



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
U.S. EMBASSY GABORONE  
**NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**



**Funding Opportunity Title:** U.S. Embassy Gaborone Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Fund Program  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** DOS-GABORONE-GR-ASSHF-2023  
**Deadline for Applications:** August 4, 2023  
**Type of Funding:** Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act  
**CFDA Number:** 19.220  
**Maximum for Each Award:** \$20,000

**A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

The U.S. Embassy Gaborone of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for registered organizations to submit proposals to implement community-initiated development projects through the Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Fund (ASSHF) Small Grants Program.

**Purpose of Small Grants:**

The Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Fund program is a grass-roots assistance program that provides small-scale assistance to communities throughout Botswana as part of an ongoing commitment by the U.S. government to support development activities at the local level. The ASSHF program is intended to be flexible and allow the Ambassador to respond directly to requests from local communities for assistance with projects that have immediate impact, and further Mission priorities. Equally important, the Ambassador’s Special Self-Help Fund program is structured to encourage communities to be self-reliant and undertake similar activities on their own in the future.

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

The Small Grants Office receives more proposals than it can fund. Careful preparation of a proposal will give your organization the best chance to qualify for funding.

Acceptable project objectives include, but are not limited to the following:

- *Economic diversification, including small business creation and income generation*
  - Generate sustainable income and employment opportunities in local communities;
  - Advance economic diversification at the grassroots level and promote a culture of entrepreneurship;
  - Encourage use of local natural resources for income generation;
  - Purchase of income generating equipment;
  - Improve basic economic or living conditions of a community.
  
- *Social services to assist disadvantaged populations*
  - Assist populations which may be disadvantaged or at-risk, including people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, the elderly and female heads of household;
  - Construct and/or furnish community-initiated health facilities or clinics;
  - Construct water and sanitation related projects such as latrines, wells, pumps, and bore holes.

*Community-based natural resource management*

- Expand effective community ownership and management of natural resources;
  - Preserve and/or expand wildlife corridors;
  - Develop sustainable community-based tourism;
  - Promote conservation of natural resources.
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- *Youth and child development*
    - Assist youth to gain knowledge and tools to live positively, set life goals and enhance their own health, safety and security;
    - Purchase of school equipment, furnishings, and books;
    - Construct school rooms or community centers;
    - Create opportunities for youth, including employment.

Proposed projects must be well planned, ready to be implemented, and easily self-sustaining when the project is completed.

The organization must obtain approval from the local development committee, local authority, town and/or district council before submission of the proposal to the U.S. Embassy.

Successful applicants should demonstrate strong ties and support from their local community and governmental bodies.

Recipient organizations must demonstrate their substantial commitment by either contributing to the project financially or providing labor or supplies (in kind contribution) to carry out the project.

Organizations must be able to demonstrate that they have adequate internal controls and financial monitoring procedures in place.

The organization is required to provide ongoing project reports. U.S. Embassy staff will make periodic visits to the project site.

Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program funds may be used to fund construction projects. These projects should be small in scale and provide a public benefit. The following forms should be included in the application when proposing construction projects: SF-424C: Budget for Construction Programs, SF-424D: Assurances for Construction Programs; These forms can be found on [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov).

Care should be taken when preparing budgets for construction projects; prices of materials often increase from the time when proposal is submitted until a project selected for funding is implemented, to avoid failure due to running out of funds.

**Participants and Audiences:**

All applicants must be registered Non-Profit Organizations (NPOs). U.S. Embassy Gaborone welcomes proposals and applications from Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Faith Based Organizations (FBOs), and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that work directly with communities. Organizations with currently running projects may apply if they justify the need for more resources in new directions. Individuals, private business enterprises, or government departments or entities are NOT eligible for funding

The following is not eligible for funding:

- Projects relating to partisan political activity;
- Purchase and set up of surveillance equipment;
- Duplication of other U.S. Government programs;
- Projects that would benefit, either personally or politically, any employee (e.g. direct hire, contractor, part-time) of the U.S. Government, or the spouse or family member of a U.S. Government employee;
- Production of agricultural commodities for export that can be expected to have a significant impact on competing U.S. exports;
- Contributing to the violation of internationally recognized rights of workers;
- Charitable or donation related activities;
- Projects that support specific religious or military activities, as well as those relating to police, prisons, or other law enforcement activities;
- Fund-raising campaigns;
- Lobbying for specific legislation or projects;
- Scientific research;
- Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
- Administrative costs, salaries or stipends;
- Vehicles, motorcycles, and non-approved equipment;
- Purchase of alcohol, medicine, school uniforms, school fees, bursaries, or personal expenses;
- Support for educational or other facilities used to a significant degree by U.S. employees or their dependents;
- Support for abortion-related facilities and services;
- Purchase of used equipment, to avoid recurring maintenance and support costs. There is a general policy for financing only new equipment unless it is simple in design and spare parts are available locally, thus providing operational and maintenance advantages;
- Creating, continuing, or supplement technical assistance programs;
- Purchase of food and food parcels;
- Support for private businesses, private crèches, or public/government schools unless through involvement of a Parent-Teacher Association;
- Purchase of luxury goods and gambling equipment;
- Purchase or production of toxic or otherwise unsafe products such as pesticides or hazardous chemicals;

- Assisting any individual or entity involved in illegal drug trafficking as noted in Section 487 of the Foreign Assistance Act;
- Support, benefit, or other services associated with those persons or entities listed under Executive Order 13224, or determined to be subject to this order or other subsequent laws or orders, who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism;
- Support for any activity barred under the Foreign Assistance Act and legislation appropriating funds for foreign assistance.

**Authorizing legislation, type and year of funding:**

Funding authority rests in Economic Support Funds under the Foreign Assistance Act, U.S. Department of State.

**B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

**Length of performance period:** *One (1) year*

**Number of awards anticipated:** *Five (5) to ten (10) awards* (dependent on grant amounts)

**Award amounts:** Awards may range from a minimum of \$1,000 to a maximum of \$20,000

**Anticipated project start date:** *October 1, 2023*

**Funding Instrument Type:** Grant.

**Program Performance Period:** Proposed programs should be completed in twelve (12) months or less.

**C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

**1. Eligible Applicants**

The U.S. Embassy Gaborone Small Grants Office welcomes applications from all established Botswana-based organizations to include:

- Registered not-for-profit organizations (NPOs,) including civil society/non-governmental organizations (NGOs).
- Established, registered grassroots community-based organizations (CBOs) and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs).

To be eligible for funding, your project must meet the following criteria:

1. Be community-based;
2. Be initiated locally;
3. Be administered at the local level; and
4. Include **substantial** community participation and contributions;
5. Organizations that apply for SSH funds must be established and registered as Community Based Organizations (CBO) or Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) at the local government level in the communities in which they work. Please provide registration certificate;
6. Help improve basic economic or social conditions at the local community or village level and have long-lived value;
7. The projects should be high impact, benefiting the greatest number of people possible.
8. Funding is limited to one project, which must be completed within twelve (12) months or less;
9. Projects must be self-sustaining upon completion. The U.S. Embassy's support for the project must be a one-time-only/one grant contribution;
10. Projects must be within the community's ability to maintain and operate. Requests for large-scale agriculture or construction projects, or for expensive equipment are not considered priority projects;
11. All applicants must display sound management in the form of financial and administrative procedures that protect against waste, fraud, and abuse.

***For-profit, commercial entities, and individuals are not eligible to apply.***

## **2. Cost Sharing or Matching**

Recipient organizations must demonstrate their substantial commitment by either contributing to the project financially or providing labor or supplied (in kind contribution) to carry out the project. Local involvement of the organization or group must be at least 10% in cash or in kind of the total project costs. Contributions may include an investment in time, labor, material, land, building, or money to promote a sustainable project. Cost sharing information should be detailed in the budget of the proposal.

## **3. Other Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization.

To be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a **Unique Entity ID (UEI) number** issued via [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) as well as a valid registration. Further, forms SF-424: Application for Federal Assistance, SF-424A: Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs, and SF-424B: Assurances for Non-Construction programs will be required before an award can be issued. The Department may not make a Federal award until the applicant has complied with all requirements. Please see Section D for information on how to obtain these registrations.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) ([www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov)) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), "Debarment and Suspension." Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

The ASSHF program office reserves the right to request additional background information on applicants that do not have previous experience administering federal grant awards.

#### **D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

**Please follow all instructions below carefully**

**Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will be deemed technically ineligible for competition.**

##### **1. Content and Form of Application Submission**

The following documents are **required**:

**a. Mandatory application forms required below are available at:**

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/forms/sf-424-family.html> or the U.S. Embassy Gaborone website.

These forms are **ALWAYS FREE OF CHARGE**. If you are requested to pay, you may be targeted by a scam.

Fill out the forms, print immediately, sign, and scan all three together into .pdf format document and include in your application package.

- *SF-424 (Application for Federal Assistance – organizations)*
- *SF424A (Budget Information for Non-Construction programs)*
- *SF424B (Assurances for Non-Construction programs)*

**b. Summary Coversheet:** Coversheet stating the applicant’s name and organization, proposal date, program title, program period proposed start and end date, and brief purpose of the program.

**c. Proposal (5 pages maximum):**

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. Dollars
- All pages are numbered
- All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives, description of community contribution and involvement, anticipated impact, and the number of female and male beneficiaries.
- **Introduction to the Organization applying:** A description of past and present operations, showing ability to carry out the program, including information on all previous grants from the U.S. Embassy and/or U.S. government agencies.
- **Problem Statement:** Clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the problem to be addressed and why the proposed program is needed.



- **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. What aspect of the relationship between the U.S. and Botswana will be improved? The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments on the way to the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal.
- **Proposed Program Schedule:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees, if any.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the timeframe of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant?
- **Future Funding or Sustainability** Applicant’s plan for continuing the program beyond the grant period, or the availability of other resources, if applicable.

d. **Budget Justification Narrative:** After filling out the SF-424A Budget (above), use a separate sheet of paper to describe each of the budget expenses **in detail**. See section *H. Other Information: Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.

e. **Required attachments:**

- Official permission letters (from the local development committee, village authority, and/or local town or district council), if required for program activities;
- A copy of NPO registration from the Ministry of Labor and Home Affairs (Registrar of Societies) or organization’s certificate of incorporation;

- Copies of primary contact and alternate contact's ID card/book;
- Primary contact and alternate contact's 1-page CVs;
- A list of all people working in the organization (including all staff and volunteers) with names, positions titles, and contact information;
- A list of Committee/Board members with their names, positions, addresses, and phone numbers;
- Copy of organization's annual operating budget for the two most recent years;
- If applicable, a copy of your valid registration certificates from the Ministry of Education or Ministry of Health as an ECD center or preschool;
- Proof of bank account for organization;
- Original pro-forma invoices/quotations from intended suppliers;
- Copies of your most recent bank statements for every account held by your organization;
- A copy of the most recent audited financial statement (if applicable);
- A letter/stamp of approval from a local authority.

## 2. Unique Entity Identifier and System for Award Management (SAM.gov)

### Required Registrations:

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration with the SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards.

***Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications.***

The 2 CFR 200 requires that sub-grantees obtain a UEI number. Please note the UEI for sub-grantees is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a sub-grantee.

***Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.***

All organizations applying for grants should obtain these registrations. **All are free of charge:**

- Unique Identifier Number (formally referred to as DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number
- Active SAM.gov registration ([www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov))

It is recommended to start the process of obtaining a SAM.gov registration as soon as possible. The process can take several weeks. There is **NO cost associated with UEI or SAM.gov registration.**

The U.S. Embassy will verify your SAM.gov registration status when reviewing your application and awarding grants.

Please note: The Embassy retains the right to ask for additional documents not included in this NOFO.

## APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

### Submission Dates and Times

Applications may be submitted for consideration **at any time**, but will not be considered after **August 4, 2023** for this funding cycle. Applications received by the U.S. Embassy after the closing date will not be considered.

All application materials must be submitted in English. Please make a copy of your entire application for your own records.

### 1. Funding Restrictions

Any costs incurred in preparation of your proposal or in advance of an award will **not** be reimbursed.

### 2. Other Submission Requirements

Complete proposals can be:

- Emailed to:  
[SSHBotswana@state.gov](mailto:SSHBotswana@state.gov)
- Mailed to:  
U.S. Embassy, ATTN: Small Grants Coordinator, Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund Program, P.O. Box 90, Gaborone
- Hand delivered to:  
U.S. Embassy, Government Enclave, Gaborone, ATTN: Small Grants Coordinator.

All applicants will be notified of the status of their proposals after the review process is completed.

## E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

### 1. Criteria

Each application will be evaluated and rated based on the evaluation criteria outlined below. The criteria listed are closely related and are considered in judging the overall quality of an application.

**Organizational experience, capacity, and record on previous grants:** The organization has experience and expertise in its stated field and the Small Grants Office is confident of its ability to undertake the proposed project. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.

**Quality and Feasibility of the Program Idea:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how project activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable and realistic implementation timeline.

**Goals and objectives:** Goals and objectives are clearly stated, and project approach is likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.

**Program priorities:** Applicant has clearly described how stated goals are related to and support the program priorities stated in this document. The number of people to benefit will be considered when determining if a project can be funded.

**Budget:** The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic, accounting for all necessary expenses to achieve proposed activities.

**Monitoring and evaluation plan:** Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The project includes output and outcome indicators and shows how and when those will be measured.

**Sustainability:** Project activities will continue to have positive impact after the end of the project.

## **2. Review and Selection Process**

The Small Grants Office will conduct a preliminary review of all applications to determine completeness and technical eligibility. If the proposal meets the criteria, the Coordinator will schedule a site visit or meeting to discuss the proposal and review the organization's capacity. All projects eligible for funding are then reviewed by the U.S. Embassy Small Grants Committee, which will evaluate all eligible/complete applications and recommend funding priorities to the Ambassador for his final approval. The Small Grants Office will notify each applicant about the status of his/her proposal.

## **F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

### **1. Federal Award Notices**

The Grant agreements will be written, signed, and awarded by the Grants Officer and administered by the Grants Officer or his/her Representative. The Grant agreement is the authorizing document and will be provided to the recipient for review by email before being invited to sign. The recipient may only start incurring project expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

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

**Payment Method:** Payments will be made by electronic funds transfer in at least two advances, as needed to carry out the project activities and based of agreed milestones.

Organizations whose applications will not be funded will also be notified *via email*.

## 2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

- **Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting a proposal, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include: [2 CFR 25](#); [2 CFR 200](#); [2 CFR 175](#); [2 CFR 182](#); [2 CFR 183](#); [2 CFR 600](#); [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#).

Certifications and Assurances, and the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, all of which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive>.

\*Note the U.S. Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

## 3. Reporting

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit financial and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

## G. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact the Small Grants Office at: [SSHBotswana@state.gov](mailto:SSHBotswana@state.gov) or call (+267) 373-2325.

*Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials will not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.*

## H. OTHER INFORMATION

### Guidelines for Budget Justification

- Personnel: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.
- Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program (consultants or speakers, program staff, and participants/beneficiaries). If the program involves international travel, include a brief statement of justification for that travel.
- Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least \$5,000 per unit.
- Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, devices that are needed for the project. If an item costs more than \$5,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.
- Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.
- Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.
- Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the project activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization

operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.

- “Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.
- Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.
- Publicity campaign: It is expected that publicity will be given to the Ambassador’s Special Self-Help program and its projects, including press and radio releases, photographs, and project site plaques that acknowledge the shared efforts of Botswana and the United States. Publicity costs should be considered in the proposed budget.