

Notice of Funding Opportunity

U.S. Embassy Rangoon

Announcement Type:	Limited Source
Funding Opportunity Title:	Building Grassroots Networks across Communities
Funding Opportunity Number:	TBD
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:	19.345
Funding Amount:	\$25,000
Expected Period of Performance:	9/15/16 – 3/15/18
Key Dates:	Deadline: 08/13/2016

Executive Summary:

The U.S. Embassy announces the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for a program to empower Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) civil society actors to advocate for change by raising awareness and understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity in Myanmar. The program aims to draw underrepresented rural LGBTI and lesbian activists into the national networks. The program will also inform other civil society leaders, law enforcement officials and policy makers, including parliamentarians and Ministry-level implementers, of their role in combating LGBTI discrimination and will raise awareness among the government officials and the general public about the importance of respecting and supporting LGBTI individuals. Finally, the program aims to build understanding among parliamentarians about possible legislative actions to combat discrimination against the LGBTI community.

Eligibility for this NOFO is limited to: educational, research institutions, media outlets and locally run not-for-profits/NGOs/social enterprises based in Myanmar.

One or two grants in FY2015 Human Rights & Democracy Fund (HRDF) will be awarded under this NOFO.

The initial period of performance will be for up to 18 months. Funding authority rests in the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended.

All applicants should be familiar with OMB Circular 2 CFR Part 200.

Contact Person: Jeffrey Warner, WarnerJM@State.gov

Please read the entire NOFO package before submitting an application, and follow the steps immediately in order to submit before the deadline. Applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria and do not contain all of the required information will not be considered.

Program Description

A. Funding Opportunity Description

The purpose of this announcement is to inform selected parties about funding opportunities through grants.

Organizations that submit applications in response to this announcement acknowledge and accept all of the requirements contained herein. This announcement serves as notice to select interested parties to have equal opportunity to submit project proposals for funding consideration. All submissions in response to this announcement are voluntary and do not obligate the Department of State to fund any proposal or proposal preparation costs.

i. Background

For decades, Myanmar suffered under a repressive, military regime limiting the human and civil rights of minority populations around the country. Recent political reforms and civil society efforts are slowly helping to develop policies that not only represent the will of the people, but also respect universal human rights for all. Myanmar has shown increasing support for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) persons, including the formation and acceptance of LGBTI rights organizations and their growing activities and public events. Despite this progress, consensual same-sex sexual activity remains illegal under Section 377 of the penal code, which contains provisions against “sexually abnormal” behavior and entails punishments up to life imprisonment. While these laws are rarely enforced, LGBTI contacts report police use the threat of prosecution to extort bribes and intimidate the community. LGBTI community members also face ongoing harassment by police, including arbitrary arrest and detention for minor violations such as loitering. While long-standing assistance to combat HIV/AIDS has built capacity within groups focusing on the gay male and men who have sex with men communities, lesbian civil society groups have not traditionally received the same level of support and capacity training assistance, and as a result few strong lesbian networks have emerged nationwide.

ii. Program Goals

The program aims to address systemic discrimination against LGBTI individuals, about improve the capacity of LGBTI civil society groups to advocate for change, as well as engage with the general population on LGBTI rights. As Myanmar continues its transition to a democratic government, civil society organizations have a unique opportunity to shape the agenda of the new Government of Myanmar and make positive improvements in the lives of the LGBTI community. The *Building Grassroots Networks across Communities* program supports local efforts to raise awareness among the new Government of Myanmar and the general public of Myanmar about the human rights of LGBTI individuals.

iii. Main Activities

The *Building Grassroots Networks across Communities* program will look to support some or all of the following set of activities:

Objective 1: Increase knowledge sharing and networking among LGBTI civil society organizations and community members

- Activity 1.1: Provide targeted workshops for lesbian activists to and build organizational capacity and raise awareness of the community’s legal and human rights to create a more robust and participatory network
- Activity 1.2: Improve human rights documentation through the creation of a database tracking LGBTI legal cases, accusations of torture and other human rights abuses
- Activity 1.3: Hold targeted workshops in second-tier cities/towns on sexual orientation and gender identity in partnership with LGBTI organizations in those locations

Objective 2: Build understanding and cultural acceptance of LGBTI identities and rights among civil servants, parliamentarians and law enforcement officials

- Activity 2.1: Conduct LGBTI awareness seminars with local and union level government implementers, parliamentarians and law enforcement officials to address LGBTI identities and human rights
- Activity 2.2: Conduct fact based advocacy workshops on the impact Myanmar’s discriminatory laws, such as Section 377, have on the LGBTI community

iv. Expected Results and Performance Indicators

Proposed activities should result in knowledge dissemination, new or empowered networks, increased collaborative efforts and relationships that will grow beyond the program duration. Specific results and performance indicators will be established in consultation with applicants.

B. Federal Award Information

i. Available Funding and Legislative Authority

The sources of this funding are Human Rights & Democracy Funds (HRDF).

ii. Summary of Award Information

Type of Award:	Grant
Appropriated Fiscal Year of Funds:	FY2016

Approximate Total Funding:	\$25,000
Approximate Number of Awards:	1 - 2 separate awards
Anticipated Award Date:	September 15, 2016
Anticipated Project Completion Date:	March 15, 2018

iii. Deadline

Deadline for Applications:	August 13, 2016
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C. Eligibility Information

Applications by applicants which do not meet the eligibility by the time of an application deadline will result the application not being reviewed.

1. Eligible Applicants: Eligibility for this NOFO is limited to: educational, research institutions, media outlets and locally run not-for-profits/NGOs/social enterprises based in Myanmar. No government entities can receive funding through these awards.
2. Cost-Sharing or Matching – encouraged, but will not be a factor for consideration in the panel review criteria. Applicants should show any cost share in the budget proposal.

D. Application and Submission Information

i. Address to Request Application Package

U.S. Embassy Rangoon
 110, University Avenue
 Kamayut Township 11041
 Yangon, Myanmar

ii. Content and Form of Application Submission

Please read the entire NOFO and follow the guidelines for proposal preparation below. Applicants must include the following in the proposal submission. **All submissions must be in English.**

1. Table of Contents that lists application contents and attachments (if any);
2. Completed and signed SF-424, SF-424A and SF424B, as directed on www.grants.gov. The Certifications and Assurances that your organization is agreeing to in signing the 424 are available at <https://statebuy.state.gov/fa/>;
3. If your organization engages in lobbying activities, a Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (SF-LLL) form is required;
4. Proposal Narrative (not to exceed 10 pages, single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font in Microsoft Word, at least one-inch margins), following the structure

described below. The proposal narrative should identify inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the proposal activities, timelines, and any qualitative or quantitative targets, and impact.

5. Summary and detailed Budget in USD, in Excel, using the format shown in the budget template;
6. Detailed Budget Narrative (not to exceed 6 pages) that includes an explanation for each line item in the spreadsheet, as well as the source and description of any cost share offered;
7. Monitoring and Evaluation Plan detailing how the project's impact and effectiveness will be monitored and evaluated throughout the project, using the attached template.
8. Attachments may be included, (letters of commitment from the applicant institution and sub-award partners, CVs of key personnel, project experience, etc.) but should not be unreasonably lengthy; see NOFO for details on required attachments, if any;
9. If your organization has a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, include your latest NICRA as a pdf file;
10. A PDF file copy of your organization's most recent financial audit;
11. Number all pages, including budget and addenda;

Applicants under consideration for an award will likely be subject to a pre-award survey to determine fiscal responsibility and ensure adequacy of financial controls. This survey contains a list of criteria for determining whether the applicant's accounting system meets the minimum standards to be eligible for USG funding. These standards include appropriate accounting software and written financial management policies and accounting procedures. The pre-award survey will involve assessing the extent to which these are in place within an organization and being actively implemented.

3. Unique Entity Identifier and SAMS

The System for Award Management is a U.S.-government wide registry of vendors doing business with the U.S. federal government and requires annual renewal. The system centralizes information about grant applicants/recipients, and provides a central location for grant applicants/recipients to change organizational information. More information about SAM.gov and useful guides for setting-up a new account, updating an existing account, or renewing an expired account can be found at:

<http://statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/SAMInfo.aspx>. Foreign-based applicants are strongly encouraged to review these guides when creating an account with SAM.gov.

Each applicant is required to: (i) Be registered in SAM.gov before submitting its application; (ii) provide a valid unique entity identifier in its application; and (iii) continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal awarding agency. The Department of State may not make a Federal award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable unique entity identifier and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department of State is ready to make a Federal award, DOS may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

Further, applicants must maintain an active account, with current information, while its application is under consideration for funding. To keep an active SAM.gov account, applicants must renew it at least once each year. If an organization's account expires, the organization cannot submit a grant application until it is renewed.

4. Submission Method and Dates

Completed applications should be submitted electronically through email. **Please follow all NOFO instructions carefully and start early to ensure you have time to collect all of the required information.** All applications must be submitted by TBD. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered, unless a late filing has been approved in advance by the Department of State.

5. Funding Restrictions: The following activities and costs are not covered under this announcement:

- Construction is not an allowable activity under this award.
- Activities that appear partisan or that support individual or party electoral campaigns;
- Direct support or the appearance of direct support for any religious organization, to include repair or building of structures used for religious purposes.
- Military assistance of any kind, including weapons buy back or rewards programs.
- Purchase of firearms, ammunition, or removal of unexploded ordnances.
- Para-police (i.e., militias, neighborhood watch, security guards) and prison-related projects. This restriction includes no funding of any secondary need in a law-enforcement organization.
- Payments for any partner government, military or civilian government employee salary or pension.
- Vehicle purchases to include motorcycles. (However, farm equipment, such as small tractors, and transportation costs will be considered.)
- Duplication of services immediately available through municipal, provincial, or national government.
- Funds for market research, advertising (unless public service related to grant program) or other promotional expenses.
- Expenses made prior to the approval of a proposal or unreasonable expenditures will not be reimbursed.

E. Application Review Information

Proposal submissions in response to this announcement should include information addressing each of the evaluation criteria below.

1. Criteria

Proposal Narrative:

This section should contextualize the proposed activities and present the need for the project in Myanmar, corroborated by qualitative and quantitative evidence such as recent research studies and baseline statistics relevant to the proposed project. The proposal narrative should include the project goal(s), objectives, and activities; in addition to the target population, the applicant's organizational capability and experience and a sustainability plan.

To the extent possible, proposed projects should complement existing efforts in the country, is innovative and fills a programmatic gap in the area, leverages existing platforms, and does not duplicate other programs, including those currently funded by the U.S. government. Organizations are highly encouraged to explain how the proposed program will strengthen community, government, and donor efforts. In addition, applications should note whether the proposed activities seek to scale up or expand on proven interventions, or to introduce and evaluate new interventions.

Budget:

Applicants must submit a line-item budget or cost schedule and a budget narrative. Both of these components must specify the total amount of funding requested in U.S. dollars. Costs within the line-item budget should include each of the categories listed below:

- Personnel
- Fringe Benefits
- Travel
- Equipment
- Supplies
- Contractual
 - a) Subgrants
 - b) Consultant Fees

i. Criteria Components

- *Executive Summary*
- *Organizational Capacity and Past Performance*
- *Program Strategy*
- *Performance Monitoring and Evaluation*
- *Management Plan*

ii. Budget Components

- *Budget Appropriateness*
- *Cost-effectiveness*

2. Review and Selection Process

Each proposal will be evaluated and rated based on the criteria, which are designed to assess the organizational capacity of the applicant and the merits of the proposed project. The criteria are closely related and evaluators will consider the criteria as a whole in judging the application. An Embassy committee will review each application individually against the evaluation criteria, not against competing proposals.

3. Designated Performance and Integrity System (currently FAPIIS)

The Department of State, 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).

The 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.

The Department of State 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.

F: Federal Award Administration Information

i. Award Notices

The grant shall be written, signed, and awarded by the Grants Officer and administered by both the Grants Officer and the Grants Officer Representative. The Grants Officer is the Government official delegated the authority by the U.S. Department of State Procurement Executive to write, award, and administer grants and cooperative agreements. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the Recipient through either mail or facsimile transmission. Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified in writing.

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

ii. Administrative and National Policy

Prior to submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications that will apply to this award to ensure they will be able to

comply. The terms and conditions are available on the State Department's procurement website at: <http://fa.statebuy.state.gov/>

Applicants should also be familiar with the OMB circular that will apply to this cooperative agreement: OMB Uniform Guidance: Cost Principles, Audit, and Administrative Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR Chapter I, Chapter II, Part 200, et al.)

iii. Reporting Requirements

The Recipient, at a minimum, shall provide quarterly and final narrative and financial reports. Please note that all substantiating documentation supporting reporting and data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Department of State upon request. All reports must be written in English.

Financial Reports

The Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial reports throughout the project period, using Form FFR SF-425, the Federal Financial Report form, as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative. Form FFR (SF-425) can be found on OMB's website here: http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms/. Financial reports are due 30 days after the end of each fiscal year quarter.

Progress Reporting

While the grantee will be in frequent contact with the U.S. Embassy in Rangoon concerning the project details, the grantee is required to submit quarterly program progress reports using page 1 of Form SF-PPR Performance Progress Report, which can be found at OMB's website http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants_forms as well as forms suggested by the Grants Officer Representative (GOR). Progress reports are due 30 days after the end of the quarterly reporting period.

Final Report

The final report will be due no later than ninety days after completion or termination of all project activities. The Final Report shall include the following elements: executive summary, successes, outcomes, how the project has increased science capacity in the regions selected and addressed the other goals of the project, and a final financial report.

G: Agency Contact

Any prospective applicant who has questions concerning the contents of this NOFO should email them to Jeffrey Warner, WarnerJM@State.gov. Note that once the NOFO deadline has passed Department of State staff in Washington, D.C. and overseas at U.S.

Embassies/Missions may not discuss this competition with applicants until the review process has been completed.