

State hiring for former AID positions. Devex Newswire, 17 Dec 2025

State a little longer

After spending much of the year insisting it could run U.S. foreign assistance without [USAID](#), the [State Department](#) is now quietly doing something else: [hiring back the people who used to do that work](#).

The signal isn't coming from official announcements or congressional notifications — it's coming from LinkedIn. In early December, a growing number of foreign aid job postings began circulating that looked strikingly familiar to former USAID staff. "Oh look the job I was RIFed from," one former employee wrote under a post advertising one of the new roles.

What's emerging **looks less like a grand redesign and more like a practical scramble**, my colleague Elissa Miolene writes. Recruitment firms long tied to USAID have been **tapped to source candidates for positions** scattered across regional bureaus, embassies, and offices reporting to the Under Secretary for Foreign Assistance. The State Department is staffing up even as its aid architecture remains unsettled, opaque, and very much in flux.

That rebuild comes after USAID's July shutdown wiped out most of its 10,000 staff and hollowed out entire teams. "It's almost like they walked into a giant factory, just started ripping out parts, saying 'who needs this, who needs this?' and then they tried to make the factory run," says one former USAID staffer, capturing a frustration that's widely shared across the aid world.

The timing matters. **Billions in foreign assistance are still moving** — including a newly announced \$2.5 billion [bilateral health agreement with Kenya](#) — meaning a much smaller State Department workforce is being asked to manage an enormous portfolio. For now, the department appears to be quietly reconstructing the machinery it dismantled, one job posting at a time.