Washington, D.C. 20520

November 7, 2017
Case No. F-2017-09463
Segments: Tirana-002
Mr. William F. Marshall
425 Third St., SW, Suite 800
Washington, DC 20024
Dear Mr. Marshall:

I refer to our letter dated October 10, 2017, under the Freedom of Information Act (the "FOIA"), 5 U.S.C. § 552. The processing of documents potentially responsive to your request remains ongoing and has located ten additional documents. After reviewing these documents, we have determined that six may be released in full and four may be released in part.

An enclosure explains the FOIA exemptions and other grounds for withholding material. Where we have made excisions, the applicable FOIA exemptions are marked on each document. All released material is enclosed. .

If you have any questions, you may contact Assistant U.S. Attorney Daniel Schaefer, at (202) 252-2531 or Daniel.Schaefer@usdoj.gov. Please be sure to refer to the case number, F-2017-09463, and the civil action number, 17-cv-01012, in all correspondence about this case.

Sincerely,

# Susal C. Weelmar for 

Eric F. Stein, Director
Office of Information Programs and Services
Enclosures: As stated.

FOIA Exemptions
(b)(1) Information specifically authorized by an executive order to be kept secret in the interest of national defense or foreign policy. Executive Order 13526 includes the following classification categories:
1.4(a) Military plans, systems, or operations
1.4(b) Foreign government information
1.4(c) Intelligence activities, sources or methods, or cryptology
1.4(d) Foreign relations or foreign activities of the US, including confidential sources
1.4(e) Scientific, technological, or economic matters relating to national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
1.4(f) U.S. Government programs for safeguarding nuclear materials or facilities
$1.4(\mathrm{~g})$ Vulnerabilities or capabilities of systems, installations, infrastructures, projects, plans, or protection services relating to US national security, including defense against transnational terrorism
1.4(h) Weapons of mass destruction
(b)(2) Related solely to the internal personnel rules and practices of an agency
(b)(3) Specifically exempted from disclosure by statute (other than 5 USC 552), for example:

| ARMSEXP | Arms Export Control Act, 50a USC 2411(c) |
| :--- | :--- |
| CIA PERS/ORG | Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949, 50 USC 403(g) |
| EXPORT CONTROL | Export Administration Act of 1979, 50 USC App. Sec. 2411(c) |
| FS ACT | Foreign Service Act of 1980, 22 USC 4004 |
| INA | Immigration and Nationality Act, 8 USC 1202(f), Sec. 222(f) |
| IRAN | Iran Claims Settlement Act, Public Law 99-99, Sec. 505 |

(b)(4) Trade secrets and confidential commercial or financial information
(b)(5) Interagency or intra-agency communications forming part of the deliberative process, attorney-client privilege, or attorney work product
(b)(6) Personal privacy information
(b)(7) Law enforcement information whose disclosure would:
(A) interfere with enforcement proceedings
(B) deprive a person of a fair trial
(C) constitute an unwarranted invasion of personal privacy
(D) disclose confidential sources
(E) disclose investigation techniques
(F) endanger life or physical safety of an individual
(b)(8) Prepared by or for a government agency regulating or supervising financial institutions
(b)(9) Geological and geophysical information and data, including maps, concerning wells

## Other Grounds for Withholding

NR Material not responsive to a FOIA request excised with the agreement of the requester

| UNCLASSIFIED U.S. Department of State Case No. F-2017-09463 Doc No. C06380428 Date: 11/06/2017 |  |  |
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## Hello Everyone,

We would like to convene the Donors' Grant Reviewing meeting of the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program. We have received applications from many NGOs during the first round of this program, and would like to invite you in a discussion on these proposals. Your valuable input and comments will be used by the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission, which has the ultimate authority in awarding the grants.
We hope you will be able to participate in this meeting, which will take place at the U.S.
Embassy on Friday, February 26, 2016 at 14:00. Please find attached a list of the grant proposals with summarized descriptions, grant program's requirements and guidelines, and the call for proposals.
We look forward to hearing.from you

Thanks and regards
Ilva
Project proposals DemComGd.dec demcomgdl.doc Document1.docx
FY6 R1 xisx:.
$\qquad$

ILVA CUKO, MBA
Program Assistant
Public Affairs Office
Embassy of the United States of America
Tirana. Albania
Cell: . . . B6
Tel: 35542247285 ext. $\square$ - , B6
E-mail: cukoi@state.gov

This email is UNCLASSIFIED


## Hello Everyone,

We would like to convene the Donors' Grant Reviewing meeting of the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program. We have received applications from many NGOs during the third round of this program, focusing on anticorruption, and would like to invite you in a discussion on these proposals. Your valuable input and comments will be used by the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission, which has the ultimate authority in awarding the grants.
We hope you will be able to participate in this meeting; which will take place at the U.S. Embassy on Thursday, September 03, 2015 at 15:00. Please find attached a list of the grant proposals with summarized descriptions

We look forward to hearing from you
Thanks and regards
Ilva

## RELEASE IN FULL

## Attached to 428



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## Guidelines for the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

The Democracy Commission Small grants program was initiated in 1994 as a flexible mechanism by which American Embassies are able to award small sums of money for projects and initiatives that support the development of democracy in the countries of Central Europe and the Baltic States.

- The small grants program is for non-governmental activities that promote grassroots democracy. Thus, it is very important to explain how the project promotes democracy. Projects, which provide a direct social service, such as services to individuals with disability, do not meet strict D.C. guidelines. Rather, projects should include democracy building aspects such as: public awareness, respect for human rights and advocacy for the targeted groups, establishment and preservation of the rule of law and democracy, economic reform, environmental clean-up, the strengthening of the NGO sector, the reconciliation of disputes, and better journalism, etc.
- The maximum amount per grant is $\$ 24,000$. However, most grants will be for smaller amounts.
- The Public Affairs section of the embassy in each country is responsible for submitting ALL proposals to Washington for a technical review after the proposal(s) have been, approved by the commission. Upon approval, Washington sends authorization to the embassy to write the grant locally. In the technical review Washington will look to see how the project promotes democracy.
- Grants should seek to facilitate long-term sustainability and democratic institution-building for local organizations and support efforts to promote reform.
- Grants for publication of materials should describe the intended audience, provide a clear understanding of the materials' content, and specify who is responsible for the distribution of the materials.
- A clear time frame, especially a date by which the grant-funded activity is expected to end, is recommended.
- Budgets should be submitted in US dollars.
- These grants may NOT be used to:
- fund American organizations and individuals
- fund activities for which there are existing programs.
- provide for long-term infrastructural needs.
- Provide direct social services to populations.
- Grants are normally made on a one-time basis. But repeat grants to the same organization are okay with clear justification and for different projects.
- Grants generally avoid paying salaries or professional fees with grants. If salaries appear necessary and appropriate, the following guidelines apply:
- Salary levels should be reasonable and no higher than other local salaries for similar work.
- Salary should be calculated as a lump-sum, based on the total number of hours worked for the duration of the project.
- Grants may not pay for food or refreshments. But if it is necessary at a workshop or conference or other event, the grantee or another donor organization must pay for it.
- A report on every grant must be submitted by the Public Affairs section of the embassy to Washington upon completion of the activity(s). The report will be used to evaluate whether the program has accomplished its goals.' Evaluation is essential to the integrity of the program and is also required to account for the dispersal of USG funds. Future funding of the program will be contingent on a careful review of its accomplishments.
- A suggested format for writing grants and evaluation is provided with these guidelines.


# DEMOCRACY COMMISSION SMALL GRANTS 

Public Affairs Section

U.S. Embassy Tirana, Albania

## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

## I. Grant Applicant

Name of the organization; address, phone/fax number/e-mail address, name and title of director and other significant staff members, particularly those who will be involved in the project.

Applicants should also attach a CV, resume or personal history of the people who will be engaged in the project. No one CV should exceed one page.

## II. Background on Applicant

When was the organization founded, what are its principle activities, significant achievements, etc.? A copy of the registration papers of the organization as issued by host country authorities should be attached.

## III. Program Description/Purpose

What does the applicant propose to do? The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do and why. The more specific, detailed, and clear the program description, the better. Remember that the Democracy Commission will only award funds to the best proposals, those that can clearly show how the proposed project will help the development of democratic, free market society in the host country.

## IV. Project Justification

This is a very important aspect of the proposal and applicants should pay particular attention to it. What is the importance of the project? Why should it be funded? Who will be affected by this project? What difference does it make for your country? Remember that the Democracy Commission will only support those projects that will make an important contribution.

Applicants may also attach letters of endorsement attesting to the seriousness of the proposal.

## V. Project Sustainability

Describe the expected long-term effects of the project. If the project is intended to continue after the funding from the Democracy Commission ends, the proposal must also contain a very thorough explanation how the organization will fund the activity in the future. If a convincing explanation is not included, this will disqualify the project from consideration for Democracy Commission support.

## VI. Proposed Program dates

When will the project be carried out, if it is funded? Be realistic about dates. Remember that, even if approved, funds from the Democracy Commission may not be available for as long as two or three months from the time the application is submitted. (For example, if the applicant submits the proposal in September, but states that the project must begin in September, the Commission may reject the proposal as unrealistic on this basis alone.).

## VII. Detailed Budget, including supporting narrative

In order to be sure that the Commission understands why there is a need for money, the applicant should prepare a line-by-line list of expenses that will be generated by this project. The budget should be prepared in a logical manner and offer enough detail that a reviewer will be able to understand exactly what the figures mean and how that figure was determined.

## ALL PROJECT EXPENSES SHOULD BE CALCULATED $\mathbb{N}$ ADVANCE AND BE REALISTIC. THE DEMOCRACY COMMISSION MEMBERS WLLL NOT AUTHORIZE ANY FUNDS IF THERE IS ANY QUESTION ABOUT THE BUDGET.

The budget narrative should follow the actual budget presentation itself and describe in some detail the costs presented in the budget. In other words, the narrative explains, line by line, what the numbers mean and how they were determined. (For example, ATravel: $\$ 3,000$." Explanation: Two day conference in (location) for 30 participants with a $2 \times \$ 50$ travel grant to each participant for room, board and transportation costs.)

If the proposal seeks funding to purchase a service orequipment, the application must include three pro-forma estimates from the service or equipment vendor. Simply listing AComputer and printer: $\$ 4,000$ " is not sufficient. The Commission will want to know what kind of computer, what kind of printer and how much three different vendors will charge for this equipment.

## BUDGET GUIDELINES

Program expenses should cover all costs for the project activities. They may include all honoraria to specialists or associates; travel/per diem/lodging expenses for trips; and all expenses for seminars or conferences (speakers= fee, preparation of materials and room rental).

Salaries could be paid only to the people who will spend a majority of their time on the project and have signed contracts. The salary should be calculated on the total number of
hours worked for the duration of the project. Salary levels should be reasonable and no higher than other local salaries, and should include all local taxes.

Equipment means computer, copying machine, printer or other technical devices necessary for the fulfillment of the project (for example, the purchase of a computer for organizing a conference is not a justified expense).

Administrative expenses include communication expenses (phone, fax, e-mail, postage); bank taxes; copying and print services; office materials (paper, toner, envelopes, etc.).

Bank charges should be pre-calculated and included in the budget. Please note that any interest earned on the grant sum must be returned to the U.S. Government. The use of Amiscellaneous expenses $\approx$ as a budget item is unacceptable.

Cocktail parties and meals not integral to a program event are not acceptable grant expenses. An effort should be made to secure funding from other sources for food costs.

Entertainment costs (amusement, diversion, social activities, ceremonials, alcoholic beverages, cocktail parties) are not allowable expenses.

## PLEASE NOTE THAT THE BUDGET ITEMS CANNOT BE CHANGED DURING THE FULFILLMENT OF THE PROJECT.

## VIII. Reporting Requirements

If you receive funding from the Democracy Commission, you will be required to submit a detailed program and financial report on the outcomes of the project. Please describe when you will submit the report on the outcomes and who will prepare the financial report (e.g. an accountant).

## IX. Other sources of support for this project, including the in-kind contribution of the applying organization

Please describe the possibilities for co-funding of the project by other organization.
Please describe the in-kind contribution of your organization - it can be voluntary work, use of premises, vehicles, classroom supplies, equipment or payment of a program event from your own funds (e.g. rental of a hall, printing of announcements, meals, travel, etc.).

Please state which other organizations you have applied to for funding with the same project, and the status of those applications.

## PLEASE DO NOT SEND IN THE APPLICATION BEFORE YOU:

* Read once again the Democracy Commission Guidelines that describe the Small Grant Program. Make sure you understand those guidelines and that your proposal fits

UNCLASSIFIECD U.S. Department of State Case No. F-2017-09463 Doc No. C06380440 Date: 11/08/2017
*. Carefully review the application to make sure it is complete and free of errors.

* Ask someone who does not know anything about your project to read your proposal to determine if it is understandable. Remember that the members of the Democracy Commission will not know anything about your proposal until they read it. If they cannot understand it simply by reading what you have written, it will not be approved.
* Ask someone with experience applying for grants to look at the application and provide advice on improving it.
* Make sure the application is neatly typed and easy to read in English. Perfect English is not required but the proposal must be understandable to an English speaker.

Applications which do not include the required information or do not comply with the requirements of the Program guidelines, will not be reviewed.

SEND THE COMPLETED APPLICATION FORM TO:
Democracy Commission Small Grants Program (Public Affairs Office)
United States Embassy Tirana, Albania
Address: Rr. Elbasanit, 103, Tirane

## Democracy Commission Small Grants Program

The United States Embassy in Tirana, acting through the Publlc Affairs Office, is pleased to announce an open competition for assistance awards through this NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO) for DEMOCRACY COMMISSION SMALL GRANTS PROGRAM.

## Purpose of the Program

The Democracy Commission Small Grants Program supports initiatives of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in, building the social and intellectual foundations of democracy, the democratic resolution of problems, strengthening civil society watchdog activities, and the institutionalization of open, pluralistic political processes. The Democracy Commission Program seeks to support initiatives throughout Albania in a variety of fields, including those related to: anticorruption, participatory and good governance, investigative journalism, respect for human rights/minority rights, women's empowerment, dispute reconciliation, environmental awareness, and combatting human trafficking.

The call for proposals has closed. The next call will be announced in Spring, 2016.

The Democracy Commission does NOT fund projects such as the following:

- Fund-raising campaigns
- Humanitarlan assistance projects
- Scientific research projects
- Projects with budgets that exceed $\$ 24,000$ and take more than a year to implement
- Projects that duplicate existing projects being implemented by an organization
- Projects submitted by for-profit, commercial organizations
- Projects that aim to support partisan political and/ or religious activity
- Conferences and individual trips abroad
- Trade activities


## Evaluation Process:

The U.S. Embassy has established the Democracy Commission, which reviews and evaluates proposals for this program. It will take the Commission up to two months after the application deadline to complete its review process. Applicants may be contacted with questlons during this review process, and will also be informed whether or not their proposal was selected via e-mail.

## Evaluation Criteria:

The Democracy Commission will assess the following when evaluating grant proposals:

- The project proposal demonstrates that the organization has sufficient expertise, skilis and human resources to implement the project.
- The organization demonstrates that it has a clear understanding of the underlying issue that the project is alming to address and is able to articulate it with specificity and clarity.
- The organization has consulted relevant resources, experts and potential partner organizations during the project's design phase.
- The organization has identified appropriate beneficiaries or target groups in a way that maximizes project outputs and outcomes and the project has a clear focus and manageable scope.
- The project's idea and approach are innovative, yet capable of being completed with the program period. Proposed project activities must be concrete, detailed, and supported by a reasonable work plan.
- The project's budget is well-organized, detailed and reasonable. There are no budget lines labeled "miscellaneous expenses." Entertainment and alcoholic beverage expenses are not included in the budget. The budget demonstrates that the organization has devoted time to plan for and assess actual expenses associated with the project instead of providing rough estimates.
- The organization has clearly articulated how It will assess and measure its own performance throughout the project implementation phase using concrete quantitative and qualltative assessment tools.
- The project proposal describes clearly the approach that will be used to ensure maximum sustainability of the project's results after its completion.
- Past performance, including U.S. government funded grants, indicates reliability, responsible use of resources, and an ability to follow through with project aims.


## Specific Guidelines:

## IMPORTANT! Organizations may only submit one proposal per program ${ }^{\circ}$.

- The maximum grant amount is USD 24,000.
- Grants are made on a one-time basis. A successful applicant may re-apply for a second grant, but the second proposal must be for a distinctly different project than the first project funded by the Democracy Commission.
- Organizations are eligible to receiving funding from this program not more often than once in two years.
- U.S. organizations and individuals are not eligible for grants under the program.

The application requires a detailed description of the activity for which grant funds are being requested and a budget proposal broken down by expenditure category; otherwise it will not be considered.

## How to Apply?

All applications are required to be in English. You must use an official application form, which together with the application guidellne package can be obtained by e-mailing PDgrants@state.gov

Your application should include:

- Name, address, telephone/fax number, e-mail address of the organization and name of contact person
- The court decision registration number of the organization
- The bank account number of the organization
- A brlef description of what the organization does
- A description of the project: how the grant will be used and who the target audience is


## Executive summary of the project (no longer than a paragraph)

- A detailed description of why the project is necessary
- The approximate time from the beginning to the completion of the project
- Description of the project's goals, and how this can be measured at the conclusion of the project
- Previous grants by various donors (name of donor, goal of project, and amount)
- A detailed budget, listing all component items
- The amount of cost-sharing by the grantee

Copies of the court decision registration, statute of the organization, and CVs of the main staff of the project must be included in the application package. Any application that does not cover all the above points will not be considered.

Please send your application package to the following address:

Democracy Commission Small Grants Program
Embassy of the United States of America
Rr. Elbasanit, Nr. 103
Tirana, Albania

## Submission of the electronic version (Word and Excel format) of the application form to PDgrants@state.gov is also mandatory.

- This site is managed by the U.S. Department of State. External links to other Internet sites should not be construed as an endorsement of the views. or privacy policies contained therein.

UNCLASSIFIED U.S. Department of State Case No. F-2017-09463 Doc No. C06380442 Date: 11/06/2017

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From:
Sent:
To:

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Subject:

Cuko, Ilva
Thursday, June 18, 2015 4:45 AM
Andi Dobrushi ( Mihallaq Qirjo' $\quad$; Elga $\quad$ B6 (USAID)
Pistoli, Angjelina
Invitation to the Grant Proposal Technical Review Meeting for Donors - Thursday, June 25, 2015 at 14:00

Hello Everyone,
We would like to convene the Donors' Grant Reviewing meeting of the Democracy Commission Small Grants Program. We have received applications from many NGOs during the first round of this program, focusing mainly on good governance, domestic violence, anti-trafficking, and women's empowerment, but not only, and would like to invite you in a discussion on these proposals. Your valuable input and comments will be used by the U.S. Embassy's Democracy Commission, which has the ultimate authority in awarding the grants.

We hope you will be able to participate in this meeting, which will take place at the U.S. Embassy on Thursday, June 25, 2015 at 14:00. Please find attached a list of the grant proposals with summarized descriptions.


List project
proposals FY15 ...

We look forward to hearing from you
Thanks and regards
Ilva
$\qquad$

ILVA CUKO, MBA
Program Assistant
Public Affairs Office
Embassy of the United States of America
Tirana, Albania
Cell: $\square$. $\quad . \quad$ B6
Tel: 35542247285 ext.
E-mail: cukoi@state.gov

## RELEASE IN FULLL

## Third round of the Democracy Commission Program lor FY 2015 <br> Embassy of the United States of Amertica, Tirana

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## RELEASE IN FULL

## Second round of the Demroccracy Commission Program for fY 2015 Embassy of the United States of America, Tirana

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UNĊLASSIFIED U.S. Department of State Case No. F-2017-09463 Doc No. C06380447 Date: 11/06/2017 NO DISCERNIBLE CLASSIFICATION

RELEASE IN PART

|  | IN PART |  |
| :---: | :---: | :---: |
| From: | Cuko, Ilva |  |
| Sent: | Friday, April 24, 2015 4:00 AM |  |
| To: | Andi Dobrushi . fiorela.shals | I. Mitre, Elga |
|  | ; agjokuta | línda.gjermani |
|  | rezarta.katuci ${ }^{\text {M Mihallaq Qirjo' }}$ | Kristina Voko |
|  | ; Premto Gogo KRIIX |  |
|  | gertameta $\square$ Shoo | qata Per Grate dhe Femijet Qendra |
| , | Kombinat $\square$ Cuko, Iva (Cuko@@s | state.gov) - |
| Cc: | Pistoli, Angjelina |  |
| Subject: | Invitation to the election rollout event 4/27 |  |

> The Ambassador of the United States of America
> Donald Lu requests the pleasire of your company
> at an event to Launch U.S. assistance
> for the June Local Elections
> on Monday, April 27, 2015
> from 10:00 until 11:00 o'clock
> Regrets onf: \&urtie@state.gov
> Intermationa(Hotel
> Attire: 6usiness Rpom

