



**U.S. Embassy Ambassador's Special Self-Help (SSH) Program
Notice of Funding Opportunity
Call for Proposals**

CFDA Number: 19.345 (International Programs to Support Democracy, Human Rights and Labor)

Issued: October 15, 2018

Closing Date: January 15, 2019

The following are included with this call for proposals:

- **Annex A** - Grant Proposal Narrative
- **Annex B** - Budget Template

SECTION I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

OBJECTIVE

The Ambassador's Special Self-Help (SSH) Program awards grants to registered non-governmental, non-profit, community-based organizations to implement short-term (12-month), small-scale (between \$5,000 and \$10,000) development projects that include significant community involvement.

Priority consideration is given to income generating projects that improve basic economic or social conditions at the village level.

BACKGROUND

Started in 1964 in Togo, the SSH Program spread across Africa as a grassroots program that allows U.S. embassies to respond quickly to local requests for small, community-based development projects that have an immediate impact. In 1980, the Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program started in Zimbabwe.

SPECIFIC PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

The SSH Program in Zimbabwe has several funding sources, each with a specific mandate. When applying for funding, clearly identify which fund you are applying to.

1. Ambassador's Special Self-Help (SSH) Fund

The Ambassador's SSH Fund focuses on community-initiated income generating projects. These projects can support access to healthy food, natural resource management, wildlife conservation, water/sanitation initiatives, and other community projects.

- *Examples of previous projects:* Grinding mills, carpentry, weaving, boreholes, drip irrigation, water storage, chicken rearing, and market gardens.



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2. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) Small Grants Fund

The PEPFAR Small Grants Funds focuses on income generating activities that improve care, support, and economic conditions for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and those directly affected by HIV/AIDS such as grandparents caring for grandchildren orphaned due to HIV/AIDS.

- *Examples of previous projects:* Agricultural training, nutritional gardens, grinding mills, artisan activities, sewing project for PLWHA, distribution system for nutritional supplements, HIV/AIDS prevention information.

SECTION II. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

SSH supports projects in Zimbabwe with an average of \$5,000 to \$10,000 per project. Projects are expected to be completed within 12 months with an anticipated start date between May 1, 2019 and September 30, 2019, depending on when funding is made available.

The SSH Program receives hundreds of applications for funding each year. All submissions are reviewed in a competitive and transparent manner. However, given the limited funding available through the SSH Program, we can only fund a small number of projects each year.

SECTION III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

- Applicant must be a Zimbabwe registered non-governmental, non-profit, or community-based organization.
 - Registered trusts, associations, schools, churches, etc. meet this eligibility requirement.
 - Individuals, businesses, and government entities do NOT qualify.
- All applications must include and identify a significant community contribution (cash, labor, and/or materials).
- The organization must be Zimbabwean and its members must be Zimbabwean citizens.
- Applicants must display sound management in the form of financial and administrative procedures that protect against fraud, waste, and abuse.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Self-Help Funds Special Self-Help funds cannot be used:

- For the cost of administering Self-Help activities, including travel expenses, whether incurred by the cooperating country government, or another implementing agency;
- For religious or military activities, as well as those relating to police, prisons, or other law enforcement;



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- For surveillance equipment;
- For creating, continuing, or supplementing technical assistance programs;
- To duplicate other U.S. Government programs;
- To 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;
- For the relocation or expansion outside the U.S. of an enterprise located in the U.S. if such activity results in the reduction of U.S. production or reduces the number of U.S. employees;
- For the production of agricultural commodities for export that can be expected to have a significant impact on competing U.S. exports;
- To contribute to the violation of internationally recognized rights of workers;
- For any single SSH activity of \$25,000 or more without prior written approval;
- To support educational or other facilities used to a significant degree by U.S. employees or their dependents;
- For abortion-related facilities and services;
- For 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 in less developed countries;
- For luxury goods and gambling equipment; or playgrounds and similar projects;
- For toxic or otherwise unsafe products such as pesticides or hazardous chemicals;
- To assist any individual or entity involved in illegal drug trafficking as noted in Section 487 of the Foreign Assistance Act;
- For the support, benefit, or other services associated with those persons or entities listed under Executive Order 13224¹, or determined to be subject to this order or other subsequent laws or orders, who commit, threaten to commit, or support terrorism;
- For any activity barred under the FAA and legislation appropriating funds for foreign assistance.

Special Self-Help funds are generally not used for the following activities that fall outside the Self-Help mandate, except as noted:

- **Refugees:** Projects to assist refugees and returnees are covered by other specialized U.S. programs, and are highly discouraged. In certain, very limited, cases, however, SSH financing is permitted. For example, it is appropriate to assist local populations in refugee-impacted areas where refugees have limited agricultural, water, health, or other resources/services. Assistance may also be given to returnee populations that no longer receive United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees or other international aid but need help to re-establish themselves in their country of origin. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) can provide further guidance and suggestions.

¹ EO 13224 is a list of groups and individuals who sponsor terrorism. Information about the list, and links to the current list may be found at <http://www.state.gov/j/ct/rls/other/des/122570.htm>.



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- **Human Rights-Related Activities:** Seminars, publications of journals and constitutions, and projects that are human rights related should be avoided; these activities should be considered under the Democracy and Human Rights Fund.
- **Multiple Grants:** To avoid communities becoming overly dependent on U.S. assistance, posts should guard against providing multiple grants to one community. However, communities that identify very different needs several years apart might warrant future project consideration.
- **Pesticides, Fungicides, and Herbicides:** Environmental procedures pursuant to Congressional regulations restrict development assistance funds for the purchase or use of pesticides, fungicides, and herbicides.
- **Revolving Loan Funds/Seed Money:** SSH funds are intended for projects that produce a tangible end product. Revolving loan funds and grants for seed money for new enterprises do not fall under acceptable projects and therefore must be avoided.
- **Use of SSH Funds for Non-Project Purposes:** SSH funds may not be used for any Embassy overhead or administrative costs. This includes the cost of travel of personnel managing the program. For personnel, travel, administrative and overhead costs, operating expenses must be used.

The SSH Program grant funds may NOT be utilized for the following:

- Ceremonies, parties, celebrations, or “representation” expenses.
- Construction, refurbishment, or infrastructure activities are not recommended.
- Payment for school fees, computers, vehicles, pharmaceuticals, medical and/or contraceptive equipment, or alcoholic beverages.

SECTION IV. SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Application should be emailed to SelfHelp_Harare@state.gov If you don't have email access, please deliver your application to:

United States Embassy
Attn: Ambassador's Special Self-Help Program
P.O. Box 3340, Harare, Zimbabwe

U. S. Embassy Harare, 172 Herbert Chitepo, Harare Zimbabwe.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. All applications must be received by the grants team by 5:00pm January 15, 2019. Any applications received after this deadline will be held and considered for 2020 funding.

Applications must be submitted in English. Typed responses preferred; hand written acceptable. Applications must include:

1. Complete the proposal narrative (Annex A)
2. Completed Budget (Annex B)
3. Include a copy of the organization's registration certificate.



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4. Include a letter of approval for proposed project from the local development committee, tribal authority, and/or local town or district council.
5. Attach original pro-forma invoices/quotations from the intended suppliers. Three quotes for each item are required.

Make a copy of your entire application for your own records.

SECTION V. REVIEW INFORMATION

Proposals that meet the evaluation criteria will be informed of next steps in the application process. Non-eligible applicants will be notified that they are not being considered for funding.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Full applications will be evaluated against the evaluation criteria described below.

- A. *Alignment with SSH Program Goals:* Shows responsiveness to SSH and PEPFAR program goals and is appropriate for the country context (15). Exhibits originality, substance, and includes a clear plan for community involvement and sustainability (10). **Total 25 points**
- B. *Feasibility of Design:* The proposed activities are feasible with a clear articulation of how the activities will lead to the overall objectives. Objectives must be SMART – specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time bound. The objectives must also be results-focused (15). Proposed timeline for project is reasonable (5). **Total 20 points**
- C. *Impact on Target Group:* The extent to which the proposed activity corresponds to the needs of target group(s) and will directly benefit them (10). Clearly defines how many men and women will benefit and how project participants will be selected (10). **Total 20 points**
- D. *Organizational Capacity:* Shows evidence of group's capability to undertake and accomplish the proposed activities. Organization clearly designates project manager with current contact information and demonstrates adequate financial and project management oversight. **Total 15 points**
- E. *Sustainability/Financial Self-Reliance:* The extent to which the funded activity will result in building and strengthening the capacity of the community and local organizations, and whether the activity itself is sustainable (5). Includes evaluation of community contribution (cash, labor, materials) and involvement as well as plan to continue and/ or build on project results (5). **Total 10 points**
- F. *Past Performance:* Previous or ongoing experience implementing similar activities. **Total 5 points**



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G. *Gender Awareness*: The extent to which the proposed activity represents a strong commitment to women as beneficiaries and strives for gender awareness in the larger target audience. **Total 5 points**

Further, the SSH Program will review the proposed budget (Annex B) to ensure its accuracy.

SECTION VI. AWARD AND ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

All grants will be negotiated, denominated, and funded in U.S. dollars. Applicants will be informed in writing of the decision made regarding their application.

SECTION VII. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACT

For questions and inquiries please contact: The Ambassador's Special Self-Help Grants Team at SelfHelp_Harare@state.gov or 00263 242 250-593 x 4821 x 4806