

Documents postmarked the due date but received on a later date will not be accepted. Each applicant must ensure that the proposals are received by the above deadline.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and 7 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/PY-04-14, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Please also submit the Executive Summary, Proposal Narrative, and Budget sections of the proposal as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word and Excel to the program officer at sjones@pd.state.gov. The Bureau will transmit these files electronically to the American Public Affairs staff in the partner country identified for this program, with the goal of reducing the time it takes to get post comments for the Bureau's grant review process.

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.

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 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 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 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 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 62. If the applicant has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 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, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping-reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA Will Be Responsible for Issuing DS-2019 Forms to Participants in This Program

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from: United States Department of State, Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, ECA/EC/ECD-SA-44, Room 734, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone: (202) 401-9810, FAX: (202) 401-9809.

Review Process

The Bureau will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. 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 assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to their conformance with the objectives and guidelines stated above and the review criteria stated in the POGI.

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." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

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 part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance