

Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI)

WE-Champs: Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem by Networking Regional Women's Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations:

CFDA Number: 19.801
Funding Opportunity Title: WE-Champs: Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem by Networking Regional Women's Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations
Announcement Type: Cooperative Agreement
Anticipated Number of Awards: One (1)
Funding: \$1,175,308 (not to exceed)
Period of Performance: No more than 36 months/ 3 years
Deadline for proposal submission: 11:59 PM EST May 13, 2022
Deadline for question submission: 11:59 PM EST April 4, 2022
Federal Agency Contact: SGWIProjectProposals@state.gov

I. Project Description

The U.S. Department of State, Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) announces an open competition for organizations interested in submitting applications for projects that promote women's entrepreneurship and dismantle systemic gender barriers by networking regional women's Chambers of Commerce (Chambers) and business associations. The project will support the U.S Interim National Security Strategic Guidance¹, National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality², and Executive Order 14020³, as well as the forthcoming U.S. Strategy for Women's Economic Security Globally.

Project activities should strengthen women's economic security by supporting women's Chambers of Commerce (Chambers) and business associations through locally designed and led responses to building gender-responsive institutions. This project may also partner with existing Chambers and business associations not solely focused on supporting women members, but are conducting advocacy on behalf of women entrepreneurs and women in business to address member-identified concerns, potentially resulting in legal, social and/or institutional change through targeted advocacy.

S/GWI seeks proposals from qualified organizations with demonstrated in-country experience (see below for list of potential countries) in developing partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including the public and/or private sector, civil society, and grassroots organizations. Applicants must demonstrate an ability to design, implement,

¹ www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/NSC-1v2.pdf

² <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/National-Strategy-on-Gender-Equity-and-Equality.pdf>

³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/03/08/executive-order-on-establishment-of-the-white-house-gender-policy-council/>

monitor, evaluate, adapt, and learn in programming that coordinates with existing efforts by U.S. government, other donors, the host country, and local actors.

All projects should lead to improved support from Chambers and business associations to women-led enterprises, advocacy for and implementation of gender-responsive reforms, and strengthened women's economic security and leadership. Successful projects will be informed by an iterative, participatory gender equality and social inclusion analysis; demonstrate, through practice and budget allocation, a commitment to meaningfully partnering and supporting local organizations, including those led by or serving women and marginalized groups; integrate practices to ensure the sustainability of efforts after funding ends; incorporate a Do No Harm approach, including through Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) provisions; safely and respectfully engage with all members of a community, including men and boys, gender-diverse persons, indigenous communities, persons with disabilities, and members of historically marginalized groups.

S/GWI's mandate is to promote the rights and empowerment of women and girls, in all their diversity, in U.S. foreign policy. S/GWI programs promote, respect, and advance human rights. S/GWI projects are flexible, civil society-focused, and global in reach; they are designed to support and foster locally informed and implemented civil society-based solutions, inspiring and providing best practices to the Department to advance women's equality and empowerment as a keystone of U.S. foreign policy. Learning will inform other U.S. policy, programs, and partnerships. As such, proposals should incubate successful solutions that can be shared and/or replicated elsewhere and prioritize strong local participation and ownership.

S/GWI is dedicated to promoting human rights, fundamental freedoms, gender equality, and equality for all and seeks prioritizes proposals from partners that will strive to inclusively implement these democratic values.



Priority Region and Countries: Significant opportunity exists to build off past and strengthen existing work with Chambers and business associations in advancement of women's economic security in Europe and Eurasia. Applicants must propose work equal to the planned funding amount (\$1,175,308) in no fewer than four countries in the Europe and Eurasia region. Final country selection will be confirmed in consultation between the successful applicant and S/GWI. Additional countries may be selected during project implementation pending availability of additional funding. Country selections may be subject to additional approvals and/or vetting.

The following are countries in which this project may work: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, and Ukraine.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

Note: S/GWI strongly encourages applicants to immediately access [SAMS Domestic](#), the required system for submission, in order to obtain a username and password. For further instructions, please see Section V below.

II. Funding Opportunity Description

Background Information:

As outlined in the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality,² strengthening women's economic security and labor force participation is vital to advancing gender equity and equality. Women's full economic participation is essential to the global economy and to enable their leadership and participation in every aspect of economic, political, and social life. Gender-based violence (GBV), along with other systemic barriers, can prevent women's full economic participation. Therefore, holistic approaches to advancing both women's economic security, leadership, and promoting respect for human rights are required.

When women and men have equal access to opportunities to participate fully in their economies and societies, countries are safer and more prosperous. When women are economically empowered, they invest in their families and communities, producing a multiplier effect that increases economic growth and stability. Women's economic empowerment boosts productivity and income equality. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated existing gender gaps in women's economic participation and leadership, and raised significant obstacles for women workers and entrepreneurs and women-led small-and medium-sized enterprises. Women working in the informal economy are facing great challenges, experiencing dramatic losses in earnings, which are not recovering at the same rate as those of men.⁴ Across sectors, the pandemic has amplified the unequal burden of care work often shouldered by women and girls, affecting women's economic participation and wage earning.⁵

Since the onset of the pandemic, women-led businesses have experienced disrupted access to relational and network capital, which may stifle growth and prevent new women entrepreneurs from joining the marketplace.⁴ Networking, an important activity to start and grow businesses, has largely transitioned to virtual environments, which may disproportionately affect women entrepreneurs given caregiving commitments and the digital gender gap.⁶ These and other factors have left many women struggling to maintain, let alone grow, their businesses and meaningfully participate in the economy.

Women and girls are more affected by climate change than male peers, yet innovation and entrepreneurship in this sector are male-dominated and women entrepreneurs face heightened barriers such as capital and structural discrimination to achieving success in "greentech" and related fields.⁷ Significant opportunity exists to mitigate the disproportionate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on women entrepreneurs by enabling women-led businesses to adapt to new technology, including but not limited to

⁴ <https://genderequalitycovid19recovery.com/>

⁵ <https://blogs.worldbank.org/voices/covid-19-highlights-unfinished-business-ensuring-equality-women-entrepreneurs>

⁶ <http://www7.bbk.ac.uk/cimr/2021/04/22/women-entrepreneurs-and-networking-during-covid-19/>

⁷ <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2021/09/why-invest-female-climate-entrepreneurs/>

financial technology and digital and e-commerce.⁸ Women’s Chambers and business associations are fora in which women entrepreneurs work to mitigate these and other challenges

Strategic Policy Framework:

The project resulting from this NOFO will support S/GWI’s implementation of the National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, the forthcoming U.S. Strategy for Women’s Economic Security Globally, and the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally, and will further the priorities of the Gender Equity and Equality Action (GEEA) Fund, which was announced at the Generation Equality Forum.⁹ The GEEA Fund, which provides the basis of funding for this NOFO, aims to advance women’s economic security and to employ a holistic approach to advancing gender-equitable and secure access to economic resources, services, and decision-making opportunities. To address systemic gender barriers that prevent full economic participation, including gender-based violence, it will also support the *U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally*.¹⁰

This project will support this GEEA Fund priority:

- **Promote Entrepreneurship, and Financial and Digital Inclusion, including through Trade and Investment.** Under this priority, programming will invest in female entrepreneurship, including through investing in gender-smart business and transforming capital markets; advance trade and investment opportunities for women-owned, -led, and -managed businesses; close gender gaps in access to banking and financial services, such as credit and insurance, including by increasing access to national identification, supporting financing for digital infrastructure, and incentivizing reform of discriminatory laws and social norms; supports bridging the gender digital divide and foster inclusive economies, including in digital industries.

In support of this priority, the project may work to ensure that women-owned and led businesses, and other private-sector institutions, are quality workplaces for women and other workers and may address systemic gender barriers that prevent women’s full participation in the workforce or as entrepreneurs, including in light of the COVID-19 context. Human rights abuses and discriminatory gender and social norms – including gender-based violence, employer policies and practices, customary systems, and laws and regulations – limit the ability of women to be equal and catalytic economic actors. Barriers can compound, necessitating an intersectional approach to ensure that women in marginalized populations are afforded equal access and opportunities. Furthermore, economic security can only be achieved if women’s safety and well-being are ensured,

⁸ <https://www.cfr.org/blog/women-and-e-commerce-300-billion-opportunity>

⁹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/06/30/fact-sheet-united-states-to-announce-commitments-to-the-generation-equality-forum/>

¹⁰ <https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/258703.pdf>

including through protection from gender-based violence as a precondition to women's economic security.

The activities engaging and supporting religious, ethnic, or racial minorities, individuals with disabilities, or other historically marginalized and underrepresented/underserved groups will support implementation of the State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan (publication forthcoming) Goal 3 Objective 2 on Equity and Inclusion, including as it relates to supporting: the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq), E.O. 14020 Establishment of the White House Gender Policy Council, E.O. 13985 Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government, P.M. #NSM-4 Advancing the Human Rights of LGBTQI+ Persons around the World, and Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the Americans with Disabilities Act. The Biden-Harris Administration is committed to ensuring that all individuals are treated fairly and equitably, adopting an intersectional approach that considers the barriers and challenges faced by those who experience intersecting and compounding forms of discrimination and bias related to gender, race, and other factors, including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, sex characteristics, ethnicity, religion, ability, age, socioeconomic status, and other aspects of identity that impact a person's relative power, access, and ability to meaningfully participate in society. Intersectionality does not consider one characteristic to be a person's primary source of marginalization but seeks to understand how multiple characteristics can compound and shape marginalization. Multiple marginalized communities are also affected by the broader existence of privilege and oppression in society. The design and implementation of this opportunity must reflect that commitment to equity and equality for all.

Applications must support the policy guidance described above, while complementing existing local and national initiatives.

Results Framework:

Theory of Change:

If women's Chambers of Commerce and business associations are established and/or strengthened through increased training, resources, and connections with similar bodies in their regions, then they can improve support to women-led enterprises, advocate for and implement gender-responsive reforms, and strengthen women's economic security.

Goal:

To strengthen women's economic security by supporting women's Chambers of Commerce (Chambers) and business associations through locally designed and led responses to building gender-responsive institutions and responding to needs of women members, in all their diversity.

Objectives:

Applicants should propose objectives that support regional networking among women's Chambers and business associations to:

- 1. Support women entrepreneurs and WSMEs:** Provide Chambers and associations with support to strengthen services for women entrepreneurs and WSMEs including by addressing member-identified needs, such as mentorship, networking, leadership and entrepreneurship training, and/or facilitating cross-regional linkages. Member interest and/or country economic context may facilitate work in climate-change adaptation/resilience, e-commerce and business technology, and value-chain linkages, among others.
- 2. Gender-responsive pandemic recovery:** Address systemic barriers to women's full economic participation through a coalition/network facilitated by Chambers, including to address gender-based violence (GBV), unpaid care work, and other impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic – as well as addressing broader social norms that are contributing to these impacts – affecting women's economic security through advocacy and implementation of member-developed and supported reforms. Member-identified needs may include access to social protection for women entrepreneurs and their families, financial relief funds, or opportunities specifically designed for WSMEs, among others.
- 3. Chamber-facilitated advocacy:** Further Chamber- and association-supported women's advocacy for gender-equitable reforms to legal frameworks, regulatory systems, access to services, and business communities. This may include social and behavior change communication activities around gendered stereotypes, engaging men and boys in support for women's economic participation and leadership, liaising with government officials to advocate for reform; and other member-identified needs.

Illustrative activities may include:

- Facilitation of learning between women's Chambers and/or business associations, as well as those serving members of historically marginalized communities, within a region related to issue-based advocacy, including as it relates to identifying challenges, crafting solutions, and communicating to public and private-sector decision-makers as well as the general public;
- Technical assistance to women's Chambers and/or business associations related to organizational health by addressing gaps identified through capacity and technical needs assessment, including but not limited to governance, strategic planning, management, membership development, and communications;
- Facilitation of learning between women's Chambers and/or business associations related to organizational capacity and management practices;
- Small grants to participating Chambers for organizational development activities including but not limited to membership services, improved communications and marketing, and/or staff development;
- Support for advocacy of member-identified reforms affecting women entrepreneurs, potentially addressing legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers to their economic participation and security;
- Organize virtual or in-person regional conference of women's Chambers and/or business associations;

- Virtual or in-person learning visits within regions or across regions between women’s Chambers’ and/or business associations’ leadership and advocacy; and/or
- Build resilience of women-owned businesses by sharing best practices and capacity building through Chamber networks to support innovative approaches, including tech, to deal with various crisis such as the pandemic or climate change.

Intended Results:

Possible intended results may include, but are not limited to:

- Women entrepreneurs and WSMEs have increased access to holistic support from Chambers and business associations to start, grow, and sustain their businesses.
- Chambers and business associations are equipped to implement member-led reforms to address barriers inhibiting women’s economic participation and security.
- Chambers and business associations adopt gender-responsive plans and policies to support members, including women and members of historically marginalized groups, in addressing impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, ensuring that women-owned and led businesses are quality, safe workplaces for women and other workers and addressing systemic gender barriers that prevent women’s full participation in the workforce.
- Chambers, business associations, and their members have the skills, access, and support needed to advocate for the enactment of gender-equitable reforms to legal frameworks, regulatory systems, and in business communities to advance women’s economic security to ensure institutions are more responsive to members and communities more broadly.
- Members of Chambers and women’s business association have increased access to information, mentors, networks, and markets throughout the region.
- Chambers and business associations are enabled to transform structural inequities faced by their members.
- Chambers and business associations provide strengthened, inclusive services to all members through regional support and networking.

Indicators:

- See Annex B for a list of possible indicators to include.

III. Proposal Requirements

Please read the entire NOFO and utilize the provided checklist in order ensure a complete proposal. In addition to referencing B (Bureau-Specific Award Provisions) and C (Indicators), applicants must include the following for this proposal submission:

1. Completed and signed **SF-424, SF-424A and SF424B and SF-LLL** forms. Applicants under consideration for an award that may engage in lobbying activities will be required to submit a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (**SF-LLL**) form. The SF-424 documents collect basic information on the applicant,

the proposed project, the funding amount requested, and information about the announcement to which it is applying;

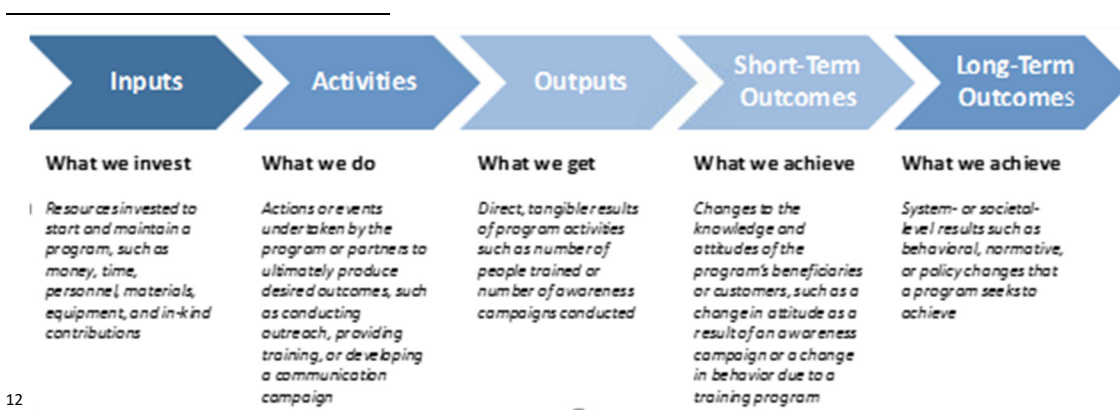
2. **Proposal Narrative** (not to exceed 15 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins). Use of the S/GWI proposal narrative format is recommended, but not required. Proposal narrative must include:
 - the problem the applicant seeks to address;
 - the planned countries for the project;
 - the implementation context, including any relevant details on the socio-political environment and target beneficiaries. not including refugees or IDP camps¹¹; and,
 - how the proposal meets required U.S. Congressional directives, strategies, and policy goals described herein;
3. **Summary and Detailed Budget** in USD, in Excel, using the format shown in the included budget template. Please note support for the establishment of new in-country offices is not envisioned under this project.
4. **Detailed Budget Narrative** (not to exceed 6 pages, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins) that includes an explanation for each line item in the spreadsheet, as well as the source and description of any cost share offered. Directions on completing a budget narrative are included. Use of the S/GWI budget narrative template is recommended but not required;
5. **Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) Plan** detailing project's short-term and long-term goal(s), objective(s), activities, outputs and intended results; provide matching indicators and explain how impact and effectiveness will be monitored, evaluated, and used for learning and adaptation throughout the program. Directions on completing a MEL plan are included. Use of the S/GWI MEL plan template is recommended but not required.

The MEL plan must include:

¹¹ S/GWI funds are different from, but are intended to complement, other USG funds that working specifically with refugee camp populations.

- A notional logic model/results framework¹² and performance monitoring plan (PMP), including a succinct Theory of Change and a streamlined set of indicators at each of the following levels: objective, intermediate outcome, and output. Please find in Annex B to the NOFO a chart of standard U.S. Foreign Assistance (FA) indicators that S/GWI commonly uses for programming. In addition to designing their own indicators, applicants should integrate the most relevant indicators from this list into their MEL plan, as appropriate;
- A description of how the project will be monitored and analyzed for impact, effectiveness, learning, adaptation and to avoid unintended consequences;
- A timeline for data collection, analysis, and how this will inform midstream program management;
- A rigorous plan for compiling, documenting, and disseminating program results and lessons learned;
- An independent evaluation, elaborating on the type (quasi-experimental, developmental, outcome harvesting, process tracing, etc.) While the type of evaluation is flexible, State Department guidance requires it to be independent¹³;
- The resources, including budget, needed to implement the MEL plan;
- A demonstrated commitment to inclusive and equitable MEL, including whether evaluation design, data collection, analysis, reporting and learning are conducted in an ethical, participatory, and responsible way¹⁴; and
- Adequate provisions for data security to protect the privacy of human subjects when collecting data from individuals.

6. **Implementation Timeline** (not to exceed one [1] page), indicating which month(s) activities are to be implemented. The timeline of the overall proposal should include activities, evaluation efforts, and project closeout. Use of the S/GWI timeline template is recommended but not required;



¹²

¹³ An independent evaluation must be (1) conducted by a third-party external evaluator or conducted by the recipient if those responsible for the evaluation do not report to any program staff or managers, and (2) budgeted and scoped to provide insight and analysis of the work.

¹⁴ For best practices, see the WHO [ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies](#)

7. **Risk Assessment and Mitigation Plan** detailing adequate risk analysis and remediation for all of its operations. Risk assessment and mitigation planning should occur throughout the life of a project, resulting in revisions to risk analysis documents and processes as necessary but at least annually. Applicants should include all assumptions and external factors in the risk analysis, including and especially safety and security of staff, participants and beneficiaries, as well as, technology. Applicants should rate the likelihood of a risk and potential impact of the risk as “High,” “Medium,” or “Low.”

Risks are unavoidable – all projects inherently contain both internal and external risks. However, with proper identification and management, risks can be prepared for, minimized, or mitigated. The purpose of a risk analysis is to identify the internal and external risks associated with the proposed project in the application, rate the likelihood of the risks, rate the potential impact of the risks on the project, and identify actions that could help mitigate the risks. S/GWI’s SAMPLE Risk Assessment template is provided, but S/GWI also welcomes more detailed models;

8. **Gender and Inclusion Analysis** (not to exceed 3 pages per benefitting country, single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins), identifying relevant gender gaps and opportunities and ways the work will address those gaps and opportunities. The analysis should also demonstrate sound approaches to inclusion, including but not limited to ethnic and religious minorities, women with disabilities, and other marginalized groups. Proposals should demonstrate how addressing relevant gender gaps enhance the project’s goals and objectives and how the gender and inclusion analysis will be revisited, updated, and adapted throughout implementation. In addition to being weaved into the proposal narrative, this should also be a standalone document and attached to the application. The S/GWI SAMPLE Gender Analysis Questions are provided in Appendix 9 of this NOFO package, but S/GWI also welcomes more detailed models;
9. **Additional attachments may be included**, (letters of commitment from the applicant institution and sub-award partners, CVs of key personnel, program experience, etc.) but should not be unreasonably lengthy; and will not count against page limitations;
10. If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (**NICRA**) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a PDF file;
11. A PDF file copy of your organization’s most **recent financial audit**; and
12. Number all pages, including budget and addenda.

Additional Information Requested:

If successful, the applicant must submit after notification of intent to make a federal award, but prior to issuance of a federal award:

- Completion of the Department’s Financial Management Survey, if receiving S/GWI funding for the first time;
- Submission of required documents to register in the Payment Management System managed by the Department of Health and Human Services, if receiving S/GWI funding for the first time (unless an exemption is provided); and
- Other requested information or documents included in the notification of intent to make a federal award or subsequent communications prior to issuance of a federal award.

Substantial Involvement:

Applicants should be aware that if their application results in an award, S/GWI will be involved in the program and management performance of the grant in the form of a cooperative agreement, which allows S/GWI consultation and technical collaboration rights on specified project activities. Examples of substantial involvement can include:

- a. Approval of the Recipient’s annual work plans, including: planned activities for the following year and changes to any activity to be carried out under the agreement;
- b. Coordination with U.S. government stakeholders and partners on programming and efforts around women’s economic participation;
- c. Approval of sub-award recipients, concurrence on the substantive provisions of the sub-awards, and coordination with other cooperating agencies;
- d. Approval of communication and branding strategies to inform public-facing materials, social media, and publications;
- e. Approval of Terms of Reference (TOR) or scope for program evaluations;
- f. Approval of hiring/opportunity announcements and selection/assignment of technical experts, including but not limited to key personnel;
- g. Approval of the MEL plan(s) for the Recipient and sub-award recipients;
- h. Collaboration in assessing progress and identifying issues that might affect the success of the program; and
- i. Other approvals that will be included in the award agreement.

Incremental Funding and Non-Competing Continuation:

Continuations beyond the initial budget period or funding amount of an award will be contingent upon the availability of funds; grantee’s progress in meeting grant requirements, including timely submission of required reports and compliance with all terms and conditions of the award; timely submission of a request for additional funding; and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the Department of State.

Pending successful implementation of this project and pending the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, S/GWI may add incremental funding and/or extend the award for additional time, not to exceed a five (5) year total period. In future, S/GWI may seek expansion of this project to include additional regions.

IV. Funding Restrictions

This cooperative agreement will be funded from money appropriated under the “Assistance for Europe, Eurasia, and Central Asia” (AEECA) heading in the Department of State and Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, 2021 (Div. K, P.L. 116-260) (SFOAA). AEECA is available for foreign assistance programs supporting economic or political stability, among other things, in AEECA-eligible countries. Given restrictions under section 660 of the FAA, assistance may be provided to law enforcement forces only under certain circumstances. Activities that involve assistance to law enforcement will be subject to vetting to ensure compliance with section 620M of the FAA (“[Leahy Vetting](#)”).

Activities must align with the Democracy Programs earmark by explicitly empowering marginalized communities, which include groups that have been traditionally discriminated against because of their race, nationality, gender, gender identity, religious affiliation, disability status, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and sexual orientation, to secure their human rights on the basis of equality and with dignity; raising awareness on issues affecting marginalized populations, including programs that teach tolerance and acceptance, and build capacity to advocate for the rights of marginalized populations both in and out of the government arena; and ending discrimination, hostility, or violence against marginalized communities, including promoting robust legal protections against discrimination and hate crimes and seeking redress against discrimination.

The recipient is reminded that funds provided under this agreement must be used in a manner fully consistent with U.S. law. The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by this award shall be used to lobby for or against abortion. The recipient agrees that none of the funds provided by this award shall be used to pay for the performance of abortion as a method of family planning or to motivate or coerce any person to practice abortions.

The following activities and costs **will not** be allowable:

- Construction
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns.
- Engagement with religious leaders and communities is encouraged; however, direct support or the appearance of direct support for any religious organization for the sole purposes of promoting religious beliefs cannot be included for funding.

- Military assistance of any kind, including weapons buy back or rewards programs.
- Purchase of firearms, ammunition, or removal of unexploded ordnance.
- Payments for any partner government, military, or civilian government employee salary or pension.
- Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government.
- Funds for market research, advertising (unless public service related to grant) or other promotional expenses.
- U.S.-based activities, study tours, scholarships, or exchange projects.
- Initiatives directed towards a permanent diaspora community as ultimate beneficiaries.
- Projects that have a predominant academic or basic research focus.
- Social welfare projects that purely provide service-delivery or humanitarian assistance.
- Costs incurred to complete activities begun with other funds.
- Medical and psychological research or clinical studies using human subjects.
- Projects exclusively of a commercial or profit-making nature.
- Cultural presentations, cultural research, cultural clubs, or festivals, etc. unless they have a specific programmatic purpose.
- Entertainment costs (e.g., receptions, social activities, ceremonies, guided tours) unless they have a specific programmatic purpose.

V. Technical Eligibility and Submission Instructions

Eligible Applicants:

Organizations submitting applications must meet the following criteria:

- Be a U.S.- or foreign-based non-profit/non-governmental organization (NGO); or
- Be a private, public, or state institution of higher education; and
- Have existing, or the capacity to develop, active and equitable partnerships with in-country partners, entities, and relevant stakeholders, including NGOs and private sector actors;
- Have capacity to carry out similar projects in up to three (3) global regions, should additional funding become available and upon proof of concept; and
- Have demonstrable experience administering successful and preferably similar programs in size, scope, and focus. S/GWI reserves the right to request additional background information on organizations that do not have previous experience administering federal awards. These applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.

Ineligible Beneficiaries:

Given restrictions on funding, no assistance under this NOFO will be provided for military or paramilitary forces. Assistance for law enforcement may only be provided in certain limited circumstances. Unless prohibited by applicable restrictions, programming

may provide technical assistance to government officials or include government officials or to provide training or outreach to governments or involving government officials. Civil society organizations, Chambers and business associations, and their members should generally be the beneficiaries of the program. Additional restrictions may apply to certain countries or activities. As noted above, country selections may be subject to additional approvals. Any assistance under this NOFO must comply with all applicable legal restrictions.

Public International Organizations (PIOs) are not eligible to apply as prime applicants under this NOFO, though they may partner on a proposal as a sub-awardee.

S/GWI maintains an anti-discrimination policy in all of its programs and activities. S/GWI welcomes submissions irrespective of race, ethnicity, heritage, color, creed, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or other status.

Project activities must take place outside the United States.

No entity listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the [System for Award Management \(SAM\)](#) is eligible for assistance or can participate in any activities under an 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.” All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All prime applicant organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number – formerly referred to as a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number – and an active SAM.gov registration before submitting an application. **S/GWI may not review applications from or make awards to applicants that have not completed all applicable UEI and SAM.gov requirements.** A 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. The 2 CFR 200 requires that subgrantees obtain a UEI number. Please note that the UEI for subgrantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before the award is processed and/or directed to a subgrantee.

All prime organizations must also continue to maintain an **active** SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which they have an active Federal award or application under consideration by a Federal award agency. Please note that a “pending renewal” registration status will not be considered “active.” SAM.gov requires all entities to renew their registration once a year in order to maintain an active registration status in SAM.gov. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements at the time of application, S/GWI may determine that the applicant is technically ineligible to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

Note: The process for obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration has changed. S/GWI encourages all organizations to begin the process of registering or renewing

with SAM.gov as early as possible. The registration process may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks on average.

- If you are **based in the United States** or pay employees within the United States, prior to registering in SAM.gov you will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code, and a UEI number from Dun and Bradstreet.
- If you are based **outside of the United States** and do not pay employees within the United States, you do not need an EIN from the IRS. Prior to registering in SAM.gov you will need a NATO CAGE (NCAGE) code and UEI number from Dun and Bradstreet.

Legal Business Name and Banking Physical Address (entities must ensure that the physical address used is the same physical address used when establishing the primary banking account and that both addresses match) must be **precise and match exactly** when entering it into the IRS, D&B DUNS, NCAGE, and SAM.gov websites. Legal Business Name and Banking Physical Address given must be exactly the same—this includes spaces, parentheses, capitalization, small letters, punctuation, letters with accents, etc.; other features not commonly used in U.S. English should be avoided. A mismatch of information will cause validation to fail.

Note: SAM.gov is not the same as SAMS Domestic. It is free to register in both systems, but the registration processes are different.

In October 2017, new information was added to the SAM.gov website to help international registrations, including “Quick Start Guide for International Registrations” and “Helpful Hints.” Navigate to SAM.gov, click Help in the top navigation bar, then click International Registrants in the left navigation panel. Please note, guidance on SAM.gov and the guidance on GSA’s website about requirement for registering in SAM.gov is subject to change. Applicants should review the website for the most up-to-date guidance.

An exemption from these requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis if: An applicant’s identity must be protected due to potential endangerment of their mission, their organization’s status, their employees, or individuals being served by the applicant.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grant Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

Note: Foreign organizations will be required to register with the NATO Support Agency (NSPA) to receive a NCAGE code in order to register in SAM.gov. NSPA will forward your registration request to the applicable National Codification Bureau (NCB) if your organization is located in a NATO or Tier 2 Sponsored Non-NATO Nation. As of October 2019, NATO nations included Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece,

Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. As of October 2019, Tier 2 nations included Argentina, Australia, Austria, Brazil, Colombia, Finland, India, Indonesia, Israel, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Serbia, Singapore, Sweden, United Arab Emirates, and Ukraine.

NSPA and/or the appropriate NCB forwards all NCAGE code information to all Allied Committee 135 (AC/135) nations, which as of October 2019 also included Afghanistan, Belarus, Bosnia, Brunei Darussalam, Chile, Egypt, Georgia, Japan, Jordan, North Macedonia, Oman, Peru, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, and Thailand.

All organizations are strongly advised to take this into consideration when assessing whether registration may result in possible endangerment.

Cost Sharing or Matching:

Cost-sharing or matching is NOT an evaluation criteria of this NOFO.

When cost sharing is offered, all cost share or matching must be included in detail in the line item budget and noted in the budget narrative. It is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing that it elects to stipulate in its proposal and that is later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, recipients must maintain written records to support all costs that are claimed as their contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with [2 CFR 200.306 – Cost Sharing and Matching](#).

Other:

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System in the System for Award Management (SAM)(www.sam.gov) 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 Excluded Parties List System in SAM can participate in any activities under an award. All organizations are strongly encouraged to review the Excluded Parties List System in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

Organization Criteria:

- Applicants should have existing, or demonstrate the capacity to develop, active partnerships with in-country entities and relevant stakeholders including women’s civil society networks, other civil society actors, the public sector, and the private sector, as relevant to the proposed project objectives. However, one organization must be designated as the lead applicant and prime grantee for the proposed cooperative agreement.

- Applicants must demonstrate an ability to provide appropriate resources and support for the psychosocial health of staff (i.e. access to educational materials, training opportunities, counseling services, or other contextually-relevant support)
 - References: For reference to international guidance, please see the following: Core Humanitarian Standard Commitment 8.9 (<https://corehumanitarianstandard.org/files/files/CHS-Guidance-Notesand-Indicators.pdf>); and IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings Action Sheet 4.4 (http://www.who.int/mental_health/emergencies/guidelines_iasc_mental_health_psychosocial_june_2007.pdf).
- S/GWI reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards, and these applicants may be subject to limited funding on a pilot basis.
- The Department of State generally prohibits profit under its assistance awards to for-profit or commercial organizations. No funds will be paid as profit to any recipient. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The permissibility of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR Part 30, Cost Accounting Standards, and Part 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures. Project income earned by the recipient must be deducted from the total project allowable cost in determining the net allowable costs on which the federal share of costs is based.

Application and Submission Information

Address to Request Application Package:

Please contact the S/GWI Programs Team at SGWIProjectProposals@state.gov if requesting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or for security reasons. Please note: reasonable accommodations do not include deadline extensions.

The applicant can find application forms, kits, or other materials needed to apply on SAMS Domestic under the Funding Opportunity entitled “*WE-Champs: Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem by Networking Regional Women’s Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations,*” solicitation number SFOP0008718.

Key Registrations:

The U.S. Department of State requires that all applicants complete the following registrations:

- Register for a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>
- Obtain necessary codes: for non-U.S. organizations, an NCAGE code at <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>; if based in the U.S or pay employees within the U.S., an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) code.

- Register for an individual account for your organization with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov): <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>
- Register for an individual account for your organization on SAMS Domestic: <https://mygrants.service-now.com/grants>. Please be advised that applicants will need to validate their email address once a request for an account has been submitted to SAMS Domestic. **Additionally, applicants will be required to log into SAMS Domestic using multi-factor authentication.**

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure an active registration in SAMS Domestic. Applicants are required to document that the application has been received in its entirety by SAMS Domestic. S/GWI bears no responsibility for disqualification that result from applicants not being registered before the due date, for system errors in SAMS Domestic, or other errors in the application process.

Organizations must maintain an active SAM.gov registration with current information at all times during which they have an active federal award or application under consideration by a federal award agency. 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 and to maintain that active registration. If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time S/GWI is ready to make an award, the applicant may be deemed unqualified to receive an award and use that determination as a basis for making an award to another applicant.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the proposal has been submitted in its entirety to SAMS Domestic and sent via email. S/GWI bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Should any safety or security concerns arise regarding registration within any of the above required systems, please contact the S/GWI Programs team (SGWIProposals@state.gov) for assistance.

Designated Performance and Integrity System (currently FAPIIS)

The Department of State, 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).

The applicant has the option to 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.

The Department of State 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 the applicant as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

Submission Dates and Times:

The application is due no later than **11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET), on May 13, 2022** on SAMS Domestic under the Funding Opportunity “*WE-Champs: Strengthening the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem by Networking Regional Women’s Chambers of Commerce and Business Associations.*” solicitation number SFOP0008718.

S/GWI will not accept applications submitted via grants.gov, email, fax, the postal system, delivery companies, or couriers.

Applicants will receive a validation email from SAMS Domestic upon successful submission of an application. Additionally, applicants **must** save a screenshot of the checklist showing all documents submitted in case any document fails to upload successfully.

Late applications are neither reviewed nor considered unless S/GWI is contacted prior to the deadline and is provided with evidence of system errors caused by SAMS Domestic that is outside of the applicants’ control and is the sole reason for late submission.

Applicants should not expect a notification upon S/GWI receiving their application.

Application Review Information:

Proposal submissions in response to this announcement should include information addressing each of the evaluation criteria below. Each proposal will be evaluated and rated based on the criteria (see below), which are designed to assess the organizational capacity of the applicant and the merits of the proposed project. The criteria are closely related, and evaluators will consider the criteria as a whole in judging the application. Panelists review each application individually against the evaluation criteria, not against competing proposals.

In most cases, the Department of State Review Panel includes inter-agency representatives from S/GWI, the appropriate Department regional bureau, relevant functional bureaus, and USAID Washington. S/GWI requests feedback on applications from the appropriate U.S. embassies and USAID missions for the panelists’ consideration. In some cases, additional panelists may participate, including from other Department bureaus or offices, U.S. government departments, agencies, or boards, representatives from partner governments, external experts and academics, or representatives from entities that are in partnership with S/GWI as donor partners. All panelists must confirm that they do not have any conflicts of interest in reviewing. At the end of discussion on an application, the panel votes on recommending the application for approval.

Department Review Panels may provide conditions and recommendations on applications to enhance the proposed project, which must be addressed by the applicant before further

consideration of the award. To ensure effective use of S/GWI funds, conditions or recommendations may include requests to increase, decrease, clarify, and/or justify costs and project activities.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. *Organizational Capacity and Past Performance (30 / 100 points):*
 - Applicant demonstrates an institutional record of successful relevant programming in areas such as women’s economic security and/or gender equality/equity.
 - Applicant demonstrates the expertise and capacity to co-design and implement programs regionally, with potential for global expansion, in equitable partnership with local sub-grantees (if any) and existing local women’s Chambers of Commerce, and business associations.
 - Applicant has the ability to analyze, design, and program effectively in support of women’s economic security
 - If sub-grants are proposed, applicant demonstrates experience sub-granting to implementers, including strong established relationships with partners in the targeted countries of various sizes, and experience building others’ organizational capacity.

2. *Project Strategy (30 / 100 points):*

The applicant must demonstrate how the strategy and design are likely to achieve the proposed results and that proposed activities and timeframes are reasonable and feasible. Applicants will be judged on the following criteria:

 - Applicant provides justification for the selection of countries and identifies any relevant links between and among selected countries.
 - Applicant proposes evidence-based approaches to addressing and implementing the objectives of the NOFO, including addressing GBV.
 - Application clearly demonstrates the inclusion and input of women’s organizations and other proposed local partners – including the private sector – in determining needs and approaches for addressing those needs.
 - The application must include an initial landscape analysis for the specific countries or geographic areas proposed in the application, and a plan and budget for doing further landscape analysis to inform program design post-award to ensure activities complement/build on/do not overlap with existing in-country efforts – including work supported by host government(s), the U.S. government, UN agencies, and other donors.
 - Application includes appropriate resources and support for the psychosocial health of staff.
 - Application demonstrates how planned activities meet the requirements of Democracy Programs funding by explicitly advancing the human rights of and empowering members of marginalized populations, including of groups that have been traditionally discriminated against because of their gender, gender

identity, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, nationality, religious affiliation, disability status, or socioeconomic status.

3. *Gender and Inclusion Analysis and Design, Do No Harm (10 / 100 points):*
 - Application includes a thoughtful gender and inclusion analysis, which is reflected in the project design and planned implementation.
 - Application presents a thoughtful analysis of and approaches for inclusion of underrepresented populations, including but not limited to ethnic and religious minorities, LGBTQI+ individuals, persons with disabilities, and other historically marginalized populations. Additionally, applicant integrates men and boys, as appropriate, in program design and implementation.
 - Application includes a plan for iterative, regular process with local partners/beneficiaries for review of progress in addressing gaps and opportunities identified in the gender analysis, and use of adaptive management to ensure implementation is informed by input from local partners/beneficiaries
 - Application includes the required information on Do No Harm and safeguarding policies and how the applicant will work on related areas with partners. Staff/consultants/local partners have relevant expertise in gender, safeguarding, and Do No Harm.

4. *Performance Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (10 / 100 points):*
 - Applicant clearly describes the results to be achieved and demonstrates capacity to measure progress towards achieving those results in a way that reflects local perspectives.
 - Applicant clearly describes in the budget and MEL plan how an independent evaluation will be conducted during the period of performance. Independent means:
 - Conducted by a third-party external evaluator or internal to the applicant organization if those responsible for the evaluation do not report to any program staff or managers; and
 - Budgeted and scoped to provide insight and analysis of the work.
 - The applicant identifies how key milestones and indicators, including one or more from S/GWI's menu of indicators, will measure program results.
 - The applicant identifies how it will adapt and modify the program based on ongoing analysis and informed management.
 - MEL plans include regular and participatory review and updating of the gender and inclusion analysis throughout the life of the grant, and complying with reporting requirements.
 - Proposed outcomes are tangible and achievable within the grant program period.
 - Notional output and outcome targets are feasible according to the duration and budget of the program.

5. *Local Engagement and Sustainability (10 / 100 points):*
Proposals will be evaluated on the likelihood of sustainable results that will endure beyond the term of the program.
- Application details plans to co-design strategy for local institutionalization with local partners, in consultation with planned beneficiaries, potentially including private-sector partnerships.
 - Application demonstrates a responsible exit strategy for sustainability and/or responsible exit, scalability, and reasonableness by demonstrating local ownership and multiplier effect (having impact beyond the direct beneficiaries of the grant).
6. *Budget (10 / 100 points):*
- Applicant proposes sufficient yet lean and scalable staffing structures that leverage appropriate internal and external expertise but maximize support and funding for local leadership.
 - Budget maximizes (provides no less than 25% of) the portion of funding, activities, and in-kind support dedicated to in-country women's organizations and their activities.
 - *Cost-effectiveness:* Provide a brief analysis in the budget narrative of why the proposed program is cost-effective. Applicants are encouraged to consider the relationship between their proposed funding amount requested and the impact that the program will have on direct and indirect beneficiaries. Any proposed program inputs should be procured at the least cost for the relevant level of quality.
 - *Budget Appropriateness:* Program budget and budget narrative are aligned with the proposed activities and explain the line items and criteria as directed. Costs are reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the proposed activities.

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 of funds awarded under this Notice of Funding Opportunity will not be disbursed until the Department has been assured that the Recipient's financial management system will provide effective control over and accountability for all federal funds in accordance with 2 CFR 200 and 2 CFR 600 as applicable.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply.

These include:

- [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)
- [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
- [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)
- [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE \(FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\)](#)
- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
- [2 CFR 600 – DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider applications for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this notice of funding opportunity in accordance with the following: NOTE:

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 85 FR 49506 on August 13, 2020, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an objective process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - Prohibiting the purchase of certain telecommunication and video surveillance services or equipment in alignment with section 889 of the

- National Defense Authorization Act of 2019 (Pub. L. No. 115—232) (2 CFR part 200.216),
- Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
 - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and
 - Terminating agreements in whole or in part to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).

3. Reporting Requirements:

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](#).

The Recipient shall provide financial, progress, and final reports. Please note that all substantiating documentation supporting reporting and data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Department of State upon request. All reports must be written in English.

- **Financial Reports:**

The Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial reports throughout the program period, using Form FFR SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form, as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found on OMB’s website here: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/. Financial reports are due 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter.

- **Progress Reporting:**

The grantee will be in frequent contact with S/GWI and the Grants Officer Representative (GOR) concerning award. The grantee is required to submit quarterly program progress reports using forms suggested by the GOR. The grantee must also assess annually whether the previously-submitted risk assessment and mitigation plan needs to be updated; if so, the grantee must inform the S/GWI of the change and provide an updated plan within the first quarter of each new period-of-performance year. The grantee may also be asked to report specifically on progress on addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender and inclusion analysis.

Progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the quarterly reporting period.

Recipients must report *immediately* when a program faces unplanned delays in implementation, fails to meet program targets or milestones, or costs increase. Any

changes or revisions to the approved budget require prior approval from the Grants Officer.

- **Final Report:**

The final report will be due no later than ninety days after completion or termination of all award activities. The final report shall include: executive summary, successes, outcomes, how the program achieved objectives, the results of the independent evaluation (which must be included in proposals and budgets), and a final financial report. The grantee may also be asked to report specifically on progress on addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender analysis.

- **Foreign Assistance Data Review:**

As required by Congress, the Department of State must make progress in its efforts to improve tracking and reporting of foreign assistance data through the Foreign Assistance Data Review (FADR). The FADR requires tracking of foreign assistance activity data from budgeting, planning, and allocation through obligation and disbursement. Successful applicants will be required to report and draw down federal funding based on the appropriate FADR Data Elements, indicated within their award documentation. In cases of more than one FADR Data Element, typically program or sector and/or regions or country, the successful applicant will be required to maintain separate accounting records.

Agency Contact:

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should email them to SGWIPROJECTPROPOSALS@STATE.GOV. To maintain fairness and transparency in competition, S/GWI will not answer substantive NOFO questions except when posting questions and answers to the announcement page on grants.gov on SAMS Domestic.

All questions must be submitted via email to SGWIPROJECTPROPOSALS@STATE.GOV by 11:59 PM EST April 4, 2022. S/GWI will create a document of submitted questions with answers and post it on SAMS Domestic. Substantive questions submitted after the deadline will not be addressed.

With the exception of technical submission questions, during the solicitation period U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas shall not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process has been completed and rejection and approval letters have been transmitted.

The intent to apply is a notification to S/GWI via email expressing the intent to submit a proposal under this announcement. The notification does not require any specific format or template. The intent to apply is optional and will not be binding.

For questions regarding creating an account with grants.gov, contact the grants.gov Contact Center. The Contact Center is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays.

Grants.gov Contact Center
(800) 518-4726
support@Grants.gov

For a list of federal holidays visit:

<https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/snow-dismissal-procedures/federal-holidays/>

For questions regarding creating an account or using [SAMS Domestic](#) to submit an application, contact the ILMS Help Desk. The Help Desk is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, excluding federal holidays. The ILMS Help Desk utilizes a user-facing ticketing interface that allows users to submit and monitor their SAMS Domestic tickets. The ILMS Self Service Portal can be accessed by going to <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>.

ILMS Help Desk
(888) 313-ILMS (4567)
[ILMS Self Service Portal](#)

ANNEX A: Bureau-Specific Award Provisions

I. Program Impact, Highlights, Success Stories

In quarterly reporting, the Recipient shall share success stories and/or highlights--or confirm that there were none for that quarter. Examples include program impact stories about (a) individual beneficiaries; and (b) organizational, project, or program-level highlights. The Recipient should indicate whether the information can be used in public communications by S/GWI and/or the broader U.S. Government. This may include, but is not limited to, remarks, social media, and website text. The privacy and safety of program beneficiaries is paramount; the Recipient shall ensure that appropriate permissions have been granted by those included in text and photos and that risks have been assessed and mitigated prior to including the information in quarterly reporting. The reporting should include high-resolution photos, photo credit information, and confirmation that appropriate permissions have been obtained from subjects/photographers for using the photos, where applicable.

II. Program Evaluations

The Recipient is required to budget and arrange for independent program evaluations in accordance with its approved proposal and any subsequent changes agreed with S/GWI in writing. In the spirit of the Evidence Act,¹⁵ S/GWI ask that evaluation reports be written with the expectation that they will be made public. **S/GWI prioritizes the safety and security of partners, participants, and beneficiaries of its work.** The Recipient should therefore aim to limit the amount of sensitive, potentially sensitive, or personal identifying information (PII) in evaluation narratives to allow this information to be easily redacted. Alternatively, this type of information can be placed in an annex that can be withheld from publication. In the event that this is not feasible or there is any concern for partners', participants', or beneficiaries' safety, an evaluation will not be made public. S/GWI will make this determination on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the Recipient.

III. Gender and Inclusion Analysis

The Recipient shall regularly monitor and reflect upon the gender and inclusion analysis together with local partners and propose in writing any significant adjustments to the program design for S/GWI concurrence. This process shall take place at the frequency set out in the Recipient's proposal, unless otherwise agreed with S/GWI in writing.

¹⁵ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/115th-congress/house-bill/4174>

Within its Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) and its final evaluation(s), the Recipient will report specifically on progress towards addressing the gaps and opportunities identified in the gender and inclusion analysis.

IV. Risk Assessments and Do No Harm

In line with Do No Harm principles, Recipient risk assessment and mitigation plans must address risk to project beneficiaries in addition to risks to staff and project implementation. These should explicitly address gender-related risks and mitigating actions, as identified in the gender and inclusion analysis.

V. Combatting Sexual Exploitation and Abuse

(a) *Policy.* S/GWI has zero tolerance for inaction regarding allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) occurring in relation to a federal award, and advocates for a survivor-centered approach to addressing such misconduct. The Recipient, Recipient employees, and their agents must:

- (1) Not engage in sexual exploitation and abuse of award beneficiaries in the performance of this award;
- (2) Adopt a zero tolerance for inaction policy and take all reasonable and lawful measures to prevent and address sexual exploitation and abuse occurring under this award.

(b) *Recipient Requirements.* To comply with the Policy in paragraph (a)(2), the Recipient shall:

- (1) Develop and adhere to a minimum set of organization-wide policies and internal controls necessary to reasonably prevent, detect, address, and resolve incidents of SEA, which must include:
 - (i) A zero tolerance policy for inaction in addressing SEA;
 - (ii) A readily available organizational policy or code of conduct for employees that includes safeguarding and [IASC principles](#);
 - (iii) A safe, accessible, and confidential internal reporting mechanism, such as a hotline, for reporting SEA, with appropriate safeguards to protect whistle-blowers and survivors, including express protection against retaliation for reports of SEA;
 - (iv) Investigative procedures that provide due process to the accused;
 - (v) Hiring policies aimed at preventing re-circulation of perpetrators on successive government awards, including policies on the impact of misconduct on rehiring or transfer and referencing for subsequent employers
- (2) Prohibit all personnel from engaging in SEA and notify employees of relevant policies, including remedies against employee perpetrators;
- (3) Take appropriate action against perpetrators that commit SEA or fail to take reasonable steps to prevent it;
- (4) Upon obtaining credible information of SEA, take prompt and reasonably appropriate action to stop harm occurring, investigate, and report to

relevant authorities (for criminal matters) in a manner consistent with a survivor-centered approach. The Recipient must maintain appropriate standards that govern the conduct of its personnel and subrecipients and a suitable mechanism for complete and comprehensive reporting of such conduct.

(c) *Notification.* The Recipient shall inform the Grants Officer (GO) and Grants Officer Representative (GOR) immediately of:

- (1) Any credible information it receives from any source (including host country law enforcement) that alleges a Recipient employee, sub-awardee, sub-awardee employee, or Recipient's agent has engaged in conduct included in paragraph (a) of this Combatting Sexual Abuse and Exploitation clause; and
- (2) Any actions taken against a Recipient employee, sub-awardee, sub-awardee employee, or Recipient's agent pursuant to this Combatting Sexual Abuse and Exploitation clause.
- (3) Each notification referred to in paragraph (c)(1) and (c)(2) will indicate, as reasonably available to Recipient: the agreement number, description of the alleged SEA, date of alleged SEA, date of first report to the Recipient, location, involvement of sub-recipient, state of affairs concerning the investigation and the action that will be taken by the Recipient, and whether the case is referred to law enforcement. The Recipient will provide updates on the status of the case. The notice will be given in writing.
- (4) It is understood and accepted that the Recipient's duty to report on SEA is subject to not compromising the safety, security, privacy, and due process rights of any concerned persons and limitations that may be imposed by applicable law. Any information or documentation provided in accordance with this Combatting Sexual Abuse and Exploitation clause will be treated by State Department with utmost discretion in order to ensure, inter alia, the probity of any investigation, protect sensitive information, ensure the safety and security of persons or assets, and respect the due process rights of all involved. State Department will presume information/documentation to be confidential, deliberative, and investigatory and will ensure that information/documentation provided to State Department personnel will be available solely to those who strictly require access to such information/documentation. Any disclosure of such information/documentation beyond such personnel will require notification and consultation with the Recipient.

(d) *Full Cooperation.* Recipient will:

- (1) Fully cooperate with State Department in the event of investigation, audit, or corrective action, including by disclosing info, providing timely and complete responses, and providing reasonable access to facilities; and
- (2) Take measures designed to ensure that employees suspected of being victims of or witnesses to prohibited activities are not subjected to additional prohibited conduct, harassment or retaliation, and shall not prevent or hinder the ability of these employees from cooperating fully with Government authorities.
- (3) Full cooperation will have the meaning prescribed at 48 C.F.R. 52.203-13 and be subject to the applicable law.

(e) *Sub-awards.* The Recipient shall include the substance of this clause in all sub-awards and in all contracts with agents.

(f) *Policies and Procedures and Oversight.*

- (1) The Recipient shall provide copies of its Code of Conduct and related policies and procedures to S/GWI upon request and by no later than within 60 days of award, unless a different schedule is agreed in writing.
- (2) Should any change be made to the Recipient's code of conduct and related PSEA policies and procedures during the validity period of this agreement, the Recipient shall inform S/GWI in writing within thirty (30) days of the changes.
- (3) State Department or any of its duly authorized representatives may at all times carry out reviews, evaluations, or other oversight measures to verify the Recipient's zero tolerance for SEA. The Recipient will fully cooperate with State Department or any of its duly authorized representatives or agents to carry out such oversight measures.

(g) *Termination.* Failure to comply with the terms of this provision may result in termination of the award.

(h) *Definitions.* As used in this clause

- "Information" means any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts, data, or opinions, in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, graphic, cartographic, narrative, or audiovisual (Committee on National Security Systems Instruction (CNSSI) 4009);
- "Sexual Abuse" means any actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions. For child sexual abuse, it specifically includes but is not limited to fondling a child's genitals, penetration, incest, rape, sodomy, indecent exposure, and exploitation through prostitution or the production of pornographic materials;
- "Sexual Exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse by Recipient or sub-awardee employees or agents of a position of vulnerability, differential

power or trust, for sexual purposes, including profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another;

- “Survivor-centered approach” means an approach for which the survivor’s dignity, experiences, considerations, needs, and resiliencies are placed at the center of the process, from the initial award design to investigating and responding to potential incidents. Consistent with the UN Protocol on Allegations of SEA Involving Implementing Partners, the survivor should be informed, participate in the decision-making process, and provide consent on the possible use and disclosure of their information. Those interacting with the survivor and/or handling information regarding the allegation must maintain confidentiality, ensure safety of the survivor, and apply survivor-centered principles which are safety, confidentiality, respect, and non-discrimination. When the survivor is a child, the approach must consider the best interests of the child and engage with the family/caregivers as appropriate. Staff and partners should comply with host country and local child welfare and protection legislation and international standards, whichever gives greater protection;
- “Credible information” - information that, considering its source and the surrounding circumstances, supports a reasonable belief that an event has occurred or will occur;
- “Zero Tolerance for Inaction” means that every allegation is treated seriously and appropriate action is pursued to resolve it.

ANNEX B: INDICATORS

Possible indicators for inclusion in a monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEL) plan at the proposal stage, though not required, may include:

- GDNR- 1: Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed or adopted with USG assistance designed to promote gender equality or non-discrimination against women or girls at the national or sub-national level
- GNDR-2: Number of female participants in USG-assisted programs designed to increase access to productive economic resources (assets, credit, income or employment)
- GNDR-4: Percentage of participants reporting increased agreement with the concept that males and females should have equal access to social, economic, and political resources and opportunities
- GNDR-5: Number of legal instruments drafted, proposed, or adopted with USG assistance designed to improve prevention of or response to sexual and gender based violence at the national or sub-national level
- GNDR-6: Number of people reached by a USG funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g., health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, other)
- GNDR-8: Number of persons trained with USG assistance to advance outcomes consistent with gender equality or female empowerment through their roles in public or private sector institutions or organizations
- DR.4-1: Number of USG-supported activities designed to promote or strengthen the civic participation of women
- DR.4.2-2b: Number of women's rights civil society organizations (CSOs) receiving USG assistance engaged in advocacy interventions
- EG.3.2-5: Number of public-private partnerships formed as a result of USG assistance
- EG.3.2-20: Number of for-profit private enterprises, producers organizations, water users associations, women's groups, trade and business associations and community-based organizations (CBOs) that applied improved organization-level technologies or management practices with USG assistance
- EG.6-1b: Number of individuals with new or better employment following completion of USG-assisted workforce development programs, number of females
- EG.6-3b: Number of individuals who complete USG-assisted workforce development programs, number of females