

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

Funding Opportunity Title: Sustainable U.S.-Palestinian Higher Education Partnerships

Funding Opportunity Number: PAUPDFY20006

Deadline for Applications: August 10, 2020

CFDA Number: 19.021

Total Amount Available: \$200,000 with the potential to scale up to \$250,000

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Public Diplomacy Section of the Palestinian Affairs Unit (PAU-PD) of the U.S. Department of State invites U.S. Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), U.S. Not-for-Profit Organizations, and Palestinian universities to submit proposals to jointly design and implement a project that will further internationalize their institutions and better prepare students to become globally empowered citizens while also advancing the PAU-PD mission to advance peace and the development of a prosperous, stable, and transparent Palestinian society, economy and system of governance through substantive engagement with American people, institutions, ideas and ideals in order to improve American-Palestinian relations and create greater opportunities for mutually beneficial partnership and cooperation. This project should advance the PAU-PD objective to support elements of Palestinian civil society working to strengthen their communities in line with American values.

Both institutions should work together to scope out areas of collaboration, identify opportunities, and engineer a model of internationalization in higher education that will contribute to achieving the institutions' objectives and deliver multidisciplinary, intercultural programs to students. Preference will be given to projects that set up long-term, mutually beneficial partnerships.

A partnership agreement should be put in place to guide and coordinate the efforts of both institutions. Partnerships between U.S. HEIs and Palestinian universities are of paramount importance as they offer the benefits of internalization to both institutions; leverage resources and develop the capacity of partners; and build trust and promote mutual understanding among students, faculty and administration. The proposal should map out a scope of work that may include, but is not limited to, the following activities: online learning; joint research activities; degree and non-degree programs; staff and student mobility; curriculum development or enhancement; as well as on-campus and virtual activities. The aim of these activities is to increase the local and global connectedness of Palestinian faculty and students and to develop students' "21st century skills" which include critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and creativity.

Priority Region: Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza

Program Objectives:

All proposed projects must aim to advance the PAU-PD mission goals stated above, a partnership between American and Palestinian institutions, and achieve at least one of the following specific objectives:

- 1- Internationalization: Supports Palestinian universities' global and regional integration and prepares students to become globally-empowered citizens.
- 2- Relationships: Reinvigorates or builds upon existing partnerships or brings a new U.S. university or education sector partner to the Palestinian higher education landscape. The partnership agreement should delineate a well-defined purpose and objectives that align with the objectives of the respective institutions. Given the unique conditions of the global pandemic, it is not required that such partnership agreement be finalized at the time of proposal submission but a letter of intent from each institution to complete such an agreement should be included if a full agreement is not.
- 3- Sustainability: the proposal should clearly demonstrate how both institutions will successfully sustain the relationship after the end of the U.S. government-funded award and how this partnership will be embedded within the institutional framework of both organizations.

Successful proposals should incorporate the following elements:

1. The proposal should establish a partnership and joint activities that support the development of a substantive and long-term linkage between the cooperating American and Palestinian educational institutions to encourage collaboration; engagement at the administrative and faculty level (and student level as appropriate); and the sharing of knowledge and expertise.
2. The proposal should explain the importance of the area of collaboration for both higher education institutions and how it aligns with their priorities; provide details about the proposed internationalization model and how it will operate; and clearly show how the expected results will help the partnering organizations achieve their objectives.
3. 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.
4. While there are no requirements about specific subject matter/fields of collaboration, the PAU hopes to fund a partnership with this award that is not purely focused on English language capacity building, since the U.S. government has many other resources supporting this field. We understand and expect that English language will be a critical and necessary element of most partnership proposals. Yet, the goal of this call for proposals is to focus on other subjects and fields.

Participants and Audiences:

Primary participants in the engagement will be academic faculty and administrators at the Palestinian and American higher education institutions. Students at the institutions should also participate in and benefit from the project as appropriate.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Length of performance period: Up to 3 years

Number of awards anticipated: Up to 2 awards

Total available funding: Award will be capped at a maximum of \$200,000. Although all requests will be considered, proposals will only be funded up to this amount.

Type of Funding: FY20 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

Anticipated program start date: September 30, 2020

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Funding Instrument Type: Grant agreement

Program Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 36 months or less, noting that at least the last 6 months and up to 12 months of the period of performance -- after the end of the substantive project activity -- should be 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.

The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under this award beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

Eligible primary applicants for grant funding *must* be U.S. Not-For-Profit Higher Education Institutions, U.S. Not-For Profit Organizations that develop and manage higher education programs, and/or Palestinian Not-For-Profit Universities.

Proposals must be submitted in English; proposals submitted in Arabic or other languages will not be considered.

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

1. what they intend to do to achieve the goals and objectives outlined in this call for proposals (specific activities of the project);
2. the American and/or Palestinian institutions and 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 fund. [Note that 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, observable, and measurable indicators of success and the intended method(s) for measuring achievement of those indicators.

Applicants should also complete the required application forms and budget templates of the proposed project (See part D.2. on page 6). **Please submit documents via e-mail to JerusalemPDJApplications@state.gov with “PAUPDFY20006 - Sustainable U.S.-Palestinian Higher Education Partnerships – application from [name of your organization]” 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 sub-award (regardless of the period of performance of the sub-awards 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 sub-award 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.

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligible primary applicants for grant funding *must* be U.S Not-For-Profit Higher Education Institutions, U.S Not-For Profit Organizations that develop and manage higher education programs and/or Palestinian Not-For-Profit Universities.

2. 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), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations. Individuals are not required to have a unique entity identifier or be registered in SAM.gov.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

The required application forms for this Notice of Funding Opportunity are available on the U.S. Embassy Jerusalem Palestinian Affairs Unit [webpage](#) and on [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). Please note the **optional** templates (Project Proposal template; Detailed Budget Spreadsheet template; and Budget Narrative template) [also available here](#). Applicants may choose to use these optional templates if they do not have their own standard proposal format.

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 and contains a clear and specific set of activities designed to achieve those goals and objectives, and clear and measurable indicators of success, along with a clear plan for measuring and evaluating those indicators to determine if the targets set for achieving objectives have been met. Indicators should be linked to program activities and must have an identified data source (see Implementation plan, sections A, C, and E below).
- 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 (Available on <https://www.grants.gov/forms/sf-424-family.html>)

- **SF-424** (*Application for Federal Assistance – organizations*)
- **SF-424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*)
- **SF-424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*)

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: The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use either the optional [Project Proposal template here](#), or your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that briefly outlines the proposed program, including its goals and objectives, the nature of the activities to be implemented, and the anticipated outcomes and 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. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and how the proposed program will address the problem
- **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. The objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-bound). Defining meaningful objectives aligned to the goal of the project and the goals stated in this NOFO is more important than the number of objectives. (Also see section A for the goals and objective of this NOFO).
- **Program Activities:** Describe the specific activities to be conducted to advance the goals and objectives of this proposal and explain how they will help achieve the stated objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. This section should clearly demonstrate how project activities directly relate to the objectives and goals of the proposal and as stated in the Program Description (section A). 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 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:** The monitoring and evaluation plan is a systematic approach or process for monitoring project performance toward its objectives over time. A strong M&E plan will include the following components:
 - a) **Implementation Plan:** A schedule of when grant activities and major milestones will occur (such as participant selection, travel, trainings, etc.), and when the grantee will check the grant’s progress to know how it is performing. This description should

include all project components as described in the Program Methods and Design section.

b) Indicators: Applicants should describe how success will be measured, and should propose specific performance indicators – both outputs and outcomes – that can be used to track progress and determine the program’s impact. An **output** is a quantitative summary of an activity, such as the number of workshops held, attendees at an event, or hours of training, etc. An **outcome** is the change that is expected as a result of an activity and can be either qualitative or quantitative. Outcomes could include a change in awareness, and attitudes; new actions taken or partnerships formed; increased knowledge or skills of beneficiaries or organizational capacity; etc. **Outcomes are more important than outputs** and a successful program will be focused on measuring indicators to determine outcomes. Applicants should include baselines and targets when developing indicators in order to assess the level of change resulting from program activities.

c) Data Collection Methods: Proposals should outline how the grantee will collect data using tools (e.g. surveys, assessments, focus groups, sign-in sheets), whether data can be disaggregated (e.g. gender, age, geography), and how often data will be collected. The applicant should describe any M&E processes and tools to be used, including key personnel, management structure (where M&E fits into the overall program’s staff structure), and technology; and the brief budget narrative should include and explain any line item expenditures for M&E listed in the program’s budget.

- **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 form, use either the [optional Detailed Budget Spreadsheet template and the optional Budget Narrative template](#) or a separate document to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

5. Attachments :

- 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
- Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

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 (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 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@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 close of business August 10, 2020.

5. Funding Restrictions

The following types of projects are not eligible for funding:

- Projects relating to partisan political activity
- Charitable or development activities
- Construction projects
- Projects that support specific religious activities or promote only one faith/religion
- Fund-raising campaigns
- Lobbying for specific legislation or projects
- Scientific research
- Projects intended primarily for the growth/institutional development/maintenance of the applicant organization or its partner organizations.

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted **by email to JerusalemPD.IApplications@state.gov** with **“PAUPDFY20006 - Sustainable U.S.-Palestinian Higher Education Partnerships – application from [name of your organization]”** in the subject line.

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 clear, achievable objectives in alignment with program goals, and 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 large grant funds and complex projects. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives: Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results and the goals and objectives of PAU-PD and this NOFO.

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 define, measure, and report achievement of key indicators to evaluate program success and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The M&E plan contains specific output- and outcome-based indicators with baselines and targets, data source, and frequency of data collection.

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

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications and choose which to fund based on availability of funds.

3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)

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 FAPIIS) (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.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates: Before September 30, 2020

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 by electronic funds transfer. Payment schedules will be determined by the Grants Officer and specified in the award document, according to the program's milestones.

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, which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/u-s-department-of-state-standard-terms-and-conditions-2/>

Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions; exceptions may be possible in some circumstances upon agreement with the Grant Officer

3. Reporting

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

Generally, grantees are required to submit quarterly program progress and financial reports throughout the project period. Progress and financial reports are due 30 days after the reporting period. Final programmatic and financial reports are due 90 days after the close of the project period. Progress reports at a minimum should be submitted via electronic mail to an address provided in the award. Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in 2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.

G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact:

JerusalemPDJApplications@state.gov with “**PAUPDFY20006 - Sustainable U.S.-Palestinian Higher Education Partnerships – application from [name of your organization]**” in the subject line.

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” 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.