Funder Research Report: U.S. Agency for International Development

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Mission

The United States Agency for International Development aims to continue the country's long history of providing social and economic assistance around the world. The agency's websites states that "U.S. foreign assistance has always had the twofold purpose of furthering America's foreign policy interests in expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of the citizens of the developing world."

Types of Grants

The agency funds a tremendous variety of grant opportunities because foreign assistance applies to many different facets of development. Therefore, USAID identifies six primary goals for grants, with three topics of development for grant purposes.

Six Program Goals for Grants

1. Broad-based economic growth and agricultural development encouraged
2. Democracy and good governance strengthened
3. Human capacity built through education and training
4. World population stabilized and human health protected
5. The world's environment protected for long-term sustainability
6. Lives saved, suffering associated with natural or man-made disasters reduced, and conditions necessary for political and/or economic development re-established.

Three Topics of Development for Grant Purposes

1. Economic Growth, Agriculture, and Trade
2. Global Health
3. Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance

WHAT IS USAID?

USAID is a federal government agency that advances U.S. foreign policy by providing foreign assistance to developing countries. Along with the agency's own programs, it annually allocates over $1.9 billion in grants that improve the livelihoods of these countries.

Eligibility

The U.S. Agency for International Development selects grants that spread the character of the United States, and provide social, economical, and political development to foreign countries. Most of the agency's grants are implemented abroad, and U.S. based grants are usually technologically and agriculturally oriented, with less grassroots efforts. Typically, USAID partners with the people and governments of assisted countries, U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, cooperatives, the U.S. higher education community, other U.S. government agencies, and international assistance agencies.

Application Process

All information regarding the application process can be found on the federal government website for grants. The USAID website does not list any of its grant opportunities. Each grant list deadlines, requirements, and the country or city to which it pertains. Most grants also identify what types of organizations are applicable.

Recommendation

I would recommend USAID as a funding source for grants that focus on international development, or a variety of other related topics. It has multiple RFP's and is perfect for groups that want to work as a non-governmental organization. However, most grants are quite large, and it may be difficult to select an RFP that fits the size of your project.