AFCP 2022 Grants Program

Application Guide

1. The Cultural Heritage Center ("the Center") in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is pleased to announce the start of the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) 2022 Grants Program. The application process involves two rounds: In Round 1, the Center will collect project ideas from embassies in the form of concept notes, due December 10, 2021. In Round 2, the Center will invite embassies with promising ideas to submit full project applications, due April 1, 2022.

2. AFCP Program Objectives: The Department of State established the AFCP in 2001 at the request of Congress (Conference Report 106-1005 accompanying H.R. 4942). At the time, the Senate noted that the preservation of cultural heritage "offers an opportunity to show a different American face to other countries, one that is non-commercial, non-political, and non-military." The projects recommended for funding advance U.S. foreign policy goals and show respect for other cultures. Cultural preservation is effective public diplomacy that resonates deeply with opinion leaders and local communities, even in countries where ties may be otherwise limited. AFCP projects strengthen civil society, encourage good governance, and promote political and economic stability around the world.

3. Competition Format: Eligible embassies may propose up to three projects per country for funding. The Center will select from among them using a process with two rounds. In their Round 1 concept notes, embassies are to focus on the public diplomacy objectives to be accomplished through the proposed project. Embassies invited to participate in Round 2 will flesh out the technical aspects of the proposed project and submit a full application. Awards will range from $10,000 to $500,000. The Center anticipates funding 20 to 30 projects.

4. AFCP 2022 Application Guide: Refer to this AFCP 2022 Application Guide for additional information on country eligibility, program funding areas, project design assistance, concept note and application requirements, ineligible activities, unallowable costs, and the application review process.

5. Eligible Countries: The AFCP 2022 Grants Program is open to embassies in countries based on their ranking in the 2020 U.N. Human Development Index. The eligible countries for the AFCP in FY 2022 are:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Angola, Antigua & Barbuda, Armenia, Azerbaijan, The Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burma, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Comoros, Congo (Democratic Republic of the), Congo (Republic of), Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Eritrea, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Grenada, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kiribati, Kosovo, Kuwait, Kyrgyz Republic, Laos, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent & the Grenadines, Samoa, Sao Tome & Principe, Senegal, Serbia, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, Somalia, South Africa, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad & Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Note: Embassy Antananarivo may apply for Comoros; Bridgetown for Antigua & Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Saint Kitts & Nevis, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent & the Grenadines; Colombo for Maldives; Dakar for Guinea-Bissau; Libreville for Sao Tome & Principe; New Delhi for Bhutan; Port Louis for Seychelles; Port Moresby for Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; and Suva for Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu.

6. Funding Areas: The AFCP Grants Program supports the preservation of archaeological sites, historic buildings and monuments, museum collections, and forms of traditional cultural expression, such as indigenous languages and crafts. Appropriate project activities may include:

a) Anastylosis (reassembling a site from its original parts)

b) Conservation (addressing damage or deterioration to an object or site)

c) Consolidation (connecting or reconnecting elements of an object or site)

d) Documentation (recording in analog or digital format the condition and salient features of an object, site, or tradition)

e) Inventory (listing of objects, sites, or traditions by location, feature, age, or other unifying characteristic or state)

f) Preventive Conservation (addressing conditions that threaten or damage a site, object, collection, or tradition)

g) Restoration (replacing missing elements to recreate the original appearance of an object or site, usually appropriate only with fine arts, decorative arts, and historic buildings)

h) Stabilization (reducing the physical disturbance of an object or site)

7. Sites and Objects Having a Religious Connection: The establishment clause of the U.S. Constitution permits the government to include religious objects and sites within an aid program under certain conditions. For example, an item with a religious connection (including a place of worship) may be the subject of a cultural preservation grant if the item derives its primary significance and is nominated solely on the basis of architectural, artistic, historical, or other cultural (not religious) criteria.

8. Funding Priorities: Some of the most successful AFCP projects have been designed as part of a greater PD programming arc promoting specific U.S. policy goals and host-country or community goals. Accordingly, in FY 2022, ECA will give preference to projects that do one or more of the following:

a) Directly support U.S. treaty or bilateral agreement obligations.

b) Directly support U.S. policies, strategies and objectives in a country as stated in the Integrated Country Strategy or other U.S. government planning documents.

c) Support disaster risk reduction for cultural heritage in disaster-prone areas or post-disaster cultural heritage recovery.

d) Support conflict resolution and help communities bridge differences.

e) Partner, connect with, or feed into other ECA or public diplomacy programs.

9. Eligible Project Implementers: The Center defines eligible project implementers as reputable and accountable non-commercial entities that can demonstrate they have the requisite capacity to manage projects to preserve cultural heritage. Eligible implementers may include non-governmental organizations, museums, educational institutions, ministries of culture, or similar institutions and organizations, including U.S.-based educational institutions and organizations subject to Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code. The AFCP will not award grants to individuals, commercial entities, or past award recipients that have not fulfilled the objectives or reporting requirements of previous awards.

Potential implementers must be registered and active in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) to receive U.S. federal assistance. The registration process can take several weeks to complete so it is important to avoid any delay. If a project is selected for an award and the registration is not completed, the award could be delayed to the next FY, pending the availability of funding.

Embassies must vet potential implementers for eligibility, suitability, and reputable performance in cultural preservation or similar activities and ensure that they are able to receive U.S. federal assistance.

10. Project Design Assistance: The Center has expertise in cultural preservation and is available for technical guidance and to work with interested embassies to help them or their prospective implementing partners:

a) Refine ideas before they submit Round 1 concept notes.

b) Transform promising ideas into effective project designs in preparation for Round 2 applications.

c) Refine project ideas for resubmission during future AFCP grant cycles when a longer project development period may be warranted, particularly with new or small organizations with limited

experience. The Center's team can provide its support in different ways depending on your needs – from direct, hands-on guidance and one-on-one support to tailored project design workshops organized for embassy implementing partners, including new or small organizations with limited experience.

During the month of November 2021, the Center is offering project design webinars for both applicants and embassy staff on the topics of heritage and climate change (November 9, 9:00 a.m. EST), engaging communities through heritage (November 16, 9:00 a.m. EST), and heritage and sustainable development (November 19, 9:00 a.m. EST). Recordings of these webinars and their resource materials will be available in late November. To register for one or more of these webinars, follow the registration links in the AFCP 2022 Webinar PDF here:
https://usdos.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/ECA_CulturalHeritageCenter/EgGTheJk-L5Fvn0YV5ceIlABxmtfdRkd9WTYdS9UzsGOsw?e=S9Jx7z

The Center has also prepared project design tips, a glossary of terms, and other materials for self-guided learning and identifying best practices when undertaking certain kinds of projects such as the conservation of objects and interpretation at small rural museums. The design tip sheet and other materials are available.

Additionally, during the Round 1 review process, the Center may identify specific projects as promising candidates for possible design enhancements, which it may propose to an embassy and its prospective implementing partner. The Center may, for example, recommend an English language learning or exchange component or suggest pairing the applicant with another ECA program or organization to amplify a project's public diplomacy impact. It may identify elements that could be strengthened to achieve public diplomacy, host-government, or community goals more effectively. In such cases, and with the embassy's permission, it can work with the relevant embassy staff and implementing partners to build the enhancements into the project designs and Round 2 submissions.

11. Round 1 Concept Note Requirements (Deadline: December 10, 2021): Eligible embassies, in collaboration with their prospective implementers, will submit concept notes. Concept notes must be submitted by Friday, December 10, 2021, 11:59 p.m. EST to kingstonculture@state.gov . Each concept note submitted must include:

a) Project basics, including working title, anticipated project length (Note: Applicants may propose project periods of up to 60 months), location/site, and project cost estimate (amount requested from AFCP; in U.S. dollars).

b) Project implementer.

c) Scope of work summarizing (1) the preservation goals and the activities planned to achieve those goals; and (2) any broader host country or community goals and the activities planned to achieve those goals; (i.e., what they hope to gain from the project beyond the preserved heritage and how they plan to get there; 2,000 characters maximum).

d) Rationale for AFCP support, explaining why it's in the interests of the U.S. government to fund the project, specifically:

• how the project relates to Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) goals, existing bilateral agreements, or other U.S. foreign policy objectives (1,000 characters maximum).

• the projected public diplomacy benefits and impacts of the project (1,000 characters maximum).

e) Embassy Front Office (FO) clearance.

f) Five (5) high quality digital images (JPEGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the site, collection, or tradition and show the urgency or need for the proposed project (collapsing walls, water damage, etc.).

12. Round 2 Full Application Requirements (Deadline: April 1, 2022): The Center will invite, through U.S. Embassies, applicants selected in Round 1 to submit full applications for short -listed concept notes by April 2022. The applications must fully satisfy the program objectives, funding areas and priorities, and eligibility requirements. Furthermore, to be considered complete, they must include:

From the implementer:

a) Project dates (maximum of 60 months [five years]).

b) Statement of importance highlighting the historical, architectural, artistic, or cultural (non-religious) values of the cultural heritage.

c) Revised/detailed scope of work with (1) clear preservation goals and activities for achieving those goals, and (2) the host country or community's intended broader goals and activities for achieving those goals (Note: When describing and ordering the activities for (1) and (2) above, highlight any major milestones and target dates for achieving them. Each set of activities should clearly lead to their corresponding goals with no gaps. The overall presentation should make a compelling case that the implementer has a clear and comprehensive sense of how to achieve the preservation and other goals).

d) Proof of official permission to undertake the project from the office, agency, or organization that either owns or is otherwise responsible for the preservation and protection of the site or collection.

e) Implementer's public awareness plan describing how the applicant intends to highlight and amplify AFCP-supported activities through print, electronic, social media, and other means.

f) Maintenance plan outlining the steps or measures that will be taken to maintain the site, object, or collection in good condition after the AFCP-supported project is complete; or, in the case of forms of traditional cultural expression, to preserve and disseminate the documentation, knowledge, or skills gained from the project.

g) Résumés or CVs of the proposed project director and key project participants.

h) Detailed project budget, demarcated in one-year budget periods (2022, 2023, 2024, etc.), that lists all costs in separate categories (Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel [including Per Diem],

Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Other Direct Costs, Indirect Costs); indicates funds from other sources; and gives a justification for any anticipated international travel costs; (Note: Use the AFCP budget template provided).

i) Budget narrative explaining how the costs were estimated (quantity x unit cost, annual salary x percentage of time spent on project, etc.) and any large budget line items.

j) Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), including Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A), Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B), and, if applicable, Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL).

k) Relevant supporting documentation, such as historic structure reports, restoration plans and studies, conservation needs assessments and recommendations, architectural and engineering records, etc., compiled in preparation for the proposed project.
l) As requested by the Center or as appropriate, additional high quality digital images (JPEGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the heritage and show the urgency or need for the proposed project (collapsing walls, extensive water damage, etc.).
From the embassy:
m) Project PD impact statement that clearly describes (1) the positive effects the embassy thinks the project will have and (2) beyond the preservation work itself, any specific or important actions needed on the part of the embassy or the implementer to achieve those effects. This section should include the embassy's strategic outreach plan describing how it intends to highlight and amplify AFCP-supported activities. ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how embassies plan to use mobile and online technologies to amplify U.S. support for cultural heritage preservation locally and to share compelling project-related content with both targeted and broad audiences. ECA strongly encourages embassies to include one or more virtual components, in coordination with the applicant's public awareness plan, to complement the proposed project. Doing so can extend engagement beyond the project's duration, increase its long-term value, and expand the audience for such work.

n) Risk assessment and monitoring plan evaluating the risks posed by applicant or project and describing how the embassy intends to monitor project progress and awardee performance.

13. Cost Sharing and Other Forms of Cost Participation: There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost participation required. When an implementing partner offers cost sharing, it is understood and agreed that the partner must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the budget of the application and later included in an approved agreement. The implementing partner will be responsible for tracking and reporting on any cost share or outside funding, which is subject to audit per 2 CFR 200. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs.

14. Ineligible Activities and Unallowable Costs: AFCP does not support the following activities or costs, and the Center will deem applications requesting AFCP support for any of these activities or costs ineligible:

a) Preservation or purchase of privately or commercially owned cultural objects, collections, or real property, including those whose transfer from private or commercial to public ownership is envisioned, planned, or in process but not complete at the time of application.

b) Preservation of natural heritage (physical, biological, and geological formations, paleontological collections, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants, fossils, etc.) unless the natural heritage has a cultural heritage connection or dimension.

c) Preservation of hominid or human remains.

d) Preservation of news media (newspapers, newsreels, radio and TV programs, etc.).

e) Preservation of published materials available elsewhere (books, periodicals, etc.).

f) Development of curricula or educational materials for classroom use.

g) Archaeological excavations or exploratory surveys for research purposes.

h) Historical research, except in cases where the research is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project.

i) Acquisition or creation of new exhibits, objects, or collections for new or existing museums.

j) Construction of new buildings, building additions, or permanent coverings (over archaeological sites, for example).

k) Commissions of new works of art or architecture for commemorative or economic development purposes.

l) Creation of new or the modern adaptation of existing traditional dances, songs, chants, musical compositions, plays, or other performances.

m) Creation of replicas or conjectural reconstructions of cultural objects or sites that no longer exist.

n) Relocation of cultural sites from one physical location to another.

o) Removal of cultural objects or elements of cultural sites from the country for any reason.

p) Digitization of cultural objects or collections, unless part of a larger, clearly defined conservation, documentation, or public diplomacy effort.

q) Conservation plans or other studies, unless they are one component of a larger project to implement the results of those studies.

r) Cash reserves, endowments, or revolving funds (funds must be expended within the award period [up to five years] and may not be used to create an endowment or revolving fund).

s) Costs of fund-raising campaigns.

t) Contingency, unforeseen, or miscellaneous costs or fees.

u) Costs of work performed prior to announcement of the award unless allowable per 2 CFR 200.458 and approved by the Grants Officer.

v) International travel, except in cases where travel is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project or to provide project leaders with learning and exchange opportunities with cultural heritage experts.

w) Individual projects costing less than US $10,000 or more than $500,000.

x) Independent U.S. projects overseas.

15. Performance and Deliverables: AFCP 2022 award recipients must submit performance progress reports, federal financial status reports, and final reports on time as specified in the Notice of Award. Upon completion of an AFCP project, the Center will also ask implementers to respond to an online survey about their project and experience with the AFCP program. In cases where the proposed public diplomacy or other expected impacts may not be fully realized at the immediate conclusion of the project, the Center may request continued voluntary reporting on specific topics. The Center may compile this information into reports to Congress and other documents.

16. SAM Registration: An implementing partner must be registered in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) prior to receiving U.S, federal assistance unless they meet one of the exemptions specified in the Federal Assistance Directive (https://usdos.sharepoint.com/sites/A-OPE/FA/SitePages/Policy.aspx). The SAM registration process, which requires either a Commercial and Government Entity (CAGE) or a NATO Commercial and Government Entity (NCAGE) code, can take weeks or months, especially for non-U.S. applicants. Non-U.S. based applicants may request a NCAGE code at https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx . SAM will assign a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) automatically to any entity registering or renewing its record in the system. Registration in SAM is free: https://sam.gov/ .

17. Disclaimer: Issuance of this funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the AFCP program or the U.S. government. The Center reserves the right to waive program formalities and to reduce, revise, or increase project scopes and budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.