

INTRO TO U.S. EMBASSY GRANTS

- A wide variety of agencies and departments inside each U.S. embassy around the world offer a wide variety of different grant opportunities.
- Each embassy's Political-Economic Section and Public Affairs Section administer a range of different grants that support community-focused projects created by individuals and/or organizations
- While U.S. government grant regulations are relatively standardized, the award specific details and other requirements change with each grant opportunity. Make sure to read instructions carefully!
- This presentation is only meant as an overview, including the basics of award notices and the grants process, as well as examples of different types of embassy grants. Learn more at [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)!

Economic Support Funds (ESF)

- The U.S. Embassy's Political-Economic section has awarded \$1.5 million in Economic Support Funds (ESF) since 2015, supporting programs that prevent the spread of pandemic diseases, combat gender-based violence (GBV), promote human rights, advance rights for people with disabilities, strengthen economic inclusion, fight chronic malnutrition, promote fiscal transparency and expand conservation efforts.
- ESF grants are flexible and timely tools to fill gaps in our bilateral development assistance and expand our reach across Rwanda.
- No annual program call.
- One time grant not to exceed \$250,000.
- Period of performance must be two years or less.
- Locally registered non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and international NGOs (INGOs) can apply.
- Program can be cost-share or matching.

ESF Funds and Most Other Embassy Grants Cannot Support:

- Military activities
- Law enforcement activities
- Religious activities
- Activities with unmitigated and negative environmental consequences
- Provide funding or aid payments directly to individuals

Ambassador's Small Grants Program

- One example of an ESF is the Ambassador's Small Grants Program, which provides self-help assistance to improve basic economic or social conditions at the local community level by funding the expansion of an existing project;
- Range between \$5,000-\$15,000;
- Have the potential to produce employment and marketable skills, such as sewing centers and agricultural cooperatives;
- Assist vulnerable groups;
- Support high-impact, quick-implementation activities which benefit a large number of people within one year without requiring further assistance;
- Have the potential to generate additional income;
- Involve a significant local contribution in cash, labor, land, or material, and are within the ability of the local community to operate and maintain;
- Only RCA registered cooperatives can apply;
- Priorities shift every year; and
- Can be sole-source.

Julia Taft Fund

- The U.S Embassy's Political-Economic section also funds projects outside the scope of Economic Support Funds. One example is the Julia Taft Fund.
- This fund is intended to meet gaps in refugee assistance needs that can be supported by projects of up to \$25,000 that are not addressed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), other international organizations (IOs), or NGOs receiving U.S. government funding.
- Programs are designed to address one-time needs.
- Can be sole-source.

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY GRANTS

- The Embassy's Public Affairs Section (PAS) administers a wide variety of grants that support our public diplomacy goals in Rwanda such as:
- Cultural Programming that Connects the People of Rwanda and the United States
- Art and Speaker Programs that Promote Mutual Understanding
- The Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation Projects
- Educational programming, including the **EducationUSA Scholars Program** college application preparatory course, administered each year by a grant partner
- English language learning programs, including the **English Access Microscholarship Program**, a two-year English enrichment program for high-potential secondary students in rural areas, administered biannually by a grant partner.

Where can I find information about Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)?

- [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov)
- rw.usembassy.gov
- Embassy's Facebook page
- Ambassador's Twitter handle

DOs and DON'Ts

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Read instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't wait until the last minute
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do your homework. Conduct research!	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't assume the reader knows your program or organization
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Think outside the box within the NOFO guidelines. Make sure your proposal is not outside the scope of the grant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't propose a program that is mostly designed for your organization's needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Justify your project and idea. Provide concrete information about project activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't exaggerate the budget
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proofread your proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't copy/paste proposals
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure your budget matches your proposal narrative	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't overlook project sustainability
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use boldface and italics to delineate section headings and make key terms stand out	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't forget to submit a budget and a budget narrative
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Propose to cost-share if possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't propose vague activities

DOs and DON'Ts (continued)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify who will be in charge of the project	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't propose only conferences and workshops
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider partnering with a bigger organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't include documents that are not required
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Indicate who are the target beneficiaries, but be careful not to exclude other important groups.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't allocate most of your funding to salaries and administrative costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Always include a project summary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't just list to attend an international conference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Contact the Grants Officer if you have general questions answered in the NOFO	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Don't hesitate to contact the Grants Officer if you have specific questions

[SAMPLE NOFO]

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. Embassy in Rwanda
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Office: Political-Economic Section

Funding Opportunity Title: Rwanda: Promoting the Dignity of Every Human Life

Announcement Type: Grant

Funding Opportunity No.: DOS-RWANDA-PE-2018-03

Date Opened: May 21, 2018

Deadline for Applications: July 9, 2018

Award Ceiling \$250,000

Award Floor: \$200,000

Page Limit: **12 pages**

CFDA Number: 19.700 – General Department of State Assistance

Submission: All applications **must be submitted electronically** via email

[SAMPLE] PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- The U.S. Embassy in Rwanda and the U.S. Department of State's Africa Bureau through the Africa Regional Democracy Fund (ARDF) announce an open competition for organizations to submit applications to advance the human rights and promote full inclusion of people with disabilities (PWDs) in Rwanda, **including people with disabilities in historically marginalized communities. The project will promote disability rights by: 1) strengthening disability organizations, 2) conducting public awareness campaigns, and 3) empowering PWDs through small grants.**

[SAMPLE] BACKGROUND

- Under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) assistance award solicitation, the Embassy is to provide a **one-time grant to a local or international nongovernmental organization** to advance disability rights in Rwanda. The proposed project is part of a USG-wide strategy to support the inclusion and dignity of every human life.
- Rwanda ratified the U.N. Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and Protocol in 2008. PWDs in Rwanda are protected under the constitution, national laws and policies, but in practice PWDs often remain marginalized and are prevented from fully participating in society. PWDs face discrimination and stigma, exacerbated by poverty and inadequate infrastructure. Only 25% of working age PWDs are labor force participants, compared with 54% for the entire working age population. Per the Government of Rwanda (GOR) 2012 Population and Housing Census, 446,453 people over the age of five were identified as PWDs (221,150 male and 225,303 female).

[SAMPLE] PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- **1. Build stronger disability rights organizations:** Strengthen the capacity of disability organizations with a series of “train the trainer” sessions, targeting, for example, members of the National Council of Persons with Disabilities (NCPD), the National Union of Disabilities Organizations of Rwanda (NUDOR), and other disability organizations that work with historically marginalized communities. To facilitate access to justice, the implementer will support NCPD, NUDOR, and historically marginalized organizations to train representatives from the private bar and legal professional associations, including paralegals, and District officials who are responsible for social affairs issues. The implementer will develop a comprehensive referral system to be used by district and sector officials, paralegals, One Stop Centers, hospitals, and schools. The implementer will connect Rwandan organizations with U.S.-based and regional organizations that have similar objectives or can provide technical assistance.
- **2. Raise public awareness of PWDs’ rights:** Conduct awareness campaigns on disability rights to sensitize families and community members and to support the other project objectives.
- **3. Empower people with disabilities:** Allocate 20-25% of the total grant amount to work with PWD cooperatives and/or local NGOs (through sub-grants) to promote livelihood activities and/or vocational training with the objective of expanding the inclusion of PWDs as contributing members of Rwandan society.

[SAMPLE]

PARTICIPANTS AND AUDIENCES

- Direct funding for NGOs is available under this announcement. Rwandan law requires **prior registration of a local or international organization** in order to implement programs or conduct any business in Rwanda. All applicants must provide a copy of the certificate of registration and license from the Rwanda Governance Board with the submission package.
- Direct funding for individuals, public international organizations, foreign governments, parastatal organizations, **educational institutions**, or U.S. Government departments and agencies is not available under this announcement.

[SAMPLE] FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

- **Length of performance period:** 18 to 24 months
- **Number of awards anticipated:** One award. The USG reserves the right to award more than one project under this announcement.
- **Total available funding:** Award may range from \$200,000 to \$250,000.
- **Type of Funding:** FY 2017 Africa Regional Democracy Fund under the Foreign Assistance Act.
- **Anticipated project start date:** October 1, 2018
- **Funding Instrument Type:** Grant
- **Project Performance Period:** Proposed project should be completed in 24 months or less.
- **This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

[SAMPLE]

APPLICATION & SUBMISSION INFO

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**; and
- All pages are numbered.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms:

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

2. Summary Page: Cover sheet stating the applicant name and organization, proposal date, project title, project period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the project.

ELEMENTS OF A GRANT PROPOSAL

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed project, including project objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the project, 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 project is needed.
- **Project Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the project is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Project Activities:** Describe the project activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the project is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- **Proposed Project Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the project 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 project. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this project?
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability:** Plan for continuing program beyond grant period, or 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.

THE GRANTS PROCESS

- Pre-Award
- Award
- Post-Award
- Close Out

PRE-AWARD

- Receiving, Reviewing and Decision on Grant Proposals
- Department policy requires full and open competition, with limited exceptions.
- NOFOs are advertised on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) with a 30 to 60 day application period. Awards that exceed this threshold and are not competed require a sole source justification. Awards to an individual do not need to be competed.

All applications should include:

- SF-424 (Organization/Individual), SF-424A; SF-424B
- Project narrative with background of organization, program goals & objectives, project activities, CV(s) for project manager(s) and/or speaker(s) and detailed budget in US\$ + budget narrative
- Copy of registration documents for NGOs
- DUNS/UEI # (for organizations) and SAM.gov registration confirmation (SAM.gov registration may require a longer period; applicants should be advised to allow sufficient time for a completion before applying for an award)

AWARD

1. GOR prepares the award and submits it.
2. Grants Officer signs the grant at latest on the day of the performance period start date. PAS coordinates closely with grantees on timing for programs and financing.
3. GOR sends the grant to the grantee. Grantee has 10 days to sign the grant.
4. GOR explains to grantee details of the award, and makes sure that grantee understands that "Department of State Terms and Conditions" are the rules which will govern the awarding of the grant.
5. Grantee returns signed grant and it added to the file.

POST-AWARD

Payments and Monitoring:

1. Kick-off meeting with the Grantee.
2. Initial payment processed to Grantee.
3. Grantee will be provided with reporting requirements, both program and financial.
4. Grants Officer and GOR share the responsibility for monitoring: Bank information, Reporting (2 page report) after each activity and these may include any media coverage, Requests for next tranche of funds.
5. Significant changes to an award must be authorized through an amendment issued by a Grants Officer, either a “cost” or a “no-cost” amendment.

CLOSE OUT

1. Grantee sends final report of activities (SF-425 Federal Financial Report Form and Program Progress Report) within the specified time, generally before 90 days.
2. Delinquent reports may result in suspended payments and potential termination of an award.
3. Embassy reviews report and assures that all funds were used by grantee as per the award budget; checks if the objectives of the program have been met, and requests additional information from the grantee if needed.
4. Request final payment of funds to the Grantee (if applicable). Grants Officer signs the Final Payment Request Memo.
5. Unspent funds returned to USG and/or take other measures according to internal procedures as necessary.
6. Grants Officer issues a closeout letter to the recipient after confirming completion.