



NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

DOS-MWI-ASSHF-FY19

U.S. Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund, U.S. Embassy Lilongwe

Department of State

U.S. Mission to Lilongwe-Malawi

GENERAL INFORMATION

Document type:	Grants Notice
Agency Name:	U.S. Mission to Lilongwe-Malawi
Funding Opportunity Number:	DOS-MWI-ASSHF-FY19
Funding Opportunity Title:	U.S. Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund, U.S. Embassy Lilongwe
Type of Funding:	FY 2019 State Africa Regional Economic Support Fund-Overseas Contingency Operations (ESF-OCO)
Announcement type:	Initial
Opportunity Category:	Discretionary
Funding Instrument Type:	Grant
Category of funding Activity:	Self-Help Fund
Category Explanation:	Improve basic economic or social conditions at the local community or village level
CDFA number:	19.700- General Department of State Assistance
Cost sharing or matching requirements:	No
Posting Date:	March 15, 2020
Creation Date:	March 15, 2020
Closing Date for applications:	May 29, 2020
Estimated Total Program funding:	\$100,000
Award Ceiling:	\$10,000
Award Floor:	\$3,000
Program performance period:	One (1) year or less
Number of awards anticipated:	Ten (10) awards (dependent on grant amounts)
Anticipated Project Start Date:	October 1, 2020

This notice is subject to availability of funding.

The U.S. Embassy Lilongwe announces an open competition for organizations to submit applications to carry out projects through the U.S. Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund. Please follow carefully all instructions below.

The U.S. Ambassador's Special Self-Help (SSH) Fund was established in Malawi in 1966 as a way to address urgent development needs at the community level. The goal of the fund is to improve the basic economic or social conditions of Malawians at the local community or village level. Over the past 50 years, this fund has disbursed over \$6 million to 1,463 projects covering all 28 Districts in Malawi. Projects funded have included classroom blocks, under-five clinics, pregnant mothers waiting shelters, school libraries, girls' hostels, installation of biogas digesters, eco-stove production, and provision of clean and safe drinking water through boreholes and shallow wells.

The U.S. Embassy funds a variety of projects each year, with an objective to obtain geographical diversity in project selection. Projects for which women and girls are the primary beneficiaries are encouraged. We will not consider projects that benefit only small number of individuals. Each grant ranges from between USD \$3,000 and USD \$10,000.

This grass-roots grant assistance program allows U.S. Ambassadors to support local requests for small community-based development projects. The purpose of this program is to fund small development activities that generate public awareness of U.S. foreign assistance efforts but that fall outside the structure of established USAID projects. The program is intended to be flexible and allow the Ambassador to respond quickly and directly to requests from local communities for assistance with small community projects that have immediate impact and further Mission policies and objectives. Equally important, this program is structured to encourage communities to be self-reliant and undertake similar activities on their own in the future. All are community-based, initiated locally, administered at the local level, and include significant community contributions in cash, labor, or materials. The SSH philosophy is to help communities that are ready to help themselves.

The U.S. Embassy funds a variety of projects each year, with an objective to obtain geographical diversity in project selection. Projects for which women and girls are the primary beneficiaries are encouraged. We will not consider projects that benefit only small number of individuals. Each grant ranges from between \$3,000 and \$10,000.

Self-Help Program Application Schedule

- Application Period: March 15, 2020 – May 29, 2020 (no later than 12:30 Malawi time)
- Grant Award Timing: no later than September 30, 2020

Important Notes

- Limit of ONE (1) proposal per organization;
- No comingling of funds from other donors; and
- Submitting a proposal does not guarantee funding.

Applicant Criteria

All citizens of Malawi representing educational, social, community development, special interest, disability, or advocacy group or organization may request funding for a community activity.

To qualify, an applicant must be an organized, motivated group with a real need, and the proposed project must be feasible and based on the socio-economic context of the local community. In addition, an applicant must demonstrate that it has adequate internal controls and financial monitoring procedures in place, and strong ties to and support from the local community and local governmental bodies.

To be eligible for funding the project must:

1. Improve basic economic or social conditions at the local community or village level, and have long-lived value;
2. Benefit the greatest number of people possible (i.e., be high impact);
3. Include substantial community participation in the activity (contributions may include labor, materials - bricks, sand, gravel, seeds, etc.-, land, buildings, or cash to ensure the success of the project);
4. Be within the community's ability to maintain and operate;
5. Be able to be completed within twelve (12) months;
6. Be self-sustaining upon completion (the Embassy's support for the project will be a one-time-only/one grant contribution); and
7. Provide evidence that the selected Project Coordinator is financially responsible and will be able to account for funds received (having a bank account is an example of such evidence).

Limitations/Exclusions from Eligibility

The Self-Help Program will only pay for items and technical assistance that are necessary for the completion of the project.

Additionally, the Special Self-Help Program will NOT fund:

1. Projects that have a purely police, military, or cultural emphasis;
2. Projects relating to partisan political activity;
3. Charitable or donation related activities;
4. Religious projects unless the beneficiary community spans multiple religious affiliations or non-affiliations;
5. Fund-raising campaigns;
6. Travel to and from the Embassy;
7. Lobbying for specific legislation or projects;
8. Scientific research;

9. Projects intended primarily for the growth or institutional development of the organization;
10. Projects that duplicate existing efforts;
11. Personal businesses;
12. Labor, salaries, stipends, allowances, scholarships, donations, or honorariums;
13. Drugs, Pesticides, fertilizers, or herbicides;
14. Overhead and administrative/operating costs, office equipment or supplies (such as copiers, pencils, paper, forms, and folders), printing material, fuel, or land;
15. Remodeling or renovating an existing facility that is in disrepair as a result of neglect or lack of money (such as purchasing paint to repaint a school);
16. Projects that are partially funded by another donor or international organization, other U.S. Government programs, the Government of Malawi (i.e., NO comingling of funds);
17. Projects that focus on refugees or displaced persons (there are specific U.S. bilateral or multilateral assistance programs designed to address their needs);
18. Purchase of previously owned equipment, luxury goods, or gambling equipment;
19. Contingency estimates;
20. Motor vehicles;
21. Revolving loan funds and seed money;
22. Activities with unmitigated and negative environmental consequences, such as dams, roads through relatively pristine forest lands, activities that contribute to commercial deforestation or conversion of land-use from forest to livestock, actions that are likely to jeopardize, threaten, or endanger species and/or their habitat, and actions that are likely to degrade protected areas significantly, such as introduction of exotic plants or animals;
23. Purchase of alcohol, medicine or medical equipment, sports equipment or uniforms, musical instruments or uniforms for an orchestra or dance company, school uniforms, school fees, bursaries, or personal expenses;
24. Construction projects that do not have full authorization with relevant authorities and proper costing by registered contractor, or have unrealistic budgets not supported by contractor estimates;
25. Ongoing needs for education/training;
26. Purchase of food and food parcels; and
27. Support for private businesses, private crèches, or public/government schools unless through involvement of a Parent-Teacher Association or Community group.

Examples of project types, including but not limited to:

- Small construction projects (less than 10,000 sq. ft.) – school rooms, community centers, maternal waiting shelters;
- Water and Sanitation-related projects – wells, latrines, pumps, bore holes, shower stalls and sinks, and fishponds;
- School equipment and supplies – desks, chairs, laboratory equipment and library items;
- Miscellaneous durable goods – stove or refrigerator for a school or hospital, or a washing machine for a clinic;
- Income generating equipment – weaving looms, tools for furniture making, rice-milling machine. However, care should be used to avoid the funding for the purchase of equipment that cannot be maintained by the local community. Please note that the equipment purchased must be maintained by the local community or group (clubs or cooperatives);
- Projects that aid women to develop marketable skills (e.g. vocational skills center) to be employed or conduct income generating activities;
- Projects that address environmental conservation issues; and
- Cooperatives pursuing projects that include fish farming, solar-powered irrigation systems, and high-value agriculture.

Specific U.S. Embassy Lilongwe Priorities for this fiscal year

- Under this year’s program, U.S. Embassy Lilongwe will prioritize: development of small to medium size enterprises within private sector, promotion of food security and nutrition, construction of girls’ hostels, libraries, laboratories, and waiting shelters for pregnant women; the provision of clean and safe water; environmental projects such as waste management; and other unique and innovative projects.

Elements of Successful Projects

- The project is initiated by the community.
- The project plan contains pre-established, long-term goals and a coherent plan to keep the project running in the future.
- A capable project coordinator who is a long-term resident in the community is responsible for the project.
- The project is assisted by a non-biased umbrella organization, such as a religious mission or a local Non-Governmental Organization that provides guidance and arbitration on issues when necessary.

- There is strong coordination and communication among the grant-recipient group, local leaders, and local government representatives.
- The project makes use of materials and supplies that can be maintained by the community, and the use of materials that will not harm the environment.

Local Community Involvement

The local cash or in-kind community contribution will be crucial to make a choice between two viable applicants. In-kind contributions could include: labor (wages of masons and workers), food, accommodation for qualified labor, carts of sand or gravel, bricks for construction, sand, fence, water supply, transportation costs, donations of materials, among other things.

HOW TO APPLY

Application Procedures

1. Required components of complete application package:
 - a. comprehensive budget;
 - b. detailed building plan with dimensions (if necessary);
 - c. copies of a bank statement and/or invoices (if available);
 - d. detailed map of the Project Location; and
 - e. any additional information/literature you have about your organization and/or project.
2. How and when to submit application package:

Submit to the U.S. Embassy Lilongwe Small Grants Office no later than May 29, 2020, 12:30 Malawi time in one of the below three methods:

- i. **By Electronic means:** submit by e-mail to Self-HelpMalawi@state.gov;
- ii. **By Post:** mail to U.S Embassy Small Grants Office, P.O Box 30016, Lilongwe 3 (must be post-marked on or before May 29, 2020, 12:30 Malawi time); OR
- iii. **By Hand Delivery:** hand-deliver to U.S Embassy Offices, Area 40, Plot 24, Kenyatta Drive (next to MCP Headquarters), Lilongwe 3.

Applications received after May 29, 2020, 12:30 Malawi time will not be considered.

3. Project selections will be announced prior to September 30, 2020

Evaluation of Proposals

Proposals will be evaluated on the following factors:

- **Completeness:** Did the applicant submit all of the materials requested, including but not limited to:
 - Applicable licenses, registration, and ownership documents;
 - Bank details and accounting procedures;
 - Signatures from local authorities (see below); and
 - Pro forma invoices.

- **Sustainability:** Is the project as described sustainable in the long term? Will the project continue without additional investment? Are measurements of success adequate?

- **Need:** Does the project adequately fulfill a stated need within a community?

- **Budget:** Is the budget complete, and well defined? Is the budget reasonable?

- **Completion within one year:** Can the project be completed in a single year?

- **Community support:** Does the project show strong community support?

- **Impact:** Does the project benefit the broadest numbers of beneficiaries possible? Is there a substantial impact on the affected community?

- **Contribution and Group Capabilities:** Does the group provide adequate resources and show commitment to the project? Is the group capable of administering the project as designed?

Other Required Documentation

The U.S. Embassy will require successful applicants to complete U.S. Standard Form 424 (and subsidiary forms), grants award documents and attachments, and agree to other terms and conditions required by the Embassy.

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 plaques at project sites to acknowledge the shared efforts of Malawi and American people. All printed materials and promotional advertisements for the project must feature an approved U.S. flag image, which the Embassy will provide to the grantee. In addition to the flag branding requirement, the award recipient is required to include the name of the U.S. Embassy or Mission when acknowledging the role of the U.S. government in the project.

Selection not guaranteed

Please be aware that submitting a grant application to the U.S. Embassy does not guarantee a grant award. Each year we receive far more project proposals than we can fund. In order to create a competitive application, please pay close attention to our funding criteria.

Project Accounting and Administration

If you are awarded a grant, you will be responsible for accounting and administration of the project. Your group will order and procure all goods. Advances are disbursed according to a preauthorized schedule via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) from the U.S. Embassy to the appropriate bank account. In order to receive any advance, after the initial advance, a grantee must submit a report confirming attainment of milestones, and account for the money already spent in order to receive the entirety of their grant.

Content and Form of Proposal Submission

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 ineligible.

Content of Proposals

1. Summary Coversheet stating:

- Name of group or organization;
- Proposal Date;
- Title of Project;
- Project Type (health, education, water, environmental, other);
- Whether the project involves construction of a permanent building or buildings;
- Brief purpose of the program;
- Program period proposed start and end date;
- Location of Project (include map) (Region, District, Traditional Authority (T.A.), Village(s));
- Sponsoring organization or agency;
- Project Manager Contact (Name, Title, Postal Address, Landline Phone (if any), Mobile Phone(s), E-Mail);

- Name of local committee that will supervise the project (indicating when committee formed and list any other activities conducted by this committee);
- Name of group/entity/individual that will manage the budget and buy materials/equipment (Name, Title, Postal Address, Landline Phone (if any), Mobile Phone(s), E-Mail))

2. Project Plan

Problem statement, project plan (description and model), projects activities, and expected results.

- i. Community problem: Very briefly describe the problem your community is facing that compels you to seek support.
- ii. Project Scope: Clearly describe the project you want to implement as a way of solving the problem described at 10 (a) above. Attach anything necessary to explain the project, such as building plans, specifications of equipment, photos, drawings, etc.
- iii. Project activities: List the activities you plan to implement to achieve your intended results for this Project.
- iv. Supplier consultations: If the project activities involve procurement of equipment and materials, where will you buy the needed equipment and materials? Attach quotations, specifications, or drawings as proof that you consulted suppliers.
- v. Project involvement: Explain clearly your community/group involvement in implementing this project.
- vi. Project Results: What are the expected results (changes in the community) after you implement this project?

3. Project Beneficiaries

- i. Intended direct beneficiaries of the project:
 - Disaggregation: Men/Women/Boys/Girls Total; and
 - How these individuals will benefit from the project.
- ii. Intended indirect beneficiaries of the project:
 - Disaggregation: Men/Women/Boys/Girls/Total; and
 - How these will benefit from the project.

4. Project Length (include estimated start and completion dates)

5. Sustainability Plan (briefly state what will ensure your project's continuity after USG funding has ended).

6. **Statement regarding proposal being submitted elsewhere for funding** (state whether this proposal been submitted elsewhere for possible funding, and if it has, state the name and contact address of the organization(s) or donor group(s)).
7. **Involvement of Peace Corps Volunteer** (state whether there is a Peace Corps Volunteer associated with this project, and if there is one, include the name and contact number for the volunteer)
8. **Involvement of State whether Member of Parliament or Councilor** (state whether there is a Member of Parliament or Councilor associated with this project, and if there is, state the name and how the MP and/or Councilor is involved).

9. Budgets

- i. Value of Local Contributions: List the estimated value (MK) next to materials or services that your community will give to the project. Do not include items that would be financed by the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund. Should include quantity, price per item and total amount for each item. Include value of unskilled labor and skilled Labor, cash contributions and source of cash, as well as total community contribution
- ii. List Items and Expenses to be financed by the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Fund: Quote actual prices at the time of application (MK). It may be helpful to consult vendors for accurate materials lists, quantities, and prices. Should include quantity, price per item and total amount for each item. And Total Cost of Materials & Services in Malawi Kwacha.

10. "Buy in" of Local Authorities:

- i. Please enlist the support of at least three local authorities, including but not limited to:
 - Traditional Authorities;
 - Chief Executive Officer/District Commissioner;
 - Community Development Assistant;
 - Member of Parliament; or
 - Councilor.

These authorities should be relevant to the kind of project being proposed. These signatures indicate that these authorities:

- are informed of the plans in this proposal;
- approve of these plans;
- attest that it is a valid plan put forward by a legitimate organization; and
- are pledging their support to the project.

For each local authority, please provide the name, title, address, signature and date on a separate sheet of paper.

11. Directional Map (as noted above) draw an accurate map to enable the Embassy team to locate you project)