

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) and American Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) Programs' Organizational Component

ECA/PE/C/PY-13-14

*Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Office of Citizen Exchanges
Youth Programs Division*

The POGI applies specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Youth Programs Division for the FY13 Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) and the American Serbia and Montenegro Youth Leadership Exchange (A-SMYLE) Programs' Organizational Component. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the guidelines in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). An application not adhering to such guidelines will be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the guidelines in the RFGP and POGI, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Overview

The FLEX and A-SMYLE Programs provide secondary schools students from Eurasia and Serbia and Montenegro, respectively, the opportunity to experience life first-hand in American host communities by living with an American family and attending an accredited American high school. The Organizational Component includes managing a broad range of administrative program details, including recruitment, selection, communication with natural parents, and arranging for alumni activities for the participants for the 2014-2015 academic year. Information on the FLEX Program is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/future-leaders-exchange>. Information about the A-SMYLE Program can be found at <http://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/american-serbia-and-montenegro-youth-leadership-exchange>.

Program participants are 15 to 17 years old. The FLEX program draws participants from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine, while the A-SMYLE program draws participants from Serbia and Montenegro. Under the terms of their visas, these participants must return to their home countries following the conclusion of their exchange programs in the United States. The award recipient organization is expected to assist the State Department in adhering to all requirements and regulations of the J-1 Secondary School Student visa program.

The Department of State seeks to include students of diverse national, ethnic, religious, and socio-economic backgrounds, and students with disabilities. Participants will be selected for the

program on the basis of merit and personal character. Finalists also undergo rigorous medical screening. Applicants undergo a series of exams and are interviewed in person for evaluation of their ability to adjust to new cultures and their English language proficiency.

The Organizational Component communicates with separate Placement Organizations. Virtually all activities of the Organizational Component award recipient will be conducted in direct coordination with the Placement Organizations (POs). It is imperative for the success of the FLEX and A-SMYLE programs that your organization works efficiently and openly with ECA and the POs throughout the duration of the grant. While the Organizational Component award recipient is responsible for the coordination of many overarching activities involved in the implementation of the FLEX and A-SMYLE Programs, the POs will recruit, screen, and select U.S. host families for participants; select schools and secure school enrollments for participants; conduct in-person host family and student community-based orientations; monitor and support students throughout the school year; and organize enhancement activities for students.

Each PO is provided Operational Guidelines, a manual that gives instructions that the POs must follow for the smooth coordination of tasks.

Program Timetable

The proposal should be planned in accordance with the dates and deadlines set by the needs of the programs. The recruitment and selection process must be completed by February 15, 2014, so that finalist applications can be disseminated for placing the students in host families and schools. Travel to the United States is expected to take place in August 2014. Return travel will occur in May-June 2015.

Recruitment Targets

The recruitment targets for each country are tentative and represent recruitment goals only. Recruitment targets are not to be confused with finalist allocations. Finalist allocations are ultimately dependent on the availability of funding, legislative mandate, policy considerations, and applicant pool. For planning purposes, the following country targets for FY 2013 (Academic Year 2014-2015) should be used; these targets are based on 1,111 total academic year participants:

A-SMYLE	
Montenegro	17
Serbia	50
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A-SMYLE Total	67

FLEX	
Armenia	40
Azerbaijan	44
Georgia	54
Kazakhstan	94

Kyrgyzstan	66
Moldova	44
Russia	319
Tajikistan	47
Turkmenistan	60
Ukraine	276
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FLEX Total	1,044

FLEX and A-SMYLE Total: 1,111

Note: The Office reserves the right to adjust countries and their numbers as circumstances require. Award recipients may not deviate from these recruitment targets without prior written approval from the Program Office.

B. Responsibilities of the Award Recipients

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State is the designated Exchange Visitor Program (J-visa) sponsor with ultimate responsibility for the FLEX and A-SMYLE programs. All organizations receiving awards including their employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of the these programs will be considered under the terms of such grants to be third parties: “an entity cooperating with or assisting the sponsor [i.e., the Office of Citizen Exchanges] in the conduct of the sponsor’s program” (22 CFR Section 62.2).

This solicitation includes one organizational component for two programs: (1) the FLEX and (2) the A-SMYLE programs. The award recipient organization will administer both programs.

Responsibilities for the Organizational Component:

1. U.S. Embassy Liaison and Consultation

- Meet regularly with the Office of Public Affairs (OPA for A-SMYLE) and Public Affairs Section (PAS for FLEX) at U.S. Embassies.

2. Overseas Infrastructure and Communications

- Maintain the appropriate infrastructure in participant countries

3. Program and Promotional Materials

- Design and develop program and promotional materials

4. Online Presence:

- Develop program webpages
- Assist the State Department in online outreach and communities

5. Recruitment, Screening, and Selection of Students:

- Manage transparent, merit-based competition

6. Medical Screening

- Ensure that students are healthy and have required immunizations

7. Students with Disabilities

- Provide on-going support and an arrival orientation for students with disabilities

8. Documentation

- Assist DOS with SEVIS data

9. Coordination of Student Information and Assignment

- Distribute student information to POs

10. Student Likeness (Photos and Video) Usage

- Secure likeness permission

11. Pre-Departure Orientation:

- Provide uniform pre-departure orientation to prepare students for life in the United States.

12. Travel

- Purchase and coordinate roundtrip international travel for all participants

13. Student Highlights

- Regularly provide alumni/participant stories and highlights

14. Communication of Student Concerns

- Communicate to ECA any concerns regarding students during their program

15. Communication with Natural Families

- Serve as a liaison between POs and students' natural families

16. On-Program Student Support Liaison

- Designate one staff member to serve as the On-Program Student Support Liaison for each program

17. Civic Education Workshop (CEW)

- Plan a Civic Education Workshop for approximately 100 FLEX students during academic year 2013-2014.

18. ECA Academic Year Programs Annual Meeting

- Plan for two staff members per program to attend an Annual Meeting

19. Alumni

- Coordinate alumni activities and plan special alumni events in convenient, regional locations

20. Information Management

- Maintain a student placement information database

21. Financial Management

- Manage fiscal data and accounting for award funding

22. Sub-Award Management

- Ensure sub-award recipients (if applicable) have copies of solicitation documents

23. Performance Reports

- Complete quarterly and final reports

24. Evaluation

- Develop and implement a program evaluation plan

C. Detailed Guidance Related to Above-Listed Responsibilities for Organizational Component

1. U.S. Embassy Liaison and Consultation

The award recipient organization should meet with OPA/PAS at the U.S. Embassies within 30 days of the awarding of the cooperative agreement to discuss the geographic and other priorities for student recruitment. You should summarize the results of this meeting, and subsequent similar meetings, for submission to the ECA program office. OPA/PAS involvement in recruitment, selection, orientations, and alumni activities will be determined through joint discussions between the award recipient and OPA/PAS.

You should maintain an open consultative relationship with OPA/PAS, as well as with the ECA Program Office. The award recipient organization must have at least monthly contact with OPA/PAS personnel regarding recruitment and selection, security, travel, student issues, and/or other matters that may be of concern. This includes informing them of student successes. In countries where your organization does not have a physical presence to conduct program activities, you must coordinate with the Bureau's Program Office and with the relevant OPA/PAS wherever possible. In situations where the political situation prevents your organization from conducting program activities within a particular country, you will need to make special provisions to conduct program functions. Your organization should seek to conduct all of these functions efficiently and cost-effectively.

Ensure that American Embassy personnel are not encumbered by the programs' day-to-day functioning of the programs. If the political situation in any country results in the need for the Embassy to assume more responsibility, your organization should provide assistance in whatever ways are possible. In all cases, field staff in each country should encourage OPA/PAS staff to participate in program events where appropriate, especially as pertains to alumni.

2. Overseas Infrastructure and Communications

The award recipient must maintain the appropriate infrastructure in participant countries to carry out the in-country functions of a youth exchange program. The ongoing communications with natural parents, follow-on activities with alumni, and relations with foreign government officials all require that your organization maintain a year-round presence in participant countries. A staff person with U.S. citizenship must head each permanent office with FLEX and A-SMYLE program responsibilities.

3. Program and Promotional Materials

Program Materials

The award recipient will design and develop materials that support all components of FLEX and ASMYLE and inform and orient program constituents overseas and in the United States (i.e., participant, host family, and school administrator handbooks, operational guidelines, pre-departure orientation materials, etc.).

The award recipient will develop, design, amend, and/or arrange for the publication of new or current program materials. Relevant materials may include support for orientation programming and for the concerns of natural and host parents of program participants, PO local staff, and U.S. school administrators. ECA may request that new program materials be developed. In such

situations, the Program Office will usually produce the text, and will request that the award recipient provide assistance with the layout and publication. Whenever possible, current materials should be amended to fit changing needs and circumstances overseas and in the United States.

Promotional Materials

All official documents and materials developed for promotional purposes must acknowledge the U.S. Department of State's role as program sponsor. Materials must be made available for approval by ECA's Program Office prior to publication and distribution. Please allow additional time for the review process. Where appropriate, documents will include the American flag and the State Department seal. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and may distribute materials related to these programs. The award recipient must also communicate with POs and ECA to coordinate information for program websites.

4. Online Presence

Social Media, Mobile Technologies, and Department of State Online Communities

The award recipient will dedicate staff to coordinate information for FLEX and A-SMYLE websites and maintain online program webpages that serve to market the program; disseminate information to U.S. and foreign publics; serve as a secure participant application and resource tool for students; and develop and implement strategies for the effective use of mobile technologies and other social media, including Facebook, Twitter, and platforms for blogging, to promote the programs.

Virtual Exchanges

Your proposal should include a plan to build capacity for virtual exchanges in 3-5 locations; one location per country. The locations should be chosen for accessibility to the Internet and a pool of English speaking students. It should also aim to reach underserved communities. Your plan should include setting up contacts in these communities, as well as providing computers if necessary. Virtual exchanges should be done in coordination with POs, who will identify appropriate U.S. communities to partner for the exchanges.

Department of State Web Resources

Outreach Resources: During the cooperative agreement period, the Bureau may develop hosting resources to assist the award recipient organization with hosting outreach, and to promote FLEX and A-SMYLE as U.S. Department of State programs. The award recipient organization is expected to support promotional campaigns by providing information to ECA and updating promotional materials as needed.

In consultation with ECA's Program Office and in coordination with its Alumni Affairs and Web and Social Media teams, as appropriate, develop and implement a strategy to leverage mobile and online technologies and networks, and the Department's digital properties, including the International Exchange Alumni website, Facebook, Twitter, and other platforms as key resources

for the promotion of the FLEX and A-SMYLE programs, augment the impact of the in-person exchange, and the engagement of FLEX and A-SMYLE alumni.

Online Communities: All award recipient staff, program personnel, and regional and local volunteers associated with FLEX and A-SMYLE are expected to be knowledgeable of the Department of State's resources such as but not limited to connect.state.gov and alumni.state.gov, and to register as members or guest members of the websites. Staff and coordinator training as well as orientations for students and host families are to include presentations and demonstrations on these resources.

Recipients should effectively promote Department of State resource sites to participants, and participants are expected to become active members at these sites. While organizations may provide their own resources and on-line opportunities, these additional online resources may not replace involvement with Department of State online communities.

5. Student Recruitment, Screening, and Selection

Recruitment and selection must be merit-based and free of the appearance or perception of political influence and corruption. The recruitment process must be open and transparent, making it possible for any student who meets the eligibility criteria to apply. To accomplish this, the process must be under the direct control of Americans at all times. The finalist pool must reflect the cultural, gender, ethnic, national and geographic diversity of each program, and you must maintain recruitment statistics at each stage by country, region, and gender.

It is not necessary or even possible, given budget constraints and areas of civil unrest, to conduct recruitment activities in all regions of each country. Recruitment should focus on major population areas, while keeping the process open to applicants from all areas. Contingency plans should be devised for recruitment in countries where host governments may impede the standard process.

Special pre-program English language enhancement activities may be provided to a small group of selected students to ensure that weaker language qualifications of certain students with disabilities or from more remote areas are not an excluding factor in their selection. You are encouraged to re-test finalists with low initial English test scores as needed prior to their departure to the United States. This additional language and cultural support enhances the student's ability to adjust to the U.S. host environment and assists in the school placement process.

The last round of finalist selection must be conducted in the United States. The program aims to select students who have personal qualities, motivation, and the academic, language, and social skills to be successful on the exchange. Selection also includes the selection of and training for the application reviewers. All application materials and accompanying documentation must be kept strictly confidential and may not be shared with any organizations, groups, or individuals

not directly involved with the FLEX or A-SMYLE programs. Your proposal should describe how you will ensure the security and confidentiality of all applicant documentation.

6. Medical Screening

Arrange in-country medical screenings and clearances to ensure that students are healthy and have immunizations necessary for admission to American schools prior to leaving their home countries when possible. Review medical screening documents in the United States to confirm that all requirements have been met.

Perform a special review, carried out by a medical doctor, to confirm that applicants with disabilities are able to travel and complete the program successfully. Provide support for students with disabilities.

7. Students with Disabilities

Support for Students with Disabilities

In addition to the support liaison(s), one staff member must be identified and have a sufficient amount of his/her time devoted specifically to working with students with disabilities. This person's responsibilities will include, but are not limited to, development of staff expertise in recruiting and supporting students and alumni with disabilities, providing resources and overseeing identification and procurement of reasonable accommodations (equipments, materials, and services), providing training opportunities for program implementers, eligibility and placement needs assessments, and preparation of students upon arrival.

The award recipient must recruit and provide necessary support and accommodation for FLEX and A-SMYLE students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must meet the same standards as all other applicants, but they may receive reasonable accommodations for testing. The recipient must implement a review process carried out by a medical doctor to adequately assess the unique needs of each student and confirm that applicants with disabilities are able to travel and complete the program successfully; ensure that interviews, orientations, and other pre- and post-program activities include reasonable accommodations; coordinate student assignments with each PO to ensure that they have the resources and capacity to place and support the student(s); provide each PO with written, detailed, and accurate support and accommodation needs assessment results for each student prior to student travel; provide funds for reasonable accommodations as necessary for students with disabilities to POs for the course of the exchange program.

Arrival Orientation(s) for Students with Disabilities

The award recipient must coordinate dates with ECA, overseas partners, and POs to conduct a pre-program workshop and assessment event(s) that will include further professional review of each student to confirm and refine a support plan to be coordinated with each respective PO. The workshop will take place after selected participants have arrived in the United States; it will present the history of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and resources available to people with disabilities in America, and provide independence training and tools for these

students. The award recipient will serve as a resource through the year by providing funds for reasonable accommodations, guidance, and assistance to POs in meeting the needs of these students.

8. Documentation

You will provide assistance to ECA with regard to collecting, verifying, and entering participant data in the Student Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) and preparation of DS-2019 forms for finalists and alternates.

9. Coordination of Student Information and Assignment

Develop and implement a plan for the equitable, transparent, and timely distribution of finalist documentation to the POs, taking into consideration such factors as gender, age, country of origin, need for English language enhancement activities, and disability.

10. Student Likeness (Photos and Video) Usage

Request permission from each student's natural family to have photographic or video images of the student taken and reproduced in ECA-approved printed and web-based promotional materials.

11. Pre-Departure Orientation

The award recipient must provide uniform pre-departure orientation (PDO) programming to prepare students for life in the United States. Uniformity is essential because it reinforces participants' identity as participants in a U.S. government scholarship program and enables the dissemination of information, policies, and procedures critical to the students' success.

Field staff should encourage the participation of U.S. Embassy personnel in pre-departure orientations whenever possible. In countries where your organization cannot conduct pre-departure orientation sessions, you should make provisions for these orientations to be conducted by U.S. Embassy staff, in a neighboring country, or with the agreement of the program office, in the United States immediately after the students arrive. The award recipient organization will also provide orientations for the natural parents prior to the students' departure for the United States and for the host families.

Students identified to participate in the pre-program workshop for students with disabilities must have their in-country PDO programming at a time that takes into account their earlier departure from their home countries.

POs must prepare materials specific to their organization for students to be distributed during the PDO. POs will send their materials to the award recipient by May 1, 2014 for distribution at PDO. The award recipient should ensure that all materials provided in this manner identify students as FLEX or A-SMYLE students and include information on the U.S. Department of State as the program sponsor.

Alternative special provisions (as appropriate) may be made for orienting students from countries where the political situation does not permit an in-country, pre-departure orientation.

12. Travel

The award recipient will arrange for round-trip international tickets, assist with passports and visas, originating from students' home communities in all participating countries to students' host communities. Regular communication and productive collaboration with POs are required to ensure effective coordination of student travel. In consultation with POs, the award recipient will develop standard travel procedures for all program participants, will recruit and train student escorts (flight leaders), and will coordinate travel for students who are for any reason unable to travel with an escorted group, including those who are voluntarily or involuntarily repatriated before the end of the exchange.

Travel should be arranged in the most efficient and cost-effective manner possible in accordance with the Fly America Act and all other USG travel regulations. All students with disabilities should depart their home countries in time to attend the pre-program workshop conducted by the award recipient. Standard travel procedures should be developed – incorporating PO input – that spell out how group flights are scheduled, how individual students are assigned to a flight, how date-change requests from POs should be made, and how and when itineraries will be provided to POs. These procedures should also explain PO travel obligations, including the deadline by which arrival airport codes are due from the POs. A detailed description of the support that will be provided to students while they are en-route to the United States should be presented, including airport staffing and emergency communication procedures.

The award recipient must recruit and train escorts (flight leaders) for the students and coordinate travel for students who are for any reason unable to travel with an escorted group, including those who are voluntarily or involuntarily repatriated before the end of the exchange. Flight escorts should be selected primarily on their ability to manage a group of teenage travelers. They should be adequately trained, so as to ensure their competence and independence while traveling.

Student Travel Documents

POs must obtain (and retain for three years) copies of the following documents for each Program participant:

- Name/photo page of international passport;
- J-1 visa page in passport;
- I-94 with date of U.S. entry indicated; and
- DS-2019 with stamp issued at U.S. port of entry.

13. Student Highlights

The award recipient will regularly provide timely reports of FLEX and A-SMYLE alumni's significant accomplishments throughout the exchange.

14. Communication of Student Concerns

You will provide on-program support for students, their natural parents, and the staff and volunteers of the POs. Efforts must correspond to the Federal Regulations as outlined in 22 CFR 62 and should be closely coordinated with ECA's Program Office. You must report immediately to the ECA Program Office any situation that affects the safety, health, or well-being of a participant, or any student disciplinary action at the second warning/probation level that could ultimately result in the student's repatriation. Only the ECA Youth Programs Division Office can make the decision to terminate the program and repatriate a student; under no circumstances will the organization, its employees, volunteers, or third parties acting on its behalf inform participants that their program will terminate and they will be repatriated without specific directions from the ECA Program Office.

15. Communication with Natural Families

The award recipient will communicate and serve as liaison with the students' natural families during the program year. Provide on-program support for students, staff, and volunteers in dealing with natural parents about student problems that arise during the program.

16. On-Program Student Support Liaison

The award recipient will designate a staff member(s) as a "Student Support Liaison" to serve as a point of contact for ECA on all FLEX and A-SMYLE student support issues, and will regularly collect on-program support updates from POs and report them on a routine basis to the ECA Program Office.

17. Civic Education Workshop (CEW)

The award recipient will be responsible for developing and conducting a Civic Education Workshop (CEW) for approximately 100 FLEX students during the 2013-2014 academic year in Washington, D.C. The award recipient will coordinate a competitive application and essay contest to select the students, and will collaborate with POs to make final selections and arrange roundtrip transportation from the host communities to Washington, D.C., and for providing room and board for students during their time in Washington, D.C. Ground transportation should be provided for participants in the Washington, D.C. area, including to and from area airports.

The CEW should be arranged for seven days, including arrival and departure, during a time when Congress is in session. This program component should include sessions on U.S. domestic and foreign policy, the role of the media in a civil society, citizen empowerment, volunteerism and community activism, and federalism. The workshop may also provide opportunities to attend cultural events and visit museums and monuments. Your proposal should include a description of the ways in which all students will be encouraged to share what they have learned, both in their U.S. host communities and when they return to their home countries. You should plan to include the participation of several FLEX and A-SMYLE alumni to enhance the students' experience. Also, provide a mechanism for evaluation of CEW in terms of its impact on the students and in fulfilling objectives. The budget narrative should include a separate explanation of costs associated with this component.

18. ECA Academic Year Programs Annual Meeting

The award recipient should plan to participate with approximately two representatives per program in the annual ECA academic year programs meeting, to be held for two days in Washington, D.C. (Meeting dates to be determined by ECA.) One representative per program must be from your organization's financial office.

19. Alumni

What happens to participants once they return home is critically important to ensuring the programs' success in fulfilling the objectives and in reinforcing a transfer of the American experience to participants' home countries. Your proposal must provide a clear, systematic plan for alumni tracking. Data must be maintained in a way that will enable the organization to provide information on participants, including their name, address, host school, and host family name and address, in a format compatible with ECA's database systems. ECA will expect reports on alumni to include dates of re-entry into Europe and Eurasia, current places of residence, and current educational/professional activities. There is an existing network of alumni associations throughout Europe and Eurasia, and regular reporting is required on these alumni associations' activities. In addition, you must provide a specific plan for using alumni in outreach efforts to rural areas.

The award recipient organization will be required to organize and conduct special events throughout the regions to celebrate major milestones, like anniversaries or other occasions of note.

The award recipient organization will be required to conduct separate competitions for program alumni as an important way of keeping them involved in the program and their American experience. You also should conduct an alumni photo and video contest as a way of building a reserve of useful program-related photos. Alumni may submit photos they have taken of others involved in program-related alumni activities. Other suggestions for creative and cost-effective alumni competitions are welcomed.

An effort must be made to publicize these competitions widely throughout participant countries to reach as many alumni as possible. Your organization should collaborate with U.S.-based organizations that conduct activities such as the *Global Village for Future Leaders of Business and Industry*, as well participant activities such as the Civic Education Workshop and the Disabilities Component workshops, to ensure that required follow-up takes place among alumni who have participated in these program components. The alumni network should be used to the greatest extent possible to ensure widespread publicity for DOS-sponsored activities such as the alumni grants competition and the alumni photo contest.

20. Information Management

The award recipient must maintain a student placement information database compatible with ECA's Eureka database for quick uploading of information; track applicants through the initial

stages of recruitment and through their selection as finalists, placement, and alumni; and prepare and electronically transmit data needed for the Bureau program office to issue DS-2019 forms, allowing ample time for visa processing. The database should be regularly maintained and updated, in order that reports generated contain accurate information. Data should be kept in a format that can be shared with ECA for its alumni database.

21. Financial Management

The award recipient must manage fiscal data and accounting for award funding, as required by federal law, including cost-sharing and any funds provided to approved sub-awardees.

22. Sub-Award Management

If sub-award recipients are involved, ensure that sub-recipients have received a copy of the RFGP and POGI and are versed in all requirements of this POGI, your organization's expectations, and J-1 visa regulations. Provide oversight to sub-recipients that ensures the quality of their performance of duties for the programs under your organization's agreement.

23. Performance Reports

Quarterly Performance Reports: The award recipient is responsible for implementing mechanisms to monitor participants and report to the ECA Grants Office and the Program Office success and impact on a quarterly basis. The recipient must submit quarterly performance reports that address, at a minimum, the following topics: past and planned program activities, financial expenditures and status (i.e. identify financial variations from original budgets), and the strengths and weaknesses of the organization's overall experience with the programs as well as with individual participants. Such program descriptions should be supported by qualitative narrative and quantitative data. The award recipient should conduct an ongoing evaluation of program success in achieving stated objectives.

The award recipient must submit to the Program and Grants Offices an electronic copy of all quarterly performance reports no more than 30 days after the reporting period end dates: March 31; June 30; September 30; and December 31. An SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet, the SF-PPR-E, and SF-PPR-F must be submitted with all performance reports. Quarterly program and financial reports should include both quantitative and qualitative data.

Final Performance Report: The award recipient must submit to the Program Office and Grants Office an electronic copy of a final performance report. This report must include a program and financial report and should include both qualitative and quantitative data to demonstrate impact, strengths, and weaknesses of the exchanges. An SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with the final performance report.

Report Summary Document: In addition to Final Performance Report identified above, the award recipient is required to submit a concise one-page document summarizing performance reports, and listing and describing award activities, along with a list of its directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees). The Program Office will transmit

these documents to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA). As required by FFATA reporting requirements, this information will be available to the public via OMB's USASpending.gov website.

24. Evaluation

The award recipient must develop and implement a program evaluation plan to monitor and assess the success, effectiveness, and impact of the programs. See the RFGP for more information on developing an evaluation plan.

II. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address all elements described below succinctly and completely. Proposals must be submitted through Grants.gov only in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word,
- Microsoft Excel,
- Adobe portable Document Format (PDF),
- ASCII Text (less desirable), or
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images).

Proposals should include the following information:

TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)

Applications must include a completed "Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424). Applicants must obtain a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to complete Box 8(c) of the Form SF-424. Applicants may obtain DUNS numbers at no charge by contacting Dun and Bradstreet at <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or 1-866-705-5711.

TAB B - Executive Summary

The Executive Summary is a single double-spaced page that provides the following information:

- Name of the organization submitting the proposal, and participating organizations, if applicable
- Beginning and ending dates of the program
- Scope of the project, including the following:
 - Number and description of participants
 - Main locations of program offices overseas

- General Nature of activities
- Funding level requested from the Bureau
- Total program cost
- Total cost sharing from applicant and other sources
- Total per-student cost by program

TAB C

Calendar of Activities/Itinerary

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. **Vision** (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. **Organizational Structure and Capacity**
 - Describe your organization’s infrastructure. Be specific about number of offices, their location, and how they are/will be staffed and equipped, keeping in mind the requirement for American oversight of the whole recruitment/selection process.
 - Include a description of your arrangements with local government authorities that will enable you to function and work with local educational institutions.
 - Describe your alternative strategies for recruitment and staffing in areas or countries where challenges may impede standard recruitment procedures.
3. **Participating Organizations**
 - Describe your organization’s staffing to oversee the FLEX and A-SMYLE programs.
 - Include sub-recipients if applicable.
 - List individuals by name and position, and provide a brief description of each person’s responsibilities.
4. **Program Activities**
 - Recruitment Process – Briefly describe the recruitment process, including your plan for advertising the competition and for scheduling the various stages of application and their locations. Describe any particular strategies for addressing situations where the political situation may affect recruitment process. Explain any plans for the application materials to ensure selection of the most-qualified students and to ensure the integrity of the merit-based process. Describe your plans for recruiting students with significant disabilities, including methods for increasing the applicant pool of qualified students with disabilities. Explain how you will amend recruitment materials to make them accessible to applicants with visual, auditory, or motor disabilities. A copy of the participant application should be included

as an attachment. Provide your work plan/timeframe for recruitment/selection activities.

- **Selection Process** – Briefly describe the selection process, including your plan for recruitment and training of application evaluators. Explain how you will ensure that finalists represent a diverse cross-section with regard to country of origin, gender, age, etc. In your work plan, include your arrangement (timeframe and method) for distributing finalist documentation to the POs.
 - **Travel** – Describe how your organization will efficiently and effectively arrange round-trip domestic travel and ticketing of finalists from their home communities to the gateway cities in Eurasia where they will depart for the United States. Provide your plan for the participants' international and U.S. domestic travel to their host communities and for their return. Describe situations where unusual travel plans must be put into effect because of challenging political conditions. Explain how you will ensure thorough and appropriate communication with POs regarding travel, and how you will incorporate their input into the procedures for travel
 - **Orientations** – Describe your plan for participant orientations prior to their departure.
 - **The Civic Education Workshop** – Briefly describe the CEW format and provide a sample itinerary.
5. **Diversity** – Describe how you will proactively seek to maximize diversity, both in program participants and program content (e.g., in orientation and alumni programming).
 6. **Multiplier Effect** – Provide a plan for continued contact with alumni to ensure that they are tracked over time, utilized and/or organized as alumni.
 7. **Program Evaluation** – Describe the ways in which your organization will evaluate success in achieving its objectives and those of the program. Focus on methods that will be used to assess problem situations and develop plans to address these. Include specific materials that will be used for the purpose of assessment and evaluation.
 8. **Follow-on/Alumni** - Describe how your organization will maintain alumni programming and special events, including provisions for countries where circumstances may prevent you from conducting regular alumni activities. Include details on any special alumni projects that are planned. Emphasize the plan for using alumni to do outreach to remote regions both for increasing alumni participation and for attracting potential applicants from those regions. Indicate how your organization plans to make use of alumni in the selection process, orientation, and other program components. Describe the plan for conducting the alumni grants competition, the alumni photo contest, and any other alumni competitions you anticipate conducting. Explain how your organization will assist

- alumni who participated in special program components in the United States to implement what they learned after they return home. If using other alumni resources, such as an alumni newsletter, your proposal must include information on how and how often the newsletter will be used, advertised and distributed.
9. **Program Management** - Describe how your organization will maintain communication between and among the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassies, the natural families, POs, ECA, and other organizations administering components of the programs, including any special provisions you will make in countries where challenging situations present obstacles to normal procedures.
 10. **Information Management** - Describe how you will maintain a database on applicants and their progression to either selection or rejection, participants on program, and alumni following their return home. Explain how you will update data on current participants in a timely fashion. Demonstrate that you have the ability to use the data to provide custom reports based on reporting requirements and ECA's needs. List the reports you will provide to ECA at the start of the academic year, based on the data collected.

Calendar of Activities/Itinerary

The Calendar of Activities/Itinerary is a monthly plan of action or timetable that demonstrates the timing and organization of the responsibilities of the award recipient. These should include, but not be limited to, monitoring local staff, students, and host families; training events; submission of quarterly reports; and dispersal of funds and information. This is not part of the 20-page limit on the Program Narrative.

TAB D - Budget Submission

Applicants must submit a Form SF-424A along with a comprehensive line item budget. The budget must include and distinguish between funds requested under the letter of solicitation and funds applicants acquire through cost-sharing or from other sources. You must submit a Program Activity Cost Summary. Include an explanatory budget narrative and submit per participant and total costs. Per participant costs are calculated as the total cooperative agreement funds requested divided by the number of participants.

All budgets will be reviewed for cost-efficiency, including the percentage of the cooperative agreement that will be used for administrative expenses. The award recipient organization will be responsible for managing fiscal data and accounting for funding, as required by federal law, including cost-sharing and funds provided to approved sub-recipient organization(s).

An accident and sickness health benefit plan or insurance for FLEX and A-SMYLE participants is provided by the POs under separate grants.

Each budget must include the following costs:

- Overseas infrastructure costs
- Overseas recruitment costs
- International travel costs
- Selection costs
- Staff travel, i.e., expenses for one person per organization, including sub-award recipients, to Washington, DC to attend a two-day ECA Youth Programs Division annual meeting
- Civic Education Workshop costs for 100 FLEX student during the 2013-2014 academic year
- Alumni costs

Budgets also typically include but are not necessarily limited to the following items:

- Stipends and honoraria for non-salaried staff and volunteers;
- Program materials (including an explanation of how materials will be used);
- Administrative costs (i.e., salaries, communication, and supplies);
- Promotional materials, including social media and website development and maintenance (Proposals must offer examples and provide substantive justification for promotional requests and how the funds will advance marketing needs specific to the programs. General, ongoing promotion and marketing expenses of the organization may not be requested as a direct cost.)

ECA requested budget should not include excess baggage fees or international travel, which may be cost-shared.

Cost Sharing: All cost sharing declared in the proposal budget must be auditable. Applicants are encouraged to develop sources of funding to complement the grant funds. Private partnerships with corporations or foundations are encouraged. Direct contributions from the applicant organization itself are welcome, both cash and in-kind. Costs borne by host families are considered “in-kind contributions” and may not be declared as a cost share item.

Program Activity Cost Summary: In addition to the budget, submit a Program Activity Cost Summary that reflects all costs (even if they do not easily fit into the enumerated categories). The Program Activity Cost Summary is used to identify project cost drivers and will not be used to evaluate proposals submitted in this competition. Annotate those line items that are affected by unique or changing cost drivers, i.e. high transportation costs, increases in stipends for local coordinators.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

TAB E - Letters of Endorsement, Resumes, Additional Illustrative Information and Data

Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages. Include additional illustrative information and data that will strengthen and provide additional detail to the application, i.e. copies of detailed participant monitoring and project evaluation plans, letters of endorsement, and commitments from all implementing partners or subcontractors.

TAB F- SF-424B, "Assurances – Non-construction Programs," First Time Applicant Documents, and Additional Documentation

1.) SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs".

2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

3.) **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:

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.

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

As part of 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.

4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

III. REVIEW PROCESS

Your proposal 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 (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds. ECA will also review the record of compliance with 22 CFR §62 et seq. of organizations designated as Exchange Visitor Program Sponsors by ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange.

The submission will be reviewed with the following review criteria in mind. The criteria are not rank ordered, and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation. The RFGP provides additional detail on each review criteria.

1. Quality of the Program Idea and Program Planning
2. Support of Diversity
3. Organization's Record and Institutional Capacity
4. Follow-on Activities
5. Program Evaluation
6. Cost-Effectiveness/Cost-Sharing
7. Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations

IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. **There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline.** For further information regarding this program or the competition, contact ECA Program Officer Callie Ward (202-632-6431), WardCA@state.gov; or ECA Program Officer Amy Schulz (202-632-6052), SchulzAJ@state.gov.