

## KOSOVO UNITED STATES ALUMNI

### Notice of Funding Opportunity

**Funding Opportunity Title:** The University Support Grant Program 23/24

**Funding Opportunity Number:** USGP23

**Deadline for Applications:** 05.11.2023

**Total Amount Available:** \$ 270,000.00

**Award Amounts:** Awards may range from a minimum of \$10,000 to a maximum of \$50,000.

The number of awards anticipated: up to 7 awards (dependent on funding and award amounts)

### Table of Contents

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PROGRAM DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA</b>	<b>3</b>
Eligibility Requirements	3
<b>APPLICATION REVIEW DETAILS</b>	<b>4</b>
Evaluation Criteria	4
<b>FUNDING LEVELS AND ALLOWABLE EXPENSES</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION</b>	<b>5</b>
Application Form requirements:	6
Application Files	7
Deadline for submission of the application	7
Disclaimer	8
<b>CONSTRAINTS OF THE PROGRAM</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION</b>	<b>8</b>

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The U.S. Embassy in Kosovo's University Support Grants Program is an annual grants program that aims to support the development of higher education in Kosovo. This year, the University Support Grants Program will support higher education institutions in Kosovo to address social and economic development challenges through research, development, and additional services that support both faculty and students. Public and private universities, as well as education-related NGOs are eligible to apply. The primary goal of this grant program is to catalyze change within Kosovo's higher education institutions.

## **PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

On behalf of the U.S. Embassy in Kosovo, Kosovo United States Alumni (KUSA) announces an open competition for the University Support Grants Program. KUSA will award a series of small grants to support higher education institutions to better address social and economic development challenges through research, development, and additional services that support both faculty and students. Follow the instructions below when writing your project proposal.

## **PROGRAM OBJECTIVES:**

The University Support Grants Program, funded by the U.S. Embassy in Kosovo and administered by KUSA, seeks proposals that advance one or more of the following objectives:

### **Objective 1: Support higher education institutions' (HEIs) initiatives to align their teaching curricula with current labor market needs.**

The objective of supporting HEIs' initiatives to align their teaching curricula with current labor market needs aims to ensure that students are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the modern economy and find employment in Kosovo.

This may involve revising or compiling new teaching curricula that provides students with the necessary skills to match local labor market needs, promoting internships and other experiential learning opportunities that give students exposure to real-world industry challenges, and

facilitating networking events and other opportunities for HEI and industry professionals to connect and share knowledge.

**Objective 2: Support activities linked to establishing or functionalizing academic HEIs' research and development (R&D) centers.**

The objective of supporting activities linked to establishing or functionalizing academic HEI's research and development (R&D) centers aims to provide HEIs with the necessary resources and support to establish or improve R&D centers. As a result, HEIs are enabled to perform and advance research and train the next generation of experts across fields.

**Objective 3: Support HEIs to engage alumni and support alumni networks and activities**

The objective of supporting alumni engagement within HEIs aims to create a network of alumni who can help current students access job opportunities, build business connections, engage in post-graduate activities with peers, and pursue give-back opportunities.

This may involve strengthening existing alumni networks, promoting alumni engagement with current students through mentorship programs and internship initiatives, and facilitating networking events and other opportunities for alumni to connect and share knowledge. The goal of this objective is to engage alumni to enrich higher education opportunities for current students and to link industry with higher education to provide students with practical experience that meets current labor market needs. Involvement of U.S. Government exchange program alumni in these activities is encouraged.

**ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA**

Higher education institutions and/or NGOs whose operations are focused on higher education are eligible to apply. The institution should assign a project coordinator who will be responsible for implementing the project. Eligibility is limited to HEIs, and NGOs registered in the Republic of Kosovo.

## Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for consideration, applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Be an active player in the higher education field in Kosovo;
- Apply with a project that is related to the program objectives;

## APPLICATION REVIEW DETAILS

Applications will be evaluated by a panel of education experts, including U.S. Embassy and KUSA representatives. The panel review may take up to two-three weeks. During that time, applicants may be contacted by the panel, should there be questions or if additional information is needed. Once the evaluation process is complete, the committee will provide scores and feedback to all applicants.

## Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate and rate each technically eligible application:

- **Project Description and Direct Target Audience:** The description provides a general overview of the project. The topic it tackles is specified, and the intended audience is measurable. The target audience should be divided into two parts: **Direct audience:** which refers to the direct beneficiaries of the project at the higher education institution or NGO; and **Indirect audience:** which refers to those indirectly benefiting from the project.
- **Goal, Objectives, Activities & Timeline:** The project has a clear goal, its objectives are measurable, and the activities and timeline are concrete and reasonable. The project proposals must address one or more of the following program objectives:
  - **Objective 1:** Support HEIs' activities and innovation initiatives to align their teaching curricula with current labor market needs.
  - **Objective 2:** Support activities linked to establishing or functionalizing academic HEIs' R&D centers.
  - **Objective 3:** Support HEIs to engage alumni and support alumni networks and activities

- **Results and Outcomes:** Project results and outcomes demonstrate progress towards the main project objectives, create a lasting impact, and benefit the target beneficiaries and stakeholders. Long-term results should also show the effectiveness and success of the project.
- **Sustainability:** The project has a plan for continuing to have a positive impact on the community after grant funding ends, and it outlines how it will generate revenue, how it will be staffed, how it will be governed, and the measures that will be taken to ensure its continued success.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation Plan:** The project has a comprehensive monitoring, evaluation, and measurement plan in place to assess progress and impact. This plan will include key performance indicators, a timeline for monitoring and evaluation activities, data collection methods, data analysis processes, and a communication and dissemination plan to share results with the Kosovo community and other stakeholders.
- **Budget:** The budget plan and justification are sufficiently detailed, well-organized, and reasonable. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. There are no budget lines labeled miscellaneous expenses.

## **FUNDING LEVELS AND ALLOWABLE EXPENSES**

Requests for funding provided by this grant program should not exceed \$50,000.00. Allowable costs are directly related to project activities. The budget should be consistent with the narrative description of the program and should reflect the applicant's understanding of the allowable cost principles described below. The applicant must submit the budget narrative form, which provides details and information about each budget line and its allocation.

*\*Costs incurred before or after the official grant period will not be reimbursed.*

## **APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Applicants must follow the instructions and conditions contained herein and supply all information required. Failure to furnish all information or comply with stated requirements will result in disqualification from the competition. Applicants must set forth full, accurate, and complete information. Providing false or misleading information in an application will result in disqualification from this and future University Support Grants Program competitions.

Application materials must be submitted by email to [info@kusalumni.org](mailto:info@kusalumni.org). The subject line of submission emails should follow this format: [USGP23/24 "Project Title" - Name of University/Organization"]. For assistance with the requirements of this solicitation, please email [info@kusalumni.org](mailto:info@kusalumni.org).

### **Application Form requirements:**

- Contact Information of the Applicant
  - Full Name of the Project Coordinator
  - Organization/Institution
- Project Details
  - Submission Date
  - Project Title
  - University Support Grant Program Objective\*
  - Project Field Covered (ex., Economics, Law, IT, etc.)
  - Total Budget Requested in U.S. Dollars (\$)
- Key Personnel and Project Partners
  - Key Personnel
  - Organizations/Institutions (if any)
- Project Dates
- Project Description
- Project Goal and Objectives
- Project Activities
- Project Timeline

- Target Audience
- Expected Results and Outcomes
- Project Sustainability and M&E Plan
- Budget Justification
  - Personnel (non-alumni)
  - Fringe Benefits
  - Travel
  - Equipment
  - Supplies
  - Contractual (Speaker/Artist Honorarium or Fees)
  - Other Direct Costs

### **Application Files**

In addition to the completed application form, proposals should include the following documents:

- Application Form
- Budget Form in (\$)
- Budget Justification narrative
- Short bios of team members (Maximum of 3 pages for all the members)

Please ensure:

- The proposal clearly addresses the goals and objectives of this funding opportunity
- All documents are in English
- All budgets are in U.S. dollars

### **Deadline for submission of the application**

All applications must be submitted by email from **05.10.2023** to **05.11.2023**, at [info@kusalumni.org](mailto:info@kusalumni.org), with the subject line "USGP23/24 "Project Title" - Name of University/Organization". Applications submitted after deadline will be ineligible for consideration. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

**Period of Performance:** This program supports projects up to 12 months in duration.

**Contact Information:**

Should additional information be required, please contact Kosovo United States Alumni at [info@kusalumni.org](mailto:info@kusalumni.org) or +383 44 573 066.

**Disclaimer**

Applicants can expect to be notified of the status of their application within approximately 40 days of the submission deadline. It does not commit KUSA to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. KUSA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. If a proposal is selected for funding, KUSA has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with the award. KUSA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the project evaluation requirements.

*\* When the grant contract is successful, please be aware that KUSA and U.S. Embassy logos need to be shown in all material corresponding to the grant. This includes programs, educational material, and posters. Banners indicating support by the U.S. Embassy in Pristina needs to be displayed at all events.*

**CONSTRAINTS OF THE PROGRAM**

The University Support Grants Program cannot fund the following activities:

- Humanitarian or charitable activities, including direct social services to the public.
- Fundraising campaigns.
- Projects/Events focused on personal career development.
- Organizations with political affiliation, affiliation to elected officials, or religious groups.
- Political or partisan activities.
- Scientific research activities.
- Individual trips abroad.



## **AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

Applicants will be notified electronically about selection results. An email message will be sent to the email account included in the application form. KUSA staff might also contact the applicants to request additional information or clarify certain aspects of the application documents; therefore, it is crucial to provide accurate contact information.

The Grant Agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Project Coordinators. The Grant Award is the authorizing document, and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document.