



Fraud Alert—June 2024

USAID Name and Logo Used to Defraud Job, Grant, and Visa Applicants

This document highlights ongoing fraud schemes involving the misuse of USAID’s name, agency symbols, and letterhead to defraud prospective job applicants, USAID grant applicants, and visa program applicants.

Schemes

USAID’s Office of Inspector General (OIG) investigates allegations of fraud and corruption in U.S.-funded foreign assistance programs. USAID OIG is alerting USAID and the public to ongoing schemes in which individuals and entities claim to represent USAID or a USAID-funded organization. The scammers require victims to pay fees associated with job, grant, and visa applications through wire transfers or mobile money applications. OIG and other investigating agencies have identified hundreds of likely applicants who have been defrauded by these schemes and incurred hundreds of thousands of dollars in monetary losses.



Example 1: Job Applicants Defrauded

Applicants seeking jobs with nongovernmental or public international organizations have been targeted by scammers posing as human resources representatives. The scammers instruct applicants to take an aptitude test and to engage with a fake law firm supposedly located in Washington, D.C., ultimately asking for payments up to \$1,000 under the guise of supporting their applications.



Example 2: Grant Applicants Defrauded

An entity has used the official USAID letterhead and logo to trick grant applicants into applying for fake awards. After applicants submit forms, the entity’s representatives ask for money through wire transfers or mobile payment applications or “apps” to an overseas account, claiming it is a fee for the grant application process.



Example 3: Visa Applicants Defrauded

Fraudsters have created fake government websites and documents offering help to secure U.S. temporary H-2 work visas. The fraudulent communications and websites look very similar to real USAID materials, with logos and program information. They trick people into registering on these fake websites through social media ads and other content. Applicants go through a “vetting process,” including virtual interviews with fake officials or lawyers. Once “approved,” applicants are told to wire money to U.S. intermediaries. Some are even told to attend fake consular appointments at U.S. embassies to finalize the process.

Remember: No one ever needs to pay intermediaries to apply for jobs with or grants funded by USAID, nor for H-2 work visas and visa applications for travel to the United States. Be on the lookout for schemes like these, and report to USAID OIG if you see these schemes or were a victim of one.