

approximately 16 U.S. experts on religion and the role of religion in American society to travel to Uzbekistan over a three-year period. Each expert should be in Uzbekistan for approximately two weeks. U.S. participants would be expected to prepare speeches and presentations, conduct workshops, and consult with Uzbek peers. For this component, proposals should focus on the same communities identified by the U.S. Embassy for the Uzbek leaders component.

Applicants should describe in detail how U.S. experts would interact with groups in the community including religious leaders, local government officials, students and educators, NGOs, and mahalla leadership. U.S. experts may be asked to address general issues related to religious practice in the United States and to speak on specific issues of interest to the Embassy or the community. U.S. experts may also be identified to participate in special events, conferences, or other relevant activities in connection with other parts of this initiative. Proposals should describe how logistical preparations would be made for the U.S. experts including transportation, lodging, interpretation (if necessary), insurance, visa processing, etc. Applicants should describe the content of orientation programs for U.S. experts before departure to Uzbekistan. Also, applicants should include a plan to follow up with the U.S. experts when they return from Uzbekistan.

Participants: Applicants should describe recruitment of U.S. participants, preferably from among specialists who have worked with Uzbek participants during the U.S.-based part of this program. Participants should be American experts on religion and religious pluralism, including religious scholars, religious organization leaders, clerics, and professionals active in community/religious relations. ECA and Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent must approve final selections.

Media: For both components, the implementing organization will work with PAS Tashkent to coordinate media coverage in Uzbekistan with a USAID-funded grantee that will be responsible for working with local media outlets.

Note: In a separate solicitation, the Bureau anticipates announcing the Uzbekistan Educational Partnerships Program in Religious and Cultural Studies. That program will support academic linkages between scholars and institutions in the United States and selected counterparts in Uzbekistan. The Uzbek institutions identified for participation in the Uzbekistan Educational Partnerships

Program in Religious and Cultural Studies may be appropriate venues for experts sponsored by the Cultural and Religious Pluralism in Uzbekistan and the United States Program. Therefore the grantees in the two programs for Uzbekistan will be expected to coordinate activities closely with one another to make sure that the activities of the two programs are complementary.

Evaluation: In general, evaluation should occur throughout the project. The evaluation should incorporate an assessment of the program from a variety of perspectives. Specifically, project assessment efforts will focus on: (a) Determining if objectives are being met or have been met, (b) identifying any unmet needs, and (c) assessing if the project has effectively discovered resources, advocates, and financial support for sustainability of future projects. Informal evaluation through discussions and other sources of feedback will be carried out throughout the duration of the project. Formal evaluation must be conducted at the end of each component, should measure the impact of the activities and should obtain participants' feedback on the program content and administration. A detailed evaluation should be conducted at the conclusion of the project and included in the final report submitted to the Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. When possible, the evaluation should be conducted by an independent evaluator.

Program Data Requirements: Organizations that are awarded grants will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. As a minimum, the data must include the following:

(1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the grant or who benefit from the grant funding but do not travel.

(2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place.

Budget Guidelines and Cost-Sharing Requirements: Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. Applicants must provide 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. Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

Since Bureau grant assistance constitutes only a portion of total project funding, proposals should list and provide evidence of other anticipated sources of financial and in-kind support. Competitive proposals will provide cost sharing to the fullest extent possible beyond ECA's minimum cost-sharing requirements.

The following program costs are eligible for funding consideration:

1. **Travel Costs.** International and domestic airfares (per the Fly America Act), transit costs, ground transportation costs, and visas for U.S. participants (J-1 visas for Bureau-supported participants from Eurasia to travel to the U.S. are issued at no charge).

2. **Per Diem.** For U.S.-based programming, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. For activities in Uzbekistan, ECA strongly encourages applicants to budget realistic costs that reflect the local economy. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at: <http://www.policyworks.gov/> and foreign per diem rates can be accessed at: <http://www.state.gov/www/perdiems/index.html>.

3. **Interpreters.** Local interpreters with adequate skills and experience may be used for program activities. The Bureau strongly encourages applicants to use local interpreters, if possible. Salary costs for local interpreters must be included in the budget. Costs associated with using their services may not exceed rates for U.S. Department of State interpreters. Typically, one interpreter is provided for every four visitors who require interpreting, with a minimum of two interpreters. Bureau grants do not pay for foreign interpreters to accompany delegations from their home country. U.S. Department of State Interpreters may be used for highly technical programs with the approval of the Office of Citizen Exchanges. Proposal budgets should contain a flat \$170/day per diem for each U.S. Department of State interpreter, as well as home-program-home air transportation of \$400 per interpreter, reimbursements for taxi fares, plus any other transportation expenses during the program. Salary expenses for State Department interpreters are covered centrally and should not be part of an applicant's proposed budget.

4. **Book and cultural allowance.** Foreign participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a book allowance of \$50. Interpreters should be reimbursed up to \$150 for expenses when they escort participants to cultural events. U.S. program staff, trainers or participants are not eligible to receive these benefits.