

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
EMBASSY KIGALI
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

Funding Opportunity Title: Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund (ASSHF)

Funding Opportunity Number: DOS-RWANDA-PE-2021-02

Deadline for Applications: August 17, 2021

Assistance Listing Number: 19.220

Total Amount Available: Depending on the availability of funds

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

U.S. Embassy Kigali and the U.S. Department of State announce an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a program to support their local communities by 1) providing assistive services to people with disabilities, 2) improving access to clean water, or 3) strengthening income-generating activities by using innovative products (high-tech or low-tech) or adding value to products. Please follow all instructions below.

Program Objectives:

Background: The Ambassador's Special Self-Help (SSH) Program is a small grants program that seeks to sustainably reduce poverty and hunger in sub-Saharan Africa. These small community development efforts promote self-reliance through significant local contributions and sustainability requirements. Over the last nine years, the State Department has provided \$2 million each year to support SSH projects in 47 countries across the continent.

This year's ASSHF objectives are to:

- 1) Provide assistive services to people with disabilities
- 2) Increase access to clean water
- 3) Strengthen income-generating activities through innovative products (either high-tech or low-tech) or linking into value chains

Examples of possible activities within each of the above objectives include:

- 1) Provide assistive services to people with disabilities
 - Hire a sign language translator to help people with auditory impairments participate in town halls, meetings, or workshops
 - Purchase FM systems, loop systems, or infrared systems to assist people with hearing impairments at a shared location (e.g. a school)
 - Purchase text-to-speech software for a computer at a library
 - Note: Any items purchased to assist people with disabilities must be communal and cannot benefit individuals alone; please ensure your application explicitly explains how items will be shared (e.g. storage in a locked cabinet, a sign-up sheet, a rotating schedule, etc.)

2) Increase access to clean water

- Install a tap at a natural spring (to avoid water contamination)
- Install a water kiosk
- Install a rainwater catchment system at a shared location (e.g. a school, church, or mosque)
- Install a solar-powered pump at a borehole or water kiosk

3) Strengthen income-generating activities

- a. By using innovative products (either high-tech or low-tech)
 - Install solar-powered irrigation at a farming cooperative
 - Purchase equipment or tools for a cooperative's shared workshop (e.g. a cooperative of carpenters, auto mechanics, plumbers, or electricians)
- b. By adding value to products
 - Install solar mini-grids for washing stations for coffee beans
 - Purchase drying equipment or a grinder to transform maize into flour
 - Purchase equipment for baking, juice production, jam production, etc.

***** The above list of examples is not exhaustive. Creative and new ideas are welcome! *****

Applicants should budget for any anticipated costs associated with the proposed project for which the applicant seeks funding. Possible costs include equipment, materials, labor, installation costs, fees, necessary environmental assessments, etc. Funding restrictions are listed below in section D.5.

Participants and Audiences:

This grant opportunity is open only to cooperatives that are registered with the Rwanda Cooperative Agency or non-governmental organizations that are registered with the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB).

Projects must be led by members of the local community. Projects must benefit a large group of people rather than only a few individuals. For example, a rainwater catchment system at a school is eligible, while one at a home is not.

Organizations comprised of and supporting people with disabilities are encouraged to apply.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: 12 months

Number of awards anticipated: Approximately 5-6 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: Awards may range from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$15,000

Total available funding: Depending on the availability of funds

Type of Funding: FY20/21 Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act

Anticipated program start date: September 30, 2021

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

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

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- Cooperatives that are registered with the Rwanda Cooperative Agency
- Nongovernmental organizations that are registered with the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB)

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing or matching is not required and will not be evaluated during the merit review. However, projects must be organized and led by the community, and the community must contribute to the project via funds, sweat equity (labor), or volunteered time.

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) and a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

***** Please Note:** Organizations may be exempted from the DUNS and www.SAM.gov requirements if the grantor deems it to be impractical for the applicant to comply with the requirements. This is determined on a case-by-case basis. If it is impractical for your organization to meet the DUNS and www.SAM.gov requirements, please email KigaliASGP@state.gov and request that the requirements be waived. ***

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Required application forms, listed below, are available at:
<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html>.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement may be found 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
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- **SF-424** (*Application for Federal Assistance – organizations*) at grants.gov
- **SF-424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*) at grants.gov
- **SF-424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*) at grants.gov (*note: the SF-424B is only required for organizations not registered in SAM.gov*)

2. Summary Page: 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 (5 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 or Individual Applying:** 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. 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. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- **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 devoted to supporting 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 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:** 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:

- Proof of registration with the Rwanda Cooperative Agency or Rwanda Governance Board
- 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:

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 must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

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

***** Please Note:** Organizations may be exempted from the DUNS, NCAGE and SAM.gov requirements if the grantor deems it to be impractical for the applicant to comply with the requirements. This is determined on a case-by-case basis. If it is impractical for your organization to meet the DUNS, NCAGE, and/or www.SAM.gov requirements, please email KigaliASGP@state.gov and request that the requirements be waived. ***

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%20NCA%20GE.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.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than August 17, 2021

5. Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for any of the following purposes:

- To pay Rwandan taxes
- To construct a building
- For religious organizations to conduct religious activities
- For military activities
- For activities relating to police, prisons, or other law enforcement
- For toxic or otherwise unsafe products such as pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, or hazardous chemicals
- For revolving loans
- For seed money for new enterprises

6. Other Submission Requirements

Applications may be submitted electronically through www.Grants.gov, or by email to

KigaliASGP@state.gov.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 20 points: The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

Monitoring and evaluation plan – 15 points: Applicant demonstrates it is 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.

Budget – 10 points: 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.

Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points: 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.

Support of Equity and Underserved Communities – 10 points: Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program will support and advance equity and engage underserved communities in program administration, design, and implementation.

Sustainability – 10 points: Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

2. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

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: Request for payment will be submitted through a SF-270. Payments shall be disbursed via electronic fund transfer (EFT) upon receipt of a signed SF-270 form and required reporting.

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:

- [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).

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. These will be due approximately quarterly. The financial reports will be using form SF-425, available on grants.gov, and the programmatic reports will be a brief narrative on the project's successes, challenges, and next steps. 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: KigaliASGP@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, that has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and that 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 that are directly associated with the program but do not fit in the other categories. For example, list 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 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.