



AMBASSADOR'S FUND FOR CULTURAL PRESERVATION

<http://exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/>



Introduction

Through the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, the U.S. Department of State is helping eligible countries around the globe preserve historic sites and manuscripts, museum collections, and traditional forms of expression such as music, dance, and language. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs administers the Fund, established by Congress in 2001 to assist less-developed countries in preserving their cultural heritage. The Ambassador's Fund is the only program in the U.S. government that provides direct small grant support to heritage preservation in less developed countries. By creating the program, Congress noted, "in efforts to assist in preserving the heritage of other cultures, we show our respect for them."

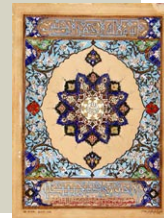


Selection

United States Ambassadors in eligible countries may submit competitive proposals for one-time or recurring projects. Awards are based on the importance of the site, object, or traditional form of expression, the urgency of the preservation need, and the impact of U.S. support for the project. The U.N. Human Development Index is used as a guide in determining the eligible countries each year. Project proposals develop from consultation with Ministries of Culture, universities, and NGO's. The project is a partnership between the U.S. Government and these entities in the host country. The program has enjoyed great success and has consistently received an 80% response rate from U.S. Ambassadors to the call for proposals. The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) has developed the program guidelines and criteria, and oversees the review and selection process. Once selected, the Embassy's Public Affairs Section oversees the project implementation.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- A sample of the 87 funded projects in 2005
- Cameroon – Bamum Scripts and Archives Preservation Project, Yaounde
 - Cambodia – Documentation of Traditional Folktales, Phnom Penh
 - Macedonia – Adaptive Reuse of the Hamm Am Turkish Baths, Tetovo
 - Egypt - Emergency Stabilization of Mosque of Aslam Al-Silahdar, Islam Cairo
 - Sri Lanka – Post-Tsunami Survey of Buildings in the 13th Century City of Matara
 - Peru – Restoration of 16th Century Oil Paintings in the Santa Catalina Monastery Museum Collection, Arequipa



Funded Projects

To date, the Ambassador's Fund has supported 292 projects, worldwide, totaling \$6.7million. Funded projects include technical support for the restoration of historic buildings; assessment and conservation of museum collections; archaeological site preservation; documentation to save threatened traditional crafts; improved storage conditions for archives and manuscripts; recording oral history; and documentation of indigenous languages. In many of the recipient countries, few resources can go a long way in addressing preservation needs.

In this fifth year of the program, upon the request of Congress, the Department increased the budget for the Ambassador's Fund to \$2.5 million.

About the Cultural Heritage Center

The Cultural Heritage Center of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Department of State supports the foreign affairs functions of the Department that relate to the protection and preservation of cultural heritage. In addition to the Ambassador's Fund, the Center administers U.S. responsibilities relating to the 1970 UNESCO Convention to reduce pillage and illicit trafficking in cultural property. It provides technical and administrative support to the Cultural Property Advisory Committee. The Center also chairs an Interagency Working Group on the Preservation of Iraq's Cultural Heritage and is carrying out a number of initiatives in support of Iraq's cultural heritage.

In addition to the work in preserving cultural heritage, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs promotes mutual understanding through its academic, professional and cultural exchanges involving approximately 30,000 participants each year.

