U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE
U.S. EMBASSY KYIV
Notice of Funding Opportunity

Funding Opportunity Title: Strengthening U.S.-Ukraine Business Relations while Addressing Social Issues through “Serious Game Jam”

Funding Opportunity Number: PAS-Ukraine-2020-012

Deadline for Applications: June 15, 2020, 11:59 p.m. EEST (Kyiv Time)

CFDA Number: 19.900

Type of Solicitation: Open Solicitation

Funding Floor: $75,000

Funding Ceiling: $100,000

Type of Funding: FY19 Smith Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds

Anticipated Number of Awards: 1

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The U.S. Embassy in Ukraine of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out a program to strengthen U.S.-Ukraine business relations and cultivate a better business environment in Ukraine while addressing social issues through “serious gaming.” Please carefully follow all instructions below.

Program Objectives:

Summary: A successful applicant will introduce U.S. companies to the Ukrainian gaming industry and promote good corporate governance by creating a platform for U.S. developers to collaborate with their Ukrainian counterparts on tackling social issues through “serious games.” In doing so and through supplemental activities, you will offer Ukrainians an alternative to competitor technology sectors while promoting STEAM education and U.S. study.

The overarching strategic goals are to 1) strengthen U.S.-Ukraine business relations by providing a transparent platform for collaboration; 2) cultivate a better business environment; and 3) address Ukrainian social issues through the development of “serious games.”
Program Structure: You will work with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) and, as applicable, a Ukrainian sub-awardee to recruit approximately 50 established and aspiring Ukrainian game developers from across Ukraine for a two-day social issues workshop and two-day “game jam.” During the workshop, participants will work in small teams to begin designing “serious games” focused on Ukrainian social issues. The workshops will take place at the Kyiv America House in the first week of September 2020 to coincide with Comic Con Ukraine. PAS will assist in determining project themes. Your proposal should include plans to invite 8-10 local and American mentors – including representatives of U.S. video game companies – to advise participants on their projects and provide career-path mentorship.

Program plans must incorporate the ability to work with the Foreign Commercial Service to introduce U.S. game development companies to the Ukrainian market and facilitate relationships with their Ukrainian counterparts. These interactions may focus on good corporate governance, corporate social responsibility, and/or intellectual property rights. A key component of all activities will be safeguarding against outsourcing and, ideally, creating jobs for American workers.

The game jam will take place in the days before Comic Con Ukraine, scheduled for September 5-6 with an anticipated crowd of 35,000. Program plans should envision coordinating with the Comic Con organizers (with PAS assistance) to arrange a “pitch contest” on September 5, when the game jam participants will have the opportunity to present their ideas to potential investors (including participating U.S. companies) and gamers. The winning team(s) will receive seed money to continue their projects, and participating U.S. companies will have co-production rights to winning games on which their representatives provided mentorship, if interested. Additionally, you will assist PAS in programming U.S. mentors on the sidelines of Comic Con for events promoting STEAM education, women in STEAM, and U.S. study.

Note: Given the COVID-19 outbreak, proposals must also include plans for transitioning to an online format in case in-person programming should be unfeasible.

Sample Timeline:

- Two months before program start date: Publish call for participant applications; identify U.S. and local mentors; solicit U.S. company involvement
Monitoring and Evaluation: You must demonstrate your organization’s capacity to monitor program activities and evaluate your program’s results by measuring performance and impact (results). Indicators of success should relate directly to the strategic goals outlined above. You budget must cover the costs of monitoring and evaluating your program.

The evaluation plan should address the following: 1) What data will you collect to determine whether the program is on track? 2) How will you collect the data (e.g., pre- or post-surveys, focus groups, interviews, media monitoring, etc.) and what type of data will you collect (quantitative and/or qualitative)? 3) How will you organize and report your data? Your evaluation plan should be submitted in the format of a “logic model,” a link to a sample of which is included in Section D.

Sample Indicators of Success:

1. Within six months of the program, at least one team is continuing work on the project they designed or a similar initiative (measured via follow-up interviews).
2. Within six months of the program, at least one quarter of the participants are maintaining a relationship with their U.S. mentors, either through collaboration or ongoing mentoring (measured via follow-up interviews).
3. Within one year of the program, at least one new U.S. video game company has established or plans to establish a presence in Ukraine or has collaborated or plans to collaborate with a Ukrainian company (measured via follow-up interviews).
4. Based on pre- and post-program surveys, participants in the game jam demonstrate stronger technical skills and a greater aptitude for innovation and entrepreneurship.
5. Based on pre- and post-event surveys, attendees at talks promoting STEAM education, women in STEAM, and U.S. study show more interest in and understanding of these topics.
6. Based on pre- and post-event surveys, workshop and game jam participants show more interest in and understanding of the social issues of focus.

Participants and Audiences:

You will target amateur Ukrainian game developers and recent graduates of relevant educational programs with ages ranging 18-30 for participation. Developing a plan to include women and marginalized communities is highly encouraged. Depending on the theme, you may focus recruitment further.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement. Cooperative Agreements are different from grants in that Public Affairs Section staff are more actively involved in project implementation. Examples of substantial involvement could include the development of the grant program, final approval of grant activities, and participation in selection panels for program participants.

Project Performance Period: Proposed projects should ideally be planned for a period of no more than 18 months, starting in July 2020. Core program activities and monitoring should be completed within 6 months, and follow-on activities (including evaluation) should continue after that for no more than 12 months.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

1. Eligible Applicants

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

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

Note: We welcome but do not require working with Ukraine-based sub-awardees. Sub-awardees must also be not-for-profit organizations or public educational institutions. The primary awardee must be a U.S.-based entity meeting the above criteria.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching
Cost-sharing is encouraged but not required. The Grants Review Committee will not look more or less favorably on proposals due to the inclusion or lack of cost-sharing.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements

In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a unique entity identifier (Data Universal Numbering System/DUNS number from Dun & Bradstreet), as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

1. Address to Request Application Package

Application information is available at: https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

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

Content of Application

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 paper, and
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.
The following documents are **required:**

1. **Mandatory application forms:**
   - SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – Organizations)
   - SF-424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs)
   - SF-424B (Assurances for Non-Construction Programs)

   All forms are available on the U.S. Embassy website: [https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/](https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/)

2. **Proposal (10 pages maximum):** The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

   - **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
   - **Introduction to the Organization 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 U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
   - **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed
   - **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
   - **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
   - **Virtual Backup Plan:** Outline briefly your strategy for transitioning project activities to an online format should in-person programming become unfeasible.
   - **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
   - **Proposed Program Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
• **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?

• **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.

• **Program Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant? What follow-on evaluation activities will you conduct to measure longer-term impacts? Your proposal should include a brief narrative statement summarizing the answers to these questions, as well as a more detailed logic model as mentioned below.

• **Future Funding or Sustainability:** Applicant’s plan for continuing the program or its outcomes beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

3. **Budget Justification Narrative:** As an example, you could use an Excel spreadsheet as seen in the sample at [https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/](https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/) for a preliminary budget estimate.

4. **Program Evaluation Plan:** As an example, you could use an Excel spreadsheet “logic model” as seen in the sample at [https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/](https://ua.usembassy.gov/education-culture/current-programs-grants/) to visualize your evaluation plan.

5. **Attachments:**

   • 1-page CV or resume of key personnel who are proposed for the program
   • Letters of support from program partners describing the roles and responsibilities of each partner, if applicable
   • If your organization has a NICRA and includes NICRA charges in the budget, your latest NICRA should be included as a PDF file.
   • Official permission letters, if required for program activities

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

**Required Registrations:**
Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.” Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

All organizations applying for grants (except individuals) must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

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

Step 1: Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

DUNS application: Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform

NCAGE application: Application page here: https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx
Instructions for the NCAGE application process: https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423
For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766
Email NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

Step 2: After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: https://www.sam.gov. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

4. Submission Dates and Times

Applications are due no later than June 15, 2020, 11:59 p.m. EEST (Kyiv Time).
5. Funding Restrictions

Proposals **may not** include funding requests for the following:

- Capital improvements, such as construction and renovation.
- Purchase of vehicles.
- Activities that convey the appearance of partisanship or support for electoral campaigns.
- Social welfare projects.

Note: Your proposal may include the cost of an audit that:

a. Complies with the requirements of 2 CFR 200 Subpart F “Audit Requirements;”

b. 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;”

c. 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. When the U.S. Department of State is the largest direct source of Federal financial assistance (i.e., the cognizant Federal Agency) and indirect costs are charged to Federal grants, a supplemental schedule of indirect cost computation is required.

6. Other Submission Requirements

All application materials must be submitted by email to KyivPDGrants@state.gov.

Serious Game Jam: Abbreviated Project Title, Name of Applicant Organization

You will receive a message confirming receipt of your electronic application containing a registration number. Please do not send hard copies by mail. Please submit only the documents indicated above; no other documents will be reviewed or taken into consideration.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

1. Criteria
Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

**Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 25 points:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline. The Grants Review Committee will pay particular attention to whether the proposal fits within the guidelines set in Section A.

**Organizational Capacity and Record on Previous Grants – 20 points:** The organization has expertise in its stated field and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account. If working with a sub-awardee, this also includes prior work managing a sub-awardee.

**Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 20 points:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated and program approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Budget – 10 points:** The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

**Monitoring and Evaluation Plan – 15 points:** Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal, including after the program has concluded. The program includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

**Sustainability – 10 points:** Program activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the program.

2. Review and Selection Process

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications within two weeks of the submission deadline.

3. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS)
For any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity, if the Federal awarding agency anticipates that the total Federal share will be greater than the simplified acquisition threshold on any Federal award under a notice of funding opportunity may include, over the period of performance (see §200.88 Simplified Acquisition Threshold), this section must also inform applicants:

i. That the Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM (currently FAPIIS) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313);

ii. That an applicant, at its option, may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered and is currently in the designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM;

iii. That the Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant’s integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

4. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates

Awards will likely be announced within two weeks of the proposal submission deadline.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

1. Federal Award Notices

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.
If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.

**Payment Method:** The Recipient must request payment under this award by completing form SF-270—Request for Advance or Reimbursement and submitting the form to the Grants Officer. Unless otherwise stipulated, the recipient may request payments on a reimbursement or advance basis. Advance payments must be limited to the minimum amounts needed and be timed to be in accordance with the actual, immediate cash requirements of the recipient in carrying out the purpose of this award. The timing and amount of advance payments must be as close as is administratively feasible to the actual disbursements by the recipient for direct program or project costs and the proportionate share of any allowable indirect costs.

2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include: 2 CFR 200, 2 CFR 600, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: [https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/](https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/).

Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

3. Reporting

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

**G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**
If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: KyivPDGrants@state.gov.

H. OTHER INFORMATION

Guidelines for Budget Justification

Personnel and Fringe Benefits: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program. Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries. If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.

Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least $5,000 per unit.

Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than $5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.

Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.

Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.

Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.
“Cost Sharing” 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.