

**The deadline for receiving applications is May 25, 2015**

**APPLICATION GUIDELINES FOR  
ALUMNI MINI GRANTS COMPETITION  
FOR 2015**

**Purpose of the Program**

The Alumni “Mini” Grants Competition is designed to support innovative, small-scale projects to promote rule of law and combat corruption in Montenegro developed and implemented by teams of at least two or more alumni of U.S. government exchange programs. In this context, U.S. alumni are past and present participants of the U.S. Government-sponsored programs. Each project team should include at least one youth exchange alumnus/a (A-SMYLE, Global Ugrad, BFTF, etc.) and one alumnus/a from a mid-career program (IVLP, Fulbright, JFDP, media training, Humphrey, etc.). The project teams of five or more alumni will be given priority.

Since the maximum award amount will be \$ 3,000 per grant, small-scale projects which offer simple, yet innovative, community-based solutions implemented by youth and mid-career alumni are encouraged, rather than elaborate, high-scale project ideas.

One individual from each team must be clearly listed as the project leader. Grants will be given as individual grants to the project team leaders, or through a registered alumni organization or an NGO. We will consult with approved projects to discuss the best course of action.

All alumni team members should be registered at <https://alumni.state.gov/> by the end of the application period, if they are not registered already.

**Basic requirements:** The application should be in English, neatly typed and easy to read. Perfect English is not required but the proposal must be understandable to an English speaker. Please use Times New Roman 12 font letters and do not change the original look of the application form.

Applications must be emailed to the following address: [PodgoricaGrants@State.Gov](mailto:PodgoricaGrants@State.Gov). Applications received after 17:00 local time on May 25, 2015 will not be considered. Please direct any questions to the Public Affairs Office at U.S. Embassy Podgorica by email ([PodgoricaGrants@State.Gov](mailto:PodgoricaGrants@State.Gov)).

**Budget Guidelines**

*Note: Since this is a “mini grant” program, the U.S. Embassy’s expectation is that these will be low-budget and simple projects that may draw on existing resources. In-kind support and cost-share are highly encouraged.*

**BUDGET MUST BE SUBMITTED IN U.S. DOLLARS. ALL PROJECT EXPENSES SHOULD BE CALCULATED IN ADVANCE AND BE REALISTIC. THE EMBASSY WILL**

NOT AUTHORIZE ANY FUNDS IF THERE ARE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BUDGET. PLEASE CHECK THE EXCHANGE RATE U.S. DOLLAR – EURO WHEN CALCULATING THE COSTS IN U.S. DOLLARS.

**The following items listed below may be considered eligible, but must be thoroughly justified. Unusually high fee and technical items costs, for example, may make funding less likely:**

Program expenses should cover all costs for the project activities. They may include all honoraria to specialists or associates; travel/per diem/lodging expenses for trips within Montenegro; and all expenses for seminars or conferences (speakers' fee, preparation of materials and room rental) within Montenegro;

Fees can be paid only to the people who will spend a majority of their time on the project. The fees should be calculated on the total number of hours worked for the duration of the project. Fee levels should be reasonable and include applicable local taxes.

Reasonable requests for expendable (consumable), small general office technical items, such as cameras, voice recorders, printers, or other technical devices necessary for the fulfillment of the project might be allowable, but need prior approval.

Administrative expenses include communication expenses (phone, fax, e-mail, postage); bank fees; copying and print services; office materials (e.g., paper, toner, envelopes). Although printing of leaflets and brochures may be covered by the grant, please explore other options such as use of social media to cut down on costs and environmental impact.

Bank charges should be pre-calculated and included in the budget. The use of “miscellaneous expenses” as a budget item is unacceptable.

**The mini grant funds CANNOT be used to cover:**

- 1) Representational events. Cocktail parties and meals not integral to a program event are not acceptable grant expenses.
- 2) Individual research projects of alumni;
- 3) Salaries or administrative overhead (except for fees and honoraria as described above)
- 4) International travel, including travel to/from the U.S.;
- 5) Speakers traveling from the U.S.
- 6) Alumni websites (instead: use [alumni.state.gov](http://alumni.state.gov));
- 7) Alumni databases (instead: use [alumniarchive.state.gov](http://alumniarchive.state.gov));

### **Other Guidelines**

- All budget items over \$200 must be itemized and described.
- All grantees must receive advance approval before making any changes to the budget during the implementation of the project.

- If you receive funding, you will be required to submit a detailed program and financial report on the outcomes of the project.
- If applicable, please state which other organizations you have applied to for funding with the same project, and the status of those applications.

## **HELPFUL APPLICATION TIPS AND GUIDELINES:**

**Proposed Program Dates:** When will the project be carried out? Be realistic about dates. Remember that, even if approved, funds may not be available immediately. If your project is approved, you may be asked to change project dates.

**Program Purpose:** What does your alumni team propose to do? The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with your work would understand. The more specific, detailed, concise and clear the program description, the better. Try to think of active, innovative and engaging projects. Applicants are encouraged to develop unique activities, instead of relying primarily on organizing roundtables.

**Project Justification:** This is a very important aspect of the proposal and applicants should pay particular attention to it. What is the importance of the project? Why should it be funded? Who will be affected by this project? What difference does it make for Montenegro? Remember that the Embassy will only support those projects that will make an important contribution.

**Project Sustainability:** Describe the expected long-term effects of the project. Projects are encouraged to be self-sustaining. If the project is intended to continue after the funding ends, the proposal should contain an explanation of how the activities will be funded in the future.

**Background on Team Members:** Include information about every team member and clearly specify who will be the team leader. Write brief, one paragraph description on every team member, to include, at a minimum, program which they attended in the United States with the support of the State Department, profession and current occupation/position being held. If the project proposal makes it to the final round, applicants will be requested to send in CVs or resumes of alumni who will be engaged in the project. No individual CV should exceed one page.

**Detailed Budget:** *Read carefully the budget guidelines listed above about allowable and non-allowable costs.* In order to be sure that the Embassy understands why there is a need for money, please prepare a line-by-line explanation of every budget line. For example, under "Travel" put a total amount, e.g.: \$1,000 and an explanation: One day conference in (location) for 10 participants with \$100 travel grant to each participant for room, board and transportation costs. The budget should be prepared in a logical manner and offer enough detail that a reviewer will be able to understand exactly what the figures mean and how that figure was determined.

**BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION:**

- \* Read the Guidelines once again. Make sure you understand the guidelines and that your proposal fits the purposes outlined.
  - \* Carefully review the application to make sure it is complete and free of errors.
  - \* You may wish to ask someone who does not know anything about your project to read your proposal to determine if it can be understood. If the application cannot be understood it without asking further questions, it will not be considered for approval. Please try to avoid writing more than you are asked in certain sections of the Application Form.
  - \* Make sure the application is in English, neatly typed and easy to read. Perfect English is not required but the proposal must be understandable to an English speaker. Please use Times New Roman 12 font letters and do not change the original look of the application form.
- In case you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs Office, U.S. Embassy Podgorica, by email ([PodgoricaGrants@State.Gov](mailto:PodgoricaGrants@State.Gov)).