

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY SEOUL, PUBLIC DIPLOMACY SECTION
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title:	U.S. Embassy Seoul PD Small Grants Program
Funding Opportunity Number:	PD-SEOUL-FY24-01
Deadline for Applications:	Monday, April 15, 11:59 p.m. GMT+9
CFDA Number:	19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Total Amount Available:	\$250,000
Maximum for Each Award:	\$100,000

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Seoul Public Diplomacy Section (PD) of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications for carrying out programs under the Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This Notice of Funding Opportunity will support projects broadly linked to the theme of the 2024 Summit for Democracy, “Democracy for Future Generations,” hosted this year by the Republic of Korea’s (ROK).

The Summit for Democracy is a global initiative that highlights the critical role of democracy, transparency, and inclusivity in tackling the world's most pressing challenges. Launched by the United States in December 2021, these summits gather world leaders, civil society, and the private sector to fortify democratic governance, uphold human rights, and combat corruption. This initiative emphasizes the importance of youth engagement and the systematic inclusion of civil society in the democratic process, aiming to foster international collaboration to ensure a prosperous, stable future for all.

Purpose of Small Grants Competition: In support of the 3rd Summit for Democracy’s goal of safeguarding democracy for future generations, Seoul’s Public Diplomacy Section invites organizations and individuals to submit proposals for programs that strengthen civic participation and inclusion, build connections between democratic stakeholders in the United States, ROK and the broader Indo-Pacific region, and promote our shared values of inclusive democracy.

Successful proposals must include an American element or connection with American experts, organizations, or institutions in a field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policies and perspectives. Proposals may include requests for international travel and related costs of experts, speakers, and key individuals in support of broader activities. However, participant exchanges should not be the exclusive program activity.

Embassy Seoul strongly encourages proposals that include substantial outreach in areas outside of the Seoul Metropolitan region. Embassy Seoul also strongly encourages programs that

increase Korean understanding and support for safeguarding democracy and shared values in the broader Indo-Pacific Region. **Program activities should take place primarily in the Republic of Korea. Programs in the United States and/or third countries will only be considered with extremely strong justification, including virtual components and cost sharing (including but not limited to travel expenses and in-kind contributions.)**

PD Small Grants Program priorities include, but are not limited to:

- Academic and professional lectures, seminars and speaker programs;
- Professional and academic exchanges and programs;
- Public awareness campaigns through traditional and/or social media;
- Youth leadership development exchanges and programs;
- Capacity building programs for grassroots civil society groups;

Program Area 1) Civic Participation and Human Rights

Campaigns that raise awareness of issues related to the promotion and protection of human rights, social inclusion, and civic participation – both domestically and internationally. We will also consider capacity building projects between organizations in the United States and Republic of Korea to develop key competencies such as defining mission statements, fundraising, managing finances, promoting effective advocacy and civic engagement, launching impactful public awareness campaigns, monitoring and evaluation of programming, and other skills as appropriate.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government's commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

Participants can range from high school and university-aged youth to established professionals who are active in civil society groups focused on the following areas:

- LGBTQI+ or other gender minority rights
- Disability rights and accessibility
- Human rights (global or domestic)
- Support for DPRK escapee communities
- Women's economic empowerment
- Mitigating gender conflict or providing support for victims of gender-based violence
- Religious diversity and interfaith understanding
- Support for other marginalized communities
- Environmental protection, sustainability, and climate change

Program Area 2) Technology's Impact on Democracy

Programs that encourage meaningful discussions about how emerging technologies affect the democratic process. This may include programs such as those related to identifying and countering foreign state information manipulation, the impact of AI on the democratic or policy-making process, and the development and deployment of technologies to increase civic participation and access.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government's commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

- Emerging youth (aged 18-29) activists, civil society organization representatives, and students working on issues related to technology and civic engagement.
- Established professionals from the Republic of Korea and United States with academic expertise and/or careers related to issues involving the development and deployment of emerging technologies and how they affect the democratic process.

Program Area 3) Cross-Border Civic Engagement

Programs that build cross-border ties between ROK and American civil society groups, students, academics, and social entrepreneurs working on issues of social inclusion and civic engagement, particularly those living in Japan, ASEAN, and/or the Pacific Island Nations. Issues can include, but are not limited to, youth civic participation and leadership, human rights and democracy, social inclusion for marginalized groups, development assistance coordination, social entrepreneurship, and women's economic empowerment.

While justifications to fund limited activities in the United States or third countries may be considered, programs outside of the ROK must have extremely strong justification, including virtual components and have cost-sharing in order to be considered. Alternatively, eligible program activities may be focused on increasing Korean understanding and civic engagement with these countries without significant travel.

Participants and Audiences:

Participants should reflect the United States government's commitment to diversity, inclusion, equity, and accessibility

- Youth members of civil society groups and academia
- Key influencers, including but not limited to journalists, civil society leaders, academics, regulators, legislative aides, and members of regional governments

The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:

- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Programs intended primarily for the exchange of participants between the UNITED STATES and Korea.
- Charitable or development activities;
- Construction programs;
- Programs that support specific religious activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs

- Scientific research;
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization; or
- Programs that duplicate existing programs.

Authorizing legislation, type and year of funding: FY24 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 1 to 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: 3 – 10 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$100,000, with typical grants expected in the \$25,000 range.

Total available funding: \$250,000

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2024 Public Diplomacy Funding

Anticipated program start date: **At least two months after the application deadline** (project period, including preparation phase, starts prior to the said condition will not be considered.)

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant, Fixed Amount Award (FAA), or Cooperative agreement.

Cooperative agreements and some FAAs are different from grants in that PD staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation (“Substantial Involvement”).

Examples of those substantial involvements are, but not limited to:

1. ***Participant Selection:*** PD staff will be involved in the selection process of participants for the program. This may include reviewing applications, interviewing candidates, and providing final approval to ensure participants meet the program’s goals and eligibility criteria.
2. ***Program Monitoring and Evaluation:*** PD Staff will actively participate in the monitoring and evaluation of the program. This involves regular check-ins, assessing progress towards objectives, providing feedback, and helping adapt strategies as necessary to achieve desired outcomes.
3. ***Technical Guidance and Support:*** PD staff will offer technical assistance and guidance to support grantees. This could include providing expertise in specific areas, facilitating access to networks and resources, and offering guidance on best practices for project implementation.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in **12 months** or less.

PD Seoul will review 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. *U.S. Embassy Seoul retains the right to execute non-*

competitive continuation amendment(s). Any amendment(s) is based on performance, pending availability of funds and is not guaranteed.)

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The Public Diplomacy Section encourages applications from U.S. and ROK organizations: For example:

- Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- Public and private educational institutions
- Public International Organizations (PIOs) and (Non-U.S.) Governmental institutions

NOTE: Preference will be given to ROK-based not-for-profit organizations that have partnerships with organizations in the United States, or vice-versa.

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

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

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

Application forms required below are available at **<https://www.grants.gov/forms>**

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.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars (**Please round up to the nearest hundred**)
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper (Letter), 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 (<https://www.grants.gov/forms>)

- **SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)**
- **SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)**
- **SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs)**

2) Summary Coversheet: Cover sheet stating the applicant's name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

3) Proposal (10 pages maximum): The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization:** 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. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and XXX will be improved? 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.
- **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 timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **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 sheet of paper to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

5) Attachments (if applicable):

- 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:

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

The Public Diplomacy Section will accept proposals throughout the year and will review proposals according to the following schedule:

- Proposals received between February 29 and April 15 will be reviewed by early May, with responses going out by late May.

5. Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for construction, vehicle purchases

6. Other Submission Requirements

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

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

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

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

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

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

Embassy priorities: Applicant has clearly described how stated goals are related to and support U.S. Embassy Seoul's priority areas or target audiences.

Budget: The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

Monitoring and evaluation plan: Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provide milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Sustainability: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

Support of Equity and Underserved Communities: Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants 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 §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

At least two months after the application deadline (project period, including preparation phase, starts prior to the said condition will not be considered.)

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 (SF270): Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified via email.

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).

In accordance with the [Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Underserved Communities](#), proposals should demonstrate how the program advances equity with respect to race, ethnicity, religion, income, geography, gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability.

The proposal should also demonstrate how the program will further engagement in underserved communities and with individuals from underserved communities. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing racial equity and underserved communities will enhance the program's goals and objectives, as well as the experience of participants.

The support of underserved communities will be part of the review criteria for this opportunity. Therefore, proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

3. Reporting

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

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PD Grants team at: SeoulPDGrants@state.gov.

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.

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

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

“Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. 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.