

internships or three-month entry-level internships, depending on professional experience.

Applicant organizations must demonstrate the ability to effectively administer the participant preparation and support component of the U.S. Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women. Participant preparation and support responsibilities in four (4) administrative categories are listed below. It should be understood that in the implementation of all of these responsibilities, the Bureau must be consulted, especially in the resolution of any and all problems that may arise. The administrative portion of the grant should be kept to a minimum, and the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding from private sources in support of this project.

1. U.S. Orientations and Academic Preparation Programs

The proposal should include a plan for two separate four-week orientation and academic preparation programs prior to the internship placements in order to assist participants with the transition to the United States, its culture, and the business environment. The first three days of the program should be conducted jointly for both groups in Washington, DC. Following this introduction, the remainder of the orientation and preparation program should be conducted in two cohorts and reflect the professional level of the participants (entry level and management interns) at a location, possibly a university campus, in the U.S. Each orientation and academic preparation program should have a maximum of 20 participants. The orientation and academic preparation program should follow an interdisciplinary approach that addresses both the opportunities and challenges of interning in a U.S. business. The program should aim to provide participants with the skills to function successfully in the United States culturally and professionally, and to inspire professional achievement. The academic portion of the program should be modeled on an MBA executive education program and could include coursework in management, finance, accounting, business strategy, marketing, organizational behavior, information technology, governance and ethics. The orientation portion of the program should include workshops on cross-cultural adaptation, U.S. history and society, the development of the business sector, women in business and leadership development.

Applicant organizations are encouraged to partner with qualified U.S. institutions that are experienced in delivering customized MBA-level training to international students. It is also highly desirable that the program participants receive a certificate of achievement from an accredited institution upon the successful completion of the academic preparation program.

2. End-of-Program Washington Workshop

The proposal should include a plan for two four-day workshops in Washington, DC. One workshop should take place at the conclusion of the three-month entry-level internship period for these interns and one should take place at the conclusion of the six-month management internship period for this group. The goals of both workshops are to provide a forum for reflection on the overall experience in the U.S., the creation of an alumnae network and the development of leadership skills. Workshop sessions should include, but not be limited to, career development, opportunities for alumni leadership, and program evaluation. Upon completion of the workshop, participants should immediately return to their countries.

3. Internship Placement Support

Internships in U.S. companies will be identified and prepared by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State, in consultation with the Department of Commerce. The Department of State is working to identify internship spots for up to 40 women in both Fortune 500 companies as well as small and medium size enterprises in a variety of industries. Additionally, the Department of State is working to identify companies in the same metropolitan areas so interns will be co-located in the same cities. Businesses may accept more than one intern, but the interns should not be managed or supervised by the same person. The U.S. business will be responsible for providing professional development and management experience; a workplace orientation that includes meeting supervisors, assigning mentors, and reviewing the work outline; and assisting with the identification and arrangement of housing (prior to the intern's arrival).

Applicant organizations will be responsible for coordination with the U.S. Department of State and the participating U.S. businesses to ensure a smooth transition to the internship

component of the program. Coordination includes making participant travel arrangements, ensuring that appropriate housing is available during the internship period and preparing the participants for living independently in a U.S. city. Additionally, the applicant organization should be prepared to assist in identifying additional internship placements in the event a business withdraws its offer of an internship after the participants arrive in the U.S.

4. Participant Monitoring and Support

The proposal should include a plan for monitoring and support of program participants during the U.S. portion of the program, including travel, housing and living stipend, and program evaluation. Proposals must discuss how the participants' progress in achieving program goals and objectives will be monitored. Proposals should cite the intended frequency and form of communication with the participants during the orientation and academic preparation program and during the subsequent internship period. The use of email lists and a program Web site should be utilized where possible and cost-efficient. The proposal should outline performance goals or benchmarks. Grantee organizations should define their policies for working with fellows who do not meet the academic standards of the academic portion of the program or violate program regulations.

Applicant organizations should propose qualified professional staff, able to efficiently carry out all aspects of the program in the United States. Applicant organizations must demonstrate institutional records of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements. Applicant organizations will be expected to maintain procedures and manuals for all components of the program to ensure that all staff operates the program according to an established protocol.

Applicant organizations should ensure that the Department of State, through the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the Middle East Partnership Initiative, is acknowledged as the program sponsor in all publicity materials and advertising. Applicant organizations should calculate their budgets on an anticipated caseload of 40 principal candidates. Note that all program materials must emphasize that participants will not be able to extend or transfer their U.S. visa sponsorship at the completion of their MEPI-sponsored internship, as they are expected to