

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and 12 copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/PE/C/-04-01, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal in text (.txt) format on a PC-formatted disk. The Bureau will provide these files electronically to the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. embassy for its review.

Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and physical challenges. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for Diversity' section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106-113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Review Process

Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. The program office, the Public Diplomacy section and other elements at the U.S. Embassy will review all eligible proposals. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review.

Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for grants resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are *not* rank ordered and *all* carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation after all required elements have been met (required cost-sharing, letters of support, willingness to work with U.S. embassies, etc).

1. *Program planning to achieve program objectives*: Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution plans to achieve the program's objectives. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should contain a detailed agenda and relevant work plan that demonstrates substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

2. *Institutional Capacity/Record/Ability*: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. For technical projects, foreign experts and their local partners will be required to have the necessary education, training and experience for the work to be undertaken, in addition to language skills where applicable. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful development or exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grant Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Many successful applicants will have a multiyear track record of successful work in the selected country or within the region.

3. *Multiplier effect/impact*: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

4. *Support of Diversity*: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program

venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

5. *Follow-on Activities*: Proposals should identify other types of exchanges or linkages that might be undertaken after completion of the Bureau supported activity.

6. *Monitoring and Project Evaluation Plan*: Proposals should provide a detailed plan for monitoring and evaluating the program. The evaluation plan should identify anticipated outcomes and performance requirements clearly related to program objectives and activities and include procedures for ongoing monitoring and corrective action when necessary. The identification of best practices relating to project administration is also encouraged, as is the discussion of unforeseen difficulties.

7. *Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing*: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals with 50% cost sharing (of the amount of grant funds requested from ECA) through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions will be judged more competitive than those proposals providing a lower amount of cost sharing.

Authority

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries * * *; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations * * * and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world."

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the