

Notice of Funding Opportunity 2019

Funding Opportunity Title: Poland: American Center Warsaw Program

Funding Opportunity Number: WAW-NOFO-FY19-02

Announcement Type: Cooperative Agreement

Funding Amount: Up to \$200,000, pending the availability of funds

CFDA: 19.040

Opening Date: April 26, 2019

Closing Date: June 24, 2019 at 11:59 p.m. GMT+1

Program: American Center Warsaw Program

Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy
29/31 Al. Ujazdowskie
grantspoland@state.gov

SUMMARY:

American Center Warsaw (ACW) is the U.S. Mission Poland's priority American Space for cultural programs and public diplomacy outreach and the hub of the Mission's hub-and-spoke American Spaces Network. The American Center Warsaw supports U.S. public outreach in Poland by creating a welcoming, technology-forward space that fosters open discussion and debate, builds cultural bridges to deepen communication on U.S. government foreign policy priority issues, provides opportunities for professional and personal skill-building, and sparks creativity, innovation, and collaboration around shared Polish-U.S. values.

The recipient organization will be responsible for staffing and operating the American Center Warsaw in close cooperation with the Public Affairs Section at U.S. Embassy Warsaw. Key program activities under this cooperative agreement include: 1) managing local staff with expertise in program and event management; 2) creating network-wide programming for all American Spaces in Poland consistent with Mission Poland's policy priorities; 3) purchasing and maintaining all necessary technology, materials, and supplies to support engagement with in-person and remote Polish audiences; and 4) designing a flexible and dynamic program of activities each month to interact with Polish visitors, while encouraging them to return regularly to the American Center Warsaw. Decisions on staffing and program content will be made in close consultation with U.S. Embassy Warsaw.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS:

Applications may be submitted by U.S. or Polish public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

Applicants must be able to demonstrate experience working in Poland and should be legally registered in Poland to provide program oversight. The applicant organization must be able to demonstrate the ability to administer all components of the program as outlined in this solicitation, and in cooperation with U.S. Embassy Warsaw.

Third country organizations and individuals are not eligible.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The American Center Warsaw (ACW) is one of over 650 American Spaces supported by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). In Poland, the ACW serves as the hub of a network of eight American Spaces, generating innovative program ideas that support the public diplomacy goals of the U.S. Mission. American Spaces exemplify the U.S. government's commitment to a core tenet of democracy: a citizen's right to free access to information. The ACW also supports the foundation of public diplomacy by creating a place for in-person engagement with Polish audiences. Embassy personnel, official visitors, and implementing partners regularly interact with Poles, especially young leaders and young professionals, to inspire dialogue on bilateral issues that strengthen and expand U.S.-Poland relations.

American Spaces worldwide provide welcoming environments where visitors can connect with and learn about the United States. Hosted in embassies, libraries, universities, and other partner institutions worldwide, American Spaces are platforms for providing information about the United States, our policies, culture, and values; English language learning; alumni activities; and information about studying in the U.S. A multifunctional platform for public diplomacy programs, American Spaces promote open dialogue and respect for diversity, counteract negative preconceptions and disinformation, and build bridges for mutual understanding.

Since its opening, the ACW has become a widely-recognized, full-fledged cultural center that provides emerging leaders in Poland with a place to learn more about the United States, improve their English in a supportive environment, and interact with Americans. The ACW has provided consistently high-quality programming and a professional and attractive online presence with over 3,000 followers on Facebook. The staff have partnered with local organizations to offer a dynamic and vibrant program of events that attracts hundreds of visitors per month. Events are regularly streamed to online audiences to expand high-quality cultural and educational programs throughout the American Spaces network in Poland. As part of its tech-forward mission, the ACW runs a makerspace with state-of-the-art 3D design, prototyping, and audio-visual

equipment to support business start-ups, entrepreneurs, and creative professionals. Dedicated staff provide training and mentor visitors to help them conceive and complete their projects. All services and events are currently free to the public.

Program Structure:

American Spaces are funded through the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), with in-country oversight by the Public Affairs Section staff at U.S. Embassies and Consulates where they are located. The recipient organization should be able to administer the daily operation of the American Center Warsaw without direct supervision of U.S. Embassy Warsaw.

However, critical decisions on programming, staffing, and major purchases (such as computers and other technology) will be made in close coordination and with the approval of U.S. Embassy Warsaw's Public Affairs Section staff. The Public Affairs Section staff overseeing the American Center Warsaw include: the Information Officer (IO), an Assistant Information Officer (AIO), and several locally-employed embassy employees in the American Spaces Unit (ASU). In addition, the Regional Public Engagement Specialist (REPS) will work closely with the ACW Director and staff to ensure that employees are properly trained and are able to design and deliver innovative programming.

This cooperative agreement will provide funding for **one year** of activity. **For up to two years**, additional funds will be provided to maintain and upgrade the center (pending successful implementation of required programming).

Program Activities:

- **Staffing the American Center Warsaw:**

Applicants should propose a staffing plan for operating the ACW to be implemented in consultation with the U.S. Embassy Warsaw. U.S. Embassy Warsaw envisions the winning proposal including positions to support the following areas:

1. **Innovative Programming:** Identifying and working with partners on initiatives that support U.S. Embassy Warsaw's mission and public diplomacy goals.
2. **IT and Technology Innovations:** Supporting the tech-forward nature of the ACW, utilizing the most current digital tools to expand the audience for ACW events.
3. **Outreach and Communications:** Actively promoting ACW events and resources, maintaining dynamic and engaging website and social media platforms (e.g., Facebook).
4. **Administration and Operations:** Overseeing day-to-day administrative tasks in compliance with U.S. Embassy Warsaw policies.

For the purpose of this project, the award recipient organization will act as the employer of all locally hired, full-time and temporary staff. The award recipient will be responsible for establishing transparent and fair employment practices. All policies are subject to review by

U.S. Embassy Warsaw. It is the responsibility of the award recipient to ensure that labor agreements are prepared and signed with each employee in full accordance with current Polish law, and, moreover, all social security and tax deductions are accurately and timely performed by the employer.

The award recipient will advise all locally hired staff of the fact that although the employee is employed by a U.S. Government partner, it does not absolve him/her from paying taxes imposed by any level of government in Poland. The U.S. Government bears no liability or responsibility for the employment, benefits or welfare of the employee under employment agreement between the award recipient and the employee, nor will any credit for employment be given by the U.S. Government should the employee ever apply for a position with the U.S. Government.

- **Implementing Programs at the American Center Warsaw:**

ACW programs are planned in consultation with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of U.S. Embassy Warsaw and should be low-cost or even free to produce with the help of volunteers and local partners. The ACW supports a dynamic events calendar that includes a regular English conversation club, film screenings, workshops for U.S. exchange program alumni, cultural events, receptions, and events that feature high-level U.S. and Polish officials. Not all programming takes place within the physical ACW space and partnerships with outside organizations are encouraged.

The proposal should also include program activities that will be supported by funds through the cooperative agreement. These may include, but are not limited to: virtual lectures and discussions with Americans; translation support; programs with exchange program alumni; master classes in the arts; performances; presentations from representatives of U.S. universities; training workshops; Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs); honoraria for local guest speakers; etc. Approximately **15% of funding** should be used for program activities.

U.S. Embassy Warsaw, both through the Public Affairs Section and other embassy sections, will also provide other programming opportunities at the ACW. For example, the Public Affairs Section administers a robust cultural and academic exchange portfolio that includes visiting artists, musicians, academics, students, and American speakers. Additional programs managed by partner organizations (EducationUSA advising, alumni events, lectures by Fulbright scholars, etc.) also regularly take place at the ACW. All activities of this kind organized or sponsored by U.S. Embassy Warsaw will be integrated into the activities of the ACW when appropriate. Therefore, ACW programs proposed by the recipient represent only some of the programming that ultimately will be provided at the Center.

- **Day-to-Day Operations at the American Center Warsaw:**

The proposal should include a detailed operational plan for managing a full-fledged public outreach center that is open to the public **five days a week**. This includes, but is not limited

to, staff schedule to ensure coverage, plans to procure supplies and materials necessary to provide the full range of services and programming including:

- Internet services, IT support (including software), and maintenance of equipment such as photocopiers and A/V equipment
- The ACW website
- Communications (telephone, postal services, etc.)
- Supplemental furniture if needed
- Supplemental equipment (additional or replacement iPads, computers, TV monitors, copy machine, printers) if needed
- Marketing materials and promotional signs
- Contractual services to maintain the center's activities, including equipment repair as needed, cleaning services, interpretation services, and delivery of drinking water

Responsibilities:

- **The award recipient's specific responsibilities** for this program include, but may not be limited to:
 - 1) Hiring the ACW staff, as outlined above, recruiting new staff as needed;
 - 2) Developing programs and events at the ACW: creating proposals (including budgets) for programs developed under the cooperative agreement, submitting those proposals for approval by U.S. Embassy Warsaw one week before the start of each calendar month, and executing those proposals, ensuring that programs are held regularly – on a weekly basis – at the ACW.
 - 3) Provide logistical and operational support for programs and events initiated through PAS Warsaw's public diplomacy programming or by PAS's partner organizations;
 - 4) Assisting visitors to the ACW;
 - 5) Managing a member database and encouraging repeat visitors to the ACW;
 - 6) Marketing the ACW to target audiences, ensuring that an optimal number of visitors and program attendees visit the ACW every week;
 - 7) Providing weekly updates on program attendance and a monthly report on the ACW operations and programs to PAS Warsaw;
 - 8) Develop a robust monitoring and evaluation plan to provide regular feedback to PAS Warsaw on ACW operations, visitors, and program impact.
 - 9) Actively managing a website and a social media presence on Facebook, Instagram, and other platforms, in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy Warsaw's Digital Media Unit for the ACW;
 - 10) Purchasing materials and supplies for the ACW including, but not limited to books, DVDs, games, magazines, software, technology, and resource materials on an as-needed basis;
 - 11) Ensuring that the ACW is clean and all equipment is well-maintained;
 - 12) Procuring and supervising coffee/tea service or catering for a small number of events as approved by PAS Warsaw;
 - 13) Cooperating with the Regional Security Office's (RSO) requirements for security and liaising with the security staff on site; submitting all new staff's information through PAS Warsaw to the RSO for vetting in a timely manner;

- 14) Liaise with the management of the Warsaw University of Technology's Center for Technology Management and Transfer (CZiTT).
- 15) In consultation with U.S. Embassy Warsaw, provide capacity-building and support for the network of American Spaces in Poland through online or in-person trainings and periodic program initiatives.

- **In a cooperative agreement**, U.S. Embassy Warsaw is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine award monitoring. The Embassy's activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:
 - 1) Approve all American Center Warsaw staff;
 - 2) Approve the purchase of major supplies, including but not limited to computers, iPads, books, DVDs;
 - 3) Provide policy guidance on key themes to be promoted in program development;
 - 4) Approve the monthly calendar of events at the ACW;
 - 5) Provide guidance and oversight on the further development of the ACW.
 - 6) Provide additional programming opportunities through Public Affairs Section programs.
 - 7) Provide guidance on the State Department's licensing agreement for film showings.

FUNDING LEVELS AND ALLOWABLE EXPENSES:

Subject to availability of funds, **up to \$200,000** is available for this program, which will support one cooperative agreement for the operation of the ACW **over the period of one year**. Allowable costs are those **directly related to the project activities**. The program encourages organizations to provide in-kind contributions and/or coordinate funding with other donors. **U.S. Embassy Warsaw** reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Staff salaries, benefits, taxes
- Materials and supplies
- Honoraria for program facilitators
- Cultural and social activities
- Meeting and workshop costs
- Evaluation
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, U.S. Embassy Warsaw urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible.

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

- Ongoing operating costs and capital improvements

- Purchase of vehicles
- Activities that convey the appearance of partisanship or support for electoral campaigns
- Social welfare projects
- Academic or analytical research (if not part of a larger project)
- Scholarships
- Medical and psychological research
- Clinical studies
- Provision of health care services
- Entertainment costs (alcoholic beverages, cocktail parties)
- Costs associated with travel to the United States and activities in the United States
- Commissioning or creating art work (unless part of a broader project)

APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

Period of Performance: The new cooperative agreement will be valid before September 30, 2019 to **December 31, 2020** but active oversight of the program will begin on January 1, 2020. Awards for **two additional years** may be provided on a non-competitive basis pending successful completion of the first year of the program and pending the availability of funds. **U.S. Embassy Warsaw** intends that there will be no disruption in the operation of the American Center Warsaw programs and activities.

Application Submission Process: Application materials must be submitted by email to grantspoland@state.gov. The *subject line* of submission emails should follow this format: **American Center Warsaw Program: Name of Individual or Organization**. For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, please email grantspoland@state.gov.

Application Deadline: All applications must be submitted by email on or before **June 24, 2019, at 11:59 p.m. GMT+1**. Applications submitted after that time will be ineligible for consideration. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

Application Content and Format: Applicants must follow the instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS:

Applicants should submit a proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible. Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals must be submitted through grantspoland@state.gov and only in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist:

Online Forms

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, “Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs”
- SF-LLL, “Disclosure of Lobbying Activities,” if applicable

Executive Summary

In one double-spaced page, provide a summary of the proposed program including information on the applicant, an overview of program activities, and funding level requested from the U.S. Embassy Warsaw.

Narrative

Within 20 double-spaced, single sided pages with one inch margins, in a size 12 New Times Roman font, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices.

1. **Vision:** Describe the project objectives and the desired outcomes.
2. **Staffing:** Describe how the applicant will provide adequate oversight of the programming through program and administrative staff in support of the project.
3. **Project Activities:** Describe the key components of the proposed program to operate the ACW, including a monthly program of activities for visitors and programs that should include, at a minimum, the following: local and U.S. Embassy Warsaw guest speakers, workshops, English-language clubs, book clubs, virtual lectures and discussions with Americans, dialogue programs with exchange program alumni, presentations from representatives of U.S. universities, and other thematic programming in support of key issues and topics of importance to Polish audiences and U.S. foreign policy goals; other creative ideas are encouraged and will be one of the key criteria reviewed by the U.S. Embassy Warsaw.
4. **Monitoring:** Detail how the applicant will ensure the program will be effectively monitored throughout its duration.
5. **Evaluation:** In the submitted proposal, applicants should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. The

Embassy recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other method.

6. **Diversity:** Explain how the program managers will proactively support diversity in program content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly to include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious diversity. To the greatest extent possible, ACW programs and activities should be made available online to Poland's national American Spaces network.
7. **Institutional Capacity and Project Management:** Outline the applicant organization's capacity to conduct projects of this nature, focusing on the provision of educational and thematic programs; and previous work in the region. If applicable, outline how the applicant can tie in additional programs and resources from existing projects that can strengthen and diversify ACW programming.
8. **Work Plan/Schedule:** Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire award period. Provide a sample draft schedule of activities in a given month.

Additional Attachments

- Work Plan / Calendar of Activities
- Resumes of key personnel
- Copy of indirect agreement, if applicable
- Detailed budget (excel)
- Budget narrative

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ORGANIZATIONS:

All organizations applying to receive Federal assistance must have a Dun & Bradstreet Number (DUNS), a CCR (NCAGE) number, and an active account with the System for Award Management (SAM.gov) **before an award can be made.**

DUNS Registration (Dun & Bradstreet -D&B)

To obtain a DUNS number please go to <https://www.bisnode.pl/produkty/db-numer-duns/>.

Again, there is no fee to obtain a DUNS number in support of submitting a grant proposal to the U.S. government. Any information to the contrary is false, and any additional services offered during the registration process are not necessary.

To obtain an NCAGE Registration (NATO Commercial and Governmental Entity)

A NATO Commercial and Governmental Entity (NCAGE) Code must be assigned to the applicant organization. To request an NCAGE code, please go to <https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>. More information is also here:

<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCA%20GE.pdf>

System for Award Management (SAM) - SAM 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: <https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/SAMInfo.aspx>

Foreign-based applicants are strongly encouraged to review these guides when creating an account with SAM.gov. 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 account expires, the Organization cannot submit a grant application until it is renewed. To register in SAM one must first obtain DUNS and NCAGE numbers. This process may take from several days up to several weeks, so applicants are advised to start early. Please note that no fee or payment is required to register for SAM or obtain DUNS and NCAGE numbers. Any information to the contrary is false

SAM Registration (System for Award Management)

To register in SAM please go to www.SAM.gov. Again, no fee or payment is required to register for SAM. If you are registering a new entity in SAM.gov, you must provide an original, signed notarized letter stating that you are the authorized Entity Administrator before your registration will be activated. The Recipient is required to scan and submit a letter through Federal Service Desk. For instructions please **click here(PDF)**.

For help with SAM.gov, please visit their support page at: <https://www.fsd.gov> or contact them at: (+1) 334-206-7828.

AUTHORITY:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is “to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world.” The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

SELECTION CRITERIA:

US. Embassy Warsaw's Public Affairs Section Grants Committee will use the following criteria to evaluate proposals received in response to this funding opportunity:

Program Goals and Objectives/Activities Plan: A clear overview of the program, as well as goals and objectives, should be indicated in the proposal. U.S. Embassy Warsaw's Public Affairs Section Grants Committee will closely consider whether the overall objectives match the stated goals of the program. Applicants should describe what they propose to do and how they will do it. The proposed activities must directly relate to meeting the goals and objectives, and applicants should include information on how they will measure activities' effectiveness. Proposals should have a clear monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure proper implementation of the program. The Grants Committee will evaluate the activities planned in terms of their relevance to the current situation and the program goals and objectives, the feasibility of the proposed activities, and their timeline for completion.

Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful programs and an ability to function independently in Poland, including responsible fiscal management and adherence to local laws.

Program Monitoring and Evaluation: The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the program's success in meeting its goals, both as the activities unfold and after they have been completed. The proposal should include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique, plus a description of a methodology to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded. The award recipient will also be expected to provide quarterly reporting in a format provided by the Embassy American Spaces Unit staff.

Budget: Costs should be reasonable and realistic in relation to the program activities. Applicants are encouraged to provide as much detail as possible so that the committee may determine the extent to which the request represents an efficient use of U.S. government resources. The budget should be consistent with the narrative description of the program and should reflect the applicant's understanding of the allowable cost principles established by Title 2 CFR 200.306 (part 230) on cost principles for non-profit organizations.

Cost Sharing: Cost sharing is strongly encouraged; however, it is not a requirement of an application in response to this funding announcement.

NOTE: The cooperative agreement can be renewed twice on an annual basis pending successful implementation of the program, and subject to availability of funds.

DISCLAIMER:

Applicants can expect to be notified of the status of their application by **no later than July 26, 2019**. Issuance of this funding opportunity does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the United States Government (USG). It does not commit the USG to pay for costs incurred

in the preparation and submission of proposals. The USG reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. If a proposal is selected for funding, U.S. Embassy Warsaw has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. The USG reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the project evaluation requirements.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Should additional information be required, please contact U.S. Embassy Warsaw at: grantspoland@state.gov.