

provide up to eight months of pre-academic training to develop English language proficiency and participant academic readiness. The two-year Partnership for Learning Undergraduate Studies (PLUS) Program has been announced under a separate Request for Grant Proposals.

Program participants will be recruited, screened and nominated by America-Mideast Educational and Training Services (AMIDEAST) in conjunction with Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassies and/or Fulbright Commissions in the region. An independent review panel in Washington, DC, will determine final selection of scholarship grantees. Participants will be placed in pre-academic programs as determined necessary in the selection process.

The Bureau's Office of English Language Programs administers this first phase of the PLUS Scholarship Program, and is responsible for allocation of funding, policy guidance and administrative oversight.

The cooperating agency will have responsibility for program administration, which involves performance of services in the following broad categories: Program Planning and Management; Placement; Supervision and Support Services; Fiscal Management; and Reporting and Evaluation Services.

Guidelines: It is anticipated that program administration activities will cover the time period December 15, 2003, through August 30, 2004. The expected cooperating agency caseload is projected to be between 75 and 100 candidates for spring 2004 and summer 2004 pre-academic programs. The cooperating agency will be responsible for the following:

(1) Identify up to 10 U.S. institutions of higher education which have Intensive English Programs that also provide activities for acculturation to life and study in the U.S. These institutions should be geographically widespread and represent the diversity of higher education in the U.S. The cooperating agency should work with the Bureau in the final selection process of these institutions.

(2) Negotiate placement into the program for the candidates and arrange scholarships or reductions of tuition or other fees when possible to leverage U.S. government funds and increase the number of participants. Negotiate on-campus housing to include, whenever possible, English-speaking roommate(s), meal plans, types and costs. Assess the availability and nature of acculturation programs including possible home

hospitality or weekend and holiday visits with American families.

(3) In conjunction with the U.S. Embassy, arrange travel for the candidates from their home countries to the location of the U.S. institution in accordance with the "Fly-America Act." ECA intends to issue the necessary DS-2019 forms and work with the U.S. embassies to secure visas for the candidates.

(4) Transfer grant funds to the respective host institutions for the students' tuition, accommodations, food, and incidentals.

(5) Enroll candidates in the Bureau's Health and Accident Insurance Program (ASPE).

(6) Monitor program and participants.

(7) Track, audit, and disburse PLUS Scholarship Program Funds.

Budget Guidelines

The Bureau anticipates awarding one grant, in an amount up to \$1,150,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement phase one of the PLUS Program. Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with fewer than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$60,000 in Bureau funding. As it is expected that the budget for this program will exceed \$60,000, organizations that cannot demonstrate at least four years experience will not be eligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost-sharing and funding in management of programs.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- (1) Per participant: Expenses for a spring semester and full summer sessions as deemed necessary by the selection process including:
 - i. tuition and fees,
 - ii. books and educational materials,
 - iii. on-campus housing with English-speaking roommate(s),
 - iv. access to a comprehensive meal plan,
 - v. maintenance allowance,
 - vi. extra curricular acculturation programs.

It is anticipated that total expenses will range from \$12,500 to \$16,000 per participant, depending on the institution and the amount of cost sharing negotiated.

(2) Round Trip Air Travel from home country to site of U.S. institution.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

Announcement Title and Number: All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/L-04-02.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Office of English Language Programs, ECA/A/L, Room 304, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547; Phone: (202) 619-5886; Fax: (202) 401-1250; E-mail: kmjenson@pd.state.gov; or Internet address: <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/RFGPs> to request a Solicitation Package. The Solicitation Package contains detailed award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. Please specify Bureau Program Officer Kenneth M. Jenson for all other inquiries and correspondence.

Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's Web site at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/RFGPs>. Please read all information before downloading.

New OMB Requirement

An OMB policy directive published in the **Federal Register** on Friday, June 27, 2003, requires that all organizations applying for Federal grants or cooperating agreements must provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for all Federal grants or cooperating agreements on or after October 1, 2003. The complete OMB policy directive can be referenced at http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/062703_grant_identifier.pdf.

Please also visit the ECA Web site at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/rfgps/menu.htm> for additional information on how to comply with this new directive.

Deadline for Proposals

All proposal copies must be received at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on Monday, November 10, 2003. Faxed documents will not be