

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2016 Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Institute Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-16-014

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division for the FY 2016 Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Institute. 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 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of U.S. Embassies and Consulates in Europe are supporting the engagement of teenagers in an intensive and substantive four-week-long Institute in the United States.

The responsibilities of the award recipient will be the following:

- 1) Recruitment and Selection of U.S. Participants
 - a) Develop plans for outreach and recruitment that will generate a strong pool of qualified candidates that represent the diversity of the United States.
 - b) Develop an application and screening process.
 - c) Conduct a merit-based selection process for U.S. participants, ages 16-18, with clearly identified criteria for the selection.
 - d) Recommend the final participants and alternates to the Department of State.
- 2) Preparation
 - a) Contact all participants before the Institute to provide them with program information, pre-departure materials, and to gather information about their specific interests.
 - b) If feasible, work with PAS in offering pre-departure orientations for participants, including general and program-specific information, as well as intercultural training.
 - c) Hire and train staff, as needed, to accompany participants during the exchange period. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for all program staff.
 - d) Design and conduct an orientation(s) for staff, American participants and their families, and those individuals participating from the U.S. host communities (including host families) to the goals of the program and to the cultures and sensitivities of the exchange visitors. The orientation for Americans may be held in person or conducted virtually.
 - e) Make housing arrangements on campus for all participants. Carefully recruit, screen, and select diverse local host families to offer homestays of at least ten days, and preferably longer, to the participants during their stay. Criminal background checks, including a

search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families and others living in the home who are 18 years or older. Monitor housing arrangements to ensure the health and safety of participants.

- f) Make domestic travel arrangements for the participants.
 - g) Make arrangements to provide adult flight chaperones for the transatlantic air travel.
- 3) Exchange Activities
- a) Design, plan, and implement an intensive and substantive three- to four-week long Institute on the stated themes. Exchange activities must promote program goals.
 - b) Arrange appropriate community, cultural, social, and civic activities.
 - c) Engage participants in at least one facilitated community service activity during the U.S. program to demonstrate American volunteerism. The program should provide context for the participants to undertake the service activity – identifying community needs, the nature of volunteerism, charitable giving, etc., and a debriefing so that the service activity is not an isolated event, but is integrated into the larger program curriculum, and to help participants see how they can apply the experience at home.
 - d) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the participants' well-being, preventing and dealing with any misunderstandings or adjustment issues that may arise.
 - e) Provide a closing session to summarize the project activities, prepare participants for their return home, and to plan for the future.
- 4) Follow-on activities
- a) Promote follow-on activities with program alumni that reinforce the concepts imparted during the Institute. Help them apply what they have learned to serve their schools and communities.
 - b) Applicants should present creative and effective ways to address the project themes, for both program participants and their peers, in order to amplify the program impact.
- 5) Work in consultation with ECA and PAS in the implementation of the program, provide timely reporting of progress, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.
- 6) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including stipend disbursements to the participants and management of any sub-award relationships with partner organizations.
- 5) Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the impact of the program (See section D.3.j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation of the NOFO solicitation).

The ECA awards for the Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute will take the form of a cooperative agreement with the award recipients. In a cooperative agreement, the Department of State is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. The Department's activities and responsibilities for the Institute are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Recruit and select the European participants, arrange their international travel, and, in coordination with the award recipients, oversee their follow-on activities.
- 3) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 4) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, DC, and the partner countries.
- 5) Approve the proposed slate of final and alternate U.S. candidates.

- 6) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas for the foreign participants. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 7) Approve recruitment materials, application forms, publicity materials, and final calendar of exchange activities.
- 8) Monitor and evaluate the program through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits.
- 9) Perform an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all option years.

All participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program. ECA will work directly with our U.S. missions overseas to facilitate the participants' application for J-1 visas for entry to the United States. The Bureau will provide accident and sickness coverage for the foreign participants.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Participants: Participants will be teenagers between the ages of 16 and 18 who have a strong interest in learning more about the global issues and diplomatic relationships, the role of a free press and free expression such as advocacy and debate in a democracy, and/or an interest in public or community service. Participants may represent as many as 45 countries in Europe and the European countries of Eurasia (countries to be determined by the U.S. Embassies that nominate), as well as the United States. The State Department will determine the participants.

English proficiency is required. Participants will demonstrate the academic aptitude for a program of this nature, as well as personal qualities that will enable them to be successful exchange participants, including maturity, strong social skills, flexibility, and open-mindedness. These factors are particularly important given the diverse group atmosphere of the Institutes.

Participant Selection: The Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at the U.S. Embassies in participating countries will select the foreign participants. They will nominate participants to ECA in spring 2016. The award recipients will be responsible for recruiting and screening the American teenagers who will join the Institute and will present the proposed slate to ECA for approval.

Logistics: The U.S. Embassies will provide participants in the program with their international airline tickets, based on a destination and arrival date specified by the U.S. organization. Since some of these participants will be minors, may be inexperienced travelers, and will be traveling from their home country alone, applicants will present a plan for adult accompaniment, such as flight escorts who will travel from one or two major Western or Central European cities with those en route to and from the United States.

Pre-departure Orientation: The U.S. Embassy Public Affairs staff will provide participants with a pre-departure orientation, reviewing the details of the program, cross-cultural issues, and travel and financial matters. The award recipient will provide written materials electronically in support of this orientation prior to the participants' departure from home. In any country where the award recipient has its own staff or the staff of an established partner organization available, they may work out orientation arrangements with the Embassy on a country-by-country basis.

U.S. Program: The program delivery should be primarily interactive activities, practical experiences, and other hands-on opportunities to learn about the fundamentals of a civil society, community service, conflict resolution, critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity, and building leadership skills. Training and joint project activity will also focus on providing participants with a deeper understanding of common global issues and diplomatic relationships, and how they in turn can influence others through media outlets, by examining freedom of speech issues, media ethics, and the role of media in creating or solidifying stereotypes.

The activities could include a mix of seminars, workshops, simulations and role-playing, teambuilding exercises, case studies, a volunteer service project, leadership training exercises, meetings, classroom visits, site visits, and social time among peers. Programming should include additional American participants wherever possible. Cultural and recreational activities will balance the schedule.

The program will also include a study tour to Washington, DC, and possibly to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Suggestions include the following:

- Workshops on conflict resolution, civic education, current events, global challenges
- Community service/volunteer activities with American youth
- Exercises related to increasing tolerance and international cooperation and developing strategies for future collaboration and cooperation among participants
- Dialogues, simulations, role plays and other activities aimed at helping participants articulate their thoughts about the project's themes
- Workshops that explore the scientific legacy of Benjamin Franklin, specifically the intersection of politics and science
- Visits to historical sites, government centers, community centers, museums and landmarks that combine learning about the principles of government, history, and society with tourism
- Sports, drama, fine arts, musical, camping and other extracurricular activities that provide opportunities to participants to work and play together
- Arts and cultural activities

The program staff will host a closing workshop for participants just prior to departure, which will focus on summarizing the experience, developing plans for activities at home, and preparing for re-entry. The participants should be encouraged and assisted with developing projects to implement on their return home. The ideas and plans should spring from the participants, but the project staff should be prepared to assist and direct the participants in developing these plans both during the U.S.-based project and during the follow-on period.

Housing Accommodations: Homestays with local families must be arranged for all participants for at least ten days of the Institute. A dormitory, hotel, or other housing with appropriate adult supervision is an acceptable arrangement for other segments of the program, such as the study tour.

Applicants must present in their proposals a clear and detailed recruitment, screening, and selection process for host families. The award recipient must also provide the families with an orientation prior to the arrival of their exchange participants, emphasizing the goals of the program. Screening needs to include a visit to the home to meet all members of the household to ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. The orientation will provide families with detailed information on the exchange program, the parameters of their participation, duties and obligations, and information on cultural differences and practices.

ECA encourages diversity in host family recruitment and selection. Host families may represent diversity in family size and structure, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and geography. Exchange participants should be afforded private space in the home. While exchange participants may share a room with someone of a similar age and the same gender, they must have their own bed. Participants may be placed with host families as singles or in pairs. Host families need to have adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations.

Applicants must also explain how they will provide adequate supervision of participants when not in homestays.

Follow-on Activities: Follow-on activities will be organized for the Institute alumni. The award recipient will need to be prepared to work with PAS in each country to design activities for alumni, such as mini-grants or online collaborative projects, and mentor them in their implementation of these activities. Given the wide range of countries, this may need to be managed online and/or through low-tech methods that do not require in-country staff. The Bureau seeks creative ideas to ensure that the alumni can effectively pursue the remaining activities of the program, particularly ideas that amplify the program impact through their peers. Alumni tracking is crucial for the evaluation of the program and for the implementation of follow-on programs. All alumni contact information gathered by the award recipients on behalf of this program must be made available to the Department of State. Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional guidance.

Evaluation: The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 requires that federal agencies measure the results of their programs in meeting performance goals. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's plan to measure the long-term impact of the program. The follow-on activities will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the U.S. project on the participants, to determine how their attitudes have changed, and to evaluate the acquisition of knowledge and skills associated with the Institute themes. (See section D.3.j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation of the NOFO solicitation).

Other notes: The award recipient is responsible for all components of the program outlined in this document. The Bureau requires the recipient organization to communicate with ECA and the Public Affairs Sections of the relevant U.S. Embassies on a regular basis about program activities. The recipient must also inform the ECA Program Officer of their progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion, and it must also obtain approval of any

significant program changes in advance of their implementation. All materials and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

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. 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)

- 1) In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:
- 2) Name of organization/participating institutions
- 3) Beginning and ending dates of the program
- 4) Proposed theme
- 5) Nature of activity
- 6) Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
- 7) 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 with one inch margins (size 11 or 12 font), provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices.

1) Vision and Motivation: Describe the project objectives and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire. Also describe the applicant's motivation for applying to conduct the Institute.

2) Participating Organizations: Identify any partner organizations for the program, their roles, and the applicant's reasons for including them. Applicants must also describe their working relationship with the partner organization(s) and detail the division of program responsibilities between the award recipient and the partner organization(s).

3) Recruitment, Screening, and Selection of U.S. Fellows: Describe how the applicant will implement a recruitment and selection plan for the American participants. Present a plan for marketing the program. Outline both the process and the criteria by which finalists will be selected.

4) Institute Activities: Describe in sufficient detail the major components of the U.S. program, including project planning, orientations, educational activities, workshops, cultural activities, meetings, site visits, community service, mentors, and the closing session. Applicants must include a detailed proposed schedule of the daily activities in Tab E.

5) Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics: Detail travel arrangements; arrangements for homestays (be specific about the process), dormitory, and other housing; ground transportation; stipend disbursement; and any other relevant administrative matters. Also describe the plan for selecting flight escorts for the transatlantic leg of the flight(s) from Europe.

6) Follow-on Activities: Describe a plan to provide follow-on activities to the U.S.-based project, including both ECA-funded and privately funded activities.

7) Program Evaluation: In the submitted proposal, applicants should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique.

8) Diversity: Explain how the program managers will be pro-active in supporting diversity in the selection of American participants and in program content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly and should include, at a minimum, geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, and religious diversity.

9) Institutional Capacity and Project Management: Outline the applicant organization's capacity for doing projects of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: provision of

educational and thematic programs, age-appropriate programming for youth, and previous work in the region. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. Include this information for primary partner organizations as well.

10) Work Plan/Schedule: Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire cooperative agreement period. A detailed work plan may be provided in an appendix.

11) Non-Competitive Continuations: Applicants should provide a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuations, pending successful program performance and availability of funds.

Additional Information to Submit:

Detailed Budget

The approximate level of funding available for the Institute is \$250,000. **The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.**

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, as stated in the Proposal Submission Instructions. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included. For clarification, applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Educational materials
- Participant travel (within the United States, local ground transportation)
- Flight escort travel
- Staff travel
- Cultural and social activities
- Meeting costs
- Food and lodging, when not in homestay
- Follow-on activities
- Evaluation
- Pocket money for participants' incidental expenses
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

Important: Applicants should plan for up to 55 participants at the Institute. For travel to and from the Institute, the award recipient should cover the costs only for the American participants. International travel costs for foreign participants will be covered through means outside this award.

Applicants should budget for adults to accompany groups of student travelers between Europe and the United States. For example, an Institute staff member or designee would meet Fellows traveling from Eastern Europe in Vienna for a group flight into the United States so that s/he could assist them with entry procedures and any problems that may arise.

Payments to host families are not allowed as an award-funded or cost-share item. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant and other sources.

Maximum limits on cooperative agreement funding are as follows: Books and educational materials allowance-\$100 per participant; Conference room rental costs-\$250 per day per room; Consultant fees and honoraria-\$250/day; Cultural allowance-\$150 per participant; Per diem-standard government rates; Evaluation costs- 3% of the cooperative agreement. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share any rates that exceed these amounts.

Foreign exchange participants will be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) to provide them with health benefits during the exchange; this cost does not need to be included in the budget. More information on ASPE is available at <http://www.usdos.sevencorners.com>. It is anticipated that the American participants will have their own health insurance.

Please refer to the PSI for allowable costs and complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

Letters of Endorsement

Include pledges to participate in the program's implementation from significant partner organizations, including those in the partner country and any receiving a sub-award.

Resumes and CVs

Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No one resume should exceed two pages.

Attachments/appendices

Please limit to those materials essential for understanding the proposed program such as a draft schedule of activities, application forms, or evaluation questionnaires.

First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable

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

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.

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 Office of Citizen Exchanges Youth Divisions Branch Program Office Greg Marcus at (202) 632-6363 Fax: (202) 632-9355; email:

MarcusGR@state.gov.