

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS UNIT  
Notice of Funding Opportunity**

**Funding Opportunity Title:** Social Media Conference to Support the Development of Palestinian E-Commerce

**Funding Opportunity Number:** PAUPDFY20004

**Deadline for Applications:** Extended to March 22, 2020

**CFDA Number:** 19.021

**Total Amount Available:** \$40,000

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The Public Affairs Section of the Palestinian Affairs Unit announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a conference on social media marketing for e-commerce in spring 2020 through this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Please carefully follow all instructions below.

**Priority Region:** Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza

**Program Objectives:** Organizations are invited to submit proposals to organize and execute a day-long conference in the West Bank featuring expert speakers, including Americans, and presentations addressing the use of social media to grow e-commerce among Palestinians. The conference will discuss how digital media can help Palestinians working in the field of e-commerce gain knowledge, provide an introduction to the tools they need to scale their businesses using digital tools, and build key contacts to further develop and scale their businesses. This could include discussions of effective e-marketing, digital branding, search engine optimization, e-payment options, data security, and more. The conference will target Palestinian audiences with some knowledge of e-commerce, keeping in mind current local conditions and available infrastructure.

U.S. companies have found that social media platforms have offered an invaluable resource for marketers to drive sales online and in-store by reaching the right audiences through targeted advertising. Social media platforms also offer a more direct way of communicating with potential customers than any other advertising channel, making it easy to engage in two-way conversations with users who are interested in learning more about your products. The experiences of U.S. companies can provide valuable insight for Palestinian e-commerce and social media practitioners.

A successful conference should result in any or all of the following: participants increasing their use of the kinds of e-commerce and social media tools and practices presented in the conference; participants reporting positive business results due to the knowledge they gained at the conference; an increased interest among participants in continuing to explore new ways to grow their businesses through e-commerce; continued contact between the American and other expert

speakers and the Palestinian participants in a mentoring, advising, or other constructive relationship.

Successful grantees will have a strong network of contacts in the American and Palestinian digital media communities and will conduct a needs assessment prior to the conference to ensure that the topics discussed by speakers and panelists address current and specific needs in the Palestinian e-commerce community.

Successful proposals should incorporate the following elements:

1. The proposal should be designed to address specific knowledge gaps among current and future Palestinian e-commerce professionals. To do this, the proposal should include a needs assessment phase to identify key themes to address during the conference. These can include, but are not limited to, e-commerce, marketing, online payment systems, and data security.
2. The proposal should include an overview of the social media conference, including likely speakers and panelists, as well as public and private-sector partners the grantee plans to work with. Some of the speakers and panelists should be Americans from well-known U.S. social media and/or e-commerce companies.
3. The proposal should include an overview of logistical needs to be addressed by the organization, including type of venue, food and beverage, technology/equipment, and transportation.
4. The proposal should contain clearly stated, measurable goals and objectives and specific indicators of success along with a plan for measuring those indicators to evaluate the project's success in achieving its goals and objectives.

**Participants and Audiences:** Primary participants in the social media conference will be Palestinian professionals working in e-commerce, digital marketing, and/or social media. Attendees will come from Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza. If visiting speakers are non-Arabic speakers, the awardee will ensure interpretation/translation is available for audiences who only speak Arabic. The proposal should ensure that attendees represent a broad range of Palestinians from a diverse geographic area who work in independent and small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).

## **B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

- Length of performance period: 6 months
- Number of awards anticipated: One award
- Total available funding: Award will be capped at a maximum of \$40,000. Although all requests will be considered, only one proposal will be funded.

- Type of Funding: FY19 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds
- Anticipated program start date: April 2020
- Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement
- Program Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 6 months or less, noting that the first 1 month will be dedicated to a needs assessment and the last 2-3 months dedicated to short and medium-term measurement and evaluation of project success to measure indicators and determine if leading goals and objectives have been met.

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

### **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

Applicants wishing to submit proposals to the Public Affairs Section should send a proposal detailing:

1. What they intend to do to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in this call for proposals;
2. The organizations or entities with whom they plan to partner;
3. A budget narrative providing specific details on how the budget line-items will be used and what they will cover [applicants may elect to charge a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct costs (MTDC) which may be used indefinitely];
4. A clear monitoring, measurement and evaluation plan, stating specific and measurable indicators of success and methods for measuring those indicators.
5. Applicants should also complete the required application forms and budget templates of the proposed project.

**Please submit documents via e-mail to [JerusalemPDJApplications@state.gov](mailto:JerusalemPDJApplications@state.gov) with “Social Media Conference to Support the Development of Palestinian E-Commerce” in the subject line.**

Modified total direct costs (MTDC) means all direct salaries and wages, applicable fringe benefits, materials and supplies, services, travel, and up to the first \$25,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award). MTDC excludes equipment, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, rental costs, tuition remission, scholarships and fellowships, participant support costs and the portion of each subaward in excess of \$25,000. Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

Proposals **must be submitted in English**; proposals submitted in Arabic will not be considered.

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- U.S. or foreign not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- U.S. or foreign public and private educational institutions

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), as well as a valid registration on [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov).

## **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Application forms required below are available at [il.usembassy.gov](http://il.usembassy.gov) and [grants.gov](http://grants.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.

### **Content of Application**

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity and contains clear and measurable indicators of success along with a clear plan for measuring and evaluating whether or not those indicators have been met.
- The proposal contains a clear budget and budget narrative detailing how the budget proposal supports the proposed activities and goals/objectives of the project
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered

The following documents are **required**:

#### **1. Mandatory application forms**

- **SF-424** (*Application for Federal Assistance – organizations*) at [grants.gov](http://grants.gov)
- **SF424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*) at [grants.gov](http://grants.gov)
- **SF424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*) at [grants.gov](http://grants.gov)

**2. Summary Page:** 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 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:** 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, including measurement and evaluation. 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 time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner and in accordance with the substantive goals of the grant; and how will indicators be measured and the program evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?

**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. Please find attached two sample templates (budget and budget narrative) that may be used to assist applicants in provision of budget information. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

**5. Attachments (in addition to the 5 page limit):**

- 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 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

**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](http://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](mailto: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.

## **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:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.

- **Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants:** 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.
- **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and in accordance with those outlined in this NOFO for this project; 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 can measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program demonstrates how output and outcome indicators will be measured.
- **Sustainability:** Program activities will continue to have a positive impact after the end of the program.

2. **Review and Selection Process:** A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

### 3. **Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIS)**

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 FAPIS) (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**

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 two or more installments, as needed to carry out the conference activities.

**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/>.

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to provide U.S. Embassy Jerusalem with regular financial and progress reporting. The Federal Financial Report (FFR or SF-425) is the required form for the financial reports. The progress reports must include page one (signed and completed) of the SF-PPR (Performance and Progress Report) and a narrative attachment to the SF-PPR. Narrative progress reporting should show the project's impact on the overarching objectives and should be compiled according to objectives, outcomes, and outputs and outlined in the award's Scope of Work (SOW) and in the Monitoring and Evaluation plan. Where relevant, the progress reports should include the following sections:

- (1) Relevant contextual information (limited);
- (2) Explanation and evaluation of significant activities of the reporting period and how the activities reflect progress toward achieving objectives;
- (3) When possible, any tangible or success stories from the conference;
- (4) Relevant supporting documentation of the conference activities including agendas, surveys, photos, and/or videos;
- (5) Reasons why established goals were not met.

## **G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: [JerusalemPDJApplications@state.gov](mailto:JerusalemPDJApplications@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: This 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.