition includes, but is not limited to, the following:

* Review and approve the Recipient’s implementation plan to achieve the expected results described in Section A.3.
* Review and approve expenses, budget, staffing level at activities, etc.
* Provide ongoing guidance and communication related to the Recipient’s implementation plan for outreach events and meetings with scientific communities.
* Direct the nature, time, topic, location, and other details of the activities taking place under the cooperative agreement.
* Review and approve all individuals who will participate in activities under the award, including, but not limited to, exchange activities.
* Review and approve all aspects of the design and production of any media products and/or packages, including scripts, storyboards, cuts, edits, etc.
* Review and approve the plan for and implementation of distribution of any media products and/or packages, including directing the exact details of distribution when appropriate.
* Review and approve any final written products created under the award, including reports and analysis.
* Review and approve any subawards or contracts with third parties issued under this award, including, but not limited to, for the in-country implementation of events, for the creation and/or distribution of media products and/or packages, and for travel related expenses, such as airline tickets, hotel bookings, etc.

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

In accordance with 2 CFR 200.315, the U.S. Department of State retains a royalty-free, nonexclusive and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work produced under this award for Federal purposes, and to authorize others to do so. Work produced under this award includes final reports, media products and packages and all associated media (including outtakes, earlier versions, etc.).

# Section C. Eligibility Information

## C1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is limited to U.S. Non-profit/non-governmental organizations (NGOs) having a 501(c)(3) status with the IRS, or overseas-based non-profit/non-governmental organizations, and U.S. or overseas

public, state, and non-profit institutions of higher education.

Technically eligible submissions are those which: 1) arrive electronically to www.grants.gov or <https://mygrants.service-now.com> by the designated deadline; 2) have heeded all instructions contained in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), including length and completeness of submission; and 3) do not violate any of the guidelines stated in the solicitation and this document.

For-profit and commercial firms, including for-profit educational institutions, are not eligible to apply in response to this NOFO.

Please see 2 CFR 200.307 for regulations regarding program income.

## C2. Cost Share

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility requirement for this NOFO.

Please note: If cost-share is included in the budget then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost-share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient’s budget, OES’ contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient’s contribution.

***C.3 Other Eligibility Requirements***

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM)(www.sam.gov) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR,1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR,1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.” Additionally, no entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

Organizations may only submit one application per organization. If more than one application is submitted by an organization, only the first application received from that institution will be reviewed for eligibility and funding.

**Section D.**  **Application and Submission Information**

## D1. Address to Request Application Package

Please read carefully the entire announcement and follow the guidelines below before sending inquiries or submitting proposals.

Once the NOFO deadline has passed, OES 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 (copy all three) Ms. Maria Urbina at [UrbinaMA1@state.gov](mailto:UrbinaMA1@state.gov), Ms. Alexis Lennon at [LennonAM@state.gov](mailto:LennonAM@state.gov), and Dr. Sarah Staton at [StatonSJ@state.gov](mailto:StatonSJ@state.gov). Please refer to the funding opportunity number XXXXXXXX Any updates about this NOFO will also be posted on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

## D3. Unique entity identifier (DUNS) and System for Award Management (SAM)

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

* Unique Entity Identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
* NCAGE/CAGE code
* www.SAM.gov registration

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 unique entity identifier (DUNS) number. (Certain exceptions apply)

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

NCAGE application: Application page here: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>

Instructions for the NCAGE application process:

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

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423

For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766

Email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: <https://www.sam.gov>. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

Applicants must have an active registration in SAM ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)) prior to submitting an application, must prove a valid Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, formerly referred to as a DUNS number, and must continue to maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by the U.S. government. **If an organization does not have an active registration in SAM.gov prior to submitting an application, the application will be deemed ineligible.** Note: The process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

The Unique Entity Identifier (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. SAM is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to obtain a UEI number and register in SAM.

SAM requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM and to also maintain its active registration in SAM.

An exemption from this requirement may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if the applicant’s identity must be protected due to possible endangerment of their mission, their organization’s status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant. Organizations requesting an exemption should email the point of contact listed in Section G of this NOFO.

**Please note:** foreign organizations will be required to register with the NATO Support Agency (NSPA) to receive a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code in order to register in SAM. NSPA will forward your registration request to the applicable National Codification Bureau (NCB) if your organization is located in a NATO or Tier 2 Sponsored Non-NATO Nation. (As of January 2015, NATO nations included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States of America; and Tier 2 nations included Australia, Austria, Brazil, Finland, Israel, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, and Singapore.)

NSPA and/or the appropriate NCB forwards all NCAGE code information to all Allied Committee 135 (AC/135) nations, which as of January 2015 also included Afghanistan, Argentina, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Colombia, Egypt, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Montenegro, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sweden, Thailand, Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, and the United Arab Emirates.

## D4. Submission Dates and Times

The Department of State requires proposals be submitted electronically through [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) or SAMS Domestic.

Organizations new to Grants.gov: In order to register to use grants.gov, an organization must complete a number of steps, which include those registration requirements listed in D3. Completing all of these steps can take up to 4 weeks, especially for an international organization.

Applicants are urged to begin this process well before the submission deadline. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps.

Callers in the U.S. may call toll free 1.866.577.0771; callers outside the U.S. may call at a charge 1.202.401.5282. The Help Desk is open Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m. Eastern Time (U.S.). Please direct your questions regarding the process of uploading your application to the Help Desk.

All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on **August 10, 2020.** Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

* **Funding Restrictions**

1. No pre-award costs are allowed.

## D5. Proposal Format Requirements

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

1. Table of Contents that lists application contents and attachments (if any);
2. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A and SF424B, as directed on www.grants.gov. 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-mandatory-family.html>; The SF-424B is required only for those applicants who have not registered in SAM.gov or recertified their registration in SAMS.gov since February 2, 2019 and completed the online representations and certification.
3. If your organization engages in lobbying activities, a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form is required.
4. Contingency plan. Due to the work disruptions and travel restrictions caused by COVID-19, the applicant must include a contingency plan outlining how to mitigate restrictions/interruptions to the project implementation during the period of performance. Contingency plans may include project implementation through remote or virtual training tools.
5. Letter of Disclosure for proposed consultants/personnel (if applicable) of potential conflicts of interest, employment with a local/state/federal government; and
6. 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.

An important part of the application is the Proposal Narrative. The Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 10 pages, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins), should be organized using the following section headings: Executive Summary, Organizational Capacity and Past Performance, Program Strategy, Performance Monitoring and Evaluation, and Management Plan. (CVs, budget components and the SF-424s do not count as part of the 10 page limit). The point value shown for each section indicates its relative importance in the application review process. Please see Section E for more information. Evaluation values are based on five narrative components and two budget components.

## Section E. Application Review Information

## E1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and scored on the five part Proposal Components and the two part Budget Components using a 100 point scale by a peer review committee of Department of State and other experts, as appropriate.

## E2. Review and Selection Process

*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

The importance of each section is indicated by the maximum score as follows:

* Executive Summary – 5 points
* Organization Capacity and Past Performance – 30 points
* Program Strategy – 15 points
* Performance Monitoring and Evaluation – 15 points
* Management Plan – 15 points

**Narrative Components**

1. Executive Summary (5 points)

This section should be a succinct one-page summary containing information that the applicant believes best represents its proposed program and includes: the name and contact information for the project’s main point of contact; the project’s purpose; 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; and expected results and sustainability; and a one-paragraph program description.

2. Organizational Capacity and Past Performance (30 points)

This section of the application provides information about the applicant organization. It provides evidence that the applicant has the ability to 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 with science and technology (S&T), executing meetings abroad for international audiences, social media and outreach, international S&T networks (diaspora, diplomatic community, students, universities, etc.), executing public diplomacy programs and budgets, travel management, and other work you deem relevant to this NOFO.
* As an attachment (which does not count as part of the 10 pages), 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 (15 points)

* Propose a clear and realistic implementation plan to significantly address the Program Goals in Section A2.
* The proposal should further outline the expected and achievable results for the project which could include suggestions in Section A3. It should also outline the relevant and appropriate Main Activities to accomplish the goals and expected results, 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.
* In table format, please present a brief, one- to two-page work plan matrix (which does count as part of the 10 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.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Primary Activities, Deliverables, and/or Milestones | Q1 | Q2 | Q3 | Q4 | Q5 | Etc. |
| Project Monitoring Plan (may be requested within 90 days after the start of the activity (see Attachment A)) | X |  |  |  |  |  |
| XYZ Activity | X | X | X | X |  |  |
| Activity 123 |  |  | X | X | X |  |
| Etc. |  |  |  |  |  |  |

4. Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (15 points)

* Discuss how progress towards the expected results will be measured, as outlined by the Performance Indicators in Section A5. Identify which performance indicators will be measured and how data on these indicators will be collected, analyzed, and used for program management. Present indicators linked to specific project objectives in table format and include source of data and proposed frequency of collection. See the full list of Performance Indicators in Appendix 1.

5. Management Plan (15 points)

* 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.
* Include job descriptions and CVs of key staff (Project Director, etc.) as attachments (do not count as part of the 10-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 OES. Note the location where key staff will be based.

**Budget Components**

* Refer to the Excel Budget Template for guidance on compiling a budget and associated budget narrative.
* 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.
* NICRA: If your organization hasa Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your most recent NICRA should be included as a PDF file. This document will not be reviewed by the panelists, but rather used by project and grant staff if the submission is recommended for funding and therefore does not count against the submission page limitations. If your proposal involves subawards to organizations charging indirect costs, please submit the applicable NICRA). Per 2 CFR200.414(f), organizations that have never had a NICRA may request a de minimis indirect rate of up to 10% of the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) as defined in 2 CFR 200.68. *MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of $25,000*. The budget narrative must indicate what costs will be covered using the 10% de minimis rate.

The Budget Components will be evaluated using the following criteria:

1. Budget Appropriateness (10 points)

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

2. Cost effectiveness (10points)

* 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. If cost share is provided, the amount of funding contributed by the applicant, sub-awardees, and other partners shows a commitment to the success of the project. (Note, as per Section C2, cost share is not a requirement.)

**Note: Applications that do not include all required documents will be marked as incomplete, and will therefore be deemed technically ineligible.**

OES retains the right to ask for additional documents not included in this NOFO. Additionally, to ensure all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the OES Review Panel will review the first page of the requested section up to the page limit and no further. OES encourages organizations to use the given space effectively.

Additional information that successful applicants may be asked to submit after notification of intent to make a Federal award, but prior to issuance of a Federal award, may include:

* Written responses and any revised application documents addressing any conditions or recommendations from the Review Panel;
* Completion of the Department’s Financial Management Survey, if receiving OES funding for the first time or requested by the Grants Officer;
* Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System managed by the Department of Health and Human Services if receiving OES funding for the first time, unless an exemption is provided;
* Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a Federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a Federal award.

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

# 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. 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/m/a/ope/index.htm

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

## F3. Reporting

The Recipient, at a minimum, shall provide OES with the following reports (Please note that all data collected, supporting documentation, and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau 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 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.  Progress reports must be submitted quarterly. Awardees must submit Page 1 of 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.  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. OES may also provide a detailed reporting reminder before the due date for each semiannual report due under this agreement. At minimum, it is expected that 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;
* 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 90 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 addresses gender issues and marginalized communities, how the project will be sustained, and a final financial report. Additional guidance may be provided prior to the award end date.

# Section G. Agency Contact

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should email them to (copy all three) Ms. Maria Urbina at [UrbinaMA1@state.gov](mailto:UrbinaMA1@state.gov), Ms. Alexis Lennon at [LennonAM@state.gov](mailto:LennonAM@state.gov), and Dr. Sarah Staton at [StatonSJ@state.gov](mailto:StatonSJ@state.gov). To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, OES will not answer substantive NOFO questions except when posting questions and answers to the announcement page as described below.

All questions must be submitted via email to the contacts listed above no later than July 27, 2020. OES will periodically create a document of submitted questions with answers and upload it to the announcement page in grants.gov.

Note that once the NOFO 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 Requirements

## 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 terrorists 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](mailto:RAM@state.gov), or hardcopy to the Grants Officer

Questions about the form may be emailed to [RAM@state.gov](mailto: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/m/a/ope/index.htm>

## H4. Evaluation Policy

Applicants are advised that recipients and sub-recipients of Federal assistance awards 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>

**H5. Monitoring Site Visits**

A monitoring site visit, at least once during the lifetime of a grant, is required by Department of State grant policy. The site visit is conducted to gather additional information on the recipient’s ability to properly implement the project, manage OES funds and share substantiating document for programmatic and financial reporting. Specifically, the site visit will involve the review of the programmatic progress (progress on activities, sub-recipient, consultant work, etc.) as well as administrative and financial management and controls.

**APPENDIX 1 – PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

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

The State Department takes into consideration the quality of data reported by grant recipients as part of the award activities, therefore applicants should be aware that recipients will be subject to data quality assessments.

* Number of non-U.S. individuals participating
* Number of people participating
* Number of men participating
* Number of women participating
* Partnership Support
* Media Reach
* Social Media Reach
* Social Media Engagement

**APPENDIX 2 – SAMPLE: LETTER OF INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT**

Bureau of Oceans, and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES)

U.S. Department of State

Room 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: Maria Urbina

Bureau of Oceans, Environmental and International Affairs

U.S. Department of State

**RE: Letter of support for Request for Applications # xxx**

The [name of the applicant institution] is happy to endorse the proposal’s entitled “XXXXXXX” in response to the NOFO# entitled XXXXXXX. Our organization has been working in this area for the last X years and have developed extensive expertise in selected countries/region. (if you have established a long standing contacts describe those and 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 program 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. If you know the local institutions please indicate if relevant that you have worked with relevant staff and explain the areas of collaborative work if relevant.

Sincerely,

[Sr. officer of the institution]

Signature of President or

Executive Office

***FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY AT Department of State***

Reviewed by: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: