

Summary: The U.S. Embassy is pleased to announce that we are now accepting project proposals for the 2015 Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP). The AFCP is just one of many ways in which we demonstrate our respect for Albanian culture and history, and we are pleased to be accepting project proposals that meet the guidelines of this special grant program designed to preserve unique cultural heritage around the world. **Project proposals are due on November 20, 2014**, and should be remitted to TiranaAFCP@State.gov and must strictly comply with the requirements and guidelines available here (LINK). If you have questions about this project, please contact us at TiranaAFCP@State.gov.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), Cultural Heritage Center, is accepting project proposals for the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) 2015 Competition. Full implementation of the AFCP 2014 program is pending the availability of FY 2015 funds and an approved financial plan.

FUNDING AREAS: AFCP supports projects to preserve cultural heritage in the following three areas:

- CULTURAL SITES—such as, but not limited to, historic buildings and archaeological sites;
- CULTURAL OBJECTS AND COLLECTIONS from a museum, site, or similar institution—that include, but are not limited to, archaeological and ethnographic objects, paintings, sculpture, manuscripts, and general museum conservation needs; and,
- FORMS OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL EXPRESSION—such as traditional music, indigenous languages, and crafts.

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FUNDING PRIORITIES—GENERAL: AFCP will recommend for funding those proposals that include project activities in adherence to the following guidelines and to international standards for the preservation of cultural heritage. These activities may include:

- CULTURAL SITES: conservation of an ancient or historic building, preservation of an archaeological site, or documentation of cultural sites in a region for preservation purposes.
- CULTURAL OBJECTS AND COLLECTIONS: conservation treatment for an object or collection of objects; needs assessment of a collection with respect to its condition and strategies for improving its state of conservation; inventory of a collection for conservation and protection purposes; the creation of safe environments for storage or display of collections; or specialized training in the care and preservation of collections.
- FORMS OF TRADITIONAL CULTURAL EXPRESSION: documentation and audiovisual recording of traditional music and dance forms for broad dissemination as the means of teaching and further

preserving them, or support for training in the preservation of traditional applied arts or crafts in danger of extinction.

FUNDING PRIORITIES—SPECIFIC TO THE AFCP 2015 ANNUAL COMPETITION: Proposals for projects that meet one or more of the following criteria will receive consideration in FY 2015:

- Directly support U.S. treaty or bilateral agreement obligations, such as cultural property protection agreements, and Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) goals;
- Strengthen capacity in country to preserve and protect cultural heritage;
- Support the preservation of inscribed World Heritage sites;
- Advance long-term cultural preservation objectives, lay the groundwork for subsequent AFCP-supported activities, or encourage the continued or expanded application of proven methods at the project site or elsewhere; and
- Engage women, youth, or under-served communities.

ELIGIBLE PROJECT APPLICANTS: The Center defines eligible project applicants as reputable and accountable non-commercial entities, such as non-governmental organizations, museums, ministries of culture, or similar institutions and organizations that are able to demonstrate that they have the requisite experience and capacity to manage projects to preserve cultural heritage. Embassies must vet applicants for eligibility, suitability, and reputable performance in cultural preservation or similar activities. The Center requests that embassies determine whether any country-specific sanctions should be taken into consideration before submitting proposals. Embassies must ensure the applicants are able to receive support from the U.S. Government and AFCP grants in accordance with AFCP program policies.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES AND UNALLOWABLE COSTS: AFCP will NOT support the following activities or costs, and applications involving any of the activities or costs below will be deemed 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 proposal submission;
- B. Preservation of natural heritage (physical, biological, and geological formations, paleontological collections, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants, fossils, etc.);
- 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 re-creation 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 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. Indirect costs or operating expenses, i.e. expenses incurred during the day-to-day operational activities of an organization, such as office rent, utilities, license fees, and other costs for administrative time, services, or materials not directly related to performing project work;
- U. Contingency, unforeseen, or miscellaneous costs or fees;
- V. Costs of work performed prior to announcement of the award;
- W. International travel, except in cases where travel is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project;
- X. Travel or study for professional development;
- Y. Individual projects costing less than \$10,000;
- Z. Independent U.S. projects overseas.

INELIGIBLE PROJECT APPLICANTS: AFCP does not award grants to individuals, commercial entities, or to embassies or past award recipients which have not fulfilled the reporting requirements of previous AFCP awards.

*****APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:** U.S. embassies in eligible countries must submit completed project proposals electronically through the AFCP Web site (<http://www.afcp.us>). Use of this site is strictly limited to U.S. Department of State employees. The Center will not process any non-Department registration requests. Embassies may submit more than one project proposal. Each proposal will be considered on its own merit.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS: Project proposals must include or address the following:

- A. Full and complete Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424), including Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A), Assurances for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424B), and Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL);
- B. Project Basics, including title, project dates, AFCP focus area, and other top-level information;
- C. Project Applicant information, including contact information, DUNS Number, and SAM registration (see Section 18 below);
- D. Project Location;

- E. Proof of Official Permission to undertake the project and the endorsement and support of the appropriate national authority;
- F. Project Purpose that briefly explains the project objectives and desired results;
- G. Project Activities Description that explains how the applicant intends to achieve the project objectives and results, presents proposed tasks in a logical order, and describes how those tasks directly contribute towards achieving the project objectives and results;
- H. Project Time Frame or Schedule that identifies the major project phases and milestones, with performance target dates for achieving them (NOTE: Applicants may propose project performance periods of up to 60 months [five years] with five budget periods of one year each; projects must begin before September 30, 2015, and conclude no later than September 30, 2019);
- I. Project Participant Information, specifically an estimated number of non-US and US participants and estimated number of primary and secondary participants, as well as resumes of the proposed project director and other primary project participants, which demonstrate that the applying entity (ministry of culture, NGO, etc.) has assembled the requisite experience and the capacity to carry out projects to preserve cultural heritage;
- J. Statement of Importance highlighting the historic, architectural, artistic, or cultural (non-religious) values of the cultural site, object, collection, or form of traditional expression;
- K. Statement of Urgency indicating the severity of the situation and explaining why the project must take place now;
- L. Statement of Sustainability 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 either resulting or gained from the project;
- M. Detailed project narrative and budget, demarcated in one-year budget periods (2015, 2016, 2017, etc.), that lists all costs in separate categories (Personnel, Fringe Benefits, Travel [including Per Diem], Equipment, Supplies, Contractual, Other Direct Costs, Cost Sharing); indicates funds from other sources; and gives a justification for any anticipated international travel costs;
- N. Attachments and supporting documents including, at a minimum and REQUIRED, five (5) high quality digital images (JPEGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the site, object, or form of expression and, in the case of a site or object, show the urgency or need for the proposed project (collapsing wall, water damage, worn fabric, broken handle, etc), any historic structure reports, conservation needs assessments, and other planning documents compiled in preparation for the proposed project;
- O. Rationale for U.S. support, written by the embassy, explaining: 1) why it is in the interests of the U.S. government to fund the project and; 2) how it relates to Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) goals, existing bilateral agreements, or other U.S. foreign policy objectives;
- P. Media and outreach plan, written by the embassy, describing how it intends to highlight and amplify U.S. government support for AFCP programs through existing print, electronic, and social media platforms; and

COST SHARING AND OTHER FORMS OF COST PARTICIPATION: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, AFCP encourages cost sharing, in-kind contributions, and other forms of cost participation. When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant (either the U.S. embassy or the qualified entity on whose behalf the U.S. embassy is applying for support) must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the federal government. Such records are subject to audit. For U.S.-based applicants, the basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110 (Revised), subpart C.23—Cost Sharing and Matching.

DUNS NUMBER AND SAM REGISTRATION: Applicants requesting \$25,000 or more in federal assistance must have a Dun & Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number and be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) prior to submitting applications. Applicants may acquire DUNS numbers at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by requesting a number online at <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>. SAM is the official, free on-line registration database for the U.S. Government. SAM.gov replaced the Central Contractor Registration (CCR), the Online Representations and Certifications Application (ORCA), and the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in July 2012. SAM.gov collects, validates, stores, and disseminates data in support of federal agency acquisition and grant award mission. Registration in SAM is free: <https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>

APPLICATION SCREENING CRITERIA: The Center will first screen all proposals for technical eligibility based on the criteria contained in this request for grant proposals. The Center will also screen proposals against the lists of AFCP program-specific ineligible activities, costs, and applicants (see relevant sections above).

APPLICATION RATING CRITERIA: Using a point-based system (below), the Center will rate all applications based on the program funding priorities; the quality, soundness, and comprehensiveness of the proposed project and budget; the urgency of the proposed project; the rationale for U.S. support of the project supplied by the applying U.S. embassy; the quality and quantity of supporting materials, such as resumes of the key project participants, images of the resource, and notices of official permission from the responsible resource steward, such as a ministry of culture.

AFCP POINT-BASED RATING SYSTEM: Proposals will be rated as follows:

- Purpose and Summary, Description, Time Frame, Importance of Site/Object/Form of Expression: 20 points max
- Urgency: 10 points max
- Sustainability: 10 points max
- Rationale for U.S. Support: 15 points max
- Media and Outreach Plan: 15 points max
- Budget: 15 points max
- Supporting Materials: 15 points max

Once the Center has completed its screening and rating, it will forward the technically eligible and favorably rated proposals to the Public Diplomacy sections in the respective regional bureaus in the

State Department for ranking. Once the proposals are ranked, the Center will convene a panel to recommend proposals for funding. The Center may deem proposals ineligible if they do not fully adhere to AFCP 2015 Competition objectives, requirements, and other criteria stated herein.

DISCLAIMER: Explanatory information provided by the Center that contradicts published language is not binding. Issuance of this Request for Proposals does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. Government. The Center reserves the right to waive program formalities and to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements as specified above and in the Notice of Award.