

The Office of Citizen Exchanges solicits proposals for exchange projects that involve the following priority themes:

1. *Women's Leadership*

Proposals should focus on promoting women's political leadership by strengthening the capacity of grassroots women's organizations to develop the skills of current and future women political leaders and by compiling a repertoire of practical material in the local language(s) for use in workshops, mock campaigns and elections, educational sessions, or other activities. Proposals must reflect a practical knowledge of the political and legislative environment in the partner country. Projects may include components listed in "Guidelines" below and may focus on the following:

- *Workshops for Political Leaders* might include such topics as public speaking, message development, leadership, campaign management, accountability and constituencies, consensus building, surveying, polling, advocacy, voter outreach, networking, working with the media, and fundraising, with the goal of increasing the effectiveness of women's participation in the political process.

- *Women's Political Awareness Campaigns* should educate women on the political process with the goal of increasing their participation in government and politics. Awareness campaigns should be jointly developed and grass-roots, get-out-the-vote campaigns conducted with partner organizations. These should reach the widest possible audience in various regions of the country, in large and small cities, and in towns and villages, with the goal of increasing women's participation in the political process.

- *Women's Human Rights Education* should improve women's understanding of human rights issues and the rule of law. Exchanges and training should be jointly conducted by U.S. and Afghan partner organizations and should reach the widest possible audience.

2. *Educational Development and Literacy for Women and Girls*

Proposals should focus on exchanges and training for educational administrators and community leaders who are actively involved in managing, delivering or promoting education in formal, informal, and non-traditional settings, including accelerated learning programs for out-of-school and hard-to-reach populations, self-study and distance education, and life skill-based, job skill-related, or functional literacy training. Emphasis should be on

providing assistance and support to administrators and others promoting education and literacy. Potential topics for activities include, but are not limited to, promoting professional competence in educational methodology and practice, especially in the area of promoting literacy; strengthening local capacity to support education; increasing understanding of the importance of women's and girls' education for the family and for society and public life; developing leadership and enhancing values of civic responsibility; and developing mentoring programs. Only adult professionals or grassroots practitioners who are not being trained as teachers may be selected to travel internationally for exchange activities. Girls and women may take part as students in pilot sessions and other in-country educational activities.

3. *Women-Led Small Business Development*

Projects should foster the development of local women-led businesses in Afghanistan and create ongoing international partnerships. Project components in the U.S. or in Afghanistan, with examples of possible topics, include: seminars for women considering micro-enterprise activities (e.g. entrepreneurship, management, finance and registration issues); workshops (developing business plans, loan packages, marketing, staff training, appropriate technology); site visits (to chambers of commerce, local governments, women's business associations, small business resource centers); establishment of women's business associations or business resource centers; mentoring; consultancies; internships; job-shadowing; or other activities.

Grant funds may be used to develop or enhance exchanges and training focused on women's business resources and the development of services in Women's Resource Centers, or to further the activities of such a center, but may not be used to furnish new centers. ECA funds may also be used to support women's business associations and regularly published not-for-profit women's business newsletters in the local language and may be used on resources and development of services. No more than \$10,000 may be used to purchase computer and/or office equipment. No funds may be used for micro-credit or re-lending activities, though funds may be used for training women considering micro-enterprise activities.

In certain types of program activities, Afghan participants could be linked

with U.S. mentors or counterparts with similar work responsibilities in order to ensure ongoing professional interaction. In addition to activities for businesswomen, proposals may include components targeting female heads of households, such as widows, training them to start businesses.

4. *Job Skills Training*

Job skills training should focus on providing women with practical skills that will have market value and that will better enable them to support their families.

5. *NGO Management*

NGO management may be addressed as part of the program design, including workshops on NGO management and capacity building for NGOs whose work advances women's political and economic development in civil society. Topics might include strategic planning, volunteer recruitment and management, coalition building, public relations, facilitation training, peer education and outreach, public-private partnerships, information management, and Web site development.

Project Guidelines

Applicants should state expected goals and objectives in the proposal narrative and describe a clear and convincing plan for carrying out project components to fulfill them. Travel costs for a maximum of 10 Afghans per grant will be permitted under this competition.

Suggested activities might include:

1. (If necessary) Initial needs assessment/orientation or training travel by American organizers to develop contacts and relationships with both American Mission officers and counterpart organizations/individuals in the Women's Development Centers in which the exchange activities will be conducted, and to provide initial training for Afghan participants.

2. First training session in Afghanistan (may coincide with needs assessment). American professionals carry out group "train-the-trainer" sessions on the subject of their exchange project, and select no more than 10 outstanding Afghan women participants for further training in the U.S.

3. A U.S.-based program, including orientation for Afghan participants to program purposes and to U.S. society, discussions, site visits, additional training of trainers, or limited internships or job shadowing opportunities.

4. A return visit by American specialists to collaborate with Afghan participants from the U.S.-based