

Notice of Funding Opportunity: Bolstering Security and Defense *SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS*****

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Funding Opportunity Title:	Bolstering Security and Defense
Funding Opportunity Number:	SCA-525-23-GR0000
NOFO Start date:	December 16, 2022
NOFO Closing Date:	July 5, 2023
CFDA Number:	19.040 - U.S. Embassy Public Diplomacy Section Programs

A) PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Public Diplomacy Section (PD) of the U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Canada, U.S. Department of State, announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out programs strengthening bilateral ties between the United States and Canada on **Bolstering Security and Defense**.

Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Priority Region: Canada

The U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Canada invite proposals from non-governmental organizations, think tanks, government institutions, and academic institutions for programs strengthening the bilateral ties between the United States and Canada and supporting the [Roadmap for a Renewed U.S.-Canada Partnership Pillar](#) **Bolstering Security and Defense**, including, but not limited to:

- Programs that raise awareness and increase support for U.S.-Canada defense cooperation, with an emphasis on NATO and defense spending, NORAD and defense modernization, and the Arctic.
- Programs that raise awareness and support for increased information sharing and cooperation in law enforcement and intelligence, with an emphasis on cyber security and countering ideologically motivated violent extremism.
- Programs to counter disinformation, misinformation, and malign influence as threats to democracy.

All programs must engage Canadian audiences. All programs must include a U.S. element or connection with U.S. experts that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives. Any speaker paid with grant funding must hold U.S. citizenship.

COVID-19 SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT TO ALL POTENTIAL APPLICANTS:

Applicants are encouraged to consider the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on travel

and public gatherings in Canada when developing programs and submitting proposals. Proposals should detail the applicant's plans to execute either a virtual, in-person, or hybrid program, depending upon the public health restrictions in force at the time the program takes place.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Professional and academic speaker programs, lectures, and seminars
- Professional and academic exchanges and projects
- Public messaging campaigns using social media, video, and new media
- Cultural and Fine Arts Programming, to include cultural performances, workshops and engagements based around dance, theater, music, poetry, youth competitions, the plastic and other fine and performing arts

Please note that we will not fund the following:

- Trade Shows,
- Programs relating to partisan political activity,
- Charitable or development activities,
- Construction programs,
- Fund-raising campaigns,
- Scientific research,
- Personal use,
- Lobbying for specific legislation,
- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization,
- Programs that duplicate existing programs, or
- Alcohol.

Participants and Audiences:

- The program participants and primary audience must include majority Canadians.
- All applicants for awards must identify their target audience and estimate the expected audience reach through indirect contact via social media, traditional media, or online meeting platforms.

Diversity and Inclusion Guidelines:

Programs, speakers, and participants should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social, and cultural life in the United States and abroad. Diversity should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives.

B) FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: Twenty-four months

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$15,000.00 to a maximum of \$250,000.00

Type of Funding: FY23 Smith-Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

Funding Instrument Type: Standard Award, Fixed Amount Award, Individual Award, or Cooperative Agreement. Significant involvement for a Cooperative Agreement may include prior approval of specific speakers for programs.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in twenty-four months or less.

C) ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- U.S. or Canadian not-for-profit, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations.
- Public and private educational institutions.
- Public international organizations and governmental institutions.
- Individuals (note that for-profit organizations are not eligible for this notice of funding opportunity. By extension, this means that an employee or owner of a for-profit organization may not apply as an individual solely to circumvent this restriction. If applying as an individual, you must include in your application an explanation of why you are uniquely qualified as an individual applicant.)
- U.S. organizations applying for funding must partner with a Canadian organization.

Other Eligibility Requirements:

To be approved for funding, all organizations must have a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain the necessary registrations. Please note that NCAGE and SAM.gov requirements do not apply to individuals applying for a grant.

D) APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Please read the following instructions carefully. Applications that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be considered ineligible.

The application process includes three phases:

- **Phase 1:** Statement of Interest (SOI) - online submission ([click here](#)). SOIs will be reviewed by the U.S. Embassy and Consulates Grants Committee. Successful applicants in Phase 1 will be invited to participate in Phase 2.
- **Phase 2:** virtual interview with members of the Grants Committee. Successful applicants in Phase 2 will be invited to submit a full application package (Phase 3).
- **Phase 3:** full application package submission.

1. Phase 1

The online Statement of Interest provides an overview of the project and covers the Individual or Organization's contact information and the project details (description, audience, goals, funding, timeline).

Please do not share a full application package at this stage. It will not be reviewed.

Applicants will be able to submit a more-detailed proposal IF they are invited to participate in Phase 3.

2. Phase 2

Successful applicants in Phase 1 will be invited to a virtual interview with a panel comprised of members of the Grants Committee or members of the post overseeing the project. During this interview, applicants should be prepared to present on the following and answer any questions that may arise during the discussion:

Credibility statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who are you?• What is your project about?• What is your timeline?• Who is your target audience?• How are you going to measure the success of your project?
Opportunity/Problem	Explain what opportunities your organization has or what problems you are trying to solve
Proposed solution	Explain how the funding would help the project. It should be realistic, implementable and include specifications on what the results will be.

We recommend applicants use the interview to address any questions they may have or seek clarifications. Further instructions on the interview will be provided via email once successful candidates are selected.

3. Phase 3

Successful applicants in Phase 2 will be notified and invited to submit a full application package.

a) Full Application Package

The following documents are mandatory and are available on the Embassy's website on the [U.S. Mission to Canada Funding Opportunities page](#) under 'Grant Application Package.'

- Grant Proposal Template* (see detail below)
- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – for organizations)

- SF-424I (Application for Federal Assistance – for individuals)
- SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs – mandatory for organizations)
- SF 424B (non-construction – mandatory for individuals only)
- Budget Justification Narrative
 - In addition to the SF-424A, use the [Budget Justification Narrative](#) Excel template provided on the [U.S. Mission to Canada Funding Opportunities](#) page.
 - Budget numbers must be provided in U.S. dollars. Cost sharing is not required.

***Grant Proposal Template:** Candidates invited to proceed to Phase 3 will have the opportunity submit a complete proposal, using the [Grant Proposal Template](#), in addition to the required Federal Assistance forms and the Budget Justification Narrative. Proposals should clarify any details absent from the Statement of Interest and address any questions or requests for additional information raised during Phase 2. Proposals should be no more than 10 pages.

Additional Attachments:

- Name, title, and organization of each proposed U.S. speaker for your program.
- If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Contract Rate Agreement with the U.S. government (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.

b) Required registrations for organizations only (individuals do not need these):

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

- NCAGE/CAGE code
- SAM.gov registration: www.SAM.gov

Step 1: Register for a NCAGE code

- NCAGE 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 United States, call 1-888-227-2423
- For NCAGE help from outside the United States, call 1-269-961-7766
- Email NCAGE@dliis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: Register with SAM.gov

- After receiving the NCAGE code, proceed to register in www.SAM.gov and follow the instructions for registering your entity. Your SAM account must be renewed annually.

Please note that SAM.gov applications may take several weeks to be processed and that funding cannot be released until proof of an active SAM.gov registration and respective Unique Entity Identifier number have been provided. If invited to Phase 2, candidates that are not already registered in SAM should immediately begin the process of registration.

Submission Dates:

The Grants Committee will review applications based on the following schedule. The Grants Committee recommends that applicants submit proposals with start dates three to six months after the submission deadline.

Round 1

Funding opportunity published	December 16, 2022
Phase 1: Statement of Interest deadline	January 17, 2023, 11:59 pm EST
Phase 2: successful candidate email notifications	On or before January 30, 2023
Phase 2: virtual interviews	On or before February 6, 2023
Phase 3: successful candidates email notifications	On or before February 13, 2023
Phase 3: full application packages deadline	On or before February 27, 2023
Selected proposal notifications via email	On or before March 13, 2023

Round 2

Phase 1: Statement of Interest deadline	April 11, 2023, 11:59 pm EST
Phase 2: successful candidate email notifications	On or before April 24, 2023
Phase 2: virtual interviews	On or before May 1, 2023
Phase 3: successful candidates email notifications	On or before May 8, 2023
Phase 3: full application packages deadline	On or before May 23, 2023
Selected proposal notifications via email	On or before June 5, 2023

Round 3

Phase 1: Statement of Interest deadline	July 5, 2023, 11:59 pm EST
Phase 2: successful candidate email notifications	On or before July 17, 2023
Phase 2: virtual interviews	On or before July 24, 2023
Phase 3: successful candidates email notifications	On or before July 31, 2023
Phase 3: full application packages deadline	On or before August 14, 2023
Selected proposal notifications via email	On or before August 28, 2023

Please note that all funding decisions are based on availability of funds.

E) APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Each application will be reviewed by the Embassy and Consulates Grants Committee. Each application will be assessed and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.

- **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 has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.
- **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and the program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.
- **Budgets:** 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:** Applicants demonstrate they are able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.
- **Sustainability:** Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

F) FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Federal Award Notices:

The grant award will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The DS-1909 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 Notice of Funding Opportunity 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: The U.S. Embassy in Ottawa will provide funding on an as-needed basis using the SF-270 form. The Embassy will retain up to 20% of the funding which will be reimbursed upon successful completion of the program. Please note the Grants Officer has the right to change the payment structure if deemed necessary. The U.S. Embassy in Ottawa reserves the right to amend the final amount to be reimbursed after reviewing the final progress and financial reports.

Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions: 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 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>.
 - Note the U.S flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

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.

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

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact PD at ottawa-pa@state.gov. Questions are encouraged at each stage of the process, even the initial process when an organization is considering whether to apply and may be unsure if program activities fit the grant purpose.

Applications and Questions:

Full applications and questions about the process can be submitted to: ottawa-pa@state.gov.

Thank you for your interest in our grants program.

U.S. Embassy and Consulates in Canada