

program activities, and applicants should explain and justify their programmatic choices. Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package—this RFGP, the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI), and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)—for further information.

Budget Guidelines

The funding available for these projects is \$500,000 for Indonesia, \$200,000 for the Philippines, \$198,000 for Serbia, and \$595,000 for Southeast Europe. ECA intends to award between four and six grants for the four projects under the ACCESS Program announced in this RFGP. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

The Bureau anticipates awarding four or more grants exceeding \$60,000 each under this competition. Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$60,000 in Bureau funding. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs are not eligible to apply under this competition.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting program, administrative, and cost-sharing budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package. The POGI outlines allowable costs; the PSI offers complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

Announcement Title and Number: All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/PE/C/PY-03-31.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Youth Programs Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/PY, Room 568, U.S. Department of State, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, (202) 619-6299, fax (202) 619-5311, E-mail: npleasan@pd.state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. The Solicitation Package contains detailed award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. Please specify the Bureau program officers on all other inquiries and correspondence.

Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

To Download a Solicitation Package via Internet: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's Web site at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/RFGPs>. Please read all information before downloading.

Deadline for Proposals: All proposal copies must be received at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on *Friday, April 11, 2003*. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked the due date but received on a later date will not be accepted. Each applicant must ensure that the proposals are received by the above deadline.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original proposal, one fully-tabbed copy, and six copies of the application with Tabs A-E should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/PE/C/PY-03-31, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants must also submit the executive summary, proposal narrative, budget section, resumes, and any important appendices as e-mail attachments in Microsoft Word and Excel to the following e-mail address: npleasan@pd.state.gov. In the e-mail message subject line, include the reference number (ECA/PE/C/PY-03-31) and the country/region for which you are applying. The Bureau will transmit these files electronically to the public affairs sections of the relevant U.S. embassies for review, with the goal of reducing the time it takes to get embassy comments for the Bureau's grants review process.

Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socioeconomic status, and physical challenges. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the

advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the "Support for Diversity" section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal. Public Law 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." Public Law 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 Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this RFGP, 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 the J visa program 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