

2020

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**ALUMNI**  
ENGAGEMENT  
INNOVATION  
FUND

# About this project opportunity!

- AEIF 2020 supports teams of at least **two alumni** of U.S. government-sponsored international exchange programs with funding from US \$5,000 up to US \$25,000 to support public service projects.
- The global AEIF 2020 competition will provide resources for alumni projects around the world to advance women's and girls' safety and their meaningful participation in peace and security processes.
- **New this year**, all projects will go through public affairs sections of the U.S. Embassy Cyprus; alumni will no longer submit proposals directly to the alumni website. The U.S. Embassy will nominate the most competitive candidates from Cyprus for the global competition in Washington, D.C.

- This year, AEIF 2020 will support the United States' commitment to working with our partners around the world to **advance the essential role of women in peace, security, and governance**. Topics/themes include:
  - **Strengthening the role of women** in peace, security, and governance;
  - **Engaging women as partners** in preventing terrorism and countering radicalization and recruitment;
  - **Promoting the protection of women and girls** from violence, abuse, and exploitation; or
  - **Supporting women's** political and civic participation

# Who are the eligible alumni?

- Any past participants of a U.S. government-funded exchange program are eligible to lead a team, partnered with another USG exchange alumna/us.
  - U.S. citizen alumni *can* participate as team members but cannot submit proposals on their own;
  - Alumni teams may be comprised of alumni from different exchange programs and different countries (Fulbright; CASP; IVLP; SUSI; YTILI; Summer Youth Institute; BFTF, etc.);
  - All projects must take place outside the United States and its territories;
  - Proposals must address women in peace, security, and governance;
  - Application form, guidelines, budget form must be used from our website

# How do I apply?

- Start forming your teams! [Alumni.state.gov](http://Alumni.state.gov) website may help you identify other alumni in Cyprus and program alumni around the world.
- **The proposal deadline is March 6, 2020.**
- The U.S. Embassy will nominate the most competitive candidates from Cyprus for the global competition in Washington, D.C.
- Funding decisions will be made in Washington, D.C. sometime in spring 2020; grants likely to begin in early summer 2020.

# What are allowable costs we can include?

- All project activities and initiatives must take place outside the United States. AEIF 2020 can support the following costs:
  - Intra-regional or in-country transportation;
  - Rental of venues for project activities;
  - Trainer or speaker expenses;
  - Reasonable equipment and materials;
  - Meals or refreshments integral to the project goals (e.g., a working lunch during a meeting);
  - Communications and publicity materials, such as manuals or project advertisements

## *Helpful Tip!*

- *Include cost-sharing in your budget to strengthen your proposal!*

# What are ineligible activities and costs?

- AEIF 2020 **does *not* support:**

- Airfare to or from the United States and its territories
- Sustained staff salaries, office space, and overhead
- Large items of durable equipment or construction programs
- Alcohol, excessive meals, refreshments, or entertainment
- Academic or scientific research
- Charitable or development activities or the provision of direct social services to a population
- Support or opposition of partisan political activity or lobbying
- Programs that support specific religious activities
- Fund-raising campaigns

# What are ineligible activities and costs?

- AEIF 2020 **does *not* support:**

- Programs intended primarily for the growth or institutions development of the organization
- Venture capital, for-profit endeavors, or charging a fee for participation in the project
- Personal development
- Social travel/visits
- Gifts or prizes
- Programs that duplicate existing programs

# Evaluation criteria

- Purpose and summary, description and implementation plan **20 points**
- Relevance of the project to women, peace, and security **10 points**
- Degree of alumni involvement **10 points**
- Participation and support from local partners **10 points**
- Evaluation and impact of the project **10 points**
- Sustainability **10 points**
- Communication, media, and outreach plan **10 points**
- Budget and budget narrative **20 points**

**Total possible points: 100**

# Tips for creating a strong proposal

- Make your proposal stand out! Winning projects demonstrate innovation by tackling a new issue, using a unique approach, working with a different group of people, or performing the project in a different location than other projects.
  - **In 2016, out of 829 project submissions from 137 countries, 10 projects in Europe were selected to receive an award: two were from Cyprus!**

# Tips for creating a strong proposal

To write your narrative, consider the following criteria:

- What is your project, and why is it important?
- What change will your project affect?
- Who is your target audience? (e.g., is it youth? A specific professional sector? Disadvantaged communities?)
- Why is it important for Cyprus? Justify with numbers if possible
- What impact or change do you expect to see because of the project?
- Who are your partners? What specific responsibilities will each have?
- What major steps and activities will you undertake to make it happen?

# Tips for creating a strong proposal

- **Relevance of the project to women, peace, and security.** Demonstrate how your project will strengthen the role of women as agents of peace, reconciliation, development, growth and or stability.
- **Degree of alumni involvement.** Explain the roles and responsibilities of each member of the alumni team.
- **Participation and support from local partners.** Local buy-in is important, and a strong sign that there is community support from a broad range of community experts. List and describe non-alumni partners and the role, resources, or services they will provide to your project (e.g., subject matter experts, community centers, academic institutions, businesses, local/national government, NGO's, American spaces).
- **Monitoring and Evaluation.** How will you be judging your projects intended outcomes? How will they be collected? (surveys, interviews, focus groups, etc.)

# Tips for creating a strong proposal

- **Sustainability.** AEIF funds only take your project so far. How do you plan to continue your project beyond its initial funding year?
- **Communication, media, and outreach plan.** How will you promote your project to the public and the beneficiaries? Include social media, websites, print news, and other forms of media. Also, be prepared to develop a reporting plan to share information about the success of your project if it is funded.
- **Budget.** Only use the AEIF 2020 budget form. Additionally, consider the amount of funds you will request: there is no need to request the full amount of possible funding if you can achieve the impact you are seeking for less. You might consider a smaller scale version of a larger project.
  - Budgets should include a **narrative description** to justify each item. Explain what the numbers represent, how you calculated them, and why you need to incur them. *It helps reviewers understand your vision!*
  - *Cost share (in-kind support? Services, labor, supplies, or volunteers all count!)*

# QUESTIONS?

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