

1. A U.S.-based program that includes: Orientation to program purposes and to U.S. society; study tour/site visits; professional internships/placements; interaction and dialogue; hands-on training; professional development; and action plan development.

2. Capacity-building/training-of-trainer (TOT) workshops to help participants to identify priorities, create work plans, share and strengthen professional and volunteer skills, share their experience to committed people within each country, and become active in a practical and valuable way.

3. Seed/small grants to indigenous non-profit organizations to support community-based educational projects that build upon exchange activities and that address issues of local concern. Proposals may include a component for a Seed/Small Grants Competition (often referred to as 'sub-grants' or 'secondary grants'). This requires a detailed plan for recruitment and advertising; description of the proposal review and award mechanism; a plan for how the grantee would monitor and evaluate small grant activity; and a proposed amount for an average grant. The small grants should be directly linked to exchange activities. Small/seed grants may not be used for micro-credit or re-lending purposes. Small/seed grants may not exceed 10% of the total value of the grant funds sought from ECA.

4. Site visits by U.S. facilitators/experts to monitor projects in the region and to provide additional training and consultations as needed.

5. Content-based Internet training/cyber-training to encourage citizen participation in workshops, fora, chats, and/or discussions via the Internet that will stimulate communication and information sharing among key opinion leaders on priority topics as a form of cost sharing. Proposals that include Internet utilization must reflect knowledge of the opportunities and obstacles that exist for use of information technologies in the target country or countries, and, if needed, provide hardware, software and servers, preferably as a form of cost sharing. Federal standards are under review and their adoption may impact on the implementation of these programs.

This program is not academic in nature. The Office of Citizen Exchanges encourages applicants to be creative and innovative in planning projects. Activities may combine elements of skill enrichment, theoretical orientation, and experiential, community-based initiatives.

Partner organizations should be identified in the proposal, with project plans developed collaboratively by both the American and foreign partners. Applicants who have not yet confirmed local partners, but whose proposals show significant regional and thematic expertise, will still be eligible to apply. Projects funded under this competition should enhance relationships among American and foreign organizations and achieve lasting and sustainable results.

Eligibility: Public and private nonprofit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals in response to this Request for Grant Proposals.

Selection of Participants

Proposals should include a description of an open, merit-based participant selection process for all international exchange components or any other component requiring participant selection. All grant proposals should clearly describe the type of persons who will participate in the program. A draft application and a sample announcement used for recruitment advertising should be included. It is recommended that for programs including U.S. internships, grant applicants submit letters tentatively committing host institutions to support the internships. For travel to the U.S., priority should be given to foreign participants who have not previously traveled to the United States.

Public Affairs Section Involvement: The Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies play an important role in project review and implementation. They evaluate project proposals, coordinate planning with grantee organizations and in-country partners, nominate participants and vet grantee nominations, facilitate and observe in-country activities, debrief participants, and evaluate project impact.

Applicants should expect to work closely with the relevant U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section in selecting participants, with Embassies retaining the right to nominate participants and to advise the grantee regarding participants recommended by other entities. Public Affairs Sections must approve all foreign participants who will travel internationally. They will assist foreign participants in obtaining the necessary J-1 visas for entry into the United States with Department of State sponsorship. Though project administration and implementation are the responsibility of the grantee, the grantee is expected to inform the Public Affairs Section of its operations and procedures and to

coordinate with and involve Public Affairs officers in the development of project activities. The Public Affairs Section should be consulted regarding country priorities, political and cultural sensitivities, current security concerns, and related logistic and programmatic issues.

When participants are selected, grantee institutions will provide the names of American participants and brief biographical data (two pages) on each American participant to the Office of Citizen Exchanges for information purposes. (See section below on requirements for maintenance of and provision to ECA of data on participants and program activities.)

Adherence to All Regulations Governing the J Visa

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this RFGP, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR part 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR part 62, organizations receiving grants under this RFGP will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of grantee program organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR part 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving a grant under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR part 62 *et seq.* The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places great emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by grantee program organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should *explicitly state in writing* that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR part 62. If the applicant has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR part 62 *et seq.*, including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants,