

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY BRATISLAVA, PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)**

Funding Opportunity Title: U.S. Embassy Bratislava PAS Annual Program Statement
Funding Opportunity Number: PAS-SVK-FY2023-01
CFDA Number – Name: 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs
Deadlines for Applications: Applications are received, and possibly also evaluated, on a “rolling” basis. Indicative intermediate deadlines:
January 31, 2023; June 15, 2023

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy Bratislava Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Department of State is pleased to announce that funding is available through its Public Diplomacy Small Grants Program. This is an Annual Program Statement, outlining our funding priorities, the strategic themes we focus on, and the procedures for submitting requests for funding. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Purpose of Small Grants Program: PAS Bratislava invites proposals for programs that **strengthen societal and cultural ties between the U.S. and Slovakia** through programming that highlights shared values and promotes bilateral cooperation. All programs should include an American cultural element, or connection with American expert/s, organization/s, or institution/s in a specific field that will promote increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives. **Project proposals should have an intrinsic public diplomacy objective in support of the Priority Program Areas listed below.**

Priority Program Areas:

- Supporting Slovakia’s transatlantic orientation by addressing hybrid threats, including disinformation and cyber security.
- Supporting Slovakia’s capacity to uphold rule of law anti-corruption efforts and increased transparency.
- Strengthening independent media and journalism and helping to foster critical thinking.
- Promoting economic prosperity, energy security, and entrepreneurship through partnership with the U.S., including innovative approaches to technology.
- Contributing to Slovakia’s efforts to support human rights and foster a culture of tolerance and inclusion of minorities.
- Encouraging women’s empowerment.
- Promoting cross-cultural understanding and supporting highly specialized English language learning in Slovakia.

Special Note 1: Celebrating 30 years of US – SK bilateral diplomatic relations

PAS Bratislava invites applicants to submit proposals for programs that highlight US – SK relations in the context of the 30th anniversary of bilateral diplomatic relations to be implemented in 2023.

Special Note 2: American Spaces Programing

PAS Bratislava invites applicants to submit proposals for programs be located at American centers in Banska Bystrica and Kosice (<https://www.americanspaces.sk/>).

Preferred, but not exclusive, audiences are educators as well as students. The centers can assist in disseminating information and attracting audiences. The Embassy prefers sustainable longer-term programming over one-off events.

Technical Equipment of the American Spaces:

1. American Center Banska Bystrica, State Scientific Library, Lazovna 9

Projector, screen, WI-FI coverage, 10 laptops (HP, Intel Core i5, Windows 10, Open Office), Maker Bot Replicator 3-D printer, printing material, 10 BBC Micro:bit sets, Evo Classroom ozobot kit (12 bots), VR Headset Oculus Quest 2

2. American Center Kosice, State Scientific Library, Hlavna 10

Projector, screen, WI-FI coverage, 10 laptops (HP, Intel Core i5, Windows 10, Open Office), Maker Bot Replicator 3-D printer, printing material, 10 BBC Micro:bit sets, Evo Classroom ozobot kit (12 bots), Lego Mindstorms Ev3, 3 core sets + 3 extension sets

We recommend consulting the Embassy before submitting a grant application for an American Space Program via Bratislava_GrantsSlovakia@state.gov.

Participants and Audiences:

We seek proposals for geographically and demographically diverse audiences within Slovakia.

The following types of programs are not eligible for funding:

- Programs relating to partisan political activity;
- Charitable or development activities without Public Diplomacy relevance
- Construction programs;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or programs;
- Scientific research;
- Programs that duplicate existing programs.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: generally, up to 12 months, but no more than 24 months from the proposed project start date. The proposed project start date must be reasonably close to the submission date of the application (generally within 6 months).

Number of awards anticipated: 30 awards (dependent on amounts)

Award amounts: awards may range from a minimum of \$1,000.00 to a maximum of \$24,999.00. However, in exceptional cases and upon prior consent of PAS, awards up to USD 150,000.00 might be considered.

Total available funding for US fiscal year 2023: approx. \$400,000.00

Type of Funding: Fiscal Year 2023 Public Diplomacy Funding (Smith-Mundt Act)

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Fixed Amount Award, Grant, or Cooperative Agreement.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The Public Affairs Section encourages applications from U.S. and Slovakia (exceptionally, if justified, also from third countries with a clear link to the U.S. and/or Slovakia):

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations.
- Individuals.
- Non-profit or governmental educational or cultural institutions.
- Governmental institutions

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

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

Cost sharing is not required.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

(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. Application Package

Application forms required below are available at <https://sk.usembassy.gov/education-culture/public-affairs-section-grant-opportunities/small-grants-program/>.

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;
- All pages are numbered;
- All documents are formatted to A4 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are preferably single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The following documents are **required**:

I. Mandatory application forms

- **SF-424** (*Application for Federal Assistance – organizations*) or **SF-424-I** (*Application for Federal Assistance --individuals*)
- **SF424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)
- **SF424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*) Mandatory for all entities, unless the organization has certified electronically when registering in SAM.gov..

II. Small Grants Program Application (8 pages maximum; optional template

available): The Application should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. 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. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and Slovakia 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:** 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), describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

III. Attachments - optional:

- E.g. 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
- E.g. Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner
- Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

3. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations:

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

- NCAGE/CAGE code
- www.SAM.gov registration which will generate a UEI

Any applicant with an exclusion 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.”

The Unique Entity Identifier (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. SAM.gov is the Federal government's primary database for complying with FFATA reporting requirements. OMB designated SAM.gov as the central repository to facilitate applicant and recipient use of a single public website that consolidates data on all federal financial assistance. Under the law, it is mandatory to register in SAM.gov.

Starting April 2022, the UEI will be assigned when an organization registers or renews its registration in SAM.gov at www.SAM.gov. To access SAM.gov an organization is required to have a Login.gov account. Organization can create an account at <https://login.gov/>. As a reminder, organizations need to renew its sam.gov registration annually.

Foreign-based organizations: Must apply for a NCAGE code before registering in SAM.gov. Go to: <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/CageTool/home> to apply for a NCAGE code. NCAGE codes must be renewed every 5 years.

US-based organizations: A CAGE code will be automatically assigned when the U.S. organizations registers in www.sam.gov. CAGE must be renewed every 5 years. Site for CAGE: <https://cage.dla.mil/Home/UsageAgree>. Grantees may be asked for more information to finalized and must comply.

It is in the organization's best interest to check if their CAGE/or NCAGE codes are active. Organizations are required to register/or renew their CAGE or NCAGE codes **prior** to registering or renewing www.sam.gov. Both registration and renewals for both CAGE and NCAGE can take up to 10 days. Organization's legal address in NCAGE/CAGE must mirror exactly www.sam.gov.

www.sam.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure it has an active registration in SAM.gov.

If an organization plans to issue a sub-contract or sub-award, those sub-awardees must also have a unique entity identifier (UEI number). Those entities can register for a UEI only at SAM.gov.

Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required.

If you have questions concerning the sam.gov registration or the UEI transition, please visit www.fsd.gov.

4. Submission Dates and Times

The Public Affairs Section will accept proposals throughout the year and will review proposals on a rolling basis, as well as according to the following indicative schedule:

- Proposals received by January 31, 2023, will be reviewed by February 28, 2023, with responses going out by March 15, 2023.
- Proposals received between February 1, 2023, and June 15, 2023, will be reviewed by July 31, 2023, with responses going out by August 15, 2023.

Applications submitted after the **June 15, 2023 deadline** but before August 31, 2023 might also be considered within this NOFO.

5. Funding Restrictions

Award funds cannot be used for construction, vehicle purchases and similar investment costs. Also, award funds cannot be used to finance the standard operation of the applicant.

6. Other Submission Requirements

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

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

US Component: The program has a clear connection to US persons, institutions, ideas/values.

Public Diplomacy objective: To what extent does the program contribute to the strengthening of societal and cultural ties between the U.S. and Slovakia.

Organizational capacity and record on previous grants: 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 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 clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

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.

Originality: The program includes an innovative, unique or otherwise positively outstanding element.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants 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: Payments will be made in at least two installments, as needed to carry out the program activities (generally 80% advance; 20% reimbursement).

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

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, Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at: <https://www.state.gov>.

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 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 PAS at: Bratislava_GrantsSlovakia@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.