

program in conducting additional workshops, seminars, or on-site training.

5. Training programs carried out in Afghanistan in Women's Resource Centers led by the Afghans who have received training in the U.S.

6. Distance learning techniques using appropriate technology and activities meant to bridge the digital divide are also encouraged to the extent possible.

This program is not academic in nature. The Office of Citizen Exchanges encourages applicants to be creative and innovative in planning projects.

Activities may combine elements of skill enrichment, theoretical orientation, and experiential, community-based initiatives designed to achieve objectives. Activities should provide participants an opportunity to experience each other's culture. Cultural programming may include activities or events hosted by local institutions and home stays with community members.

Projects funded under this competition should enhance partnerships among American and foreign organizations, provide hands-on activities and training sessions with practical materials in the local language, and achieve lasting and sustainable results.

Afghan partner organizations should be identified in the proposal, with project plans developed collaboratively by both the American and Afghan partners. Applicants who have not yet identified local partners but whose proposals reflect significant regional and thematic expertise are also eligible to apply, but priority will be given to organizations that have already developed these links and identified Afghan partner organizations.

**Eligibility:** U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c)(3) are eligible to apply. All proposals will receive equal consideration. U.S. organizations should have an Afghan partner, with the U.S. partner as the principal applicant.

**Selection of Participants:** Proposals should include a description of an open, merit-based participant selection process for all program components requiring participant selection. A draft application and a sample announcement used for recruitment advertising should be included. For exchange travel to the U.S., priority should be given to participants who have not previously traveled to the United States.

**Public Affairs Section Involvement:** The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassy (PAS) in Kabul will play an important role in project implementation. PAS Kabul will

evaluate project proposals, coordinate planning with the grantee organization and in-country partners, facilitate in-country activities, nominate participants and vet grantee nominations, observe in-country activities when feasible, debrief participants, and evaluate project impact. Applicants should expect to work closely with Embassy PAS in Kabul in selecting participants, and all Afghan exchange participants traveling to the U.S. must be approved by the U.S. Embassy Kabul PAS. PAS Kabul retains the right to nominate participants and to advise the grantee regarding participants recommended by other entities.

PAS Kabul will work with grantee organizations to assist Afghans selected for international travel in obtaining the necessary J-1 visas for entry into the United States. Although project administration and implementation are the responsibility of the grantee, the grantee is expected to inform the PAS in Kabul of its operations and procedures and to coordinate with and involve PAS officers in the development of project activities. The PAS should be consulted regarding country priorities, political and cultural sensitivities, current security concerns, and related logistic and programmatic issues.

#### **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 exchange programs resulting from this solicitation, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR part 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR part 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 part 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 part 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 J visa program participant 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 part 62. If the applicant has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR part 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 the 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 Fourth Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone: (202) 401-9810, FAX: (202) 401-9809.

#### **Budget Guidelines**

The Bureau expects to award up to five grants, not exceeding \$150,000 each, to support program and administrative costs required to implement exchange programs under this competition. Applicants must submit a comprehensive line-item budget based on guidance provided in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the Solicitation Package. Grants awarded to organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000. A maximum of 10 Afghans traveling to the U.S. will be permitted for each grant awarded under this competition. Proposals which clearly demonstrate a significant cost-sharing—with 50% of the amount requested from ECA as the preferred target—will be judged more competitive. For example, an organization requesting \$150,000 will be more competitive if the proposal contains at least \$75,000 in allowable cost sharing.

Allowable costs include the following:

1. Direct Program Expenses (including general program expenses, such as orientation and program-related supplies, educational materials, traveling campaigns, consultants, interpreters, and room rental; and participant program expenses, such as domestic and international travel and per diem)