

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2017 Fulbright Specialist Program

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-17-002

Office of Academic Exchange Programs (ECA/A/E)

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Academic Exchange Programs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at the Department of State (ECA/A/E) for the FY 2017 Fulbright Specialist 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

Pending the availability of funds, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State will enter into a Cooperative Agreement with an accredited post-secondary U.S. institution (community college, liberal arts college, public or private university), consortia of organizations, or public or private U.S. non-profit organization meeting the provisions of a 501 (c) 3 to administer the FY 2017 Fulbright Specialist Program. The Fulbright Specialist Program annually provides approximately 425 awards to U.S. academics and professionals (such as attorneys, business professionals, artists, and journalists) whose qualifications and experience are at the faculty or full professional level to build capacity and promote linkages between their home and overseas host institutions by engaging in short-term, collaborative projects abroad. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase funding amounts and participant numbers pending the availability of funds, the needs of the program, and U.S. Department of State priorities.

The Fulbright Specialist Program is a component of the Fulbright Program. Responsibilities for the Fulbright Specialist Program include:

A.1 Recruitment

The award recipient will prepare a creative and comprehensive plan for recruitment for all Fulbright Specialist grant opportunities. A successful recruitment plan will address specific strategies for attracting a pool of Specialist applicants that represent high academic and professional quality and relevance, and all aspects of diversity as discussed in ECA's Diversity Statement, including: institutional, geographic, racial, gender, ethnic, age, religious, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity. ECA will approve all elements of the recruitment plan before implementation.

The recruitment plan should make clear the primary purpose and audience for key messages, making sure to differentiate between recruitment and general program promotion.

Particular attention should be paid to developing new and innovative approaches to recruitment of U.S. academics and professionals to be matched to projects in countries or regions traditionally underrepresented in academic exchanges or for which recruitment of U.S. scholars and professionals is challenging. Emphasis should be placed on countries in regions outside of Western Europe, and Australia and New Zealand, especially those that are of importance to U.S. foreign policy interests. Attention should also be paid to recruiting Specialist candidates to be matched to rapid-response projects, which respond to high priority and fast-breaking events, and candidates whose disciplines reflect U.S. foreign policy priorities.

The recruitment plan must include:

- Proposed recruitment materials and activities, including, but not limited to, print and online content, social media, videos, conferences and campus visits, and other in-person outreach events;
- A plan to reach applicants (such as attorneys, business professionals, scientists, artists and journalists) outside of academia, particularly in disciplines of importance to U.S. foreign policy interests;
- A proposal for strategic approaches to attracting faculty and administrators from community colleges;
- A strategy for utilizing virtual recruitment tools, including videoconferences, and a roadmap for implementing a series of high-quality general information and program-specific webinars;
- Detailed methods for recruiting applicants from specific disciplines and ideas for coordinating with Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies on outreach to U.S. scholars and professionals;
- A targeted approach for including Fulbright Specialist Program alumni in outreach and recruitment initiatives and activities to attract new applicants;
- A strategy for, and innovative uses of, a Fulbright Specialist Program website, as well as new technologies, especially social media platforms, for both specific and general recruitment;
- Ideas for potential partnerships with academic, non-profit, and private sector organizations to help reach new potential applicants for the Fulbright Specialist Program;
- Ideas for proposed staff travel to campuses, workshops, and conferences;
- A plan for print and electronic recruitment and outreach publications (flyers, one-pagers, brochures, etc.) to recruit candidates for Specialist project proposals submitted by overseas host institutions, embassies, and Fulbright commissions;
- A plan for major recruitment advertisements (both print and electronic);
- Proposed materials to be provided to participants; and all other materials and efforts involving publicity, recruitment, and outreach.

In addition to providing a recruitment plan, the award recipient will:

- Plan for and solicit ECA participation in all its Washington, D.C. area activities, as well as other major events.
- Publish a public, online directory of Fulbright Specialists receiving 2016-2017 grants by January 31, 2017. ECA uses the data in the directory as a vehicle for presenting and explaining the program in the private and public sectors, including through ECA presentations to the U.S. Congress, and demonstrating local impact. The Fulbright Specialist Directory should include the name of each participant, home state, country of assignment, field (project topic), and U.S. and host institutions (as appropriate).
- Issue a request to U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions to review and update priority disciplines to inform recruitment activities.

- Develop and keep updated outreach and recruitment mailing and email lists. Recruitment materials should include descriptions of the experiences and accomplishments of individual program participants, host campuses, impact on the host community and/or country, and alignment with program goals. The individual stories selected should align with Department of State public diplomacy goals, and should show the impact (including “multiplier effect” to broader sectors) of the program.
- Propose appropriate staffing levels to effectively implement all proposed activities and initiatives in its recruitment plan.
- In order to present a cohesive Fulbright brand, work in coordination with administrators of the Fulbright Scholar and all Fulbright Student Programs, to provide information on the full range of Fulbright opportunities at all of its recruitment and outreach events.

A.2 Application, Screening, Selection, Project Submission, and Matching Process

The award recipient will be responsible for managing the Specialist candidate application, screening, and selection process. A key component of the Fulbright Program is maintaining an independent, merit-based review process. The award recipient will also be responsible for overseeing the online project proposal submission and process for matching Specialists on the register to projects submitted by U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions.

The award recipient should demonstrate its capacity and plans to support the following activities for application receipt, screening, selection, project submission and matching:

A.2a Application, Screening, and Selection

- In consultation with ECA, develop, maintain, and publicize an online application form for the Fulbright Specialist Program register.
- Respond to queries by phone, electronically, or in person from potential applicants to the register.
- Maintain a system that allows candidates to apply to the program entirely online (including submission of references) through the Fulbright Specialist Program website.
- Conduct special recruitment for Specialist register candidates for unique projects or in under-served fields, as needed.
- Receive and screen all applications submitted to the register and conduct a technical review of all applications received for eligibility and completeness. The award recipient will screen all applications for eligibility and suitability according to Chapter 600 of the [Fulbright Program Policies](http://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/board_policy_chapter_600.pdf) (http://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/board_policy_chapter_600.pdf), provide a checklist of criteria by which the applications were screened, and confirm that screening has taken place at the time that slates of recommended candidates are transmitted to ECA.
- Propose a peer review timeline and process, including arranging an electronic review of applications by external review committees; recruiting, selecting, and training appropriate academic and professional experts to review applications; and observing ECA and program diversity objectives. A review of applicants should occur no less frequently than every eight weeks.
- Peer review committees should be comprised of Fulbright Specialist and/or Fulbright Scholar alumni to the extent possible, and reviewers should have country or regional experience in addition to discipline expertise. ECA officers will serve as observers and resources at the panel meetings. ECA should

receive biographical information on the panel members and logistics for these committees at least two weeks before the meetings are scheduled to convene.

- Provide ECA with the results of the peer review process, including data on the number of applications and recommended candidates for the Specialist register, as requested.

A.2b Project Submission

- Establish and maintain an online Fulbright Specialist project management system to manage all aspects of the program, including submission of project requests and reports, tracking of the approval and processing of requests and grants, tracking the status and drawdown of country allocations and type of funding used, providing all stakeholders with the roster of potential participants, and provision of the capacity to run various reports and searches necessary to manage the program. The online system should allow for submission, processing, and approval of project requests within two months on a rolling deadline basis. Ensure that ECA program officers, U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions, and host institutions have access to the online system via a user ID and password.
- The online system should also host the Fulbright Specialist register. U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions must be able to access the Fulbright Specialist register, track countries' annual project allocations, develop and submit Specialist project proposals, match Fulbright register candidates to project proposals, and create final reports following project completion.
- Host institutions should also have access to the Specialist register to develop project proposals and match candidates from the Specialist register to the project through the online system. Host institutions must submit project proposals through the online system to U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions for initial review.
- The online project management system should include the following components related to the project proposals:
 - Project status: submitted, approved, denied, withdrawn/cancelled
 - ECA approval information: approval status, approving program officer, approval date, comments
 - Foreign host institution contact information
 - U.S. embassy or Fulbright commission contact information
 - ECA approval, disapproval, project cancellation, and comments
 - Project proposal description: discipline, specialization, types of activities, project description, project purpose, project impact on host institution, project potential for institutional linkages
 - Project guidelines: multiple visit project information, project dates, project length
 - Specialist applicant description: qualifications, degree, teaching experience, academic rank or professional status, foreign language requirements, audience, named or open request, justification, candidate roster status
 - Cost-share and funding model (see below): contact for all cost-share arrangements, funding notes, lodging arrangements and cost-share amount, local transportation/in-country travel arrangements and cost-share amount, meal arrangements and cost-share amount, formula to calculate total cost-share amount, cost-share provider (host or home institution, host community, U.S. embassy, Fulbright commission, etc.)
- U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions will review and edit project proposals through the web-based project management system and submit finalized project proposals electronically to ECA.
- Project Funding Models: The Fulbright Specialist Program operates three funding models for projects:

- o The traditional funding model is a cost-shared arrangement whereby ECA funds under the award are used for air travel and a daily honorarium. The in-country host (or U.S. embassy) provides cost-share for lodging arrangements, local transportation/in-country travel, meals, and sometimes additional per diem costs. Approximately 325 projects under this funding model, with an average program cost of \$7,500/specialist, should be anticipated in FY17.
- o The fully field-funded model is a cost agreement whereby ECA supports only the administrative arrangements under this award – the cost of recruitment and maintenance of the roster, as well as submission of the project proposal, and follow-on activities. The Fulbright commission or U.S. embassy writes the grant award and arranges all logistics. Approximately 50 projects under this funding model, with an average cost to ECA of \$0/specialist, should be anticipated in FY17.
- o The fully ECA-funded model is a cost agreement whereby ECA funds under the award are used to pay all costs for the project, with no, or little, cost-sharing provided by the host. This funding model is only available to a limited group of countries, where this program is traditionally underutilized. Approximately 25 projects under this funding model, with an average program cost of \$10,000/specialist, should be anticipated in FY17.

A.2c Matching

- If a host institution, U.S. embassy, or Fulbright commission does not identify a candidate from the Specialist register to match to a project proposal, the project is known as an “open project.” The award recipient will conduct recruitment or search the register for a qualified and eligible candidate.
- If a host institution, U.S. embassy, or Fulbright commission identifies a candidate on the register to match to a project proposal, the project is known as a “named project.”
- If a host institution, U.S. embassy, or Fulbright commission identifies a candidate who is not currently on the Specialist register, also a “named project,” the award recipient must contact that individual and guide them through the Specialist register application, selection, and screening process before they can be matched to the project (if approved).
- The online project management system should allow ECA and the award recipient to review and edit project proposals and the Fulbright register, and run reports on all aspects of the Specialist Program.
- The online project management system should allow Specialists, host institutions, U.S. embassies, and Fulbright commissions to complete a final report following the completion of a project. ECA, U.S. embassies, and Fulbright commissions will have access to Specialist, host institution, embassy, and commission final reports.
- Once candidates on the register have been named to a Specialist project submitted by a U.S. embassy or Fulbright commission, the award recipient must have the capacity to build an electronic transmittal module in the online project management system to electronically submit slates of Specialist candidates recommended by the peer review committees for the Fulbright Specialist Program to the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) for selection.

A.3 Post-Nomination Services

Fulbright Specialist Program applicants who are recommended through the peer review process, placed on the register, and named to a Fulbright Specialist project are considered to be nominated for further consideration by the FFSB. The Fulbright Specialist Program does not follow the cycle of Fulbright Scholar and Student programs.

Following the nomination of U.S. Fulbright Specialist candidates through the peer review process, the cooperating organization will:

- Respond to queries from applicants about Specialist grants after nomination and before being matched to a project.
- Prepare and send notification letters to applicants who are designated as non–selected Specialist register candidates.
- Prepare and send correspondence to all Fulbright Specialist candidates approved by the peer review panel and placed on the register, informing them of their status in a timely manner.
- Prepare final selection letters for FFSB signature, after a candidate on the register has been peer reviewed and is matched and selected for a project.
- Prepare and complete fact sheets and pre-departure information for Fulbright Specialists on countries where they are to be placed, to be distributed electronically or in-person as requested by ECA.
- Prepare grant documents for awards to individual Fulbright Specialists.
 - For Specialist projects that are fully-funded by Fulbright commissions or host institutions, Fulbright commissions are responsible for preparing grant documents.
- Respond to questions from Fulbright Specialists on issues related to their awards including status of placement, travel arrangements, and other pre-departure inquiries.
- Distribute individual payments and reimbursements to Specialists.
 - Specialists should receive individual grant payment in multiple payments, with the final payment provided after the Specialist submits a final report.
 - Specialists whose projects are fully funded by the host institution, U.S. embassy, or Fulbright commission will receive the honorarium from the host institution, U.S. embassy, or Fulbright commission.
 - Specialists whose projects are fully funded by ECA must receive all funding for lodging, local transportation/in-country travel, and meals prior to their departure date for the host country
- Advise participants on travel arrangements, which must meet requirements set forth by the Fly America Act. Arrangements should be made through a travel agent.
- Enroll participants in ECA’s health benefits program; advise grantees participating in ECA's health benefits program about program policies and enrollment procedures.
- Devise and develop administrative rules for project changes, to be approved by ECA, to allow for changes to start dates, travel arrangements, adjustments of project details, and other routine project changes. These routine project changes should be administered with minimal need for ECA subsequent review and re-approval.
- Communicate regularly with ECA and overseas Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies on the status of specific Specialist Program requests.
- Process participant withdrawals from the program and notify ECA; indicate availability of other candidates or recruitment of new candidates. The cooperating organization will inform U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions of any changes.
- Although the U.S. embassy and the host institution will have the lead responsibility for monitoring the grantee while on program, the award recipient should maintain at least a minimum level of monitoring by checking on the grantee via phone or virtually during the Specialist project. For projects of 14 days, this might be appropriate to do only once during the project, but should be scaled appropriately based on the length and complexity of the project.

- Assist ECA in handling medical emergencies, other serious health, including mental health, or personal issues, evacuations, and repatriation.
- Require a final report from the grantee to be submitted electronically through the online project management system.
- Require short final/evaluative reports from the sponsoring U.S. embassy, Fulbright commission and host institution, to be submitted electronically through the online project management system.

A.4 Special Projects

- **Multiple Visit Projects**
 - Multiple visit projects split the project activities into separate visits. A host institution may request a multiple visit grant provided the combined visits do not exceed the maximum grant length. Each visit will be counted as a separate project towards the country allocation.
- **Multiple Country Projects**
 - Countries in some regions are eligible to submit project proposals that include visits to two countries. Both visits must incorporate activities in a single discipline. Only one embassy or Fulbright commission will submit the project proposal. The combined length of the visits may not exceed the maximum grant length.
- **Tri-Lateral Specialist Projects**
 - ECA, U.S. embassies, and Fulbright commissions in Brazil, France, and Portugal cooperate to bring additional Fulbright Specialists to Lusophone and Francophone Sub-Saharan African countries. The project proposals for the Program must involve France, Portugal, or Brazil and the targeted Lusophone and Francophone countries. Project proposals must include a two-week stay in Brazil, France, or Portugal at the beginning of the grant; a three-week stay in the African Lusophone or Francophone country; and a one-week stay in Brazil, France, or Portugal at the end of the grant. ECA will fund all international travel and daily honoraria in Africa. Brazilian, French and Portuguese host institutions will fund the Specialists' stay in Brazil, France, Portugal and all associated cost-share. ECA and host universities will fund the Specialists' stay in Africa and all associated cost-share. ECA will determine the eligibility of African countries for this opportunity based on previous usage of the Fulbright Specialist Program, and other factors.
- **Special Initiative Specialist Projects**
 - From time to time ECA may name a special initiative wherein Specialist projects will be available above and beyond the country allocations. These will be rare and to respond to topics that meet urgent foreign policy needs.
 - The recipient must have an ability to track these projects outside of the country allocations.
- **Regional Specialist projects**
 - ASEAN Fulbright Specialist projects support and provide institutional capacity-building activities such as needs assessments, surveys, curriculum and faculty development; participation in seminars, workshop presentations and conferences; teacher training programs; and lecturing at the undergraduate and graduate level. Applicant host institutions must be located in one of the ten ASEAN member states.
 - ECA may establish other regional Specialist project models that meet foreign policy needs.

A.5 Program Planning and Reporting Management

The applicant's proposal should demonstrate how mutual understanding and long-term academic and professional connections in participating countries would be developed and strengthened through the Fulbright Specialist Program. The award recipient will:

- Maintain current participant data electronically including individual grant amount; host and/or home institution cost-share; name of U.S. embassy or Fulbright commission; and the fiscal year of funding. Required data fields for the electronic data system include, but are not limited to the following: first name; middle name; last name; gender; date of birth; country of citizenship; country of residence; participant type; field of study/research topic; home institution; host institution or affiliation; Fulbright Program category/subcategory; fiscal year of funding; award amount; home/host U.S. state; and Congressional district.
- Design participant reports and ensure that scholars complete these programmatic reports as required and they are shared with ECA.
- Provide a quarterly report on the Fulbright Specialist Program, including statistical data as well as highlights of outstanding participants. These reports may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Data on host institutions' multiple use of specialist projects;
 - Data on return visits by requested scholars;
 - Data on the origination of specialist program requests.
- Submit all required reports. (See section on “Program Reporting” under “Program Specific Guidelines” for guidance on required statistical and financial reports.)

A.6 General Program Responsibilities

The award recipient will:

- Provide ECA with an organizational staff chart and provide an updated version of the staff chart on a quarterly basis.
- Provide statistical and participant data to ECA on a regular basis for the Academic Exchanges Information System (AEIS) database and/or related data systems that maintain statistical records on participants; consult with ECA to determine the requirements of the AEIS database.
- Develop protocols for the collection, use, maintenance, and dissemination of personally identifiable information (PII), ensuring that the personal information of Fulbright Specialist applicants, candidates, and grantees is appropriately protected. Protocols should be applied to data submitted for the ECA Annual Statistical Exercise, as well as any PII being transmitted between the cooperating agency and ECA. Additionally, ECA encourages its cooperating partners to establish internal protocols, ensuring appropriate collection, use, maintenance, and dissemination of PII.
- Prepare standard report forms for use by all grantees and ensure that reports are completed and made available to ECA program staff on a timely basis. Program reports should be selectively distributed to new participants to inform and prepare them for their assignments. Material from the reports should be used to highlight significant accomplishments in publicity and promotional materials about the program.
- Offer regular virtual and in-person training, toolkits, handbooks, resources, and other support to U.S. embassy, Fulbright commission, and host institution staff, as requested by ECA. The award recipient must regularly update such resources and must submit drafts to ECA for approval prior to publication.

- Populate the recently launched Fulbright Program digital asset management system (the Fulbright Source). ECA relies on its cooperating partners to fully integrate the Fulbright Source into all recruitment, outreach, and communications initiatives. The Fulbright Source is designed to provide ECA with the capability to track the impact and success stories of the Fulbright Program worldwide, as well as to give program staff around the world the ability to access and share photos, videos, and other program resources such as informational flyers, press kits, logo files, and annual reports. The Fulbright Source should be utilized for print and electronic outreach, recruitment, and reporting. The award recipient should be prepared to provide the staffing resources necessary to collect, upload, tag, and curate accurate and relevant digital assets for the Fulbright Source. The award recipient should also promote use among Fulbright grantees and alumni, and coordinate with ECA Public Affairs Staff and relevant program office staff regarding system content and protocols.

A.7 Outreach and Marketing

In addition to targeted recruitment for U.S. academics and professionals as discussed above, the award recipient will develop a marketing and publicity campaign designed to raise general awareness of the Fulbright Specialist Program and to demonstrate inclusiveness, innovations, new program models, and local and international impact. The marketing and publicity campaign should be designed in concert with recruitment planning, but should focus on informing a more general audience in the United States about the value and relevance of the Fulbright Specialist Program. Abroad, U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions are responsible for publicizing the Fulbright Specialist Program to potential host institutions.

The award recipient will:

- In coordination with ECA, develop general information language to include in recruitment and outreach brochures, announcements, and other materials to demonstrate the impact of the Fulbright Specialist Program, including beyond the individual exchange.
- Maintain and update a general information website where the Fulbright Specialist Program is described. The website content should be dynamic and must emphasize the accomplishments, experiences, impact, and diversity of current and past program participants, as well as promoting details of projects that reflect ECA priorities or fields that are underrepresented on the register for special recruitment. The award recipient must regularly check the website content to ensure that all posted material is current and correct, and must submit any proposed new online initiatives or major revisions of current online materials to ECA for approval prior to development. ECA also reserves the right to request that website content be added or removed in a timely manner.
- Propose plans for collecting, analyzing, reporting, and presenting impact data from Fulbright Specialists and alumni. Special emphasis should be given to data visualization.
- Working with the administrators of the Fulbright Scholar and all Fulbright Student Programs, continue to develop the Fulbright Program's digital asset management system (the Fulbright Source) and encourage Fulbright commissions, U.S. embassies, grantees, alumni, etc. to utilize the system as a repository for the collection of country and program- or activity-specific impact data as well as outreach, recruitment, and reporting activities.
- Utilize social media assets both as a recruiting tool and to disseminate information on the impact of the program. This will include participant profiles, specific recruitment messages, and infographics and data visualization.

- Provide support for new Fulbright marketing directions including implementing new design and implementation strategies as an expected outcome of the Fulbright Marketing Initiative (research phase is currently ongoing).
- Widely advertise and promote ECA's Fulbright Program website (<http://eca.state.gov/Fulbright>) and provide draft material, when requested by ECA, for ECA's Fulbright Program website and all of its components.

Publications, program materials, the website and all other online programs, including social media websites, should explain the mission of the Fulbright Program, and its binational character, and highlight the U.S. government and the Department of State's role as the program's sponsor and manager. As such, all materials should note that "The Fulbright Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, is the U.S. government's flagship international educational exchange program and is supported by the people of the United States and partner countries around the world. For more information, visit <http://eca.state.gov/fulbright>." This language should appear prominently on all print and electronic materials and should precede any language regarding the role of the cooperating partner in administering the program. Publications should prominently feature the Fulbright logo and the U.S. Department of State seal, in accordance with established guidelines. The publicity strategy and all publication materials such as brochures, including cover designs, must be submitted to ECA/A/E Public Affairs Staff for approval prior to publication and dissemination.

All print and online materials provided to applicants, candidates, Specialists, campus contacts, U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions, host institutions, and peer review committees should be submitted for ECA/A/E Public Affairs Staff review before distribution. Prior to ECA review, all print and online materials should be carefully edited and revised to meet standards commensurate with the prestige and academic character of the Fulbright Specialist Program.

Any communication with Fulbright commissions and/or U.S. embassies involving major new initiatives or policy revisions should be cleared by ECA/A/E Program Staff and ECA/A/E Public Affairs Staff before dissemination.

A.8 Fiscal Management

The award recipient will:

- Manage, prepare, and disburse grant payments for all Fulbright Specialist grantees as appropriate.
- Audit internal functions, systems, and controls as necessary.

See Section II, Program Reporting, for additional guidelines on fiscal reporting requirements.

A.9 Health Benefits Enrollment

The award recipient must enroll all Fulbright Scholar participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Plan for Exchanges (ASPE) and/or other health benefits plan as directed by ECA and assist in filing claims to the designated health benefits agency.

A.10 Follow-on

The award recipient should develop suggestions for possible follow-on activities for program participants to ensure that ECA supported programs are not isolated events. This may include, but is not limited to, alumni presentations, seminars, or workshops to the State Department, the FFSSB, academic or professional institutions or organizations, or other relevant stakeholders; reporting/publications that could be utilized for information sharing or promotional purposes; mini-grants; or other activities that support the goals of the program that may be proposed by the recipient or by ECA.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

PROGRAM REPORTING

Program reporting:

The award recipient must prepare and submit to ECA by November 30, 2017, an annual report of 2016-2017 Fulbright Specialist activity containing comprehensive program statistics and information, to be determined in consultation with the Office of Academic Exchange Programs.

Financial reports:

The award recipient shall provide detailed financial reports for the Specialist Program, organized by world region and country. Individual projects should be listed, including the fiscal year of the project start date. These reports should capture the amount of programmatic funds, total paid expenditures, current balance, unpaid commitments, projected balance, and cost-share amounts. Reports are due after the end of each fiscal quarter.

Other reports: The award recipient should provide weekly reports on Fulbright Specialists currently on the program. On request, prepare summary reports on the Fulbright Specialist register applicant pool (number of applications, trends, disciplines, and quality), projects, projected costs, statistics, or expenditures, as necessary. Upon request, the cooperating organization will provide detailed reports to ECA on actual cost-share from U.S. home institutions, overseas host institutions, Fulbright commissions, and U.S. embassies, and monitor trends in institutional cost-share and other conditions affecting the Fulbright Specialist Program.

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 30 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. Additional information may be submitted in appendices.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (publicity, advertisement, recruitment and screening, selection, affiliation, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring and support services)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

Additional Information to be Submitted

- Detailed Budget

Applicants should pay careful attention to the below detailed budget instructions. Narrative proposals will be reviewed on the applicant's capacity and ability to complete all of the above program

components, however all of those program components are not included in the below request for a detailed budget. The applicant’s budget proposal will be reviewed for adherence to the below guidelines.

1. General Considerations

The total FY 2017 funding request should not exceed \$3,720,000, pending the availability of FY 2017 funds.

The Bureau anticipates the following scholar caseload in FY 2017:
U.S. Specialist Total: 425

Funding for projects will fall under three project funding models:

- 1. Traditional funding model (cost-shared arrangement) (325 projects)
- 2. Fully-field-funded model (50 projects)
- 3. Fully-ECA-funded model (25 projects)

For additional detail about these funding models and average costs for the funding models, See A.2b

Applicants should submit separate administrative and programmatic budget proposals. Applicants should also submit a summary page reflecting budget requests for all programs.

Submit a line item budget in a three-column format as indicated below:

Column 1	FY 2017 Bureau funds request
Column 2	Amount of Cost Sharing in FY 2017
Column 3	Total FY 2017 Budget (Total of columns 2 and 3)

Program Costs:

- A) participant costs, may include (but must not exceed the rates prescribed by federal travel regulations):
 - 1. round-trip international and domestic airfare,
 - 2. visa fees,
 - 3. ground transportation,
 - 4. other transit costs,
 - 5. housing accommodations
 - 6. meals and incidentals
- B) additional costs associated with normal administration of exchange programs
- C) special project-related costs, as approved by ECA, (examples may include project-related additional baggage and procurement of materials)

Administrative Costs:

- A) staff salaries, benefits, and support services for the program (fringe benefits should be stated separately from salary costs);
- B) space rental requirements: office rent, furniture, and equipment;
- C) communications, printing, and publishing, and office supplies used for the program;

- D) program-related staff travel (may not be required): round trip domestic and/or international airfare, visas, ground transportation, transit costs, and per diem (all per diem must not exceed the rate prescribed by federal travel regulations);
- E) other fees associated with the normal administration of exchange programs, including but not limited to Program Planning and Management; Recruitment; Application, Screening Selection; Project Submission, and Matching Process; Post-Nomination Services; Special Projects; Program Planning and Reporting Management; General Program Responsibilities; Outreach and Marketing; Fiscal Management; Health Benefits Enrollment; and Follow-on.

2. Budget Guidelines

The proposal must include a comprehensive line-item budget, the details and format of which are contained in the PSI. In addition, the proposal must include a comprehensive budget narrative demonstrating how all costs were derived. As with other exchange programs, ECA is committed to containment of costs consistent with overall program objectives and sound management. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise or increase the proposal budget and participant numbers in accordance with funding availability and the needs of the program.

The proposed budget should include the following sections:

- 1) Summary Budget: broken into Administrative and Program Cost Sections.
- 2) Administrative Costs
- 3) Program Costs

Each budget section should consist of the three column format described in detail by the PSI.

Cost sharing should be distinguished as follows: Applicant's cost sharing, other organizations' cost sharing (specify the name of the organization and amount of cost sharing provided).

As specific contract personnel cannot be determined at the time of proposal, the Center must keep ECA fully and currently informed regarding the hiring of consultants on this program. Any consultants over and above administrative consultants (IT assistance, etc.), should be disclosed to ECA at the time of the Center's hiring of the consultant's services.

- Calendar of activities/itinerary
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs (resumes of all key personnel 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 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.

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:

1. *Quality of the Program Idea:* The proposal should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's priorities and mission. Proposed programs should strengthen mutual understanding and the establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.
2. *Program planning and ability to achieve program objectives:* 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. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the applicant will meet the program's objectives and plans, while demonstrating innovation, productivity, and a commitment to academic excellence. The proposal should demonstrate a capacity for flexibility in the management of the program.
3. *Institutional Capacity and Institution's Record/Ability:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals. The applicant should demonstrate well-established links to the scholarly and professional community in the U.S. and knowledge of other educational environments as they apply to academic and professional exchange programs. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by the

Bureau's Grants Division. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

4. *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. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.
5. *Support of Diversity:* The proposal should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. The proposal 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.
6. *Project Evaluation:* The proposal 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. The cooperating organization will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

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, contact Vincent Pickett at PickettVS@state.gov or (202) 632-3243 or Lana Muck at MuckLS@state.gov or (202) 632-3233.

(END)