

section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal. Pub. L. 104–319 provides that “in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy,” the Bureau “shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries.” Pub. L. 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

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 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

The Bureau 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. The program office, as well as the Public Affairs Section overseas, where appropriate will review all eligible proposals. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of Bureau officers 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 Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau'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. *Quality of the program idea:* Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission and responsiveness to the objectives and guidelines stated in this solicitation. Proposals should demonstrate substantive expertise in curriculum development, social studies education at the high school level, and teacher training.
2. *Creativity and feasibility of program plan:* A detailed agenda and a relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertaking, logistical capacity, and a creative utilization of resources and of relevant professional development opportunities. The agenda and work plan should be consistent with the program overview and project design that are outlined in this solicitation.
3. *Ability to achieve project objectives:* Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of educational issues in Armenia.
4. *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity by explaining how issues of diversity are included in program design and implementation. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities). The proposal should demonstrate an understanding of the specific diversity needs in Armenia and should address these needs in terms of the project themes and objectives.
5. *Institutional capacity and record:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the goals of the

project. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange activities, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by the Bureau's grants staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior grant recipients as well as the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

6. *Project Evaluation:* Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other evaluation technique should be included together with the description of how project outcomes will be compared with project objectives.

7. *Follow-on Activities:* Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) that ensures that the project activities are not isolated events but are part of a coherent and on-going plan to improve education in Armenia.

8. *Cost-effectiveness:* The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be reasonable and appropriate and should reflect a commitment to pursuing project objectives. The Bureau views cost sharing as a reflection of institutional commitment to the project. Contributions should not be limited to indirect costs.

Authority

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Pub. L. 87–256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is “to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries * * *; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations * * * and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world.” The funding authority for the program above is provided through the Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act of 1993 (FREEDOM Support Act). Programs and projects must conform to Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package. Bureau