

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

Funding Opportunity Title: Celebrating Excellence in Journalism
Funding Opportunity Number: PAS-CMR-FY21-05
Deadline for Applications: March 10, 2021
CFDA Number: 19.040
Total Amount Available: \$25,000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy in Cameroon announces an open competition for applications to carry out a program to identify and celebrate, such as through an award ceremony, examples of high-quality journalism in Cameroon. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

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Priority Region: None; all regions of the country should be equally represented.

Program Objectives:

- Promote ethical, high-quality journalism in Cameroon by bringing positive attention to examples of excellence in the profession and recognizing best practices being observed.
- Encourage journalists practicing high-quality journalism to continue doing so.
- Raise awareness with the public and among journalists about what high-quality, ethical journalism looks like.
- Provide role models for other journalists, especially younger generations and journalism students, who to others demonstrate through their work that it is possible to practice high-quality journalism in the challenging Cameroonian context.

This grant will fund an award ceremony or other program for journalists, bloggers, and media outlets in Cameroon. The awards may cover different topics of reporting, including but not limited to: democracy, human rights, corruption/governance, COVID-19, health (non-Coronavirus topics), regional security, gender issues, press freedom, and environment (e.g. illegal mining, poaching, etc.).

The grantee must establish clear and fair criteria by which entries will be evaluated that represent accepted industry standards of excellence, quality journalism, and ethics. We seek to promote journalism for the purpose of informing and educating citizens to be effective and active members of society. The grantee must also establish an inclusive process for the submission or nomination of entries for consideration and the selection of a credible panel of judges (which may consist of Cameroonians and/or Americans, media professionals and/or academic lecturers of journalism, etc.) to choose which entries will be recognized. The proposal should include a category to honor student journalists who shows a good mastery of best practices for a beginner.

Awards or prizes may include cash but should not be solely or predominantly cash. Values or amounts of awards or prizes should be sufficient to convey prestige and seriousness in recognizing excellence of those who demonstrate respect for professional standards and ethics. It should also seek to boost respect for these standards among other journalism practitioners in Cameroon and serve as a motivational factor in demonstrating that adhering to standards of excellence can be rewarded.

Participants and Audiences:

Proposals must provide for consideration of the work, in English or French, of any Cameroonian journalist in print, broadcast, or online mediums, including professional bloggers and student journalists/interns, who are Cameroonian citizens working in Cameroon. This must be clearly communicated in any publication calling for submissions. All mediums of journalism should be included in a representative fashion. Younger journalists and journalism students are the primary audience for the program objectives, and proposed activities must include publicity that targets this audience, although the work of journalists of all ages should be evaluated to find the examples that best represent journalism excellence in Cameroon.

The following types of activities are not eligible for funding:

- Scholarships for study in the United States or to fund conference attendance or study tours to the United States
- Activities that are inherently political in nature or that contain the appearance of partisanship
- Construction activities
- Programs that support specific religious activities
- Fund-raising campaigns

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 2 to 6 *months*

Number of awards anticipated: 1 award

Award amounts: \$18,000 to \$25,000

Total available funding: \$25,000

Type of Funding: FY21 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement. Cooperative agreements are different from grants in that bureau/embassy staff are more actively involved in the grant implementation. This involvement may consist of, but is not limited to:

- The Embassy will concur on selection of panel members who will evaluate stories entered for consideration.
- The Embassy will have veto rights over stories selected by the panel for recognition.
- The Embassy will approve promotional material design/content, selection of speakers at events, and venue choice for any in-person gatherings.

Program Performance Period: Proposed programs should be completed in 6 months or less.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

PAS encourages applications from the United States and Cameroon:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks, community associations, and civil society/non-governmental organizations with programming experience
- Individuals
- Non-profit media organizations
- Professional trade organizations
- Non-profit or governmental educational institutions

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required. If an applicant offers cost sharing, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its application and later included in an approved agreement.

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). Organizations who have previously received U.S. government funding from any source must also have a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. This registration is free of charge. You may register for it at any time, regardless of the status of an application for grant funding. It is recommended to apply for this registration as early as possible.

Individuals are not required to have a DUNS number or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Send complete proposal applications to: PASGrantsYaounde@state.gov, BoubaTM@state.gov and nganzirn@state.gov.

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.

The following requirements must be met:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars

- All pages are numbered

Content of Application

1. Mandatory application forms

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

These forms are available here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms.html>. They must be submitted in English, but French translations of the forms are available here: <https://cm.usembassy.gov/fr/education-culture-fr/small-grants-program-fr/grant-forms-fr/>.

- 2. Summary Cover Sheet:** Cover sheet stating the applicant name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.
- 3. Proposal (9 pages maximum):** The proposal should contain sufficient information so that anyone not familiar with the subject of the proposed project would understand exactly what the applicant intends to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.
 - **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
 - **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
 - **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed.
 - **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
 - **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
 - **Program Methods and Design:** An explanation 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.

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.

Optional Attachments:

- a. 1-page CV or resumes of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- b. Letters of support from partner organizations (if any) that you intend to play a key role in carrying out your proposal activities
- c. If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file
- d. Official permission letters, if required for program activities

Required Registrations:

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) 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 EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
- NCAGE/CAGE code
- www.SAM.gov registration

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@dliis.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.

Submission Dates and Times:

Applications are due no later than March 10, 2021.

Other Submission Requirements:

All application materials must be submitted by email to PASGrantsYaounde@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.

Organizational capacity: The organization has expertise in its stated field and PAS is confident of its ability to undertake the program. This includes a financial management system appropriate to the amount of funding being requested and a bank account.

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.

Goals and objectives: Goals and objectives are clear, realistic, and measurable, 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 Yaoundé's priority program areas and/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: Applicant demonstrates ability 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.

2. Review and Selection Process and Timeline

An Embassy Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications within 2 weeks of the submission deadline and will contact successful applicant(s) for next steps within 2 weeks of the Review Committee meeting.

3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)

For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

- i. That 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 designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);
- ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;
- iii. That 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.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award 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.

2. 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.

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: the U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section at PASGrantsYaounde@state.gov

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

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

Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

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

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

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

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

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