

return to their home countries to fulfill the two-year home residency requirement of the J visa.

Additionally, the Bureau requests that the applicant organization discuss how it plans to cooperate with the overseas recruitment partner to:

(a) Establish and maintain participant statistical database.

(b) Open, maintain and close intern files. Retain records of grants and other pertinent documentation.

(c) Conduct a technical review of applications for eligibility and thoroughness: checking for accurate bio-data, transcripts, recommendations, TOEFL scores and follow-up, if necessary, to secure missing documentation.

Guidelines: Program administration activities should cover the time frame from August 1, 2004 to March 5, 2005. The expected grantee caseload for the summer 2004 to spring 2005 time frame is projected to be 40 individuals. The Bureau's Office of Academic Exchange Programs will administer and coordinate the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) U.S. Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women. Subject to the availability of funds, the Bureau expects to award one grant of up to \$1,580,000.

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) is a Presidential initiative to support economic, political, and educational reform efforts in the Middle East and champion opportunity for all people of the region, especially women and youth. The initiative strives to link Middle Eastern, U.S., and global private sector businesses, non-governmental organizations, civil society elements, and governments together to develop innovative policies and programs to achieve this mission.

The U.S. Business Internship Program will provide young women from the Middle East unique opportunities to learn management and business skills while working in the dynamic and productive U.S. business environment. This MEPI program will establish substantive internships for skilled, qualified Middle Eastern businesswomen in cooperating U.S. businesses and create a cadre of professionals infused with an experience that only hands-on training can provide. Immersion in the American business environment will give these future business leaders unique tools and skills to bring home and incorporate into regional enterprises while creating mutually beneficial professional and personal relationships between Middle Eastern and American partners.

Participant recruitment and alumni support will be administered through a

separate grant agreement. Recruitment efforts will specifically target young Middle Eastern women outside of the traditional urban areas in economically diverse and disadvantaged sectors. A review panel in Washington DC, including representatives of ECA and MEPI, will make the final selection of participants.

Competition for the MEPI U.S. Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women will be open, merit-based, and fair to all applicants. Applicants will be evaluated based on academic excellence, leadership potential, proficiency in written and spoken English (with a minimum TOEFL score of 550), maturity, and flexibility and suitability to operate successfully in an American corporate environment. Selected applicants must also demonstrate a sufficient level of information technology knowledge and word processing ability to operate in a U.S. business at the appropriate entry or management level.

In-country interview panels will be comprised of representatives from the Public Affairs section of U.S. embassies, embassy Economic/Commercial sections, locally qualified businessmen/women, NGO officials, and alumni of USG exchange programs.

All program participants must be sponsored under Exchange Visitor Program No. G-1-0332 on a J-1 Visa and comply with J-1 Visa regulations. In addition, administration of the program must comply with reporting and withholding regulations for federal, state, and local taxes as applicable.

Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

Budget Guidelines: The Bureau anticipates awarding one grant in the amount of \$1,580,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this phase of the U.S. Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women. Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$60,000 in Bureau funding. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost-sharing and funding from private sources in support of its programs.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. Awards may not exceed \$1,580,000. There must be 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. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

Program Costs

- Domestic travel, coach class or equivalent, from Washington, DC to the orientation site and from the orientation site to the internship location, and from the internship location to Washington, DC;
- Washington Orientation Workshop expenses (not to exceed \$800 per participant);
- Tuition, fees (including all staffing and professional fees), room and board for orientation and academic preparation program;
- Educational materials (not to exceed \$1,000 per participant);
- Cultural allowance (not to exceed \$500 per participant);
- Monthly stipend (please develop an average based on current MMR rates);
- End of Program Workshop expenses (not to exceed \$1000 per participant, per workshop);
- Accident and sickness insurance;
- Withholding for taxes as necessary.

Domestic Administrative Costs

- Staff salaries and fringe benefits (Each staff member and his/her position must be listed separately, including the percentage of his/her total time spent on this program and duties performed on behalf of the program. Proposed salaries and time on task must be certified as true and accurate representations of actual costs and percentage of time. Resumes must be included for new staff.);
- Staff travel and per diem;
- Communication costs (fax, telephone, postage, equipment, etc.);
- Administration of tax withholding and reporting as required by Federal, State, and local authorities and in accordance with relevant tax treaties;
- A-133 Audit fees if not included in the indirect cost pool;
- Other direct costs;
- Indirect costs (per OMB Circular A-122, Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations, organizations receiving more than \$10 million in Federal funding of direct costs in a fiscal year must break out the indirect cost component into two broad categories, Facilities and Administration, as defined in subparagraph C.3).

The above cost allocations are subject to the availability of funds. ECA reserves the right to modify any of the above cost allocations to achieve program efficiency and cost savings.