

proposal should also describe the target student audience that will be served by the creation of this program and the potential market for the program.

In addition to demonstrating how each participating institution can assist its partner(s) to meet institutional goals, proposals should also explain how this cooperation will enable each institution to address its own needs. Accordingly, applicants are encouraged to describe the needs and deficiencies as well as the capabilities and strengths of each participating department and institution, and how each institution will contribute to and benefit from the achievement of project objectives. Proposals that realistically assess institutional capacities will be better able to outline compelling objectives that address institutional needs and justify a request for support. To be competitive, proposals should demonstrate that the participating institutions understand one another and are committed to mutual support and cooperation in project implementation.

Projects may include soundly planned distance learning activities. These activities should be directly linked to stated project goals and outcomes. Proposals with distance learning components should describe pertinent course delivery methods, audiences, and technical requirements in detail. Proposals should discuss not only the infrastructure at the partner institution, but also the level of access among the target population. Proposals that discuss distance-learning elements without addressing the technological access and capacity of the foreign partner institution will be considered less competitive.

If the proposed partnership would occur within the context of a previous or ongoing project, the proposal should outline distinct project objectives and outcomes for the new project and explain how the request for Bureau funding would build upon the pre-existing relationship. Previous projects should be described, with details about the amounts and sources of support and the results of previous cooperative efforts.

Institutions receiving partnership grant awards will be expected to submit periodic reports on the results of program activities. Proposals should describe and budget for a methodology for project evaluation. The evaluation plan should include an assessment of the current status of each participating department's and institution's needs at the time of program inception with specific reference to project objectives; formative evaluation to allow for mid-course revisions in the implementation

strategy; and, at the conclusion of the project, summative evaluation of the degree to which the project's objectives have been achieved. The final evaluation should include indicators of the project's influence on the participating institutions and their surrounding communities or societies. The final evaluation should also include recommendations about how to build upon project achievements. Evaluative observations by external consultants with appropriate subject and regional expertise are especially encouraged.

Institutional Commitment

A U.S. college or university must submit the proposal and must be prepared to serve as the grant recipient with responsibility for project coordination. Proposals must include letters of commitment from all institutional partners including the institution submitting the proposal. Each letter must be signed by an official who is authorized to commit institutional resources to the project. In addition, letters of support should explain why each institution is interested in the project.

Costs

The commitment of all partner institutions to the proposed project should be reflected in the cost-sharing, which they offer in the context of their respective institutional capacities. Although the contributions offered by institutions with relatively few resources may be less than those offered by applicants with greater resources, all participating institutions should identify appropriate contributions. These costs may include estimated in-kind contributions. U.S. institutions are strongly encouraged to contribute to the international travel expenses for U.S. participants as part of their institutional cost-share.

Proposed cost-sharing will be considered an important indicator of the applicant institution's interest in the project and potential to benefit from it.

The Bureau's support may be used to assist with the costs of the exchange visits as well as the costs of the administration of the project by the U.S. grantee institution. U.S. administrative costs that may be covered by the Bureau include administrative salaries, faculty replacement costs, other direct administrative costs, and limited indirect costs. The cost of administering the project at the foreign partner organization(s) is also eligible for the Bureau's support. Although each grant will be awarded to a single U.S. institutional partner, adequate provision in the proposal for the administrative

costs of the project at all partner institutions, including the foreign partner(s), is strongly encouraged—especially if a foreign partner has relatively few resources. More information on partner institution eligibility in this competition is found in this RFGP under the headings “U.S. Institution and Participant Eligibility” and “Foreign Institution and Participant Eligibility.”

The proposal may include a request for funding to reinforce the activities of exchange participants through the establishment and maintenance of Internet and/or electronic mail facilities at the foreign partner institution as well as through interactive technology or non-technology based distance learning programs.

Projects focusing primarily on technology or physical infrastructure development are not eligible for consideration under this competition. Proposals that include Internet, electronic mail, and other interactive technologies in countries where these technologies are not easily maintained or financed should discuss how the foreign partner institution will cover its costs after the project ends.

See the associated document entitled “Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation” (POGI) for additional information on the funding the Bureau may provide and on restrictions and maximum amounts that apply to certain budget categories.

Applicants may propose other project activities not specifically mentioned in this solicitation if the activities reinforce the impact of the project.

Pending the availability of FY 2004 funds, the maximum award in the FY 2004 competition will be \$250,000. The program awards grants for up to three years. Requests for amounts smaller than the maximum are eligible. Budgets and budget notes should carefully justify the amounts requested. Grants awarded to organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000.

Foreign Country and Location Eligibility:

Foreign partners from the following countries are eligible:

- Armenia;
- Azerbaijan: Proposals which designate public universities are encouraged;
- Belarus;
- Georgia;
- Kazakhstan;
- Kyrgyzstan;
- Moldova;