

Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI)

FY 2016 STUDY OF THE U.S. INSTITUTES FOR STUDENT LEADERS FROM EUROPE

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAA-E-16-011

Office of Academic Exchange Programs

Study of the U.S. Branch

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notification of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the **Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Study of the U.S. Branch**, for the **FY 2016 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders from Europe**. 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 NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Award Recipient Responsibilities for this Cooperative Agreement include:

1. Designing and overseeing three five-week academic programs in the United States at academic institutions for undergraduate students from selected countries in Europe; the recipient may conduct one of the three Institutes;
2. Providing and monitoring subawards to selected host institutions to conduct the Institutes, each host institution should not implement more than one Institute and the recipient may choose to implement one institute;
3. Providing syllabi and program calendars to ECA for all Institutes;
4. Providing programmatic and administrative oversight of all three Institutes including ongoing oversight of selected host institutions;
5. Issuing participant DS-2019 forms for Institute participants;
6. In coordination with U.S. embassies and consulates or Fulbright Commissions, arranging and purchasing international round trip travel for participants and disbursing international travel allowances prior to departure to the United States;
7. Coordinating, in conjunction with host institutions, and in coordination with U.S. embassies and consulates and Fulbright Commissions, logistical and administrative arrangements for participants such as pre-departure information, airport pick-up and drop-off, lodging and meals, domestic travel, any medical treatment, and the disbursement of program funds;
8. Conducting an evaluation program that links outcomes of the Institutes to stated program goals and objectives to ensure that all Institutes meet comparable and high levels of quality in fulfilling program goals;
9. Informing and consulting with ECA about any program or participant problems, emergencies, or other issues as well as the progress of necessary corrective action;
10. Developing and implementing, in coordination with ECA, a media outreach effort to publicize the

program;

11. Managing all funds for this activity, including submitting required quarterly and final financial reports to ECA;
12. Submitting weekly updates to ECA during main program activities, as well as required quarterly and final program reports by the established deadlines and other ad hoc reporting as appropriate; and
13. Providing participants with follow-on guidance and resources and facilitating continued interaction among participants and U.S. students after the conclusion of the Institute(s).

B. Department of State Responsibilities for this Cooperative Agreement include:

1. Providing advice and assistance to the award recipient and Institute staff including final approval of key project plans and activities;
2. Coordinating all communications with participating U.S. embassies, consulates, and Fulbright Commissions, including the recruitment and selection of participants. U.S. embassies and Fulbright Commissions will nominate participants. The Study of the U.S. Branch will make final approvals and selections and forward the final list of participants to the award recipient. The award recipient will not participate in the selection of participants;
3. Issuing the participants' J-1 visas;
4. Enrolling the participants in an accident and sickness health benefits program for the duration of the Institutes and issuing health benefits identification cards for each participant. The program office will instruct the award recipient how to access informational brochures and claim forms;
5. Monitoring the Institutes through regular communication with the award recipient and host institutions and possibly one or more site visits; and
6. Conducting a formal debriefing session with the participants during their Washington, D.C. visit.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

A. Overview

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of three (3) five-week Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders from Europe on: Civic Engagement; Environmental Stewardship; and Social Entrepreneurship. Each program should be designed for groups of approximately 22 students from selected countries from Europe as specified in the Notification of Funding Opportunity (NOFO). Proposals should present an integrated and imaginatively designed programs, as well as community service activities, leadership development, cultural activities, and robust opportunities to interact with a diverse group of Americans. The Institutes should focus on the particular theme while also illuminating the history and evolution of U.S. society, culture, and values. The NOFO for this competition gives further direction on the substance of the program.

All aspects of the programs, including presentations and other class work, readings, writing assignments, leadership training, community service, and site visits should be integrated so as to illuminate the overall Institute theme, and contribute to the understanding of the United States. The conception and structure of the

Institutes are the responsibility of the award recipient. It is essential that proposals provide a full, detailed, and comprehensive narrative describing how the award recipient will achieve the objectives of the Institutes. A tentative academic program, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc. for each of the three Institutes should be included. Proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their responsiveness to the review criteria listed in this NOFO.

B. Program Dates

All Institutes should last approximately 36 days (including arrival and departure days). The three Institutes will take place in summer 2016. Summer Institutes should begin no sooner than June 1, 2016, and should conclude no later than August 31, 2016. To ensure adequate time for the award recipient to make pre-program arrangements, ECA will make every effort to award the approved Cooperative Agreement in a timely fashion, pending a FY 2016 appropriation from Congress.

C. Program Administration

Applicants must discuss their organization's capacity to successfully manage international exchange programs, including institutional strengths such as experience, relevant departments, and major administrative units. Proposals should include a staffing pattern that details how staff will share responsibilities. The award recipient must designate a **project director** to oversee all of the Institutes. The project director will coordinate logistical and administrative arrangements, ensure an appropriate level of continuity among the various host institution programs, and serve as the principal liaison between ECA and the host institutions and ECA's primary point of contact.

The award recipient should also designate **academic directors** at each host institution who will be present throughout the programs in their entirety to ensure the continuity, coherence, and integration of all aspects of the academic program, including the study tour. The academic director will plan and implement the program, oversee its day-to-day management, and monitor program participants. In addition, **administrative directors** or coordinators should be assigned at each host institution to oversee all student support services, including supervision of the program participants, budgetary, logistical, reporting, and other administrative arrangements.

Other staff may be designated as appropriate. Applicant organizations may choose to incorporate qualified "cultural ambassadors" or "graduate mentors" (or another appropriate name) at each Institute who exhibit cultural sensitivity, an understanding of the program's objectives, and a willingness to accompany the students throughout the program. Program coordinators and graduate student assistants may be employed to carry out clerical duties and to assist with the day-to-day concerns and needs of participants, but should not be the principal point of contact for participants' administrative concerns.

D. Participants

Each Institute will host approximately 22 participants, for a total of approximately 66 undergraduate students from underserved communities from selected countries in Europe.

The participants will be highly motivated undergraduates from colleges, universities, and other institutions of higher education, who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied, and will include the sciences, social sciences, arts, humanities, education, business, and other fields. Every effort will be made to select a balanced mix of male and female participants, and to recruit participants who are from non-elite or underprivileged backgrounds, from both rural and urban sectors, and have had little or no prior experience in the United States or elsewhere outside their home country.

Please note: ECA reserves the right to amend or modify the list of participating countries should conditions change in the nominating country or if other countries are identified as U.S. priorities. Participating countries will be determined by ECA, in consultation with Fulbright Commissions and the Public Affairs Sections at U.S. embassies abroad. ECA also reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets based on program needs and the availability of U.S. Government funding.

E. Academic Residency Program

The Institutes should include a four-week academic residency component and a one-week educational study tour. Applicants are encouraged to design creative, thematically coherent programs that draw upon institutional strengths, including faculty and other resources. The academic residency component should be a specially designed and well-integrated seminar that imaginatively combines lectures, discussions, readings, debates, and site visits and regional travel into a coherent program.

Each Institute must provide a comprehensive **narrative** describing the program objectives. There also should be a **calendar or itinerary** of all program activities for each Institute. The overall program should be supported by a **bibliography** and a **syllabus** that indicates the subject of each class session and explains how assigned readings and other materials support the session for each Institute. The readings should relate directly to the Institute theme.

Additionally, the academic residency program of each Institute should:

- Focus on the given theme as well as on U.S. history, government, institutions, culture, and society and contribute to a deeper understanding of the United States, while at the same time providing useful skills and concepts for future leaders. The program should not simply replicate an existing lecture course, survey, or seminar designed for U.S. students. To encourage interaction with Americans, it is acceptable for applicants to create a course for participants in this program that is also offered to U.S. students for credit. The cost for U.S. students to take this course may not be included in the funding request from ECA.
- Consist of a carefully integrated series of lectures, panel presentations, seminar discussions, debates, individual and group classroom activities, and reading assignments. Sessions should be interactive and allow time for the exchange of views among participants and presenters.

- Be tailored for the particular group of foreign students and include a discussion of relevant issues facing their countries and region. Efforts should be made to encourage active student participation in the educational process. Classes should take into account that the participants may have little or no prior knowledge of the United States and varying degrees of experience in expressing their opinions. Consider that participants might have different levels of proficiency in English.
- Expose participants to a variety of presenters representing diverse backgrounds, viewpoints, and occupational fields on the topics and issues to be explored. In addition to host colleges or university faculty and professionals from the region where the Institute takes place (e.g., in government, media, religious and civic organizations), course presenters should include outstanding scholars and other professional experts from throughout the United States, as appropriate.
- Include time for discussion at each session and throughout the program to allow for questions and answers and for a collegial exchange of views among participants, presenters, and panelists.
- Include a bibliography of readings for the various program components. It should include at least one survey text or reader, as well as a number of interpretative readings directly related to the Institute themes.
- Include at least **one leadership training session per week** that should serve to both develop and enhance participants' leadership and collective problem-solving skills, and inspire participants to apply them. These workshops should be creative, highly interactive, and team-oriented. They should require input and contribution from all participants, and provide students with basic leadership skills. The award recipient may decide to recruit qualified instructors for these sessions from other organizations.
- Include at least **one hands-on volunteer activity per week** with local community service organizations to provide the participants the opportunity to experience first-hand the U.S. tradition of grassroots approaches to solving community problems, as well as additional opportunities to meet and interact with diverse Americans outside an academic setting.
- Include day trips or optional weekend excursions, designed to reinforce the academic curriculum, to various local and nearby locations, including historical sites, schools, places of worship, newspapers, etc.
- Be intensive, yet leave sufficient free time for pursuing individual interests, socializing with fellow participants and U.S. students, exercising, and relaxing. The program schedule should include adequate time for reading and preparation of class assignments. Supervised cultural and weekend activities (such as group nights at the theater, concerts, sporting events, and city tours) are encouraged and should offer the students opportunities to experience the diversity of the United States, while fostering group cohesion.

F. Study Tour

The study tour for each Institute should:

- Be an integral part of the Institute that directly complements and reinforces the academic residency program and the overall Institute theme.
- Be arranged and led by the Institute's academic director and principal staff. All staff that will be working on this component as managers or escorts should be clearly identified in the proposal.
- Be approximately one week long, including two to three days in Washington, D.C. at the conclusion of the Institute. It should include a trip to at least one other region within the United States different from the host institution's region. The agenda for these educational visits should include an appropriate mix of professional-level meetings (local, state, and/or federal government offices, international organizations, NGOs, etc.), visits to cultural institutions, and recreational activities.
- Indicate the cities or other destinations to be visited, as well as the specific sites. Day trips or optional weekend excursions to various local and nearby locations, including historical sites, schools, churches, newspapers, etc., are encouraged. Proposals should explain how the site visits and presentations included in the educational travel program relate to the Institute's academic objectives and subject matter.
- The conclusion of the program in Washington, D.C., must include a three-hour session with Department of State officials; the ECA program officer responsible for the Institutes will assist in making the arrangements for this session.

Please note: The Study of the U.S. Branch may request that the award recipient modify the academic residency and/or educational travel program. Similarly, the award recipient, in consultation with the Study of the U.S. Branch, may also wish to make program modifications. For further information regarding this program or the NOFO, please contact José Marrero in the Study of the U.S. Branch at: MarreroJA@state.gov; (202) 632-3337.

G. Logistical Considerations

The proposal should discuss your institution's and, if relevant, your subaward recipients' capacities to successfully manage these international exchange programs and should include institutional strengths, such as faculty, libraries, relevant departments, and major administrative units.

- **Housing and meal arrangements** are an important dimension of program planning and must be discussed in detail in the proposal. In general, participants should be housed on campus in university dorms or similar designated university housing. When feasible, it is encouraged to host participants with American roommates. Walking distance to daily classes should be taken into account. If possible, participants will have access to kitchen facilities, either in their own rooms or in a common room. A cafeteria meal plan combined with a cash allowance for food that will permit participants to cook or eat at local restaurants is strongly recommended. In many cases, participants may experience difficulties with American eating customs due to religious or other dietary restrictions, cultural differences, and availability of familiar foods. Institute staff should be prepared to discuss such problems with the participants and seek solutions. To the

extent permitted by budget limitations, participants should receive up to the U.S. government per diem rate for meals and incidental expenses at the various program locales. See <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/104877> for current U.S. government per diem rates.

- **Pre-departure materials** should be available to participants via an Institute website or email at least six weeks before the start of the program. For participants who do not have Internet access, your institution should make arrangements to send hard copies of these materials by express mail to the U.S. Embassy or directly to the participants, as appropriate. Program websites should be updated regularly to provide changes in the program schedule, readings, photos of Institute activities, and other useful information.
- **An administrative orientation** to the United States and to the host campus for the participants should address administrative details of the program, identify campus and local resources, review safety and security procedures, and provide general information that will facilitate the participants' adjustment to daily life in a new cultural environment. Important topics will be security, medical problems, and availability of foods to which participants are accustomed, or which meet specific dietary requirements.
- **An academic orientation** should provide participants with a concise overview of the program, including principal objectives and major themes. The academic director should also use this opportunity to discuss guidelines for class participation that encourage active participation by all class members, respect for the views of other participants, concise comments and questions that keep the students on-topic, and other ground rules that will promote effective class discussion throughout the program.
- **Opening and closing events** (e.g., luncheon, dinner or reception) should formally inaugurate the program, inviting interested college/university and community representatives and ECA staff.
- **Access to resources** should be arranged, including campus libraries, computer and internet facilities, local and national newspapers and periodicals, as well as radio and television. A formal orientation to library services should be conducted during the first week of the program, and computer training and technical support should be provided for those participants who require it.
- **Evaluations and Monitoring** should be conducted on a regular basis to ensure that academic, administrative, and personal problems are acted upon promptly. At the conclusion of the Institute, a formal evaluation session should permit participants to comment on all aspects of the program.

Please note: All participants will be required to return to their home countries immediately upon the conclusion of the program. Travel to visit family or friends elsewhere in the United States will NOT be permitted *before, during, or after* the program, including on unscheduled weekends during the academic residency period. Family or friends may be permitted to visit the participants while the latter are in residence at the host institution, at the discretion of the award recipient and in consultation with ECA, provided that such visits will not prove disruptive to the program. At no time will family or friends be permitted to accompany the participants during scheduled program activities, whether such activities are mandatory or optional. Institute staff should arrange to escort all participants to airports for their return travel, and to remain at the airport until the students have checked in and entered the security departure area.

H. Fostering Mutual Understanding

ECA's mission is to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations.

In order to promote this mission, the program should provide ample opportunities to attend informal and formal gatherings of ordinary Americans from a variety of ethnic, social, and professional backgrounds, as well as with U.S. college students. Programs should strive to include as many of the following program components as possible:

- A weekend-long home stay with a local family;
- A structured way for participants to present their country's history and culture to diverse groups of Americans;
- A peer system where international participants are paired with U.S. students for individualized recreational evening and weekend activities;
- Classes with U.S. students or accommodations with U.S. roommates, if possible;
- Informal group activities, between the participants and members of the local community; and
- To the extent possible, mentoring relationships between participants and academically-appropriate host institution professors.

I. Alumni Outreach/Follow-on Activities

Your proposal should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (with minimal ECA support) that ensures that ECA-supported programs are not isolated events. Proposed follow-on activities for alumni must reflect the goals and objectives of the program and must contribute to ECA's mission to foster mutual understanding among the people of other countries and the people of the United States. The proposal should include an outline of follow-on alumni programming (including a timeline), information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts, and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained. Examples of successful past follow on activities include, but are not limited to, structured mentoring programs, small grant competitions, alumni reunions or workshops, monthly web discussions, reverse exchanges, cooperative publications by participants and their American peers, and distance learning opportunities for alumni. Applicants should incorporate the online communities on the International Exchange Alumni website (Alumni.State.Gov) into their alumni outreach plans.

Follow-on activities should be well developed, but also remain flexible enough to allow for changes based on the needs of the participants. Alumni activities should be financed using the line item budgeted for follow-on activities as well as significant cost-sharing by the applicant organization.

Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

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)

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 ECA, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

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

Additional Information to be Submitted

- DETAILED BUDGET, SUB-AWARD(S) BUDGET(S), SUMMARY BUDGET, AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

All budget guidelines must be followed. The budget should indicate any cost sharing in the form of in-kind or cash contributions to the program from sources other than the Department of State. See standard guidelines (PSI) in the Solicitation Package for information on cost sharing and the cost of audits.

A sample budget is provided as an excel document download as part of the application package for this solicitation. Please note there are two tabs in this document, the Summary Budget and the Detailed Budget. Applicants must complete both tabs. The sample budget includes an explanation of specific budget categories and line items. Unless otherwise indicated, each of the line items should appear in the proposed budget. You are urged to be as detailed and specific as possible, adding line items if needed.

Separate budgets for sub-awardees should be included and should resemble the Detailed Budget for the award recipient.

Please be sure to include a Summary Budget on a separate page before the Detailed Budget. The Summary Budget should clearly indicate the number of program participants and provide an overall unit cost per participant, as well as a unit cost breakdown by program and administrative costs. A sample of this format is provided on the first tab of the sample budget. Please note the summary budget includes estimated cost projections for the option years of the grant. You are not required to provide a detailed budget for the option years until ECA decides to exercise the option year.

Following the Detailed Budget(s), please include a Budget Narrative that concisely explains how costs were calculated and the rationale for including them in the budget. The Budget Narrative should also explain costs for sub-awardees.

Applicant institutions should attempt to maximize cost-sharing throughout the program by enlisting the support of the U.S. private sector, including foundations and corporations. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets based on program needs and the availability of U.S. Government funding.

- CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES/ITINERARY (FOR EACH INSTITUTE)
- DRAFT ITINERARY OF THE CONCLUSION OF THE PROGRAM IN WASHINGTON D.C.

- LETTERS OF ENDORSEMENT
- RESUMES AND CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
- FIRST TIME APPLICANT ATTACHMENTS (if applicable)

Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, 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 the 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.

IV. 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 José Marrero at (202) 632-3337, Study of the U.S. Branch; Fax: (202) 632-9411; email: MarreroJA@state.gov.