

The U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP)

2025 Grants Program Funding Opportunity

Public Diplomacy Section, U.S. Embassy, Bangkok, Thailand

Announcement

The U.S. Embassy in Bangkok and Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State are pleased to announce the call for proposals for the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) 2025 Grants Program Funding Opportunity.

Since its inception in 2001, AFCP has helped preserve cultural sites, cultural objects, and forms of traditional cultural expression in Thailand and around the world. Cultural heritage endures as a reminder of the contributions and historical experiences of humanity. By taking a leading role in efforts to preserve cultural heritage, the U.S. shows its respect for other cultures. AFCP-supported projects include the restoration of ancient and historic buildings, assessment and conservation of rare manuscripts and museum collections, preservation and protection of important archaeological sites, and the documentation of vanishing traditional craft techniques and indigenous languages. AFCP project strengthen civil society, encourage good governance, and promote political and economic stability around the world.

Under the AFCP Grants Program, the minimum funding available for individual projects is US\$25,000 per project and the maximum amount is US\$500,000 per project. **The deadline for submitting concept notes is January 12, 2025.**

The AFCP Grants Program supports the preservation of archaeological sites, historic buildings and monuments, museum collections, and forms of traditional cultural expression, such as indigenous languages and crafts. Special consideration will be given to proposals with a focus or that include a component on intangible heritage. Appropriate project activities may include:

- Anastylis (reassembling a site from its original parts)
- Conservation (addressing damage or deterioration to an object or site)
- Consolidation (connecting or reconnecting elements of an object or site)
- Documentation (recording in analog or digital format the condition and salient features of an

object, site, or tradition)

- Inventory (listing of objects, sites, or traditions by location, feature, age, or other unifying characteristic or state)
- Preventive Conservation (addressing conditions that threaten or damage a site, object, collection, or tradition)
- Restoration (replacing missing elements to recreate the original appearance of an object or site, usually appropriate only with fine arts, decorative arts, and historic buildings)
- Stabilization (reducing the physical disturbance of an object or site)

Specific to the AFCP 2025 Grants Program annual competition, proposals for projects that directly support one or more of the following will receive additional consideration:

- 1) Directly support U.S. treaty or bilateral agreement obligations.
- 2) Directly support U.S. policies, strategies and objectives.
- 3) Directly support host country or community goals beyond preserving cultural heritage.
- 4) Support risk reduction and resilience for cultural heritage in disaster-prone or politically unstable and economically disadvantaged areas.
- 5) Support post-disaster cultural heritage recovery.
- 4) Complement other public diplomacy programs.

AFCP will NOT support the following activities or costs, and applications involving any of these activities or costs below will be deemed ineligible:

A) **Privately or Commercially Owned Property:** Preservation or purchase of privately or commercially owned cultural objects, collections, or real property, including those whose transfer from private or commercial to public ownership is envisioned, planned, or in process but not complete at the time of application.

B) **Natural Heritage:** Preservation of natural heritage (physical, biological, and geological formations, paleontological collections, habitats of threatened species of animals and plants, fossils, etc.) unless the natural heritage has a cultural heritage connection or dimension.

- C) **Human Remains:** Preservation of hominid or human remains.
- D) **News Media:** Preservation of news media (newspapers, newsreels, radio and TV programs, etc.).
- E) **Published Materials:** Preservation of published materials available elsewhere (books, periodicals, etc.).
- F) **Mandated Educational Materials:** Development of curricula or educational materials for classroom use.
- G) **Archaeological Research:** Archaeological excavations or exploratory surveys for research purposes.
- H) **Historical Research:** Historical research, except in cases where the research is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project.
- I) **New Exhibits or Collections:** Acquisition or creation of new exhibits, objects, or collections for new or existing
Museums.
- J) **New Construction:** Construction of new buildings, building additions, or permanent coverings (over archaeological sites, for example).
- K) **New Works of Art:** Commissions of new works of art or architecture for commemorative or economic development purposes.
- L) **New or Modern Adaptation:** Creation of new or the modern adaptation of existing traditional dances, songs, chants, musical compositions, plays, or other performances.
- M) **Conjectural Reconstructions:** Creation of replicas or conjectural reconstructions of cultural objects or sites that no longer exist.
- N) **Relocation:** Relocation of cultural sites from one physical location to another.
- O) **Removal:** Removal of cultural objects or elements of cultural sites from the country for any reason.
- P) **Digitalization:** Digitization of cultural objects or collections, unless part of a larger, clearly defined

conservation, documentation, or public diplomacy effort.

Q) **Conservation Plans or Studies:** Conservation plans or other studies, unless they are one component of a larger project to implement the results of those studies.

R) **Cash Reserves or Endowments:** Cash reserves, endowments, or revolving funds (funds must be expended within the award period [up to five years] and may not be used to create an endowment or revolving fund).

S) **Fund-Raising Campaigns:** Costs of fund-raising campaigns.

T) **Contingency Costs:** Contingency, unforeseen, or miscellaneous costs or fees.

U) **Pre-Award Costs:** Costs of work performed prior to announcement of the award unless allowable per 2 CFR 200.458 and approved by the Grants Officer.

V) **International Travel:** International travel outside of the project country, except in cases where travel is justifiable and integral to the success of the proposed project or to provide project leaders with learning and exchange opportunities with cultural heritage experts.

W) **Project Cost Limits:** Individual projects which cost less than US \$25,000 or more than \$500,000.

X) **Independent U.S. Projects:** Independent U.S. projects overseas.

Application Review Process

a) Round 1: Concept note review and selection: ECA will determine which project ideas advance to the Round 2 application stage.

b) Round 2: In early 2025, ECA will notify embassies of the Round 1 results and invites a subset to submit full project proposals to Round 2.

AFCP Grants Program has a point-based rating system as follows:

- Activities Description and Timeframe (20 points)
- Importance (10 points max)
- Project Maintenance Plan (10 points max)

- Implementer Public Outreach Plan and Embassy Strategic Outreach Plan (25 points max)
- Data and Information Access Plan (5 points max)
- Budget and Budget Narrative (20 points max)
- Supporting Materials (resumes, assessments, reports, images, etc.; 10 points max)
- Innovative integration, collaboration, or coordination with other ECA and public diplomacy programs (5 bonus points max)

There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost participation required for this competition. When an applicant offers cost sharing, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. The applicant will be responsible for tracking and reporting on any cost share or outside funding. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs.

Eligible project implementers are reputable and accountable non-commercial entities that demonstrate they have the capacity to manage projects to preserve cultural heritage. This may include non-governmental organizations, museums, educational institutions, ministries of culture, or similar institutions and organizations, including U.S.-based educational institutions and organizations subject to Section 501(c)(3) of the tax code. The AFCP will not award grants to individuals, commercial entities, or past award recipients that have not fulfilled the objectives or reporting requirements of previous awards.

Potential implementing partners must be registered and active in the U.S. government's System for Award Management (SAM) to receive U.S. federal assistance. If the concept notes is advanced to Round 2 and the anticipated implementing partner has not registered itself in SAM, the embassy will work with them to initiate the registration process so that the registration is active in the event the project is ultimately selected for an award.

SAM Registration: An implementing partner must be registered in SAM prior to receiving U.S. federal assistance unless they meet one of the exemptions specified in the Federal Assistance Directive. The SAM registration process can take weeks or months, especially for non-U.S. applicants. SAM will assign a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) automatically to any entity registering or renewing its record in the system. Registration in SAM is free: <https://sam.gov/>.

Suggested guidelines for concept notes to be submitted are below. Each concept note must be in English and should be emailed to Bangkokpd@state.gov with the subject line: **"AFCP 2025 GRANTS Program: Project Name – Applicant Name"** by midnight January 12, 2025. *To determine if your project fits into the AFCP guidelines, interested applicants can email a short one-paragraph description of their project to Bangkokpd@state.gov any time before the deadline for an initial review.*

For more information, please contact Public Diplomacy Section of U.S. Embassy Bangkok by Email: Bangkokpd@state.gov. For additional information about the fund, please visit the AFCP website <http://eca.state.gov/cultural-heritage-center/ambassadors-fund-cultural-preservation>.

INFORMATION TO BE INCLUDED IN CONCEPT NOTES

All information ***must be submitted in English***

A) Project Basics:

1. Implementer's name
2. A working title of the project
3. Anticipated project length (between 12-60 months)
4. Project location
5. A project cost estimate (amount requested from AFCP in U.S. dollars).

B) Project Summary Description: Provide a summary (3,000 characters maximum) that outlines

1. project activities
2. deliverables (outputs)
3. intended results (outcomes).

C) Visual or Audiovisual Documentation: Submit five (5) high-quality digital images (JPEGs or PNGs) or audiovisual files that convey the nature and condition of the site, collection, or tradition and show the urgency or need for the project (collapsing walls, water damage, etc.).