

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2015 English Access Microscholarship Program

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAALW-15-003

Office of English Language Programs **Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of English Language Programs (ECA/A/L), Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs for the FY 2015 English Access Microscholarship 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

The English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) provides a foundation of English language skills to bright, economically disadvantaged 13- to 20-year-olds worldwide through after-school classes and intensive sessions in their countries. Access programs expose students to U.S. culture and democratic values, improve the students' potential to participate successfully in the socio-economic development of their countries, and increase their chances of competing for and participating in future U.S. exchange and study programs. The program will also support programming for alumni, teachers, directors, administrators and ministry officials that can be conducted in-country, in the region or in the U.S. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Office of English Language Programs (ECA/A/L), based on input from U.S. embassies' Public Affairs Sections (PAS), selects the schools or other in-country educational service providers that conduct the classes, as well as the participants who receive the scholarships. Because of the program's multiregional scope, the method of instruction, curriculum, textbooks, tests, hours of instruction, cost per participant, etc., vary considerably from country to country, and sometimes within a single country. This open competition includes the expansion of programming to other relevant audiences and age ranges designated by ECA; training of teachers and in-country educational service providers by a corps of Teaching English as a Foreign Language experts whose duties include but are not limited to developing curriculum, conducting training and evaluating programs; an information sharing platform to exchange best practices; and the creation and maintenance of a financial management system.

Under the close supervision of ECA/A/L, the Cooperative Agreement recipient will disburse funds to local providers in countries around the world and will conduct at least two workshops in the United States for selected teachers, directors, administrators, and ministry officials.

Under the auspices of the Cooperative Agreement, the Bureau's Office of English Language Programs is substantially involved in the Access Program, above and beyond routine monitoring. The Bureau provides overall program and policy design and direction with substantial involvement at all levels of the program, while U.S. embassies are responsible for working with selected in-country educational service providers on the in-

country aspects of the program.

Specific responsibilities for the recipient organization for this particular project include but are not limited to the following:

a) Fiscal Management:

- i) The recipient organization will disburse funds to in-country educational service providers worldwide. ECA/A/L will provide written instructions to the recipient organization identifying the in-country educational service providers as well as the amount of funds to be disbursed to each. The recipient will only disburse funds based on written instructions from ECA/A/L. Ideally, the recipient will disburse funds quarterly to each partner organization (some embassies work with more than one partner organization), but different disbursements may be authorized by ECA/A/L. The award recipient will work with ECA/A/L, U.S. embassies, and in-country educational service providers to determine the most efficient means of disbursement.
- ii) In response to Executive Order 13224 which requires U.S. organizations to verify that they are not providing and will not knowingly provide material support or resources to any individual or entity that appears on the Master List of Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons maintained by the U.S. Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) or has been designated by the United States Sanctions Committee (UNSC) established under UNSC Resolution 1267 for individuals or entities that are linked to terrorists or terrorist organizations, the recipient organization must collect and vet the in-country educational service providers' information and the names of its senior staff against these, and similar, lists.
- iii) The recipient will collect, review and seek revisions to proposals from U.S. embassies to administer the Access program.
- iv) The recipient will draft and finalize official documentation, e.g. sub awards, before disbursing funds.
- v) The recipient will collect, review, and seek revisions to written and financial reports from the in-country educational service providers on a schedule agreed to by the U.S. embassies and their providers.
- vi) The recipient organization must track the entire process, e.g. proposals, official documents, reports and the disbursements in addition to sending reminders about when reports are due and overdue.
- vii) The recipient organization should refer to the final federal assistance award agreement for report submission requirements.
- viii) The recipient organization will contract with Educational Consultants who will work closely with the Office of English Language Programs on resource development and programmatic activities. These consultants will include a corps of Teaching English as a Foreign Language experts who will conduct training for teachers and providers, develop curricula for training and evaluate programs on an as needed basis.
- ix) The recipient will support professional development opportunities for teachers, directors, administrators and ministry officials that can be conducted in-country, in the region, or in the U.S. The training will be requested by U.S. embassies and approved by ECA/A/L.
- x) The recipient will support programming for Access alumni, which can be conducted in-country, in the region, or in the U.S.
- xi) The recipient will support programming for other relevant audiences, program lengths and age ranges as designated by ECA.

b) U.S. Exchange Component (workshops):

Workshops may be conducted by the recipient or subawarded through an open competition. Subrecipients may include non-profits, non-governmental organizations, and accredited colleges and universities for the workshops. The recipient organization will plan, conduct, and fund at least two workshops in the United States for selected ministry officials, administrators, directors and teachers.

- i) At least two workshops (approximately two weeks or more in duration) in the United States (U.S.) will be conducted for approximately 25 teachers, directors, administrators and ministry officials in each workshop, chosen by ECA/A/L from nominations by embassies. The workshops will focus on providing participants the most current teaching methods, exposure to relevant educational technology, education policy, and education administration in addition to firsthand exposure to the United States. The latter may include an academic component on U.S. history, society and culture and attendance at conferences related to the English as a Second Language (ESL)/English as a Foreign Language (EFL) field.
- ii) The recipient will assume overall logistical responsibility for arrangements during participants' time in the United States, which includes but is not limited to:
 - (1) Organize and facilitate the exchange component of the program.
 - (2) Prepare DS-2019 forms, budgeting for all necessary visa application and processing fees, and communicating clearly the guidelines and information regarding visa regulations and the participants' return to their home countries after the completion of the program. The program must comply with J-Visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information;
 - (3) Prepare and distribute necessary pre-departure orientation materials for use by posts in a pre-departure orientation (could be accomplished electronically);
 - (4) Make in-bound and out-bound (round-trip) international travel arrangements to and from participants' home cities in compliance with the Fly America Act ;
 - (5) Arrange U.S. domestic and local travel for participants;
 - (6) Prepare and facilitate an orientation upon participants' arrival that includes a basic introduction to American life and customs, and how these customs might differ from those of their home country;
 - (7) Enroll participants in the State Department's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) or other health benefit plan as required by the Bureau, budget for insurances costs, and provide participants with medical coverage and enrollment information;
 - (8) Assume overall responsibility for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for teachers;
 - (9) Maintain contact lists for participants and workshop alumni;
 - (10) Provide qualitative and quantitative results about the programs, including their participation in the academic and community activities;
 - (11) Administer all financial and logistical aspects of the program, comply with reporting requirements;
 - (12) Monitor and evaluate the program through pre- and post-surveys in addition to questionnaires and evaluations.

c) Seek Guidance and Clearance from ECA/A/L:

- i) The recipient will request guidance and clearance on all aspects of the program, which includes but is not limited to:
 - (1) Personnel: The recipient will seek approval of critical personnel changes from ECA/A/L.
 - a. Educational Materials: At ECA/A/L's request and guidance, the recipient will seek opportunities to collaborate with other ECA programs and materials. This may include printing and shipping of ECA/A/L-produced educational materials.
 - (2) Digital learning resources: As requested by ECA/A/L, the recipient will conduct an open competition to develop MOOCs and/or other digital learning resources for English language learning; coordinate and support the deployment of these resources overseas, including the purchase and shipment of equipment, as necessary; and manage professional development activities to allow educators to use these products most effectively abroad.
 - (3) Shipment of books and materials: The recipient will purchase and ship books and materials to the providers in the field as required. ECA/A/L will authorize the purchases and shipments as necessary based on program requirements.
 - (4) Publications: The recipient will draft and clear all public advertisements, newsletters, and websites with ECA/A/L before development and dissemination to ensure proper identification with the U.S. Department of State.
 - (5) Educational Consultants: The recipient will contract with Educational Consultants who will work closely with ECA/A/L on resource development and programmatic activities. The recipient, in collaboration with ECA/A/L, will also contract with a corps of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) experts whose duties will include, but are not limited to, developing curriculum, conducting training and evaluating programs on an as needed basis
 - (6) Communication Strategy: The recipient will develop and implement a strategic communication plan in close coordination with ECA/A/L.
 - (7) Additional Programming: The recipient will support in-country, regional or U.S. programming for alumni, teachers, directors, administrators and ministry officials as requested by ECA/A/L. The recipient will support programming for other relevant audiences and age ranges as designated by ECA/A/L.
 - (8) Data Management: The recipient will create and maintain a financial management system related to this cooperative agreement.
 - (9) Information Sharing Platform: The recipient will create and maintain at least one information sharing platform for best practices to be shared with students, teachers, administrators, and other relevant audiences designated by ECA.

ECA/A/L activities and responsibilities for the Access Program include but are not limited to:

- 1) Allocate program funds by region and country.
- 2) Select, based on input from U.S. embassies, Regional English Language Officers, and the State Department's Regional Bureaus, the in-country educational service providers (schools, NGOs, etc.) that will provide English language instruction, cultural enhancement, and leadership development, to the Access students, programming for alumni or professional development opportunities for teachers,

directors, administrators and ministry officials;

- 3) Select, based on input from U.S. embassies and the in-country educational service providers, the students who receive the scholarships;
- 4) Approve proposals, official documentation, and reports for all programming under this cooperative agreement;
- 5) Determine, based on input from U.S. embassies, the amount and timing of financial disbursements by the recipient to the in-country educational service providers;
- 6) Serve, except for routine disbursements and other transactions approved in advance by ECA/A/L, as the recipient's primary point of contact and intermediary with the in-country educational service providers involved in the Access Program. Similarly, ECA/A/L serves as the primary point of contact and intermediary with the U.S. embassies, students, teachers, directors, and administrators involved in the Access Program;
- 7) Select, based on input from U.S. embassies and the in-country educational service providers, the directors, teachers, administrators and ministry officials who participate in U.S.-based workshops;
- 8) Direct all phases of planning and development, and approve design, of the in-country and U.S.-based workshops and alumni activities;
- 9) Approve all major personnel changes in the recipient organization that are directly involved with this cooperative agreement.

In this Cooperative Agreement, U.S. embassies are also substantially involved in the program activities, above and beyond routine monitoring. U.S. embassies' activities and responsibilities for the Access Program include but are not limited to:

- 1) In collaboration with the relevant Regional English Language Officer, select the in-country educational service provider(s) (school(s), NGO(s), etc.) that will provide 1) English language instruction, cultural enhancement, and leadership development to the Access scholarship students; 2) programming for alumni and/or 3) professional development opportunities for teachers, directors, administrators and ministry officials;
- 2) Determine the level of funding for each in-country educational service provider;
- 3) Recommend approval of proposals, official documentation, and reports for all programming under this cooperative agreement;
- 4) Collaborate with in-country educational service providers on the participant selection process and approve the selection of all participants;
- 5) Collaborate with in-country educational service providers in developing appropriate materials, curricula, enhancement activities and community service projects;
- 6) Participate in enhancement activities for Access students, when possible;
- 7) Propose participants for the workshops to ECA/A/L;
- 8) Conduct a site visit to each in-country educational service provider at least once a year;
- 9) Conduct regular review of the in-country educational service providers' programs and accounts;
- 10) Provide certificates signed by the U.S. Ambassador to the students at the beginning and end of the Access Program;
- 11) Collect, review and submit U.S. embassy approved written and financial reports as well as alumni data from the in-country educational service providers.

In this Cooperative Agreement, in-country educational service providers are also substantially involved in the program activities. They may or may not choose to work with additional in-country educational service providers to meet programmatic and administrative needs. In-country educational service providers' activities and responsibilities for the Access Program include but are not limited to:

- 1) Plan and prepare programming closely with the U.S. embassy, Regional English Language Officer and ECA/A/L;
- 2) Draft proposals that meet program requirements and submit for approval to the U.S. embassy, Regional English Language Officer, and ECA/A/L;
- 3) Advertise and recruit participants for the student scholarships, alumni programming, and professional development opportunities for teachers, directors, administrators and ministry officials;
- 4) Collaborate with the U.S. Embassy during the participant selection process;
- 5) Implement the program according to the verbal and written guidelines from the U.S. Embassy, approved proposals and signed official documents;
- 6) Nominate participants for the workshops and other professional development opportunities through the U.S. Embassy to ECA/A/L;
- 7) Regularly monitor and evaluate to ensure that the program is implemented in accordance with the relevant official documents as well as to highlight best practices and address challenges quickly;
- 8) Send invitations to the U.S. Embassy about special events, opportunities to visit and speak;
- 9) Provide certificates signed by the U.S. Ambassador to the students at the beginning and end of the Access Program;
- 10) Submit timely written and financial reports as well as alumni data according to the schedule outlined in official documents and when requested by the U.S. Embassy.

II.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

The Bureau anticipates providing Access scholarships to approximately 15,000 students worldwide with FY 2015 funding. ECA will identify the countries that are participating in the program and inform the recipient.

The plan for at least two U.S. workshops for select directors, teachers, administrators, and ministry officials should be submitted as part of the proposal. The workshop may be held at any time during the calendar year. The recipient will provide sufficient funds to participants identified by ECA/A/L to pay for the round trip tickets to the United States, as well as domestic travel, per diem and lodging in the United States during the workshops.

The recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019s, where applicable.

III.

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:

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 no more than 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. Name of Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Management: Using the responsibilities above under Statement of Work, demonstrate a plan for implementation of the program.

5. Organizational capacity: Describe staff needed to manage the program. Provide a resume for each program staff person, and identify each person's roles and responsibilities.
6. Monitoring and Program Support: Describe how the applicant organization will maintain on-going communication with the Bureau, U.S. embassies, and other organizations during all phases of the Cooperative Agreement.
7. Program Evaluation
8. Follow-on: As outlined in the PSI, "ECA's General Policy Guidance on Alumni Outreach/Follow-on and Engagement," the proposal must include a plan outlining alumni outreach/follow-on and engagement.
9. Project Management: Briefly describe how key staff will manage the various aspects of this program.
10. Work Plan/Time Frame

Additional Information to be Submitted

- Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative

The Bureau's goal is to maximize the funding available for programming. Costs associated with planning, conducting, and funding at least two workshops in the United States for approximately two weeks or more in duration for approximately 50 select teachers, directors, administrators, and ministry officials. Costs should at minimum include: the participants' international and domestic transportation, U.S. per diem, space rental, workshop materials, participants' pre-departure costs such as visa costs, necessary travel to obtain visas, etc.

Administrative Costs:

1. 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 this program.
 2. Communication costs (e.g. fax, telephone, postage, communication equipment, etc.)
 3. Office supplies
 4. Printing and duplication costs
 5. A-133 Audit fees
 6. Other direct costs; and
 7. Indirect costs.
- Calendar of activities/itinerary
 - Letters of endorsement
 - Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
 - First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

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 award 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 award 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.

APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

IV. REVIEW PROCESS

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. 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:

1. *Quality of the program idea and program planning:* Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the Program overview and guidelines described above.
2. *Ability to achieve program objectives and institutional capacity:* Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals.
3. *Institution's Record/Ability:* Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of

successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by the Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

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. *Project Evaluation*: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, 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.
6. *Follow-on Activities*: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) which insures that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.
7. *Cost-effectiveness and Cost-Sharing*: 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. Proposals 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 the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The award recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

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

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

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, call Melissa Fernandez at (202) 632-9276, ECA/A/L; Fax: (202) 632-6490; email: accessprogram@state.gov.