

<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/RFGPs>. Please read all information before downloading.

Shipment and Deadline for Proposals

Important Note: The deadline for this competition is Monday, December 8, 2003. In light of recent events and heightened security measures, proposal submissions must be sent via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (*i.e.*, DHL, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.) and be shipped no later than the above deadline. The delivery services used by applicants must have in-place, centralized shipping identification and tracking systems that may be accessed via the Internet and delivery people who are identifiable by commonly recognized uniforms and delivery vehicles. Proposals shipped on or before the above deadline but received at ECA more than seven days after the deadline will be ineligible for further consideration under this competition. Proposals shipped after the established deadlines are ineligible for consideration under this competition. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure that each package is marked with a legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. Delivery of proposal packages may not be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and eight (8) copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: *ECA/A/E/EUR-04-04*, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicant must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" section of the proposals in text (.txt) format on a PC-formatted disc. The Bureau will provide these files electronically to the Public Affairs Section at U.S. Embassies for their review.

Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to ECA'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," ECA "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

For your information only: The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is placing renewed emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by grantees and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR part 6Z, including the oversight of 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 Grantee 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

ECA 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 by the Public Affairs Sections overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and ECA regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Department of State 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 Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with ECA'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:

1. *Program Development and Management:* The proposal should exhibit originality, substance, precision, innovation, and relevance to ECA's mission. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the grantee organization will meet the program's objectives. A relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. The work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

2. *Multiplier Effect/Impact:* The IATP should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and Internet expertise. The applicant organization should include ECA alumni as a resource for facilitating IATP outreach and education.

3. *Support of Diversity:* The proposal should demonstrate the grantee organization's commitment to promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity through geographic distribution of IATP sites and outreach to groups identified in consultation with PAS officers in each region.

4. *Institution's Record/Ability:* The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful administration of Internet programs. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals.