

Department of State

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request
for Grant Proposals: Fulbright Student Program**

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/E-14-01

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.400

Key Dates:

Application Deadline: June 17, 2013

Executive Summary: The Office of Academic Exchange Programs (ECA/A/E) of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for one or more assistance awards to provide administrative services for the Fulbright Student Program in Fiscal Year 2014. Public and private non-profit organizations or consortia of eligible organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to cooperate with the Bureau in the administration and implementation of one or more of the following three program components:

- For U.S. students: the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, including the Fulbright Public Policy

Fellowship Program, the Fulbright English Teaching Assistant Program, and the Fulbright-mtvU Program.

- For foreign students administered by world geographic region: the Fulbright Foreign Student Program, including the Faculty Development Program for selected countries of the Western Hemisphere.
- For foreign students administered globally: the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program, pre-academic training, orientation programs, and enrichment activities, as well as oversight of the Fulbright Offices in Moscow and Kyiv.

Applicant organizations may compete to administer the entire world-wide Fulbright Student program comprising both the U.S. and foreign student components.

Alternatively, applicant organizations may compete to administer the U.S. student program and/or the foreign student program based on guidelines detailed in section II.

It is anticipated that the total amount of funding available for all FY 2014 administrative costs to support the program components listed above will be approximately

\$11,704,057, pending the availability of funds, and will involve management of approximately 4,700 new students.

II.) Award Information, below for additional details.

I. Funding Opportunity Description:

Authority:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 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 legislation.

Purpose:

The Fulbright Program is the U.S. government's premier program for international academic exchange and one of our

nation's most important investments in improving international relations between the U.S. and other countries through the development of future leaders in virtually every area of endeavor. It was created by the U.S. Congress after World War II to exchange U.S. and foreign students, scholars and teachers, and to provide them opportunities to experience firsthand the political, economic and cultural institutions in each other's countries and thus help establish a basis for international mutual understanding and peaceful interaction. It now extends to over 155 countries worldwide and awards approximately 8,000 new and renewal grants to American and foreign participants each year. The Fulbright Program focuses on leadership development and counts among its 315,000 alumni world leaders in every profession and field of endeavor.

A hallmark of the Fulbright Program is binationalism. The United States and foreign governments, U.S. and foreign educational and other public and private institutions are all partners in this exchange. Program priorities are developed between the U.S. and foreign partners and in many countries of the world, financial contributions from

governments or public/private sources match or exceed those of the United States.

Administration of the Fulbright Program is programmatically and administratively complex. It must accommodate a variety of circumstances in every geographic region of the world and be responsive to and supportive of many different constituencies in the United States and abroad, each with its own sets of goals and concerns. The integrity of the Program requires maintenance of the highest and most consistent standards of academic and professional quality in the selection of candidates and the implementation of projects. While the Program is active in many countries, it is important that it maintain a single world-wide identity. Overall policy guidelines and selection criteria for all Fulbright programs are determined by the Presidentially-appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, while responsibility for conducting the program is assigned to the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State.

Description of the Fulbright Student Program:

The Fulbright Student Program offers scholarships to recent U.S. and foreign college and university graduates, advanced

graduate students including those pursuing doctoral degrees, and creative artists to study, teach, or conduct research abroad and in the United States. A basic premise of the Fulbright program remains the selection of all participants through an open and transparent merit-based competition.

U.S. Student Program:

Only one cooperative agreement will be awarded for all administrative services for the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Under the U.S. Fulbright program, graduating college seniors or developing artists and professionals or graduate students who are U.S. citizens are awarded scholarships each year through a competitive process to study, undertake research, or assist in the teaching of English at institutions in countries overseas. Students must hold a bachelor's degree, or its equivalent, before the start of the grant. Award opportunities for U.S. students are determined overseas by binational Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies, in coordination with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in Washington. In FY 2014, the Fulbright U.S. Student Program expects to

send abroad approximately 2,030 U.S. students, developing professionals and artists, and Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (described below) to study and conduct research.

In addition to "traditional" research awards, candidates for awards under the U.S. student program may apply for Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships, Fulbright Public Policy Fellowships, or Fulbright-mtvU awards. Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETA) teach English language and conversation classes in schools and universities abroad while simultaneously pursuing individual study and research plans.

Fulbright Public Policy Fellows serve in professional assignments within host government ministries for an academic year. Fulbright-mtvU recipients pursue research projects that focus on contemporary or popular music as a cultural force.

U.S. students applying for a Fulbright grant to selected countries may request an enhancement of their award to provide up to six months in-country language training prior to beginning their research project. This initiative may include Arabic, Bahasa Indonesian, Chinese (Mandarin),

Russian, and Indic languages, pending availability of funding.

Foreign Student Program

One or more grants will be awarded for administration of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. Section II below contains detailed information on applying to administer all or parts of the Foreign Student Program.

Fulbright foreign student candidates are nominated through open, merit-based competitions in each participating country, conducted by a binational Fulbright commission or, in the absence of a commission, by the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of U.S. embassies. Scholarship opportunities for foreign students are determined through consultations between commissions or embassies and the Bureau similar to the process for the U.S. Student Program nominees. The Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board makes the final selection of all Fulbright nominees.

The Fulbright Foreign Student Program expects to bring to this country approximately 2,700 new foreign students for study and research in the United States for FY 2014. This total includes new foreign students in the two activities

listed immediately below. Applicants for this administrative award(s) should submit program proposals and budget projections for new FY 2014 students only. Ongoing awards to foreign students from prior years will be managed by the organizations currently administering the program.

In addition to the traditional foreign student program operating binationally in more than 155 countries, the Fulbright Foreign Student Program also includes a special activity that is competed and funded on a worldwide basis: the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program.

The Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program (FLTA) aims to strengthen foreign language instruction at U.S. educational institutions while providing young teachers or teacher trainees of English as a Foreign Language the opportunity to refine their teaching skills, increase their English language proficiency, and broaden their knowledge of American society and culture. Fellows are placed for an academic year at a U.S. university where they teach their native language and enroll in at least two courses in U.S. studies or teaching methodology. Languages taught by FLTA participants may include Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dari, French, Gaelic, German, Hausa, Hindi,

Indonesian, Italian, Korean, Malay, Mongolian, Pashto, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tajik, Thai, Turkish, Urdu, Wolof, or other languages. In FY 2014, the Bureau intends to fund approximately 400 FLTAs.

Orientation and Enrichment Programs:

The Bureau funds a range of activities designed to deepen the mutual understanding potential of the Fulbright program. Starting with pre-academic English language training and entry orientation programs designed to introduce Fulbright students to American academic life, these programs strengthen the participants' communication and classroom skills, allowing them to make the most of their Fulbright opportunity. Throughout the academic year, the Bureau funds a range of enrichment seminars for first year Fulbright foreign students which create enhance their engagement and understanding of U.S. culture and issues.

Program Management:

Management of the Fulbright Student Program is shared among the Office of Academic Exchange Programs (ECA/A/E) of the U.S. Department of State in Washington, bilateral Fulbright commissions in 50 countries, Public Affairs Sections (PAS)

of more than 100 U.S. embassies abroad, and cooperating private sector organizations in the United States. Grantee cooperating agencies must ensure full and proper identification of the Fulbright program with the U.S. government and the Department of State.

In a cooperative agreement, the Bureau is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. The Bureau will work cooperatively and closely with the recipients of cooperative agreement awards, provide guidance and maintain a regular dialogue on administrative and program issues and questions as they arise over the duration of the award.

Bureau activities and responsibilities for this program include:

- 1) Participation in the design and direction of program activities;
- 2) Approval of key personnel;
- 3) Approval and input on program timelines, agendas and administrative procedures;
- 4) Guidance in execution of all program components;
- 5) Review and approval of all program publicity and recruitment materials;

- 6) Approval of participating students, in cooperation with Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies, subject to final selection by the Fulbright Board;
- 7) Approval of changes to students' proposed academic field, academic program, or institution;
- 8) Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of program;
- 9) Assistance with non-immigration status and other SEVIS-related issues;
- 10) Assistance with participant emergencies;
- 11) Liaison with relevant U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions and country desk officers at the State Department.

Programs must conform with Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package which includes the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP), the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

Guidelines:

Applicant organizations are requested to submit a narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and implementation of the Fulbright Student Programs for

which they are applying. The comprehensive program strategy should reflect a vision for the Program as a whole, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright Student Program with creativity, as well as providing innovative ideas and recommendations for the Program. The Bureau places a priority on ensuring that the positive impact of the Fulbright Student Program is visible to the public in U.S. and campus communities and applicants should outline a plan to work with the media and other organizations to insure that the program and its scholarship awards receive appropriate publicity. As part of the proposal, applicant organizations should develop and include a strategic media communications plan outlining strategies for soliciting impact stories from participants as well as how to use the media to disseminate those stories to greatest effect.

Program for U.S. Students:

Please plan to begin services under this cooperative agreement with merit review panels for candidates for scholarships beginning in academic year 2014-2015 and include the recruitment of students for academic year 2015-2016. Depending on timing, the selected applicant organization may need to work with the incumbent

organization to phase in responsibility for the review and selection processes in the initial cycle.

Screening and Selection Process: Applicant organizations should present a plan to pre-screen for eligibility all electronic applications previously received from U.S. program applicants for academic year 2014-2015 and convene national review panels composed of area and subject experts. Panels will determine which applicants will be nominated based upon proven merit, project proposal feasibility and factors that help present a truly national character in the pool of finalists, who will be recommended to PAS and Fulbright commissions overseas and to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board for final selection.

Program Management: Applicants should outline in their proposals plans for tracking and monitoring participants; development and maintenance of an electronic database on participants; and the preparation of statistical reports and grantee reports.

Post-Nomination Services: The narrative should include a description of how the cooperative agreement recipient will inform successful candidates of their selection, and non-selected candidates and alternates of their status; provide award packages for students as required; respond to queries

from participants; assist with pre-departure orientation as requested; electronically maintain data on participants; evaluate participants' health status and administer Bureau health benefits plan, monitor participants and provide participants' reports and analyses of these reports to the Bureau; and assist with emergencies.

Fiscal Management: Applicants should describe how the cooperating agency will manage electronic disbursement of payments to participants; provide quarterly reports on actual and projected expenditures; provide regular statistical reports; and monitor and audit internal functions and systems in accordance with U.S. government and Bureau guidelines.

Recruitment: Provide a comprehensive plan for the recruitment of U.S. students for all programs for academic year 2015-2016. Proposals should offer imaginative strategies for the recruitment of U.S. students and plans to enhance the visibility of the program, with particular focus on the recruitment of groups currently under-represented in the Fulbright program.

Publicity and Applications: The recipient of the cooperative agreement award will be responsible for establishing and maintaining a website for the U.S. student program which should include provision for electronically

submitted applications. Please outline in detail your plans for the announcement of scholarship opportunities for academic year 2015-2016, application processes, the creation of an annual directory of student participants, and a plan for publicity for the program in the U.S. Proposals should delineate an outreach and recruitment strategy, with a strong focus on diversity, which might include written and electronic publications, professional networking, media relations - including social media, outreach to potential applicants, universities and others.

Programs For Foreign Students

Please provide a plan for administration and implementation of the Foreign Student Program, indicating precisely the programs for which you are applying. Describe your capacities for administering the programs and provide detailed information on how you will perform the following duties:

Program Planning and Management: The award recipients will be responsible for placement of foreign students for academic year 2014-2015 at U.S. institutions, as needed; the development of significant U.S. institutional and private sector funding and cost sharing for scholarship awards; developing recommendations on participants' living

allowances; producing an electronic participants database and special reports. Proposals should offer strategies for placement and plans to enhance the visibility of the foreign student program and may include other innovative activities. Organizations or consortia of organizations should describe overseas capacities to assist U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions with publicity, and recruitment as specified in the attached Project, Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI), for academic year 2015-2016. Also detail any regional, exchange or other kinds of expertise that your organization would contribute to the effective administration of the program.

Selection: Discuss your plans for the development of a comprehensive website for foreign student applicants and participants; preparation and distribution of electronic applications and selection guidelines to Fulbright commissions and PAS for academic year 2015-2016; receipt and review of recommended applications for academic year 2014-2015; making arrangements for required English language and other assessments; and preparation of participants' handbooks and orientation material. Your organization should demonstrate the capacity to both receive applications electronically from overseas and to transmit the applications electronically to the ECA/A/E

regional branches and the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Placement: Describe your organization's resources and capabilities for insuring the best and most appropriate placement of students at a full range of U.S. public and private institutions representing geographic and institutional diversity. Discuss in detail your organization's potential for securing co-funding from U.S. institutions to leverage U.S. and other sources of Fulbright funding. Detail your past success securing cost-sharing.

Supervision and Support: Describe how you will supervise and monitor foreign students including oversight of the following: enrollment in approved academic programs and academic performance; medical care and health benefits coverage; Federal tax compliance; J-visa status; renewal and extension of awards; and emergencies.

Fiscal Management: Outline your capacity to manage electronic stipend payments to participants; handle tax withholding, as required; provide reports on expenditures; and monitor and audit internal functions and systems in accordance with U.S. government and Bureau guidelines.

English language and Pre-Academic Training: One organization or consortium of organizations will organize

and administer worldwide English language and pre-academic training programs and short-term entry orientation programs for selected Fulbright students enrolling for academic year 2014-2015, including designing criteria and estimating costs for these programs, placement and supervision of participating students, and evaluating and monitoring the programs.

Enrichment Activities: The organization or consortium of organizations administering the pre-academic and orientation programs will also administer up to nine enrichment seminars at locations around the nation for foreign students in all programs in the winter and spring of 2014. The goal of these workshops is to provide students an in-depth understanding of U.S. institutions, society and culture.

II. Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number I above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2014

Approximate Total Funding: \$11,704,057

Approximate Number of Awards: One or more awards, in accordance with the following options:

Organizations or consortia of organizations may compete to administer the entire world-wide Fulbright Student program, comprising both the U.S. and foreign student components. Alternatively, single organizations or consortia of organizations may compete to administer the U.S. student program and/or the foreign student program based on the following guidelines:

For the U.S. Student Program, the Competition is open to:

- single organizations or consortia of organizations wishing to administer the program worldwide.

For the Foreign Student Fulbright Program, the competition is open to:

- single organizations or consortia of organizations wishing to administer the program worldwide or;
- single organizations or consortia of organizations wishing to administer the foreign student program for one or more regions of the world. For the purposes of this competition, regions are defined as follows:

- Sub-Saharan Africa
- Europe and Eurasia
- East Asia and the Pacific
- the Middle East and North Africa
- South and Central Asia

- Western Hemisphere

Proposals must include plans to administer the Fulbright Foreign Student Program in all of the countries within a region where there currently is a program. A complete list of country programs in each region is provided in the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) package. Any proposal that includes countries not listed in the POGI will be deemed less competitive under the program planning criteria.

Organizations or consortia of organizations applying to administer the Foreign Student Fulbright Program in two or more regions must demonstrate the capacity to administer the global foreign student programs and enrichment activities including the Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program, English language and pre-academic programs, short-term orientation programs, special thematic seminars, and at least nine enrichment seminars.

Organizations applying to administer the foreign student program in Europe and Eurasia must to propose to offer in-country offices in Moscow and Kyiv or partner with another

organization to manage the administration of the Fulbright programs in those countries. The Offices of the Fulbright Representative in Moscow and Kyiv (Fulbright Program Offices) are responsible for the administration of ECA's Fulbright Program in Russia and Ukraine. Additional information is provided in the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) package.

Organizations applying to administer the foreign student program in the Western Hemisphere must to propose to administer the Faculty Development Program. Please refer to the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional information on the Western Hemisphere Faculty Development Program.

Consortia proposing to administer the worldwide U.S. Fulbright Student Program or the worldwide foreign student program should designate one organization to be the recipient of the cooperative agreement award. Proposals for administration of the program by a consortium should provide a detailed description of arrangements for cooperative work among the partners and between the

partners and the U.S. and overseas academic communities, bilateral commissions and other entities.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds. In addition, it reserves the right to accept proposals in whole or in part and make an award or awards in accordance with the best interests of the Fulbright Student Program.

Approximate Average Award: \$6,000,000

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds, October 1, 2013.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2017.

Additional Information: Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew the grant(s) for a period of not less than four additional fiscal years, before openly competing the program again. The Bureau reserves the right to renew the award(s) beyond that period.

III.) Eligibility Information:

III.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations or consortia

of institutions meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: The Bureau anticipates that proposals will include significant amounts of cost-sharing in support of the Fulbright Student Program, and encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of funding in support of this initiative.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved grant agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

III.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one or more awards, in an amount or amounts greater than \$130,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. 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 in support of its programs.

IV.) Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete 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.

IV.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:
Please contact Ms. Susan Borja or Ms. Robin Bradley, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E, SA-5, 4th Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C

Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, email BorjaSE@state.gov and telephone (202) 632-3264 or email BradleyRG@state.gov and telephone (202) 632-3223, fax (202) 632-6490 to request a Solicitation Package.

Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E-14-01 when making your request.

Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Ms. Susan Borja or Ms. Robin Bradley and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E-14-01 on all other inquiries and correspondence.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:
The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under IV.3f. "Application Deadline and Methods of Submission" section below.

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is

included in the appropriate box of the SF - 424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative and budget.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the System for Award Management (SAM) database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other

information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

IV.3d.1 ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients 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 the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, 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 award recipient 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://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-44, Suite 668
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

IV.3d.2 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, socio-economic status, and disabilities. 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 your 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.

IV.3d.3. **Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these

outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

IV.3d.4. **Virtual Exchange Component:** ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages

organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

IV.3d.5. Describe your plans for: overall program management, staffing, coordination with ECA and with U.S. and foreign universities, Fulbright commissions and PAS of U.S. embassies. Provide a staffing plan which outlines the responsibilities of each staff person and explains which staff members will be accountable for each program responsibility. Whenever possible, streamline administrative processes.

IV.3e. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A - "Budget Information - Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. Applicants must submit a comprehensive line item administrative budget for the entire program or the specific portion of the program they are applying to administer. It is anticipated that funding for the cooperative agreement award(s) for program administration for all new Fulbright students will be approximately \$11,704,057, pending the availability of funds. Pending availability of FY 2014 funds, it is anticipated that most of the resources will come from the FY 2014 Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs Appropriation. However, it is also anticipated that approximately \$700,000 will be transferred to the Bureau from Economic Support Funds and other resources to administer programs for approximately 200 Pakistani students.

IV.3e.2. Allowable costs and additional budget guidance are outlined in detail in the POGI document. Please refer to

the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

IV.3f. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: June 17, 2013

Reference Number: **ECA/A/E-14-01**

Methods of Submission:

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should

check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays.

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation.

Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA

will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Optional - IV.3f.1 You may also state here any limitations on the number of applications that an applicant may submit and make it clear whether the limitation is on the submitting organization, individual program director or both.

IV.3g. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. REVIEW PROCESS

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in

the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels 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 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. Program planning:** Proposals should respond precisely to the planning requirements outlined in the RFGP. Planning should demonstrate substantive rigor. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan, including a timeline, should

demonstrate feasibility and the applicant's logistical capacity to implement the program.

2. Ability to achieve program objectives: Proposals should demonstrate clearly how the applicant will fulfill the program's objectives and implement plans, while demonstrating innovation and a commitment to academic excellence. Proposals should demonstrate a capacity for flexibility in the management of the program.

3. Support of Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (recruitment and selection of participants, academic placements and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and enrichment programs, program meetings, resource materials). Proposals should articulate a diversity plan, not just a statement of compliance.

4. Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve program goals. Applicants should demonstrate established links to institutions of higher education in the U.S and knowledge of the overseas educational environment, particularly an awareness of conditions in societies and educational institutions outside the United

States as they apply to academic exchange programs. Applicants should demonstrate prior experience or the capacity to negotiate significant cost savings for foreign students from American institutions of higher education. Applicants should also demonstrate their capacity to provide an information management/database system that meets program requirements, is compatible with the Bureau's systems, and provides for electronic applications, electronic data storage, and electronic payment of stipends.

5. Institution's Record/Ability: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of managing successful exchange programs, including significant experience in developing and administering international academic exchange programs, sound fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau cooperative agreements as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. In its review of proposals, the Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

6. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the program's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that proposals include a draft survey

questionnaire or other instrument plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original objectives.

7. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries, should be kept as low as possible while adequate and appropriate to provide the required services. Proposals should document plans to realize cost-savings and other efficiencies through use of technology, administrative streamlining, and other management techniques. Proposals should demonstrate maximum cost-sharing. Preference will be given to proposals which demonstrate innovative approaches to leveraging of funds, and other sharing of costs.

VI.) Award Administration Information

VI.1a. Award Notices:

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive an Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized

Grants Officer, and mailed to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

For assistance awards involving the Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza:

All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S. laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Donna Ives, Branch Chief for Middle East Programs, 202-632-6050 for additional information.

VI.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments".

OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>.

<http://fa.statebuy.state.gov>

VI.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The performance reports (PPR) must be submitted electronically to the Grants Office at reportseca@state.gov with a copy sent to the Program Officer. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/> .

Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.

- 2.) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all program performance reports.
- 3.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 4.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.
- 5.) Additional reporting requirements as outlined in the POGI document.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission Instructions (IV.3.d.3) above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

All reports must be sent to the ECA Grants Office and ECA Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Ms. Susan Borja or Ms. Robin Bradley, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E, SA-5, 4th Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, email BorjaSE@state.gov and telephone (202)632-3264 or email BradleyRG@state.gov and telephone (202)632-3223, fax (202)632-6490.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/E-14-01.

Please read the complete 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.

VIII. Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative.

Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding.

Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. 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. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

Ann Stock

April 11, 2013

Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs

Department of State