

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2016 Community College Initiative Program

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAS-16-008

Office of Global Educational Programs

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Global Educational Programs for the FY 2016 Community College Initiative (CCI) Program. Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may 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 standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/S/U is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

ECA/A/S/U activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

- 1) Participation in the design and direction of program activities;
- 2) Approval of key personnel;
- 3) Approval and input on program timelines and agendas;
- 4) Guidance in execution of all program components;
- 5) Review and approval of all program publicity and other materials;
- 6) Approval of host campuses;
- 7) Final selection of participating students;
- 8) Approval of placements and changes to students' proposed academic field or institution;
- 9) Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program;
- 10) Assistance with SEVIS-related issues;
- 11) Advising and consulting about participant emergencies;
- 12) Arrangements for State Department speakers during workshops;
- 13) Liaison with the U.S. Embassies, Fulbright Commissions, and State Department country desk officers; and
- 14) Performing an annual performance evaluation/review.

ECA will accept proposals for the administration and implementation of the FY 2016 Community College Initiative Program. Pending availability of funding, the Cooperative Agreement(s) for the base year should begin on or about February 1, 2016 and end on or about December 31, 2018. The open competition includes both administrative and educational components of the program. The CCI Program provides international participants from underserved and underrepresented communities with

quality educational programs at accredited U.S. community colleges. The CCI Program also focuses on leadership and professional skills development, practical professional experience, service learning, community engagement, and programming that build mutual understanding and knowledge about American society and culture. Participants are expected to return to their home communities following the completion of the U.S. program.

For the 2016-2017 academic year, we anticipate hosting students from countries such as Brazil, India, Indonesia, Pakistan, South Africa and other countries (subject to change). Currently, CCI participants come from twelve countries and participants are recruited through the Public Affairs Section of the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate, or through the Fulbright Commission if available in the eligible country. The Bureau reserves the right to make changes in eligible countries; proposals should indicate flexibility and willingness to host international students from any country.

Applicant organizations may apply to administer the entire program under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation, or may apply to administer a portion of the program under Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only. The proposal should clearly state under which option the applicant organization intends to apply. Applicant organizations should demonstrate flexibility to work with other organizations and the ability to increase or decrease hosting capacity to accommodate final funding levels. Applicants should specify the number of participants that will be supported with the amount of funding requested.

The responsibilities of the award recipient(s) vary under the two distinct application options, as follows.

**Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation**

Organizations that represent consortia of eight or more community colleges are eligible to apply under “Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation” to administer CCI Program-wide activities and to implement CCI Programs at U.S. campuses. Applicants under Option A need to demonstrate the capacity to administer these CCI Program-wide activities: managing the application review and placement cycle; coordinating pre-departure materials and participation in virtual orientations; planning and executing at least one event for all CCI participants; and overseeing the CCI-wide branding and alumni engagement efforts. Applicants under Option A also need to demonstrate the capacity to implement U.S. arrival orientations and pre-academic programs, along with academic year programs at host campuses for approximately 132 participants, contingent on the availability of funds and the number of awards executed. One cooperative agreement will be awarded under Option A.

Administrators of the CCI Program awarded under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation must implement these specific responsibilities:

**Program-wide Administration Responsibilities of the Award Recipient**

1. Establish a system for receiving, reviewing, and clearing application materials for CCI Program participants nominated by U.S. Embassy or Fulbright Commissions;
2. Follow up with the U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions regarding missing documents and respond to their inquiries, copying the appropriate program officer in the Bureau;
3. Conduct a technical review of all applications to ensure applicants meet eligibility requirements;
4. Conduct a medical review for each applicant;

5. Review candidate dossiers and distribute complete applications to consortia to determine the best program placement in the proposed fields of study for each participant that will meet his/her academic and professional goals;
6. Distribute candidates to each consortium so that each has a mix of participants by rank-order, geography, and gender to the extent possible;
7. Ensure that final placements establish diverse multinational cohorts at each host campus with 12-16 participants per cohort and no more than four participants from the same country at the same campus, if possible, and ensure cohorts have a mix of participants by geography and gender to the extent possible;
8. Obtain final approval of the Bureau's program officer on candidate placement;
9. Submit final placement reports to the Bureau's program officer and communicate final approved placements to the Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions in the partner countries;
10. Identify resources for pre-departure distance learning and in-country English language programming and coordinate proposed opportunities;
11. Prepare and distribute pre-departure materials for U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions to use during their in-country pre-departure orientations;
12. Coordinate virtual participation of consortia and ECA representatives in home-country pre-departure orientations offered by U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions;
13. Prepare pre-departure materials for individual participants and oversee dissemination of materials to participants through U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions;
14. Ensure that each participant signs a Terms and Conditions document and completes all other necessary pre-travel paperwork;
15. Notify the U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions of each candidate's proposed U.S. arrival date and the date for sending travel itineraries for each participant;
16. Plan and implement at least one CCI-program event in or near Washington, D.C. that facilitates participant personal and professional development and helps participants maximize their CCI experiences;
17. Plan and coordinate activities that would create opportunities for CCI-wide alumni engagement and amplify host campus alumni engagement efforts to strengthen both the CCI-wide Program brand and the CCI alumni network;
18. Promote CCI-wide branding and administer CCI websites and social media properties cooperatively with ECA in compliance with ECA Communication Guidelines.

#### Implementation Responsibilities of the Award Recipient

19. Open and maintain an up-to-date file on each participant selected;
20. Identify and propose community colleges to each host a cohort of participants in two or three of the designated fields of study, with the concurrence of the Bureau's program officer;
21. Review candidate dossiers at each host campus to determine the best program match in the proposed fields of study for each participant that will meet his/her academic and professional goals;
22. Work with consortia administrators to ensure diverse multinational cohorts at each host campus with 12-16 participants per cohort and no more than four participants from the same country at the same college, if possible, and ensure campus cohorts have a mix of participants by geography and gender to the extent possible;

23. Prepare and send the DS-2019 form as soon as possible after placement to facilitate the visa application and adjudication process and at least 60 days before departure;
24. Work with program-wide administrators to prepare and send award and pre-departure advising materials such as letters of award, program guidelines, and program descriptions to students selected for the program;
25. Arrange round-trip travel for the participants from their home cities to their U.S. host institutions; send this itinerary to each participant and the respective nominating Fulbright Commission or U.S. embassy along with general travel information;
26. Ensure that each host campus receives a signed Terms and Conditions document from each participant and that participants complete all other campus-specific pre-travel paperwork;
27. Arrange housing for each participant in conjunction with host campuses and share rules and regulations for housing with participants;
28. Ensure that each participant receives an orientation upon arrival in the U.S.;
29. Enroll participants in the Bureau's ASPE health benefits plan or alternative plan that meets J-1 visa requirements and is approved by ECA, advise participants about the benefits plan, and assist with claims as necessary;
30. Ensure participants have signed a release form that states whether they approve or do not approve the use of their photos or quotes in publications related to the CCI Program;
31. Develop and facilitate educational and cultural enrichment activities;
32. Assist participants in developing an individual development plan;
33. Assist participants in arranging a professional internship directly related to the participants' field of study;
34. Assist participants in arranging service learning opportunities;
35. Monitor participants' adjustment and academic performance; consult with the Bureau's program officer regarding any participant-related issues and emergencies that may arise;
36. Monitor, evaluate, and report to the Bureau's program officer regarding host campus performance;
37. In close consultation with the Bureau's program officer, evaluate the program and its impact on the participants, their host communities, and their host institutions during their stay in the U.S., and after they return to their home countries;
38. Manage financial aspects of the program including participant maintenance allowances, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, host university agreements, taxes, and other activity costs;
39. Manage and monitor the J-1 visa duration and SEVIS status of the participants;
40. Assume overall responsibility for complying with all applicable tax treaties and Federal, state and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for participants;
41. Respond to any requests by participants for extension of stay due to exceptional circumstances in consultation with the Bureau's program officer;
42. Report programmatic, financial, and statistical information to the Bureau's program officer;
43. Respond fully and promptly to requests for information relating to the participants and alumni;
44. Track and maintain updated lists of alumni and facilitate follow-on activities with alumni after they return home.

### **Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only**

Organizations that represent consortia of three or more community colleges are eligible to apply under “Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only” to administer and implement U.S. arrival orientations and pre-academic programs, along with academic year programs at host campuses for approximately 36 students. Up to two cooperative agreements may be awarded under Option B. Organizations that apply under Option B need to demonstrate a commitment to working with the institution awarded under Option A for CCI program-wide activities.

Administrators of the CCI Program awarded under Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only must implement these specific responsibilities:

#### CCI Program Implementation Responsibilities of the Award Recipient

1. Open and maintain an up-to-date file on each participant selected;
2. Identify and propose community colleges to each host a cohort of participants in two or three of the designated fields of study, with the concurrence of the Bureau’s program officer;
3. Review candidate dossiers at each host campus to determine the best program match in the proposed fields of study for each participant that will meet his/her academic and professional goals;
4. Work with consortia administrators to ensure diverse multinational cohorts at each host campus with 12-16 participants per cohort and no more than four participants from the same country at the same college, if possible, and ensure campus cohorts have a mix of participants by geography and gender to the extent possible;
5. Prepare and send the DS-2019 form as soon as possible after placement to facilitate the visa application and adjudication process and at least 60 days before departure;
6. Work with program-wide administrators to prepare and send award and pre-departure advising materials such as letters of award, program guidelines, and program descriptions to students selected for the program;
7. Arrange round-trip travel for the participants from their home cities to their U.S. host institutions; send this itinerary to each participant and the respective nominating Fulbright Commission or U.S. embassy along with general travel information;
8. Ensure that each host campus receives a signed Terms and Conditions document from each participant and that participants complete all other campus-specific pre-travel paperwork;
9. Arrange housing for each participant in conjunction with host campuses and share rules and regulations for housing with participants;
10. Ensure that each participant receives an orientation upon arrival in the U.S.;
11. Enroll participants in the Bureau’s ASPE health benefits plan or alternative plan that meets J-1 visa requirements and is approved by ECA, advise participants about the benefits plan, and assist with claims as necessary;
12. Ensure participants have signed a release form that states whether they approve or do not approve the use of their photos or quotes in publications related to the CCI Program;
13. Develop and facilitate educational and cultural enrichment activities;
14. Assist participants in developing an individual development plan;
15. Assist participants in arranging a professional internship directly related to the participants’ field of study;
16. Assist participants in arranging service learning opportunities;
17. Monitor participants’ adjustment and academic performance; consult with the Bureau’s

- program officer regarding any participant-related issues and emergencies that may arise;
18. Monitor, evaluate, and report to the Bureau's program officer regarding host campus performance;
  19. In close consultation with the Bureau's program officer, evaluate the program and its impact on the participants, their host communities, and their host institutions during their stay in the U.S., and after they return to their home countries;
  20. Manage financial aspects of the program including participant maintenance allowances, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, host university agreements, taxes, and other activity costs;
  21. Manage and monitor the J-1 visa duration and SEVIS status of the participants;
  22. Assume overall responsibility for complying with all applicable tax treaties and Federal, state and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for participants;
  23. Respond to any requests by participants for extension of stay due to exceptional circumstances in consultation with the Bureau's program officer;
  24. Report programmatic, financial, and statistical information to the Bureau's program officer;
  25. Respond fully and promptly to requests for information relating to the participants and alumni;
  26. Track and maintain updated lists of alumni and facilitate follow-on activities with alumni after they return home.

## II.

### PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

ECA will award up to three cooperative agreements in support of the CCI Program: one award will be made under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation and up to two additional awards may be awarded under Option B: CCI Program Implementation Only. The proposal should clearly state under which option the applicant organization intends to apply. Applicant organizations should demonstrate flexibility to work with other organizations and the ability to increase or decrease hosting capacity to accommodate final funding levels.

#### **Guidelines for All Applicants**

##### **Participants**

The Community College Initiative (CCI) Program emphasizes the selection of qualified men and women who can have a positive impact in their underserved and underrepresented communities. The Bureau is targeting scholarship participants who represent the diversity of their home countries, including underserved, underrepresented individuals (particularly women) generally in their mid-twenties, many of whom will have some previous work experience. Individuals living in the United States are not eligible and preference is given to those without significant U.S. or other overseas study experience. The Fulbright Commissions and/or Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies in sending countries are responsible for the recruitment and nomination of candidates for this program.

### **Host Campus Institutional Capacity**

The selection of appropriate U.S. host colleges that can create a customized CCI Program experience is essential to the success of the CCI Program. Host campuses should be identified in the proposal, and letters of project commitment from the senior administrative official authorized to make such a commitment should be included for each college.

The proposal should describe the accredited U.S. community colleges where multinational field-of-study clusters of CCI students will be placed. Each host college should be selected on the basis of excellence in the field(s) of study in which the college is hosting participants, geographic diversity, ability to leverage institutional and private sector funding, resources to support international students, proven success hosting international students, and availability of appropriate, safe, and cost-effective housing. Host colleges should be committed to assist with housing the participants in the program, preferably in dormitories or apartments.

Host colleges will be expected to have experience in conducting international education programs, including hosting international students and visitors. The proposal should describe strategies to incorporate each cohort of students into all aspects of campus and community life. Proposals should describe the following types of campus resources or community partnerships that will support the CCI participants: academic advising, study centers, language and writing labs, health or counseling services, internship or career services, student organizations, international student services, and housing services.

Proposals should also describe how the proposed CCI Program at each host campus would contribute to meeting the CCI Program objectives for community colleges and connect CCI participants with efforts to enhance study abroad awareness and participation in international study among U.S. students.

Each host college should assign a campus adviser who is responsible for guiding participants in individual development plans and serving as a central resource regarding participant scholarships, the J-1 visa program, and aspects of academic and cultural adjustment. The adviser also serves as a link between the participants and the consortium.

It is strongly encouraged that the organizations cooperating with the Bureau on this program will work to obtain financial aid, scholarships, tuition awards, in-state tuition, and private sector funding, including support from foundations, businesses or civic groups, as cost-sharing for the program.

### **Pre-arrival Information**

Competitive proposals will describe how host campus leaders will engage remotely with participants prior to arrival at host campuses. Applicants should provide a sample host campus pre-arrival information packet with your proposal. Information should be complete and detailed. Key points concerning how to prepare for travel and participation, academic requirements, academic departments and available courses, housing, personal budgeting considerations, and other critical issues should be included in the material. The material should be designed to serve as a useful post-arrival reference as well. Creative uses of technology to advise participants about pre-arrival preparation and engage with them to set expectations are encouraged (Google Hangouts, Skype interviews).

### **Arrival Orientations and English-Language Training**

Applicants should describe plans for in-depth arrival orientation and pre-academic programs of approximately two to four weeks and 40 hours each week that facilitate transition to U.S. culture, introduce participants to their local communities, familiarize program participants with U.S. campus facilities and services, strengthen oral and written communication skills in English, and foster skills development to facilitate success in the program (i.e., study skills, time management, team building, use of technology, budgeting, and healthy living). The pre-academic program should also familiarize participants with expectations for behavior and program participation, the rules and regulations of the host colleges, and the laws of the U.S. communities with a focus on navigating topics such as gender (i.e., personal relationships, sexual harassment) and diversity within the U.S. context. The pre-academic program should also provide CCI students with a basic understanding of current issues in U.S. society and develop an understanding of U.S. social values in order to help them to build personal and professional networks and to foster richer intercultural exchange and integration with their host communities. Proposals should provide a rationale for the length of time applicants propose for their orientation and arrival program.

English language program components should be customized to meet the diverse needs of individual participants whose skills are below the minimum requirement for enrollment in credit-bearing courses at the U.S. host institutions as well as participants who meet the minimum language requirement but who would benefit from instruction in academic writing. Multiple levels of intensive English language courses, from beginning to advanced, should be made available as part of the orientation and preparation program, preferably at the colleges that the students will attend.

Fulbright Commissions and posts will administer a standardized English language placement test as part of the recruitment process. The results of this test will be used to determine eligibility and to identify those candidates who are most in need of intensive English upon arrival. It is assumed that some participants will require intensive English-language instruction that will extend beyond the pre-academic program into their academic year programs. Pre-arrival distance learning and pre-departure in-country English training programming is encouraged. Proposals should describe creative ideas to connect participants with State Department English language resources in-country and on the web (<http://www.americanenglish.state.gov/>) and campus-based resources to facilitate language learning prior to arrival. Language learning could include general communication or writing skills or industry-specific terms in proposed fields of study.

Participants will take an English language proficiency test upon arrival in the U.S. to determine course eligibility and appropriate course registration. These test scores will also be used as a baseline from which to measure change in English proficiency as a result of participating in the CCI Program. Proposals should describe plans to administer follow-on testing at the end of the CCI Program to measure and report on change in language proficiency. Proposals should describe English as a Second Language programs and services that host colleges are prepared to provide during the academic year to students needing additional language work. Proposals should explain how the orientation and preparation program will improve participants' language skills and prepare them to take classes in their fields of study.

## **Program Activities**

Proposals should describe plans for a program with these major components: U.S. orientation; program with academic, professional, and personal development components; evaluation; and alumni tracking and engagement. Proposals should describe an academic program in the selected fields of study with both theoretical and practical elements. Proposed professional and personal enrichment programming should foster leadership development and mutual understanding through community engagement and learning about U.S. society and culture.

The recipient will place students in fields that may include agriculture, applied engineering, business management and administration, early childhood education, information technology, media, public safety, and tourism and hospitality management in programs lasting one academic year.

The proposal should indicate the ability to design and offer comprehensive one-year programs in the selected fields of study that showcase noteworthy host campus academic programs; partnerships with local institutions related to the field of study that enrich on-campus learning; and co-curricular, sector-based programming that develops a social, political, economic, and cultural understanding of the local, national, and international contexts of each field. The program should also expose participants to local leaders, experts, or practitioners in the field. Each host campus should plan to offer comprehensive year-long programs in two or three fields of study. All fields of study should be represented across the consortium.

The proposal should describe the comprehensive program offerings in each field at each proposed host campus. These program offering summaries would guide the application and placement phases of the program. Candidates would apply to participate and be placed in these specific, targeted, year-long programs.

To support the mutual understanding goal of the exchange, the Bureau is interested in opportunities for academic and enrichment experiences related to U.S. institutions, society, and culture, including opportunities for students to better understand and appreciate diversity in the United States. Activities should include participant presentations (for example, to college classes, local schools and community groups) and matching students with a local friendship family. The Bureau welcomes creative ideas for introducing participants to American institutions; opportunities may include discussion groups on U.S. social, political, educational, or cultural issues, visits to political campaign offices and polling places, attendance at school board or city council meetings, visits to American religious institutions, and civic-related volunteer work. Participant attendance at museums, concerts, plays, and other cultural events featuring American content should be encouraged and facilitated whenever possible. Organizations cooperating with the Bureau on this program will be expected to keep the Bureau informed of the progress of these academic and enrichment experiences as well as other aspects of the program throughout the year.

**Practical Education/Professional Internship**

Proposals should describe how program participants will be supported in substantive practical education placements (i.e., internship, cooperative education) directly related to their fields of study and/or career plans. This component is intended to provide participants with practical experience in their field of study and help them develop professional skills. Descriptions should include how these practical educational placements are supported as part of (or independent from) existing campus services for all students. Host colleges should guide the participants in their search, developing the skills to apply and interview for positions, approve placements, monitor participants, assess learning, guide reflection on the relevance of learning to participants' home country contexts, and evaluate this component of the program. Participating colleges may offer this opportunity for academic credit.

**Service Learning**

Proposals should describe how the program will provide program participants with opportunities to volunteer on a project or program within a framework of service learning to introduce participants to volunteerism as an American cultural value and to foster the engagement of participants with their local communities. Service learning could also strengthen field of study programming and practical education components.

**Participant Monitoring**

Proposals must discuss how the participants' progress in achieving program goals and objectives will be monitored at their U.S. host institutions (e.g. monitoring tools, surveys, interviews, work plans). The proposal should describe individualized advising and support services host colleges will provide to the participants. The proposal should cite the intended frequency of communication with participants and outline performance goals or benchmarks for each semester. The proposal should also discuss evaluation of participants' successes and the monitoring of their problems during the program, as well as mechanisms to address and improve the quality of participant activities. Staff assigned to the project should be knowledgeable about best practices in the field of international education and demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills, sensitivity, and a flexible approach that is responsive to the individual participants and their circumstances. Proposals should also outline how the consortium and host colleges will handle creating and enforcing the terms of the program to facilitate participant success.

**Participant Responsibilities**

Participants will be sponsored under a SEVIS program number for which the Bureau will provide the principal responsible officer. In accordance with J-1 Visa regulations, participants will be expected to maintain the equivalent of a full-time course of study. They must comply with the academic and other requirements of the program and host institution. Participants must return immediately to their home countries upon completion of the academic program. Participants may be removed from the program for academic non-performance, behavioral misconduct, or inability to fulfill the program goals. The final decision to remove a participant will be made by the Bureau after consultation with the cooperating organization and the host college. Each participant is required to read and sign terms and conditions of the scholarship which must be approved by the Bureau.

### **Alumni Tracking and Follow-On Activities**

Alumni activities are an important part of the Bureau's academic exchange programs. Alumni programming in the form of virtual programming, blogs, newsletters, and use of social media provides critical program follow-on and maximizes and extends the benefit of the participants' program in the United States. Please outline how host consortia or colleges will creatively organize and support alumni activities. Alumni tracking is critical for the evaluation of the program and for the implementation of worthwhile follow-on programs. Proposals should describe how long-term links with CCI alumni will be fostered and maintained. Proposals should detail how database systems will be maintained and updated beyond the duration of the Cooperative Agreement and how often updated database information will be provided to the Bureau. Applicants should explain how these efforts will be coordinated with the Bureau, the Fulbright Commissions and the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassies.

All statistical information gathered and compiled by the cooperating organizations on the program participants and alumni should be transferable to the database maintained at the Bureau. Proposals should describe how host organizations intend to store data on participants for transfer to the Bureau's system.

### **J-Visa and Tax Requirements**

Host organizations will be responsible for designating one or more Alternate Responsible Officers under a SEVIS program number under the Bureau's responsibility to issue DS-2019 forms to participants in this program. Visa support will not be offered for dependents. The lead applicant institution will conduct the administrative work for the issuance of DS-2019 forms. In addition, cooperating organizations must ensure that administration of these scholarships is in compliance with reporting and withholding regulations for Federal, state, and local taxes as applicable.

### **Health Benefits**

Administrators of the CCI Program will enroll participants in the Bureau's ASPE health benefits program or alternative plan that meets J-1 visa requirements and is approved by ECA and provide assistance to participants regarding medical coverage issues. The Bureau health coverage program provides limited accident and sickness, repatriation of remains, and medical evacuation coverage for participants in the exchange phases of the program. The Bureau will provide the necessary instructions and forms for the participants to complete prior to travel. Host institutions will assist in presenting claims to the health benefits program administrator and consult with the Bureau on participant health issues that may affect successful program completion. Please note that the Bureau's health benefits program is described in the PSI.

### **Additional Guidelines for Applicants under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation**

#### **Recruitment**

Fulbright Commissions and/or Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies in sending countries are responsible for the recruitment and nomination of candidates for this program. Applicants applying under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation would work with ECA to finalize application materials for recruitment and respond to questions from Fulbright Commissions and/or Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies about academic programs for which they are recruiting.

### **Application Review and Placement**

The proposal should describe in detail a system for receiving and reviewing applications and clearing, selecting, and placing candidates nominated by U.S. Embassies and Fulbright Commissions abroad. Final approval of principal and alternate slates of candidates and placements resides with ECA. It is important that the proposal narrative clearly state the applicant's commitment to consult closely with the ECA Program Office in the placement of students and communication about placements with the Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassies or Fulbright Commissions in the partner countries. No invitations to participate may be issued without Department of State clearance.

The proposal should also clearly state a commitment to work with other organizations in the placement of students if more than one award is made.

### **Pre-arrival Information and Advising**

Proposals under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation should describe plans to oversee coordination of pre-arrival activities such as remote participation in home country pre-departure orientations, dissemination of print materials, host campus communication with program participants, and CCI-wide branding efforts.

### **CCI-wide Event**

Proposals under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation should describe plans to implement at least one CCI-wide program event in or near Washington, D.C. of approximately three-days in duration that facilitates participant personal and professional development and helps participants to maximize their CCI experiences. This event may be at the mid-point of the academic year or at the conclusion of the academic year.

Proposals should include a description of the overall concept of the program, a rationale for the duration and timing of the event, and plans for coordinating logistics and implementing the program. The proposal should demonstrate a commitment to work closely with ECA to determine the theme for the event and to coordinate opportunities for ECA's participation and engagement with CCI participants during this program.

### **CCI-wide Alumni Engagement**

Consortia and member campuses awarded under Option A or Option B should demonstrate a commitment to tracking and maintaining updated lists of alumni and facilitating follow-up activities. Proposals under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation should also demonstrate a commitment to facilitate CCI-wide alumni engagement and propose activities that would amplify campus efforts and strengthen both the CCI Program brand and the CCI alumni network. Proposals under Option A should describe how program leaders would coordinate host campuses or consortia sharing individual reporting and engagement activities across the diverse stakeholders to facilitate CCI-wide alumni engagement initiatives.

### **CCI-wide Branding**

Proposals under Option A: CCI Program-wide Administration and Implementation should explain plans to promote CCI-wide branding and administer CCI websites and social media properties cooperatively with ECA and in compliance with ECA Communication Guidelines.

## 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 succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

**NOTE:** Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

### **Online Forms**

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, “Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs”
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

### **Program Narrative**

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
  - a. Number and description of participants
  - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
  - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
  - d. Fields covered
  - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

### 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. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities ( selection and placement, orientation and welcome, professional development (academic component, internships, service learning), cultural program (sharing culture, friendship families), language learning, participant advising and monitoring, and CCI-wide activities as applicable)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

### **Additional Information to be Submitted**

- Detailed Budget
- Calendar of activities/itinerary
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs (resumes of all staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
- First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

### Detailed Budget Guidelines

We anticipate awarding a total of approximately \$5,200,000, pending the availability of funds, for program and administrative costs for the base program year. The Bureau anticipates that a minimum award available under Option B will be approximately \$1,400,000. The proposal should include comprehensive line item budgets for program and administrative costs for the base program year. In addition, applicants must submit a comprehensive budget narrative demonstrating how cost estimates were derived. The budget format should break out costs on a program-year basis. Sample budget format may be found in the PSI document. The number of participants that the institution proposes to sponsor should be clearly stated. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with funding availability and the needs of the program.

A clear and cogent budget narrative must accompany the budget to explain and justify each line item. Please refer to the NOFO, POGI, and PSI for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions. In addition, the budget notes or narrative should indicate how the organization will monitor and track expenditures throughout the duration of the Cooperative Agreement to avoid under- or over-expenditure.

In addition to the comprehensive line item budget and the budget narrative, proposals should include a summary chart that provides the following information: total program

costs, a per participant cost, total administrative costs, a per participant administrative cost, total cost share contribution, and a per participant cost share contribution.

The proposal should also demonstrate long-range planning that accounts for possible non-competitive continuation years. The proposal should include an abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two non-competitive continuation years). This summary budget should reflect the anticipated funding level of \$5,200,000 for each year (base year plus two non-competitive continuations), pending the availability of funds.

As with other exchange programs, the Bureau is committed to containment of costs consistent with overall program objectives and sound management. The total administrative costs funded by the Bureau must be reasonable and appropriate.

Cooperative Agreement funded expenditures may include, but are not limited to, the categories below.

#### PROGRAM EXPENSES

- Round-trip travel domestic and international travel for participants from home city to the U.S., coach class (via American carrier and following “Fly America” regulations);
- Tuition and community college fees;
- Maintenance allowances (estimate and explain an appropriate stipend level). Maintenance allowances should be sufficient to enable participants to meet the costs of lodging, food, clothing, and incidental purchases throughout the period of the Cooperative Agreement in the locations where the participants will be residing.
- Educational materials including books, scientific calculators, and other professional equipment necessary for study in the participant’s field of interest (estimate and explain an appropriate stipend level);
- Costs for practical education and service learning;
- Arrival orientation materials and expenses;
- Costs for a minimum of one consortium-wide event (Applicants under Option A only);
- Return travel allowance no less than USD 100 and not to exceed USD 200.
- Advising and monitoring of students;
- Travel and per diem for senior staff members of cooperating organization to monitor and evaluate programs at host campuses;
- Costs of academic and cultural support and enrichment activities;
- Costs for disability accommodations;
- Costs for alumni activities;
- Evaluation;
- Withholding of taxes as necessary;
- Costs associated with registering participants in SEVIS.

### ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

- Staff salaries and benefits (each staff member and his/her position must be listed separately.) Please also note the percentage of his/her total time spent on the program;
- Communication costs (e.g. fax, telephone, postage, communication equipment, etc.);
- Office supplies;
- Printing and duplication costs:
- Administration of tax withholding and reporting as required by Federal, State, and local authorities and in accordance with relevant tax treaties;
- OMB Circular 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F Audit Requirements fees;
- Other direct costs;
- Printing and duplication costs; and
- Indirect costs.

**Please note:** 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](http://USASpending.gov) website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

### **APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

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. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. 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:

The submission will be reviewed with the following review criteria in mind:

- 1. Quality of the program idea and program planning:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission as well as the objectives of the Community College Initiative Program. Proposals should demonstrate an understanding of issues faced by countries in the developing world as related to the program goals. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity for participants placed in field-related clusters. Proposals should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail. The program agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.
- 2. Ability to achieve program objectives:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the Community College Initiative Program's objectives and plan and should address each program component.
- 3. Multiplier effect/impact:** Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of individual linkages. The proposed strategy should maximize the Program's potential to maintain community college links with Program alumni.
- 4. Support of Diversity:** Proposals should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including individual grantee/participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.
- 5. Institutional Capacity and Track Record:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should describe the applicant's knowledge of, or prior experience with, international students and visitors, and the applicant's experience in educating students in the targeted subject fields, including information about certificate programs in subject fields. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs involving the hosting of international students and visitors, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants or cooperative agreements. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.
- 6. Follow-on Activities:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Activities should include tracking and maintaining updated lists of all alumni and facilitating follow-up activities with alumni, including electronic listservs.

**7. Project Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success in meeting program objectives, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

**8. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing:** The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The applicant should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

### **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 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 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 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20547

### **APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

**The NOFO 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 LaRita Hagar, HagarL@state.gov, 202-632-9458, or Emily Spencer, SpencerEW@state.gov, 202-632-6329, Office of Global Educational Programs (ECA/A/S/U), SA-5, 4th floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0504.