



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY BAMAKO
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**



Funding Opportunity Title: Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Program – Annual Program Statement
Deadline for Applications: August 17, 2020
Type of Funding: Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act
Maximum for Each Award: \$10,000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy in Bamako, Mali, announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out projects through the Ambassador’s Special Self-Help (SSH) Small Grants Program. Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Purpose of Small Grants

The Ambassador’s Special Self-Help (SSH) Program is a grassroots grant assistance program that allows U.S. embassies to support local requests for small community-based development projects. The purpose of the SSH Program is to support communities through modest grants that will have a positive impact on local communities. Equally important, the SSH Program is structured to encourage communities to be self-reliant and undertake similar community development activities in the future.

To be eligible for funding, your project must meet the following criteria:

1. The project should help improve basic economic or social conditions at the local community or village level and have long-term value.
2. The project should be high impact, benefiting the greatest number of people possible.
3. Substantial community participation in the activity is required. Contributions may include labor, materials (such as bricks, sand, gravel, or seeds), land, buildings, or money to ensure the success of the project.
4. Funding is limited to one project per organization. Projects must be completed in 12 months or less.
5. Projects must be self-sustaining upon completion. The U.S. Embassy’s support for the project must be a one-time-only/one-grant contribution.
6. Projects must be within the community’s ability to maintain and operate. Requests for large-scale agriculture or construction projects, or for expensive equipment, are not considered priority projects.
7. Managers of a project should have evidence that they are financially responsible and will be able to account for funds sent to them. Having a bank account, or establishing credit with vendors, are examples of such evidence.
8. The requested amount for implementing activities cannot exceed \$10,000. Project budgets generally range from \$5,000 to \$10,000.

All citizens of Mali representing a civilian, religious, social, community development, special interest, disability, or advocacy group or organization may request funding for a community activity. Organizations must be registered with the proper authorities and must be able to demonstrate that they have adequate internal controls and financial monitoring procedures in place.

Successful applicants should demonstrate strong ties to and support from their local community and local authorities.

Each year, the Political and Economic Section receives more proposals than it can fund. Careful preparation of the application will give your organization the best chance to qualify for funding.

Organizations selected for SSH funding will have to provide ongoing project reports. U.S. Embassy staff may also make periodic visits to the project site.

Recipient organizations must demonstrate their substantial commitment by either contributing to the project financially or providing labor or supplies (in-kind contribution) to carry out the project.

Proposed projects must be well planned and ready to be implemented and must be easily self-sustaining when the grant is completed.

Organizations must obtain approval from community leaders before submission of the proposal to the U.S. Embassy. Community leaders may include local municipal leaders, religious leaders, tribal or clan leaders, or any governing body that has oversight over where the project will be implemented.

Participants and Audiences

All applicants must be registered Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs) and have been in operation for at least one year to be eligible for funding. Proposals are welcome from community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, and non-governmental organizations that work directly with communities.

Limits/Exclusions from Eligibility

The Self-Help Program may only pay for items and technical assistance that are essential for the completion of the project. The Self-Help Program cannot be used for administrative costs, salaries, costs associated with the project manager, travel to and from the Embassy, or items that are not permanent in nature. Costs incurred prior to the actual award of a grant will be reimbursed only by pre-approval of the grants officer at the sole discretion of the Embassy.

Additionally, the Special Self-Help Program does not fund:

- Requests to buy equipment like vehicles, office equipment, copiers, stereos, etc.
- Proposals that have a purely police, military, partisan/political, or cultural emphasis.
- Religious projects, unless they genuinely assist the whole community without regard to religious affiliation.
- Projects that duplicate existing efforts.

- Personal or private businesses.
- Scientific research.
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization.
- Scholarships, donations, or honorariums.
- Staff salaries, stipends, or supervision costs for the supervising organization.
- Payment for pesticides, herbicides, labor, salaries, operating costs, printing material, fuel, or land.
- Remodeling or renovation of an existing facility that is in disrepair as a result of neglect or lack of money.
- Office supplies such as pencils, paper, forms, and folders.
- Purchase of alcohol, medicine, school uniforms, school fees, bursaries, food and food parcels, or personal expenses.
- Projects that are partially funded by another donor or from the government of your country. Funds cannot be commingled with funds from other donors, international organizations, or other U.S. government programs.
- Projects that focus on refugees or displaced persons. There are specific U.S. bilateral or multilateral assistance programs designed to address the needs of these populations.
- Previously owned equipment, luxury goods, or gambling equipment.

Please note: We encourage you to contact the U.S. Embassy with questions as you develop your proposal, as applications that include ineligible items may be disqualified.

Elements of Successful Projects

- The project is initiated by the community.
- The project plan contains pre-established long-term goals and a coherent plan to keep the project running in the future.
- A capable project manager who is a long-term resident of the community is responsible for the project.
- The project is assisted by a non-biased umbrella organization, such as a religious mission or a local NGO that provides guidance and arbitration on issues when necessary.
- There is strong coordination and communication amongst the grant-recipient group, local leaders, and local government representatives.
- The project makes use of materials and supplies that can be maintained by the community, and the use of materials that will not harm the environment.

Authorizing legislation, type and year of funding

Funding authority rests in Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act, U.S. Department of State.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: Up to one (1) year

Number of awards anticipated: Five (5) awards (dependent on grant amounts)

Award amounts: Awards may range from a minimum of \$5,000 to a maximum of \$10,000

Anticipated project start date: October 1, 2020

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant

Program Performance Period: 12 months or less

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The Ambassador's Special Self Help Program will only accept proposals from:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations, including civil society/non-governmental organizations.
- Established, registered grass-roots community-based organizations and faith-based organizations.

For-profit commercial entities and individuals are not eligible to apply.

2. Cost Sharing/Matching and Community Involvement

Local involvement of the organization or group must be at least 10% in cash or in kind of the total project costs. The personal contribution of funding may be crucial to make a choice between two viable applicants. The local contributions can be in cash or in kind. In-kind contributions may include labor (e.g., wages of masons and workers), food, accommodation for qualified labor, construction materials, fencing, water supply, transportation costs, or donations of other materials.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding. If you submitted an unsolicited application prior to the publication of this Notice of Funding Opportunity, you must re-submit your application in order to be considered for funding.

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (<http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/pages/CCRSearch.jsp>); NCAGE/CAGE code from (<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>); as well as an active registration in www.SAM.gov. Please see **Section D.3** for information on how to obtain these registrations.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application forms required 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 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 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*)
- **SF424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)
- **SF424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*)

2. Summary Coversheet: 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 (5 pages maximum): The proposal should contain sufficient information such 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 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:** Goals describe what the program is intended to achieve. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and Mali will be improved? 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 goals.

- **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.
- **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.

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:

- Official permission letters, if required for program activities
- A list of Committee/Board members with their names, positions, addresses, and phone numbers
- A copy of your organization registration with the proper authorities
- Curriculum vitae (CV) of project manager(s)
- A list of all people working in the organization (including all staff and volunteers) with names, positions and starting dates
- Copies of your most recent bank statements for every account held by your organization
- A copy of the most recent audited financial statement (if applicable)
- A stamp of approval from a local authority

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

All organizations applying for grants must obtain these registrations before sending in their applications. All are free of charge:

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

Step 1:

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 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: Apply for a DUNS number. Make sure the addresses used are the same as in NCAGE registration to link your organization in the two systems.

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/displayHomePage.do;jsessionid=81407B1F03F2BDB123DD47D19158B75F>

Step 3: After receiving the NCAGE Code and DUNS number, proceed to register in SAM by logging onto: www.sam.gov (please use the Chrome browser). Start by creating an individual account, log in, and then proceed to register your entity. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

The U.S. Embassy will verify your SAM.gov registration status before accepting your application.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications for fiscal year 2020 may be submitted for consideration at any time before the closing date of August 17, 2020. Applications received by the U.S. Embassy after the closing date will not be considered.

5. Funding Restrictions

Any costs incurred in preparation of your proposal or in advance of an award will not be reimbursed.

6. Other Submission Requirements

Complete proposals can be emailed to:
BamakoEcon@state.gov

Mailed to:
U.S. Embassy, Political and Economic Section, P.O. Box 39, Bamako

Hand delivered to:
U.S. Embassy, Bamako Mailbox, Bamako, ATTN: Self-Help Grants Coordinator

Once proposals are received, the Political and Economic Section will acknowledge receipt through an email. All applicants will be notified of the status of their proposals after the review process is completed.

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 experience, capacity, and record on previous grants:** The organization has experience and expertise in its stated field and the Political and Economic Section is confident of its ability to undertake the proposed project. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.
- **Quality and feasibility of the proposal:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how project activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable and realistic implementation timeline.
- **Goals and objectives:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.
- **Program Impact:** Applicant has clearly described how stated activities will contribute to the socio-economic development of the community. The number of people to benefit will be considered when determining if a project can be funded.
- **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 provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The project includes output and outcome indicators, and shows how and when those will be measured.
- **Sustainability:** Project activities will continue to have a positive impact after the end of the project.

2. Review and Selection Process

The Political and Economic Section will conduct a preliminary review of all applications to determine completeness. If the proposal does not meet the funding guidelines, the applicant will be informed. If the proposal meets the criteria, the Grants Coordinator will follow up with the applicant to discuss the proposal and review the organization's capacity. All projects eligible for funding are then reviewed by the U.S. Embassy Small Grants Committee, which will evaluate all eligible/complete applications and recommend funding priorities to the Ambassador for final approval. The Political and Economic Section will notify each applicant about the status of his/her proposal.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The Grant agreements will be written, signed, and awarded by the Grants Officer and administered by the Grants Officer or his/her Representative. The Grant agreement is the authorizing document and will be provided to the recipient for review by email before being

invited to sign. The recipient may only start incurring project 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 by electronic funds transfer in at least one advance, as needed to carry out the project activities and based on agreed milestones.

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.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial 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 Political and Economic Section at: BamakoEcon@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 will 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, devices, that are needed for the project. 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 project 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 monetary 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.