



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

Strengthening U.S. Advanced Technology Protection from Chinese Diversion in NEA, WHA, and EAP

Bureau of Arms Control and Nonproliferation, Department of State

Opportunity number: DFOP0018150

Application deadline: July 20, 2026

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U.S Department of State
Arms Control and Nonproliferation
Notice of Funding Opportunity

A. Basic Information

1. Overview

Funding Opportunity Title	Strengthening U.S. Advanced Technology Protection from Chinese Diversion in WHA, NEA, EAP
Funding Opportunity Number	DFOP0018150
Announcement Type	Initial Announcement
Deadline for Applications	Monday, July 20, 2026, 23:59:59 EST
Assistance Listing Number	19.317
Length of performance period	12 to 24 months
Number of awards anticipated	1 award
Award amounts	The budget should not exceed the ceiling per line of effort (LOE), nor the total available funding.
Total available funding	\$4,032,350 pending availability of funds
Type of Funding	FY25/26 NADR Foreign Assistance
Anticipated project start date	October 01, 2026

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit applications that address all lines of effort specified in this notice. Applications that do not cover all required lines of effort will be deemed non-responsive and disqualified from consideration.

Subawards and Subrecipients

The Department encourages applicants to utilize subawards and subrecipients to achieve program objectives. Applicants may partner with other organizations through subaward arrangements. Prime recipients remain responsible for overall program management, compliance, and reporting requirements for all subaward activities. All subaward arrangements must comply with 2 CFR 200 and Department of State requirements.

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative agreement. Cooperative agreements include substantial involvement of the bureau or embassy in program implementation of the project. Examples of substantial involvement are included in section C below.

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should be completed in 24 months or less.

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

2. Executive Summary

This NOFO combats China's efforts to acquire U.S.-origin advanced technologies and control critical supply-chain nodes that enable proliferation-relevant capabilities. **LOE 1** strengthens GCC governments' ability to implement U.S. AI license conditions, detect and prevent diversion of U.S.-origin advanced technologies, and counter Chinese exploitation of regional transshipment hubs. **LOE 2** helps priority Western Hemisphere countries design and enforce fair, effective investment screening to block Chinese access to sensitive technologies, critical infrastructure, and minerals essential to defense supply chains. **LOE 3** reinforces export controls and oversight of free trade and special economic zones across ASEAN and Mongolia to disrupt Chinese diversion of emerging and dual-use technologies through regional trading hubs.

Applicants should propose an innovative and effective set of activities based on the target funding amount but be prepared to execute flexibly and adjust activity composition and timing based on U.S. government priorities and other factors during the period of performance. Creative approaches are imperative to achieve maximum impact for U.S. national security objectives. Applicants should demonstrate that each proposed engagement will have a specified objective to support U.S. interests, associated indicators, and means for follow-up engagement (e.g., virtual, survey, etc.) to produce meaningful data on realized changes as well as enabling and limiting factors for unrealized changes.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

The following U.S. or foreign organizations are eligible to apply:

- *Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations*
- *Public and private educational institutions*
- *For-profit organizations (only if allowed by appropriation - not for PD funds)*

Applications submitted by for-profit entities may be subject to additional review following the panel selection process. Additionally, the Department of State prohibits profit to for-profit or commercial organizations under its assistance awards. Profit is defined as any amount in excess of allowable direct and indirect costs. The allowability of costs incurred by commercial organizations is determined in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) at 48 CFR 30, Cost Accounting Standards Administration, and 48 CFR 31 Contract Cost Principles and Procedures.

Please see 2 CFR 200.307 for regulations regarding program income. For-profit recipients who do not have a formally established overhead or G&A rate should allocate indirect costs into the appropriate direct cost categories.

- *Public International Organizations and Governmental institutions*

2. Cost Sharing or Matching

The non-Federal share of costs, frequently called "cost share" or "matching costs", refers to that portion of the project or program costs not borne by the Federal Government. This may include

cash and third-party in-kind contributions. These costs must reflect the realistic capacity of the applicants and any third-party contributors.

Providing cost sharing, matching, or cost participation is not an eligibility factor or requirement for this NOFO and providing cost share will not result in a more favorable competitive ranking. Per 2 CFR §200.306, items that are proposed for cost share must be allowable per 2 CFR §200, Subpart E—Costs Principles.

Voluntary cost-share: Should the applicant choose to contribute voluntary cost-share, in the event the applicant does not meet the minimum amount of the voluntary cost-sharing stipulated in the applicant's budget, DOS contribution may be reduced in proportion to the Applicant's contribution.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov as well as a valid registration in SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for more information. Individuals are not required to have a UEI or be registered in SAM.gov.

C. Program Description

1. Goals and Objectives

LOE 1: Strengthening U.S. Advanced Technology Protection from Chinese Diversion in the Gulf (\$983,500)

China's systematic exploitation of transshipment hubs, weak export control enforcement, and gaps in due diligence in the Gulf region poses a direct threat to U.S. technological superiority and national security. Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries—Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates—are rapidly integrating full-stack U.S. artificial intelligence (AI) technologies and infrastructure through major commercial deals worth billions of dollars. While U.S.-issued licenses contain strict technology protection controls, and some GCC countries are actively taking steps to improve security, recipient country ability to monitor, enforce, and comply with license conditions varies significantly. Chinese state-affiliated entities and front companies actively target GCC countries as opportunities for diversion of U.S.-origin AI-enabling semiconductors, advanced microelectronics, and dual-use technologies. The risk is compounded by the region's role as a global transshipment hub, high transaction volumes through free trade zones, and varying levels of export control legal frameworks and enforcement capacity across GCC member states.

Through targeted technical assistance, bilateral and regional engagement, and hands-on training and technical cooperation for targeted GCC countries (up to or including Bahrain, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and United Arab Emirates), this project will help participating countries improve cooperation with the United States, develop robust licensing procedures, enhance risk-based targeting capabilities, strengthen supply chain due diligence, and establish specialized advanced technology protection mechanisms.

Activities will include:

- 1) bilateral and regional technical assistance and consultations tailored to each country's specific capacity needs;
- 2) regional coordination to harmonize enforcement approaches and facilitate information sharing;
- 3) government-to-industry outreach to promote voluntary compliance and suspicious activity reporting;
- 4) mentoring and technical reachback support for ongoing implementation challenges; and
- 5) capability development assistance to establish specialized units or personnel focused on advanced technology protection.

Wherever feasible, taking into consideration political sensitivities or constraints, participants should engage in real-life case studies of Chinese diversion attempts, to foster peer-to-peer learning and regional networking.

The grantee will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating project progress, collecting and analyzing data on training outcomes and capacity improvements, and reporting on outcomes quarterly.

Performance will be measured by several key indicators, including:

- the number of licensing and customs officials trained in advanced technology commodity identification, risk-based targeting, and license compliance procedures;
- the number of participating countries that agree to develop or develop written procedures for implementing U.S. license conditions on advanced AI semiconductors;
- the percentage of trained officials demonstrating proficiency in technical identification of controlled microelectronics through practical assessments;
- the number of recipient countries that establish dedicated advanced technology protection units or specialized personnel;
- the number of reported instances of successfully identified suspicious procurement patterns, diversion attempts, or interdictions within 18 months of training;
- the number of industry stakeholders trained in compliance obligations; and
- documented improvements in regional coordination and information sharing on enforcement actions.

Data collection methods will include pre- and post-training assessments, practical exercises evaluated by subject matter experts, participant feedback surveys, follow-up interviews with government counterparts, documentation review of written procedures developed, tracking of reported interdictions and suspicious activity identifications, and observation by USG personnel including ACN policy offices, Department of Commerce/BIS officials, and Embassy personnel.

The grantee should plan to conduct in-person bilateral consultations in each participating GCC country, as well as regional coordination forums. The grantee should budget for a minimum of six in-person trips to the region over the 24-month program period, to include:

- 1) initial consultations with priority countries (Bahrain, KSA, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, and/or UAE) to assess capacity needs, in consultation with U.S. Department of State offices or assessments on AI adoption and exports, and confirm training priorities;
- 2) bilateral technical assistance in each participating country focused on license compliance, risk-based targeting, and advanced semiconductor identification;
- 3) regional coordination to facilitate peer-to-peer learning and information sharing;
- 4) government-to-industry outreach sessions in priority countries;
- 5) advanced training modules and follow-on mentoring visits; and
- 6) a second regional coordination forum and final assessment activities.

The grantee should budget for a minimum of 8-12 participants from each country for bilateral consultations and technical consultations and 3-5 participants from each country for regional forums (unless cost-shared by recipient countries). The grantee should also budget for virtual consultations and technical reach back support between in-person engagements to provide ongoing mentoring and address implementation challenges.

The grantee will be expected to closely coordinate with EXBS and potentially other ACN and Department regional and functional policy offices, and U.S. embassies on all consultations with GCC countries to ensure tailored framing, messaging, and composition of often sensitive technical cooperation and assistance efforts.

Applicants should propose an innovative and effective set of activities based on the target funding amount, but be prepared to execute flexibly and adjust activity composition and timing based on U.S. government priorities and other factors during the period of performance. Creative approaches are imperative to achieve maximum impact for U.S. national security objectives.

Applicants should demonstrate that each proposed engagement will have a specified objective to support U.S. interests, associated indicators, and means for follow-up engagement (e.g., virtual, survey, etc.) to produce meaningful data on realized changes as well as enabling and limiting factors for unrealized changes.

LOE 2: FDI Screening to Impede China's Technology Theft and Infrastructure Control in WHA (\$1,573,600)

China has systematically used foreign direct investment (FDI) for decades to acquire critical technologies, control strategic infrastructure, and dominate mineral supply chains, posing direct threats to U.S. national security and economic competitiveness. Investments in, and access to non-public information about semiconductors, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, port facilities, and rare earth processing undermine U.S. technological leadership, create vulnerabilities in critical infrastructure, and establish chokepoints in defense-essential supply chains.

The Western Hemisphere is central to U.S. security and economic interests. The Trump Corollary, as outlined in the National Security Strategy and the draft Executive Order for

Strategic Hemisphere Integration for Economic Leadership and Defense (SHIELD), prioritizes preventing non-Hemispheric competitors from owning or controlling strategically vital assets in the region.

China's investments in Latin American trade infrastructure—including deep-water ports, logistics hubs, and facilities near the Panama Canal—threaten U.S. commercial and military access to key maritime chokepoints and create leverage points that Beijing could exploit to disrupt supply chains or pressure regional governments to bypass nonproliferation controls during crises. China's dominant position in Latin America's critical minerals sector, including lithium in Argentina and Chile, copper in Peru and Chile, and rare earth elements across the region, creates strategic vulnerabilities for the U.S. defense industrial base and economic security.

This project aims to provide targeted technical assistance to priority Western Hemisphere countries (Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Uruguay) to help them implement fair and effective investment screening mechanisms. Support may include developing standard operating procedures, guidelines, and legal frameworks to protect advanced technology, critical infrastructure, and proliferation-relevant resources from Chinese ownership and influence. Through bilateral and, where appropriate, regional engagement and hands-on training, the project will help countries establish regulatory barriers to China's exploitative supply chain practices, reducing risks to U.S. and allied investments.

The grantee will first assess risks posed by Chinese investments in these countries, considering security, technological, and economic factors relevant to nonproliferation objectives. This will be coordinated with U.S. government stakeholders and posts to ensure alignment with policy objectives.

Following these assessments, and in close coordination with EXBS, the grantee will provide targeted technical assistance to illustrate the risks of exploitative foreign investment, identify needed legislative changes, including procurement reform, and examine potential risks from foreign investors – with private sector involvement as appropriate. The project will identify specific legal, regulatory, compliance, and enforcement mechanisms to strengthen safeguards based on each country's current status.

For this technical assistance, the grantee should plan to conduct bilateral in-person consultations and exercises in each priority country or in a regional setting, as determined jointly by EXBS and the grantee. Flexible, tailored approaches to maximize impacts are encouraged and may include (1) Bilateral technical assistance exercises and consultations specific to each country's needs; (2) Regional exercises to harmonize investment screening approaches and facilitate information sharing; (3) Government-to-industry outreach to promote voluntary compliance and reporting of suspicious activity; (4) Mentoring and technical support for investment screening implementation; (5) advanced training and follow-on mentoring visits to facilitate implementation of screening legislation and regulations; (6) if suitable, study visits to the United States and/or third country(ies); and (7) Assistance in establishing specialized units or personnel focused on investment screening best practices.

Expected deliverables may include: 1) Formation of investment screening interagency working groups; 2) Development of procedures and/or protocols aligned with U.S.-endorsed best practices; 3) Legislative and/or regulatory reforms for investment screening; and Operationalization of fair investment screening procedures.

Grantee's proposed budgets should cover virtual consultations and ongoing technical support. The grantee should also budget for virtual consultations and technical reach-back support between in-person engagements to provide ongoing mentoring and address implementation and regulatory challenges. Applicants should propose an innovative and effective recommended set of activities based on the target funding amount but be prepared to execute flexibly and adjust activity composition and timing based on U.S. government priorities and other factors during the period of performance. Creative approaches are imperative to achieve maximum impact for U.S. national security objectives.

Applicants should demonstrate that each proposed engagement will have a specified objective to support U.S. interests, associated indicators, and means for follow-up engagement (e.g., virtual, survey, etc.) to produce meaningful data on realized changes as well as enabling and limiting factors for unrealized changes. Performance will be measured by several key indicators: the development and/or refinement of legal authorities to mitigate risks from or prohibit concerning investments; the number of officials trained in fair investment screening mechanisms; the number of participating countries that develop and/or refine written procedures for implementing investment screening mechanisms; the percentage of trained officials demonstrating proficiency in identifying potentially exploitative foreign investments; the number of recipient countries that establish investment screening units or specialized personnel; the number of reported instances of successfully identified suspicious investment patterns or technology diversion attempts within 18 months of training; the number of industry stakeholders trained in investment screening compliance obligations; and documented improvements in regional coordination and investment screening information sharing.

Baseline data will be established through initial consultations and assessments of existing frameworks. Data collection will include pre- and post-training assessments, practical exercises, participant surveys, follow-up interviews, documentation review, tracking of suspicious activity reports, and observation by ACN/EXBS and other U.S. government personnel.

The grantee, in coordination with EXBS, will coordinate with relevant national authorities to tailor activities to each country's needs and context. The grantee will monitor and evaluate project progress, collect and analyze training outcomes, and report quarterly.

The goal for this project is for recipient countries to implement fair and effective investment screening mechanisms, including SOPs, guidelines, and legal frameworks, to create regulatory barriers to China's exploitative supply chain dominance and reduce risks to U.S. and allied investments.

LOE 3: Strengthening Export Controls and Securing Free Trade Zones to Disrupt China's Acquisition of Emerging Technologies (EAP - \$1,475,250)

China's sophisticated diversion tactics to avoid export controls, particularly through Free Trade Zones (FTZs) and Special Economic Zones across ASEAN (Brunei; Burma; Cambodia; Indonesia; Laos; Malaysia; Philippines; Singapore; Thailand; Timor-Leste; Vietnam) and Mongolia, pose a significant threat to the integrity of U.S. trade and American technological and military advancement. These zones, while critical to global supply chains and economic growth, provide opportunities for Chinese entities to acquire sensitive and advanced U.S. technologies for military and WMD purposes. Weak and inconsistent export controls in the region enable the illicit acquisition and transshipment of dual-use goods, undermining U.S. national security and the technological edge of the United States and its partners in the Indo-Pacific. The risk is compounded as Southeast Asian countries rapidly increase their trade in emerging technologies, and as China expands its free trade initiatives with Mongolia, further exposing the region to exploitation.

The purpose of this project is to improve the capabilities of Southeast Asian countries and Mongolia to implement effective export controls, thereby safeguarding sensitive technologies and supporting a free and open Indo-Pacific. The project will work with countries in Southeast Asia and Mongolia to learn about export controls and related topics (such as FTZs, catch-all controls, FDI screening, etc.), identify and address regulatory gaps, develop robust interagency coordination mechanisms, and enhance enforcement capabilities. The project will include the following activities:

- **Regional Strategic Trade and Security Academy (STSA):** Hosted in Southeast Asia, the academy aims to develop and begin to harmonize regulatory frameworks and best practices. This activity should educate participants about foundational export control issues, emerging threats, address current gaps in regulations/enforcement exploited by China, and identify concrete actions each country must take to mitigate these risks. The grantee should plan for a one-to-two-week in-person technical review, based on budget availability and input from EXBS.
- **Export Control Operational Readiness Exercise (ORX):** Hosted in Southeast Asia, the ORX will apply the knowledge, skills, and best practices discussed in the regional STSA. Using case studies, the ORX will test the resilience and robustness of export control systems. This should further help participating countries establish clear mechanisms for interagency coordination; promote country-specific and regional information sharing; establish authorities to identify, investigate, and prosecute violations; and develop regulatory frameworks. The grantee should plan for a one-week in-person ORX.
- **Regional Export Control Working Group:** The Working Group will serve as intra-regional exchange mechanism to ensure sustainability and ongoing knowledge transfer. To this end, the grantee should establish an accessible online platform where participants can continue to exchange information, share best practices and resources, and ask questions. The platform should be transitioned over to a beneficiary country so it can be maintained without additional U.S. resources beyond this project.

All activities should leverage and emphasize peer-to-peer learning. Participants should engage in breakout groups, strategic discussions, and hands-on exercises, including real-life case studies and site visits at ports and FTZs where feasible, to foster active learning and regional networking. Each country will be encouraged to share success stories and challenges, ensuring that all activities are responsive to the varying needs and experiences of all participating countries.

The grantee will be responsible for implementing all aspects of the project, including conducting needs assessments to identify regulatory and enforcement gaps, organizing and delivering the regional STSA, facilitating operational readiness exercises, and supporting the creation and operation of the Regional Export Control Working Group. The grantee will coordinate closely with the EXBS program on all activities and engage with relevant national authorities, ensuring that activities are tailored to the specific needs and contexts of each participating country. The grantee will also be responsible for monitoring and evaluating project progress, collecting and analyzing data, and reporting on outcomes.

Baseline data will be established through initial assessments of existing regulatory frameworks, enforcement practices, and interagency coordination mechanisms in participating countries. Data collection methods will include pre- and post-training assessments, participant feedback, meeting and exercise records, and progress reports submitted by the grantee.

Performance will be measured by several key indicators: the number of regulatory gaps identified and addressed; the development and implementation of new or revised export control frameworks; the effectiveness of the STSA and Export Control ORX; the establishment and regular convening of the Regional Export Control Working Group; and documented improvements in detection and interdiction of illicit transfers.

The grantee should plan to conduct in-person and virtual consultations. The grantee should budget for a minimum of three in-person trips to the region, to include 1) the initial multilateral Regional Strategic Trade and Security Academy (to convene participating countries, introduce key topics, facilitate peer-to-peer learning, and identify key gaps; 2) conduct the Export Control ORX; and 3) provide follow-on support as needed to ensure project sustainability and the adoption of the Regional Export Control Working Group. The grantee should budget for all costs associated with the academy and ORX, including participant travel, lodging, venue space, translation, printing, and other related costs.

The grantee should demonstrate their ability to organize and facilitate interactive training on a range of export control topics. Additionally, the grantee should clearly articulate how they would promote peer-to-peer learning during the regional STSA and ORX and their plan to tailor learning objectives to country-specific needs. The grantee should also demonstrate their experience working with stakeholders from across governments.

Ultimately, the project aims to achieve measurable improvements in the ability of Southeast Asian and Mongolian authorities to prevent and disrupt Chinese diversion tactics, institutionalize regional cooperation, and harmonize export control standards across the region. By embedding best practices and fostering sustained peer-to-peer engagement, the project should contribute to the long-term security of Southeast Asia and of the United States.

Applicants should propose an innovative and effective set of activities based on the target funding amount, but be prepared to execute flexibly and adjust activity composition and timing based on U.S. government priorities and other factors during the period of performance. Creative approaches are imperative to achieve maximum impact for U.S. national security objectives.

Applicants should demonstrate that each proposed engagement will have a specified objective to support U.S. interests, associated indicators, and means for follow-up engagement (e.g., virtual, survey, etc.) to produce meaningful data on realized changes as well as enabling and limiting factors for unrealized changes.

ACN/EXBS expects that the Activities and Outcomes of this Award will work towards the following Goals and Objectives:

ACN/EXBS Goals and Objective(s)	
	Goal 1: PROTECT at the Source – Maintain U.S. technological and competitive advantage and promote U.S. investments by protecting sensitive goods, technologies, and border infrastructure from masked or predatory acquisition. Projects under this Strategic Objective develop legal/regulatory, industry compliance, and technical frameworks and processes to enable partners to stop proliferation and other malign activity before it starts.
<i>LOE 1, 2, 3</i>	Strategic Objective 1.1 – STC Legal & Regulatory Frameworks: Support partner countries’ drafting, adopting, and implementing export control frameworks that are in line with U.S. and international best practices allowing them to prevent exploitation of sensitive commodities by unauthorized end-users.
<i>LOE 2</i>	Strategic Objective 1.2 – Investment Screening and Infrastructure Protection: Support partner development and implementation of national security-focused Foreign Direct Investment screening mechanisms and provide equipment and subscriptions to mitigate the risks of predatory foreign investment in or exploitation of advanced technology, border infrastructure, data, and critical mineral sectors.
	Goal 2: PREVENT Proliferation – Reduce adversary ability to divert sensitive goods and technologies by improving licensing capabilities, strengthening

	identification and targeting of proliferation networks, and improving enforcement consequences for non-compliance. Projects under this Strategic Objective develop government and industry technical licensing, regulatory, enforcement, and compliance capabilities to identify and act on proliferation/diversion-related activities.
<i>LOE 2, 3</i>	Strategic Objective 2.1 – Licensing and Regulatory Capacity: Enable effective export control and related restrictions implementation by developing partner government and industry export licensing, financial regulatory, and catch-all control capabilities.
<i>LOE 1</i>	Strategic Objective 2.2 – Industry Outreach: Work with partner governments to improve their outreach processes and increase industry awareness of laws and regulations, penalties for violation, internal compliance practices, end-user checks, and other export control related risks.
<i>LOE 2</i>	Strategic Objective 2.3 – Risk Analysis and Targeting: Inform partner licensing decisions and enable data-driven, risk-based approaches to analysis, targeting, investigations, and compliance by providing the technical skills, techniques, and tools to identify proliferation-related transactions and entities.

2. Substantial Involvement

ACN/EXBS anticipates awarding a cooperative agreement. The distinction between grants and cooperative agreements revolves around the existence of “substantial involvement.” Cooperative agreements require greater Federal government participation in the project. ACN/EXBS will undertake reasonable and programmatically necessary substantial involvement. Substantial involvement areas can include, but are not limited to:

- Reviewing and approving the engagement outline, draft agenda, and a list of supplemental materials.
- Reviewing and approving draft course content and any proposed revisions.
- Reviewing and approving list of proposed participants.
- Reviewing and approving the scheduling and related logistical arrangements for each engagement; grantee(s) will be responsible for grantee and participant travel, lodging, venue, catering, interpretation & translation, any required A/V support, and other logistical components, unless identified by EXBS as a cost covered or shared by separate EXBS funds, a recipient country, or other organization.
- Reviewing and approving all final training materials prior to submission.

Specific areas of substantial involvement will be dependent upon the objectives of the proposal and outlined in the final Agreement. The final determination on award mechanism will be made by the Grants Officer.

D. Application Contents and Format

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be ineligible.

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars **and must not include cents.**
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to fit 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 15-point Open Sans font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins. This does not apply to tables and graphics.

The following documents are **required**:

1. Mandatory application forms

- SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance)
- SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs) at \$4,032,350.
- Detailed Budget (Excel) found at MyGrants under Information for the Applicant
- All SF forms can be found at: [SF-424 Family](#)

2. Summary Page (optional)

Cover sheet stating the applicant's name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

3. Proposal (15 pages maximum per LOE)

The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed project, including project objectives and anticipated impact.
- **Introduction to the Organization or Individual applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the State Department and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
- **Project Goals and Objectives:** The "goals" describe what the program is intended to achieve. The "objectives" refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Project Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.

- **Project Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- **Proposed Project 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?
- **Project Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** Throughout the time-frame of the cooperative agreement, describe how the activities and associated indicators of progress toward project goals/objectives will be monitored and evaluated to ensure timeliness, efficacy, and efficiency.
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant's plan for continuing the program beyond the cooperative agreement period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

4. Risk Assessment

Proposals must include a risk assessment and a plan for monitoring and mitigating the risks identified. Risks to project implementation may include a variety of political, environmental, and other factors. A few examples include outbreak of violent conflict, elections that change government partners, cybersecurity / hacking, misuse of personally identifiable information (PII), and diversion of financial or non-financial support to prohibited parties (terrorist financing). The assessment should also identify risks to staff, implementers, participants, beneficiaries, or their communities. Besides political and environmental factors, risks may include online or in-person potential physical, social, psychological, economic, and/or reputational backlash to beneficiaries as a result of their participation. The proposal should include a participatory needs assessment and explain how its implementers will engage with local actors throughout its lifecycle. Strong proposals will also describe strategies to sustain the activities beyond ACN/EXBS funding, or alternatively, how applicants will co-design a responsible exit strategy with local partners and in consultation with beneficiaries.

5. Scope of Work (SOW)

Separate from the proposal but part of the application, not to exceed two-pages Word document (includes all proposed program components and links each of these to the specific goal(s) it addresses. This document is not a narrative. It must be in outline form and capture all proposed work to be funded by this project. This includes each proposed program component with a brief statement that links each component to the corresponding goal it supports. SOWs that contain quantitative estimates of expected outputs, outcomes and indicators of success for each component will be considered more competitive.

6. Budget Justification Narrative

After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate file to describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See section I. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Justification below for further information.

7. Attachments

Attachments must adhere to the following guidelines and attachment order. File names must only include the document type, NOFO number, and line of effort number (if applicable), and not exceed 49 characters (including spaces). Example – Table of Contents_#####_LOE1. The attachment order follows:

- Attachment A – Table of Contents
- Attachment B – Required SF Forms
- Attachment C – Proposal Narrative
- Attachment D – Risk Assessment
- Attachment E – Scope of Work (See attached template)
- Attachment F – Detailed Budget (Excel)
- Attachment G – Budget Narrative (Word)
- Attachment H – NICRA (if applicable)
- Attachment I – A-133 audit (if applicable)
- Other Supporting Documents

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. Address to Request Application Package

Applicants can find application forms, kits, or other materials needed to apply on grants.gov and [MyGrants](https://mygrants.gov) under the announcement title “Strengthening U.S. Advanced Technology Protection from Chinese Diversion,” funding opportunity number “DFOP0018150.” Please contact EXBS_Grants@state.gov if requesting reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities or for security reasons. Please note that reasonable accommodations do not include deadline extensions.

2. Department of State Contacts

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

EXBS_Grants@state.gov. Questions are due on Thursday, June 04, 2026 and answers will be posted in MyGrants no later than Tuesday, June 09, 2026 to answer questions from all potential applicants.

3. Unique entity identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

Required Registrations

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration in SAM.gov. 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. An applicant must maintain an active registration while it has a proposal under review by the Department and must continue to keep the registration active for the entire duration of the period of performance of any Federal award that results from this NOFO.

The 2 CFR 200 requires subrecipients to obtain a UEI. Please note the UEI for subrecipients is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a subrecipient.

Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

- Organizations **based in the United States** or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a UEI prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- Organizations **based outside of the United States** and that do not pay employees within the United States do not need an EIN from the IRS but do need a UEI prior to registering in SAM.gov.
- **Organizations based outside of the United States that do not intend to apply for U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) awards are no longer required to have a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code to apply for non-DoD foreign assistance funding opportunities.** If an applicant organization is mid-registration and wishes to remove an NCAGE code from their SAM.gov registration, the applicant should submit a help desk ticket (“incident”) with the Federal Service Desk (FSD) online at www.fsd.gov using the following language: “I do not intend to seek financial assistance from the Department of Defense. I do not wish to obtain an NCAGE code. I understand that I will need to submit my registration after this incident is resolved in order to have my registration activated.”

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO NOT plan to do business with the DoD should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Proceed to SAM.gov to obtain a UEI and complete the SAM.gov registration process. SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually.

Organizations based outside of the United States and that DO plan to do business with the DoD in addition to Department of State should follow the below instructions:

Step 1: Apply for an NCAGE code by following the instructions on the NSPA NATO website linked below:

NCAGE Homepage:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/sc/CageList.aspx>

NCAGE Code Request Tool (NCRT):

[NCAGE Code Request Tool \(nato.int\)](#)

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis. See [2 CFR 25.110](#) for a full list of exemptions.

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 in the NOFO providing a justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

4. Audits

Include a copy of your organization's most recent audit (single or program audit if applicable), an annual external audit or audited financial statements when an audit has not been conducted. Please refer to the 2 CFR 200 for requirements. The applicant's proposal may include the cost of an audit that:

- Complies with the requirements of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F "Audit Requirements"
- Complies with the requirements of American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA) Statement of Position (SOP) No. 92-9, "Audits of Not-for-Profit Organizations Receiving Federal Awards."
- Complies with AICPA Codification of Statements on Auditing Standards AU Section 551, "Reporting on Information Accompanying the Basic Financial Statements in Auditor-Submitted Documents," where applicable. A non-federal entity that expends \$1,000,000 or more in all USG federal assistance awards during the non-federal entity's fiscal year is required to conduct a single or program-specific audit for that year in accordance with the provisions of 2 CFR 200 subpart F. For more information, see Audit Services, 2 CFR 200.425.

5. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than Monday, July 20, 2026, 23:59:59 EST.

6. Funding Restrictions

- i. Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to provide any

payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

ii. Prohibition on Funding Activities that Encourage Mass-Migration Caravans towards the United States Southwest Border:

None of the funds awarded under this cooperative agreement may be made available to encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass-migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. Funds may not be made available for legal counseling on the United States asylum process; and/or for referrals to legal representation in the United States.

Funds may only be used for cash cards for use in the country in which they are provided or to facilitate assisted voluntary returns and other purposes that do not encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. The provision of humanitarian assistance is permitted.

iii. Certification Regarding Compliance with applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws

If the place of performance or delivery of any award made under this NOFO will be within the United States, applicants are advised that they will be required to certify the following at the time of award:

- 1) Its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code and;
- 2) It does not operate any programs promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws. A program promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion means a program whose purpose is to promote preferences based on race, color religion, sex, or national origins, such as in training or hiring.

iv. Certification Regarding Compliance with 20 U.S.C. 1011f and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements.

Applicants are advised that IHEs must certify the following at the time of award, and that this certification requirement must be included in any subaward agreements to IHEs:

- 1) Its compliance in all respects with section 1011f of title 20, United States Code, and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements is material for purposes of section 3729 of title 31, United States Code, and for receipt of appropriate Federal grant funds.

v. Certification of Trafficking in Persons Compliance and Compliance Plan

Applicants are advised that they will be required to certify the following at the time of award for awards where the estimated value of services to be performed outside the United States exceeds \$500,000:

- 1) To the best of the Recipient's knowledge, neither the Recipient, nor any subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor of the Recipient or any agent of the recipient or of such a subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor, is engaged in any of the activities described in [2 CFR 175.105\(a\)](#);

The recipient has implemented a Trafficking in Persons compliance plan to prevent activities described in [2 CFR 175\(a\)](#) and is compliant with this plan; and the compliance plan must follow the minimum requirements described in 2 CFR 175(b)(5).

- 2) That the Recipient has and will implement procedures to prevent activities described in [2 CFR 175.105\(a\)](#) and to monitor, detect, and terminate any subrecipient, contractor, subcontractor, or employee of the recipient engaging in these activities.

Recipients do not need to submit a copy of the plan. However, they must provide it to the Grants Officer upon request, and as appropriate, must post the useful and relevant contents of the plan or related materials on their website and at the workplace. Recipients must re-certify on an annual basis for the entire award period of performance.

vi. Prohibition on Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). If your project involves the purchase or use of an UAS, see this [link](#) for requirements and information you must include in your application.

vii. Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance (PHFFA)

Applicants for foreign assistance awards should be aware of requirements in 2 CFR Part 602, 603, and 604.

These policies are referred to collectively as the Promoting Human Flourishing in Foreign Assistance (PHFFA) Policy.

602: The award term imposes certain abortion-related requirements on foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United States NGOs, public international organizations, foreign governments, and parastatals.

603: The award term imposes certain requirements relating to gender ideology on foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United States NGOs, international organizations, foreign governments, and parastatals.

604: The award term imposes certain requirements relating to discriminatory equity ideology on foreign nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), United States NGOs, international organizations, foreign governments, and parastatals.

The Department recognizes there are costs associated with these policies. Potential one-time and recurring costs the Department identifies for recipients and grantees are for familiarization with the policy, development and delivery of organizational training and implementation guidance, routine compliance monitoring, and recordkeeping and reporting requirements.

7. Other Submission Requirements

Applications must be submitted electronically through [MyGrants](#).

F. Application Review Information

1. Review Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below.

	Points Available
Quality & Achievability	40
Experience & Qualifications	20
Cost & Budget	15
Monitoring, Evaluation & Learning Plan	10
Long-term Impact	15

Quality and Achievability of the Program Idea: The applicant demonstrates understanding of the LOE's objectives and clearly explains proposed activities to effectively and efficiently achieve them, with a reasonable and realistic implementation timeline. The proposal does not include any activities contrary to any standing Executive Orders. For a full list, see <https://www.federalregister.gov/>.

Experience and Qualifications: The applicant (including any sub-contracted entities) demonstrates the requisite expertise, experience, and capacity to complete the proposed

activities, especially as substantiated by past performance in similar types of work. The organization has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds.

Cost and Budget: Overall cost and specific budget categories are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and outcomes, and the applicant demonstrates the capability to responsibly manage federal funds, including through internal controls and past performance. If sub-awards are proposed, applicant demonstrates experience managing subawards.

Monitoring and evaluation plan: Applicant demonstrates ability to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

Long-term impact: The proposed approach demonstrates how the activities will contribute to objective fulfillment beyond the funded period of performance, including persistence of gains, self-sustained actions by assistance recipients, and/or other realistic mechanisms.

2. Indirect Costs

If two or more applications receive equivalent scores based on the evaluation criteria outlined in this NOFO, preference will be given to the applicant with the lower indirect cost rate, as consistent with Executive Order 14332, Section 4(b)(iii). This preference will only be applied as a tie-breaking mechanism and does not supersede the primary evaluation criteria.

3. Review and Selection Process

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

4. Risk Review

i. Risk factors

Under the merit review as required by 2 CFR 200.206, prior to making a Federal Award the Department will review and consider the following risk factors:

- a. Financial stability
- b. Management systems and standards
- c. History of performance
- d. Audit reports and findings
- e. Ability to effectively implement requirements

ii. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov

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 U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313)

An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available in SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Department will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

G. Award Notices

The cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and counter-signature. The recipient may only start incurring project expenses beginning after the official kick-off of the grant/cooperative agreement. The kick-off will be scheduled in coordination with the assigned Grants Officer Representative, and attended by the Grants team with the optional attendance of 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.

Unsuccessful applicants: Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by October 2026 via email.

Payment Method:

Payments under this award will be made through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS). Unless otherwise stipulated, the Recipient must request payments on a reimbursement basis. Instructions for requesting payments via PMS are available at: <https://pms.psc.gov/>.

Recipients may not draw down funds without the affirmative authorization of the Department of State. In addition, recipients must submit, with each PMS payment request, a detailed explanation justifying the request.

H. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. 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:

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:

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register's 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an impartial process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - 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 pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340).
For the avoidance of doubt, the Department has sole discretion over the determination that an award no longer effectuates program goals or agency priorities, and this provision permits awards to be terminated at the Department's convenience, including when it determines that the award no longer advances the national interest.
- [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](#)
- Recipients must comply with all applicable Executive Orders A searchable list can be found in the Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/>

2. *Reporting*

Reporting Requirements: Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify what reports are required and how often these reports must be submitted. If applicable, the recipient shall track all funding by country using a template provided by ACN/EXBS. All reports must be uploaded to the appropriate post award activity in MyGrants.

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.

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](#).

Reporting Calendar by Fiscal Year

Q1 (October -December) due January 30;
 Q2 (January-March) due April 30;
 Q3 (April-June) due July 30; and
 Q4 (July-September) due October 30

3. **Branding and Marking**

The Department of State, its programs, and U.S. Government funding and assistance should be easily identifiable to the Department's global audiences.

Recipients of federal assistance awards must follow the branding guidance published at [Guidance for Contracts and Grants - U.S. Department of State Brand System](#). Branding policy exceptions are outlined in the U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual [10 FAM 416, Policy Exceptions](#).

For more information, visit: <https://brand.america.gov/>

I. Other Information

Guidelines for Budget Justification

The total budget should not exceed \$4,032,350.

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 \$10,000 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 \$10,000 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 15% of Modified Total Direct Costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.1.

“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.