

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **FY 2016 Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program**

#### **Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAS-16-002**

#### **Office of Global Educational Programs U.S. Study Abroad Branch (ECA/A/S/Q)**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Global Educational Programs, U.S. Study Abroad Branch for the FY2016 Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program. Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

#### **I. STATEMENT OF WORK**

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

Responsibilities of the award recipient for this particular project include:

1. Selection: participants; host institutions
2. Placement: participants
3. Monitoring: program; individuals
4. Evaluation and Follow-on
5. Fiscal Management: sub-contractors
6. Other: Insurance - Funded programs should normally use Bureau insurance in order to comply with J-1 visa requirements. For some programs, recipient is responsible for enrolling participants - international participants and U.S. participants only; NOT program staff - in health and accident insurance program meeting the basic J-1 visa requirements. This should be clearly indicated in the NOFO and the program guidelines.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) will support the participation of not less than 550 U.S. undergraduate and graduate students in overseas summer institutes of no fewer than eight weeks in length that will offer an intensive language immersion experience. Funding will also support activities to enhance the students' understanding of the host country's culture, history, and political and social systems. A third element of the program, which will be piloted in a few institutes and will be optional for CLS students, includes a specialized course focused in a specific area of study such as public health, climate change, energy, or economic issues. The course would enhance the participants' understanding of the topical area of study as it relates to the region and/or country the institute is located in. Applicants are encouraged to consider including this optional

component in their proposals. Both the second and third components activities should incorporate a language-learning element, since language study is the primary focus of the institutes. Applicant organizations must present a proposal that clearly indicates how new institutional language-teaching capacity will be built overseas for these summer institutes. Support for alumni and their continued language learning after their return home is also an important element of this program.

The responsibilities of the award recipient (s) and subrecipient (s) are divided into two distinct components, as follows.

**Component A: Pre- and Post-Program Administration**

One award recipient will be selected to manage the recruitment, application process, and selection of participants for all CLS institutes, as well as providing oversight for all alumni activities. Applicant organizations applying to administer programs for two or more language groups are required to apply for this component through a separate proposal and must demonstrate the capacity to conduct a nationwide participant recruitment, application, and selection process and oversee all alumni activities including the following components. Only one organization will be selected to administer Component A: Pre- and Post-Program Administration.

- 1) Develop and implement plans for outreach and recruitment, including the creation of a new dedicated website or maintenance of existing website, that will generate a strong pool of qualified candidates that represent the diversity of the United States, including recruitment and outreach activities to community colleges and minority serving institutions;
- 2) Respond to and manage a significant volume of queries and applications;
- 3) Develop an online application form, and application and screening process;
- 4) Conduct a merit-based selection process for U.S. participants with clearly identified criteria for the selection, including those specified in this solicitation;
- 5) Convene candidate review selection panels in Washington, DC, including country/regional experts and field of study experts;
- 6) Recommend the final participants and alternates to ECA for approval;
- 7) Consult with ECA on a plan for notification of final participants, alternates, and non-selected applicants following ECA approval;
- 8) Prepare and send notifications to all applicants;
- 9) Notify all institute program administrators of final participants and alternates;
- 10) Consult with ECA on a plan for notifying Congressional representatives of the participation of students from their districts/states and send notification letters;
- 11) Create and manage or maintain existing official website and social media accounts (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) for CLS;
- 12) In close consultation with ECA, publicize the program through various media outlets and other avenues.
- 13) Consult with ECA on a plan to create and distribute press release notifications to institutions that have a student who is a recipient of the CLS award;
- 14) Coordinate an annual kick-off meeting with key personnel staff, of implementing organizations and plan an annual Institute Director's meeting;
- 15) Create and maintain an alumni database to track all alumni across the program;
- 16) Design and implement a re-entry webinar for students to participant in shortly after returning

- from their overseas experience. The webinar would allow participants to reflect on their overseas experience, connect their overseas experience to their career goals, and learn best practices for sharing their story and promoting study abroad. Additionally, the applicant organization (s) would develop a re-entry resource document that would be provided to all CLS participants; and
- 17) Develop and propose innovative ideas for alumni follow on activities and creative and effective ways to assist the students in continuing their language studies and provide oversight of activities.

### **Component B: Implementation of Institutes and Alumni Activities**

One or more award recipient (s) will be selected to implement the summer institutes and follow-on activities including the following components:

- 1) Meetings:
  - a) Conduct weekly meetings via in-person or virtual means with the ECA CLS Program Officer and key personnel to prepare for summer institutes and relevant activities; and
  - b) Execute kick-off meeting and annual Institute Directors' Meeting.
  
- 2) Pre-Arrival Information and Orientations:
  - a) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information and pre-departure materials.
  - b) Conduct virtual pre-departure orientation activities prior to departure.
  - c) Conduct standardized, baseline, pre-institute testing of all participants' language proficiency.
  - d) Provide substantive pre-departure orientations in Washington, DC for participants, including general and program-specific information, as well as intercultural training.
  - e) Inform host institutions and staff overseas of the goals and anticipated outcomes of the program and monitor to ensure these goals are met.
  - f) Provide intercultural training to all relevant domestic and overseas staff.
  - g) Make all necessary international and local travel arrangements for the participants;
  - h) Assist participants in securing U.S. passports and appropriate visas.
  - i) Consult with ECA in development of terms and conditions and other rules and regulations for participants and ensure the participants receive and sign the terms and conditions document.
  - j) Enroll participants in health benefits program and assist with claims as necessary.
  - k) Design and execute a comprehensive in-country arrival orientation.
  - l) Develop institute-specific handbooks in consultation with ECA.
  
- 3) Activities:
  - a) Design, plan, and implement overseas courses of intensive study for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students that focus on the acquisition of language skills in one of the specified languages.
  - b) Provide all housing and meals and arrange any local travel for the participants. Host family arrangements or native language roommates are strongly encouraged.
  - c) Develop and facilitate individual and group educational and cultural enrichment activities that enhance language learning for the period of academic study, in conjunction with host institutions, as well as pairing each U.S. student with a local peer with whom they can

- practice the language on a regular and consistent basis and who can connect them to the local culture/community.
- d) Provide day-to-day monitoring of the program (for both participants and host institute), preventing and dealing with any misunderstandings, adjustment issues, or emergencies that may arise and consulting with ECA as appropriate. This includes providing a sufficient staffing structure to handle student support issues.
  - e) Ensure that all participants abide by local laws and program requirements and adhere to relevant local customs. Recommend any participant not observing laws, requirements or relevant customs to ECA for dismissal.
  - f) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including stipend disbursements to the participants and management of sub-award relationships with partner organizations.
  - g) Provide a closing session and re-entry workshop to summarize the project activities, test students' post-institute language proficiency, prepare participants for their return home, and to plan for the future.
- 4) Follow-on Activities:
- a) Conduct follow-on activities with program alumni that enable them to share their overseas experiences in effective ways with their home institutions and communities. Substantive follow-on alumni activities are required and should be funded by the Bureau cooperative agreement; additional activities should be supported by non-Bureau sources.
  - b) Work in consultation with ECA in the implementation of the program, provide timely reporting of progress, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.
  - c) Respond fully and promptly to requests, from ECA and Component A recipient, for information relating to the participants and alumni.

## II.

### PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

This award is divided into two components. Funding for Component A: Pre- and Post-Program Administration will cover the costs for these elements, not to exceed \$400,000 in the base year. Applicant organizations applying to administer programs for two or more language groups are required to bid on this component through a separate proposal.

Funding for Component B: Implementation of Institutes and Alumni Activities will cover overall costs associated with program administration. Proposals under Component B may not exceed \$8,600,000 for the base year with average participant costs per language group not exceeding \$15,600 (includes program and administrative costs).

#### **Component A:** Pre- and Post-Program Administration

##### Recruitment of U.S. Participants:

An applicant organization should develop plans for outreach and recruitment that will generate a strong pool of qualified candidates that have the ability to succeed in the program and represent the diversity of the United

States. The award recipient will be requested to supply publicity materials to ECA for approval. The award recipient must ensure that ECA and the Department of State are prominently identified as the program sponsor in all publicity and other scholarship program materials. In consultation with ECA, recruitment materials and any publicity should provide all relevant information to potential applicants. The key conditions, benefits, and terms of the program should be fully described to candidates and nominees before they accept an award. Sample publicity materials should be included in the proposal attachments section.

Information about the program, along with all accompanying application materials, should be posted online. Applicant organizations should propose a comprehensive outreach plan to advertise the program at U.S. colleges and universities nationwide, with special attention to the recruitment of eligible students from minority-serving institutions and community colleges.

#### Screening and Selection:

Applicant organizations should outline selection criteria and a transparent and merit-based process for selecting nominees from the pool of applicants. A corresponding statement of the selection criteria should be included in the program announcement for potential applicants. The expectation that students continue their language study beyond the scholarship period and later apply their critical language skills in their professional careers should be clearly emphasized. The selected organization should work closely with the Bureau in developing the selection criteria.

Candidate review committees should be convened in Washington, DC to review applicants and to rank the candidates for final approval by ECA. Review committees should include representatives of a variety of institutions and country/regional and field of study experts pertinent to the language under review. In ranking eligible candidates, consideration should be given to academic excellence, outlined plans for continuation of language study, diversity of candidate pool, and fields of study. Preference should be given to candidates with limited or no previous study overseas.

#### Participants:

Participants will be U.S. undergraduate and graduate students who are 18 years of age or older and have completed at least their first year of university-level study by the summer. All participants must be U.S. citizens.

Participants should 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, adaptability, flexibility, and open-mindedness.

All participants must have strong demonstrated motivation to learn the language that is the focus of the institute and be committed to its study.

Selected students should represent the diversity of the United States. Applicant organizations should present a plan to identify such students and will ensure that participants selected reflect this diversity.

Other Component A responsibilities of the award recipient:

Coordination and Distribution of Congressional Notification letters to include:

All administrative tasks associated with this task, such as

- a. gathering names and addresses of successful CLS participants;
- b. performing mail merge of student addresses and ECA-approved notification letter;
- c. editing and proofreading to ensure quality and accuracy of letters; and
- d. coordinating mailings.

Development and maintenance of program's online presence to include:

- a. official CLS website and
- b. social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and other platforms).

Plan and execute program-wide meetings to include:

- a. an annual kick-off meeting with ECA staff and key personnel staff of implementing organizations, and
- b. annual training for all overseas institute directors.

Oversight of CLS alumni activities to include:

- a. building and maintaining a database of all CLS alumni;
- b. creating and implementing a mentoring program;
- c. designing and implementing a re-entry webinar with resource document;
- d. managing an Alumni Development Fund small grants competition;
- e. managing a photo and video contest;
- f. planning and executing an Alumni Ambassadors' training;
- g. creating and/or sharing networking and professional development opportunities for CLS alumni;
- h. creating a virtual or in-person program to pair CLS alumni who are interesting in continuing practice of their target language;
- i. providing report to ECA on all alumni activities; and
- j. designing and implementing a longitudinal survey.

## **Component B: Implementation of Institutes and Activities**

Pre-arrival Information and Orientations:

An applicant organization should provide a sample of a pre-arrival information packet in the proposal.

Information should be complete and detailed. Key points concerning health, safety, requirements, housing, what to pack, personal budgeting considerations, and other critical issues should be included in the material. The material should be designed to serve as a useful post-arrival reference as well, supplemented with additional information.

The award recipient (s) will organize substantive, virtual and in-person, pre-departure orientations for all participants. All in-person orientations must take place in Washington, DC, preferably immediately before the participants' departure for their host institute. The award recipient (s) must also plan substantive in-country arrival orientations for all participants. Arrival orientations should outline the program structure and schedule, define staff roles and responsibilities, provide an introduction to the host city, and review health and safety measures. A security briefing should be arranged with the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Officer.

At the end of the program, program staff should host a closing workshop for the students prior to departure, which will focus on summarizing the experience, testing the students' language proficiency, developing plans for activities at home, and preparing for re-entry.

#### Health Benefits Coverage:

Exchange program regulations require that all exchange participants carry health and accident coverage. At a minimum, such coverage must provide the following benefits:

- 1) medical coverage of at least \$50,000 per person per accident or illness;
- 2) repatriation of remains in the amount of \$7,500; and
- 3) medical evacuation benefits of at least \$10,000.

Exchange participants may be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) with no charge to the grant or other health benefits program as directed. ASPE is in compliance with 22 CFR Part 514. Please see <http://usdos.sevencorners.com/> for more information on coverage.

Alternatively, the applicant organization may use its own plan as long as it offers the same or better coverage and costs no more than \$50 per person per month; premiums may be included in the proposal budget. In addition, a qualified health benefits program shall not have a deductible that exceeds \$500 and it must meet other technical standards as specified in the regulations (22 CFR Part 5141).

If the applicant organization will not be using the Bureau's coverage, the applicant organization should budget (under program costs per participant) for insurance. It is expected that participants will be provided with insurance for those periods of actual participation in exchange activities. The period of coverage does not necessarily coincide with the duration of the funded project.

#### Project Activities:

Plans for housing, meals, and travel should be explained in detail. Include a sample program plan and clearly identify the document. Housing arrangements should be with a local host family or native language roommates whenever possible. The cooperating institution should assign a resident director to each language site who will serve as the primary resource for students regarding the program as well as academic and cultural adjustment.

Applicant organizations should also propose a project director for the entire program supported by the Cooperative Agreement, as well as the institute directors for each country institute. The project director should also serve as the main point of contact for the Bureau. Staff roles should be clearly defined and explained to students; principle staff should have sufficient time to dedicate to student support issues and not be overburdened with multiple roles and responsibilities. ECA will approve key staff for each institute.

To support the mutual understanding goal of the exchange and in addition to the four- to six-hours of structured classroom instruction for at least five days a week (20 hours a week minimum), the program will include educational activities that present various aspects of the contemporary host society as they support language learning. In addition to living with native language speakers, students should be paired with local peers to practice language outside of the classroom and to connect them to the local culture and community. Opportunities for academic and enrichment experiences related to overseas institutions, society, and culture

should be provided, but language instruction should be the primary focus. The Bureau welcomes creative ideas for exposing students to the host country's political, social, and cultural life. Student attendance at museums, concerts, plays, and other cultural events should be encouraged and facilitated whenever possible. This will also offer opportunities for the students to practice their language skills outside the classroom. The applicant organizations are encouraged to offer a specialized course focused in a specific area of study such as public health, climate change, energy, or economic issues. The course would combine language learning and the topical area of study, related to the region and/or country the institute is located in. Only a few institutes will offer the topical area of study option as a pilot. Applicant organizations should suggest what locations make the most sense based on the capacity of the overseas host organization or university to offer the topical area of study. The language study experience should be as close to "full immersion" as possible during the program. Students should also take a "language pledge" and be held accountable to that pledge, to ensure their commitment to language study and practice during the duration of the institute.

The proposal should include a plan for CLS participants who successfully complete the program to receive academic credit from an accredited U.S. college or university.

The award recipient (s) will be expected to keep the Bureau informed of program progress, as well as other aspects of the program throughout the year. Each institute will be expected to provide the Bureau with a short weekly report during the program time period, using a template to be provided by ECA. A final report, using a template that will be provided, must also be submitted to ECA.

#### Assessment and Testing:

Standardized pre- and post-institute testing should be done to determine participants' language proficiency and progress.

ECA will work with the award recipient (s) to develop and implement an instrument to measure students' increased language proficiency as a result of their participation in this program. The data should be analyzed and reported by the award recipient (s) to ECA for the program, disaggregated by institute.

In addition to language testing, the award recipient (s) may be asked to assist ECA's Evaluation Division and other Department of State offices, in collecting data via messaging/notifications to participants for surveys before and after the program is administered. (NOTE: These surveys are separate and different from the data that the organization is required to collect and report to the program office.) If assistance is required, the award recipient (s) should plan to distribute three survey links, along with weekly reminders, to participants. All program participants will be required to take three online surveys:

1. Standardized pre-program surveys, at the beginning of the program;
2. Standardized post-program surveys, at the end of the program; and
3. Standardized follow-up surveys, approximately one year after the conclusion of the program.

These surveys are designed to help the award recipient (s) and ECA assess: student satisfaction with the program; student attitudes and views; the extent of learning and skill development (including leadership); reliance on new learning and skills in their studies, at work, and in their communities; and their efforts to share new ideas, knowledge, and insights. Included in these surveys are questions specific to ECA's internal reporting.

If the Evaluation Division requests assistance as outlined above in administration of surveys, the award recipient (s) will be expected to work with the Program Officer and an evaluator from the Office of Policy and Evaluation to implement the survey instruments. To ensure proper implementation of Performance Management Initiative, the award (s) will be required to:

- Provide the Program Officer and the Performance Management Initiative evaluator with all contact information and bio-data of program participants;
- Provide all participants with information about the Performance Management Initiative survey; Students must be advised that they are required to take all three surveys, assuring them that the surveys are completely confidential, anonymous, and used only for evaluative purposes;
- Notify students of the Performance Management Initiative survey link, information about Performance Management Initiative and survey instructions;
- Allocate time for the Performance Management Initiative surveying prior to the students departure from their return to the U.S. and at the end of the program; and
- Send reminder notices to students to take the follow-up survey.

Applicant organizations should provide a description of any additional methods planned to supplement information obtained through language proficiency surveys and the Performance Management Initiative to measure progress towards achievement of the program's objectives, such as the use of focus groups and interviews, and how the data will be analyzed and reported.

Other Component B responsibilities of award recipient (s):

Execute program-wide meetings to include:

- a. a kick-off meeting with key personnel staff, of implementing organizations; and
- b. an annual training for all overseas institute directors.

Implementation of CLS alumni activities to include:

- a. managing application process and selection of recipients for an Alumni Development Fund small grants competition;
- b. managing application process and selection of Alumni Ambassadors and execution of Alumni Ambassadors' training; and
- c. creating and/or sharing networking and professional development opportunities for CLS alumni.

ECA/A/S/Q Involvement:

In a Cooperative Agreement, ECA/A/S/Q is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine award monitoring. The ECA/A/S/Q program office's activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

Component A: Pre- and Post-Program Administration

- 1) Review all print and online materials regarding the institutes before publication and dissemination;
- 2) Review and approve the recruitment and outreach strategy;
- 3) Work with the award recipient to publicize the program through various media outlets; ECA must review and approve all publications and interview requests;
- 4) Review and approve official CLS website;
- 5) Review and approve the forms used in the CLS application;
- 6) Observe, but not participate in, selection committee panels;
- 7) Confirm final selection of principal and alternate candidates;
- 8) Provide input on meeting topics and participate in Institute Director's meeting;
- 9) Provide substantive input on alumni activities and follow-up events;
- 10) Perform an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all non-competitive continuation years.

#### Component B: Implementation of Institutes and Activities

- 1) Review all print and online materials regarding the institutes before publication and dissemination; This review also includes individual institute's instructional materials, cultural activities and teacher-training plans, which must be provided to ECA at least two months in advance of the start of the institute;
- 2) Review and approve participant award documentation, including Terms and Conditions;
- 3) Work with award recipient (s) to plan and implement participant pre-departure orientations;
- 4) Work with award recipient (s) to offer standardized pre- and post-institute testing of participants' language proficiency and progress;
- 5) Review project activity schedules for all institutes;
- 6) Monitor the progress of the recipient organization(s) at each stage of the project's implementation through timely updates;
- 7) Provide Bureau-approved evaluation surveys for completion by participants before and following completion of program; and
- 8) Perform an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all non-competitive continuation years.

#### 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.

### **Executive Summary**

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 and Calendar of Activities**

In maximum 20-paged, double-spaced, single-sided pages, please describe the proposed project in detail. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices. We recommend using the following outline to organize your narrative. Refer to the proposal review criteria in this document for further guidance.

- 1) Vision: Describe the project objectives and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire.
- 2) Recruitment, Screening, and Selection: If applying to administer programs for two or more language groups, a separate proposal submission should describe how the applicant organization will recruit, manage the application process, and select U.S. participants for the Critical Language Scholarships for Intensive Summer Institutes.
- 3) Project Activities: Describe in detail the major components of the program, including project planning, the host venue, orientations, assessment and testing, language instruction, educational enrichment activities, cultural activities,

- participant monitoring, publicity, and logistics. Include a sample itinerary under Tab E.
- 4) Follow-on/Alumni Activities: Describe the plan to provide activities for the alumni of the Critical Language Scholarship Program, including both ECA-funded and privately funded activities.
  - 5) Program Monitoring and Evaluation: The progress of the program should be monitored closely and ECA must be kept informed of activities. The applicant organization should clearly identify the in-country points of contact who will be responsible for the students while they are abroad. In the proposal, applicant organizations should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA requests that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or outline of other techniques to be used to evaluate the impact of the program.
  - 6) Diversity: Applicant organizations bidding on Component A: Participant Recruitment and Selection must explain how the program managers will be proactive in supporting diversity in the selection of American participants. Diversity is also an evaluation criteria for Component B: Administration and Implementation of Institutes. Applicant organizations must explain how in-country program staff will be prepared for the diversity of CLS participants, as well as how the diversity of the host country will be showcased. Diversity should be defined broadly and should include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, institutional, and socio-economic diversity.
  - 7) Institutional Capacity and Project Management: Outline the applicant organization's capacity (and its partners) for implementing programs of this nature. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities, both in the U.S. and overseas), qualifications, structure, and resources.
  - 8) Participating Organizations: If applicable, identify partner organizations for the program, their roles, and the applicant organization's reasons for including them.
  - 9) Work Plan/Schedule: Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire grant period. Provide a proposed schedule for implementation of the program abroad highlighting significant activities.

## **Detailed Budget**

The anticipated level of base-year funding available for the Critical Language Scholarship Program is \$9,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2016 funds. Funding for participant recruitment and selection for the base year is not to exceed \$400,000. Applicant organizations may submit cooperative agreement proposals requesting base-year funds not exceeding \$8,600,000 to implement the CLS institutes between June and August 2016 and follow-on activities. Average participant costs per language group should not exceed \$15,600 (includes program and administrative costs). ECA intends to issue two or more awards to cover the participant recruitment and selection and implementation of institutes for the specified languages/language families and follow-on. 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. In addition, it reserves the right to accept proposals in whole

or in part and to make an award or awards in the best interest of the program.

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, applicant organizations must provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity. Applicant organizations should also provide copies of any sub-award agreements that would be implemented under terms of this award.

**Allowable Costs:**

a) Allowable administrative costs include items such as:

- Staff salaries and benefits;
- Staff travel and per diem;
- Rent and facilities;
- Furniture and equipment;
- Meetings and conferences;
- Emergency/incidentals no to exceed \$300 per student;
- Communication costs;
- Network charges;
- Administration of tax withholding and reporting as required by Federal, state and local authorities and in accordance with relevant tax treaties;
- Indirect costs; and/or
- OMB Circular 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F Audits.

Applicant organizations should also provide a detailed explanation of administrative overhead (what elements of the budget it is based upon and how it is calculated).

b) Allowable program costs to be funded by the Cooperative Agreement award include items such as:

- Publicity, pre-departure and orientation materials and expenses;
- Medical review of health forms;
- Costs of national review committees including travel and per diem;
- Website/on-line applications/database management;
- Expenses of pre-departure orientations in the U.S. for selected U.S. students: program, per diem, travel for participants;
- Program materials;
- Participant travel (international travel and domestic and local travel in the host country);
- Cultural activities;
- Standardized language proficiency testing;
- Accredited academic credit;
- Participant food and lodging;
- Participant stipends or allowances;
- Participant tuition fees in host country;

- Health benefits coverage (See Health Benefits Coverage section above);
- Evaluation; and/or
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities.

Significant cost sharing is expected and will enhance the proposal. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicant organizations to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant organization and other sources.

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

## **Additional Information**

### **Letters of Endorsement**

Letters from collaborating organizations, institutions, etc., indicating their agreement and the role they will play are important in confirming what the applicant has proposed. Copies of sub-award agreements should also be provided. Letters from members of Congress and other political leaders are not advisable.

### **Resumes and CVs**

Resumes of all program staff that will receive compensation under the Cooperative Agreement should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.

### **Outreach Plan:**

If submitting a proposal for Component A: Participant Recruitment and Selection, applicant organizations should propose a comprehensive outreach plan to advertise the program at U.S. colleges and universities, conferences, and partnerships with organizations nationwide.

### **Sample information packets:**

A sample of the information packet provided to participants before departure should be included. The packet should include general and program-specific information, as well as intercultural training.

### **Sample itinerary and project activities:**

Provide a sample itinerary that shows the language instruction, educational enrichment activities, and cultural activities in which participants will engage. All educational enrichment and cultural activities must have a clear language-learning component.

### **Sample media outreach:**

Proposals for Components A and B should contain a sample of previous experience in successful outreach plans to domestic and/or international media outlets.

### **Other attachments, if applicable:**

Applicant organizations should limit attachments to what is essential. Manuals, promotional material on

the organization, articles, tables, and the like are generally not helpful to the applicant organization making a case for the proposed program.

**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:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should demonstrate how students would be monitored, and also how they will be supported as alumni. If applying for Component A, proposals should show how students would be recruited and selected.

**2. Program planning:** 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 substance of the instruction and the exchange activities should be described in detail and included as an attachment.

**3. Ability to achieve program objectives:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. The responsibilities of partner organizations will be clearly delineated.

**4. Multiplier effect/impact:** Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

**5. 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.

**6. Institutional Capacity and Institution's Record/Ability:** Applicant organizations should demonstrate knowledge of each country's educational environment and the capacity for hosting this language institute. Proposals should include detailed information about the applicant organization's capacity in the United States and about in-country support for the program, including descriptions of experienced personnel who will implement it. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's goals. 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 Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

**8. Follow-on/Alumni Activities:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Proposals should provide a plan for continued contact with returnees to ensure that they are tracked over time, utilized and/or organized as alumni, and provided opportunities to reinforce the knowledge and skills they acquired on the exchange and share them with others. Proposals should provide a strategy for maximizing the opportunities for alumni to further their study of the language and culture of the host country, presenting plans that are within the context of the grant (with Bureau support) and after its completion (without the Bureau's financial support). Please refer to the POGI for additional guidance on alumni outreach and follow-on engagement.

**9. Project Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan and methodology to evaluate the

program's successes and challenges, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The evaluation plan should show a clear link between program objectives and expected outcomes, and should include a description of performance indicators and measurement tools. Applicant organizations will indicate their willingness to submit periodic progress reports in accordance with the program office's expectations. The final project evaluation should provide qualitative and quantitative data about the project's influence on the participants' long-term language-learning goals. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives are recommended.

**10. Cost-effectiveness:** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. While per participant costs lower than the stated average of \$15,600 (includes program and administrative costs) will be favorably viewed, under this review criterion, all figures should be realistic. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should demonstrate a quality, cost-effective program.

**11. Cost-sharing:** Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

#### **FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY:**

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

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

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 Program Officer Angela Woods at (202) 632-9451, ECA/A/S/Q; Fax: (202) 632-6489; email: [WoodsAN@state.gov](mailto:WoodsAN@state.gov).**