

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2020 Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTILI)

Professional Fellows Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

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Key Date/Application Deadline: Thursday, June 4, 2020

Executive Summary: The Professional Fellows Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) invites proposal submissions for the FY 2020 Young Transatlantic Innovation Leaders Initiative (YTILI) Professional Fellows Program. The YTILI Professional Fellows Program will bring leaders, ages 25-35, to the United States from 45 countries in Europe. The YTILI Professional Fellows Program is a two-way exchange program designed to strengthen the transatlantic relationship, develop sustainable partnerships between U.S. and European entrepreneurs and innovators, promote regional integration and cooperation in Europe, and encourage European businesses, governments and civil society to develop their innovation ecosystems.

The YTILI Professional Fellows Program will support at least 50 emerging European business and social entrepreneurs in a series of robust program activities in-person and virtually, including an opening program in a U.S. city, a four-week individually tailored fellowship placement with a U.S. business, and a closing program in Washington, D.C. Upon the conclusion of the U.S.-based program, at least 15 American participants will travel to select European cities for a minimum one-week reciprocal exchange to assist the YTILI Fellows with implementing business action plans and projects in their communities, as well as help contribute to lasting, substantive partnerships between U.S. and European professionals. The YTILI Professional Fellows Program will also include follow-on alumni engagement activities.

It is ECA's intent to award one cooperative agreement of up to \$1,050,000, for the administration of the FY 2020 YTILI Professional Fellows Program. Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional fiscal years before openly competing it again.

Applicants may submit only one proposal under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared ineligible and receive no further consideration in the review process.

ECA reserves the right to modify the list of participating countries, and the scope of any resulting cooperative agreement with any subsequent renewal solicitation. ECA also

reserves the right to modify the composition of the final award and its funding level based upon the quality of proposals submitted, the availability of funds, and other factors impacting long-term foreign policy objectives.

For additional details on the award, please see Section B. “Federal Award Information” below.

A. Program Description:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Purpose: The YTILI Professional Fellows Program supports the following broad goals:

1. Promote mutual understanding and lasting partnerships between emerging leaders from Europe and the United States;
2. Strengthen the entrepreneurial and leadership skills of YTILI Professional Fellows so they can achieve success, grow their businesses in size and impact, and lead positive change in their workplaces, communities, and countries;
3. Provide opportunities before, during and after the U.S.-based program for the YTILI Professional Fellows and American participants to collaborate and share ideas, approaches, and strategies to develop solutions to pressing business challenges;
4. Increase Americans' global competitiveness through new and expanded partnerships with professionals from Europe;
5. Assist the YTILI Professional Fellows in identifying new resources, networks, and support for their businesses or organizations; and
6. Create a transatlantic network of entrepreneurs, business leaders, and innovators that supports entrepreneurial partnerships and continued business opportunities between the people of Europe and the United States.

For this NOFO, foreign program participants are referred to as “Fellows.” Americans participating in follow-on reciprocal exchanges are referred to as “American participants.” Employees and family members of employees of the award recipient, any sub-award recipients, contractors or U.S. government employees are not eligible to participate in the YTILI Professional Fellows Program and cannot be included as program participants.

A.1. Eligible Countries and Themes

Fellows will be business or social entrepreneurs, ages 25-35, recruited and selected from 45 eligible countries in Europe: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom. ECA reserves the right to modify the final list of participating countries and the allocation of participant numbers by country in the FY2020 cooperative agreement and up to two subsequent renewal cooperative agreements.

Proposals should address the following themes: entrepreneurship, innovation, and transatlantic connections. These include, but are not limited to, increasing trade and marketing across borders to create synergies and strengthen U.S. job growth and exports and strengthening Western government values like competition and innovation.

A.2. Outreach and Program Promotion

The award recipient will develop and manage a program website, create adaptable program informational documents and templates, and develop and manage official program social media accounts.

To ensure a strong and consistent brand identity for the YTILI Professional Fellows Program, the award recipient will be responsible for developing an outreach and program promotion plan to raise public awareness of the program, the impact of international exchanges, and the contributions of exchange participants in building long-lasting peaceful relations between the United States and Europe. Proposals should include an outline to describe how the YTILI Professional Fellows Program will be publicized, using traditional and digital technology, to reach the widest possible audience of qualified applicants, potential U.S. fellowship placement organizations, U.S. mentors, U.S. embassies and consulates, and other relevant program stakeholders. The proposal should demonstrate how the award recipient will engage with ECA and U.S. Department of State social media sites to share impact stories, demonstrate successes, amplify core messages, and connect the program to foreign policy objectives. The outreach strategy should also

include a plan to develop templates for promotional documents that can be shared and adapted by Posts.

Proposals should address the recipient's ability to develop a program website independent of the recipient organization's website. The YTILI Professional Fellows Program website should be mobile-friendly and 508 compliant under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Special attention should be paid to creating a site that describes the YTILI Professional Fellows Program and all its components in a creative, dynamic, and interactive manner. The award recipient must regularly update website content to ensure that posted material is current and engaging. ECA must approve major revisions to online materials, new strategies for website development, and modifications to program information. ECA reserves the right to request that website content be added or removed in a timely manner. The website must be mobile friendly.

All program materials, including but not limited to the YTILI Professional Fellows website, program templates, and social media content should support and reference the mission of the YTILI Professional Fellows Program. Materials should note that "The YTILI Professional Fellows Program is a program of the U.S. Department of State and is supported in its implementation by [award recipient]." When applicable, this note should include a link to the program website. Language emphasizing the role of the U.S. Department of State as the program's funder should appear prominently on all print and electronic materials and should precede any language regarding the role of the award recipient in administering the program. Publications should prominently feature the YTILI Professional Fellows logo and the U.S. flag and U.S. Department of State seal in accordance with established communication guidelines (see NOFO section "D.3k. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients" for additional information). All print and online materials provided to or created for dissemination to applicants, participants, program partners, U.S. government agencies, including U.S. embassies and consulates, and other entities must adhere to ECA communication guidelines and be submitted for ECA review and approval prior to distribution.

Proposal should emphasize ways in which technology will facilitate communication among Fellows and their fellowship placement organizations before, during, and after the fellowship placement as well as strengthen group identity and facilitate follow-on projects and alumni activities.

A.3. Recruitment and Selection

The award recipient will be responsible for conducting recruitment and selection each year of the award in collaboration with ECA and the Public Affairs Sections at U.S. embassies and consulates overseas. Proposals must demonstrate the capacity of the award recipient to conduct a merit-based open-competition recruitment and selection process for Fellows, fellowship placement organizations, and American participants for the Reciprocal Exchange component.

The award recipient will be responsible for developing **recruitment materials** including, but not limited to, print materials (flyers, fact sheets, one pagers, brochures), online content (website information, social media campaigns), and materials for outreach to stakeholders in U.S. organizations, sectors related to Fellows' professional backgrounds, and other relevant stakeholders.

Fellows

Fellows must be selected through an open, merit-based, competitive process in consultation with ECA and the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the respective U.S. Embassies and Consulates (“posts”) in relevant European countries. ECA will encourage PAS, if feasible, to be involved in participant selection and interview candidates from a slate of eligible Fellows; however, full responsibility for recruitment coordination and implementation lies with the award recipient.

Proposals must demonstrate how a diverse cohort of Fellows will be recruited, including minorities, and marginalized populations, and individuals with disabilities. Special attention should be made to the recruitment and selection of women entrepreneurs.

At a minimum participant selection criteria for Fellows must include the following:

- Citizen of eligible country; see section A.1. Eligible Countries and Themes;
- Business or social entrepreneur, 25 to 35 years old, with a demonstrated track record of at least two years of experience successfully managing an entrepreneurial venture in their home countries. “Social entrepreneur” is defined as an individual who implements an innovative solution to a pressing social challenge employing a job-creating and/or revenue-generating business model. Such social enterprises can be for-profit or non-profit. “Business entrepreneur” is defined as a person who has successfully started his or her own for-profit business and has successfully maintained the business for at least two years.
- Demonstrated commitment to develop, enhance, or lead an existing venture. During the application process, successful candidates must provide a well-articulated action plan they will work to refine and for which they will seek support during their fellowships;
- Demonstrated viability of their current ventures through indicators such as: investment to date, current or planned number of employees, profits, social impact analysis, and an overall track record of achievement in the field;
- Social entrepreneurs should have experience in one or more of the following areas: (1) alleviating youth unemployment; (2) creating positive alternatives and

economic opportunities for at-risk youth; (3) increasing social inclusion; or (4) promoting transparency and fighting corruption; and

- Demonstrated proficiency in both written and oral English.

American Participants

The award recipient will select approximately 15 American participants in an open, merit-based, competitive process, in consultation with ECA, to travel to a limited number of European countries in support of Fellows. American participants must be U.S. citizens primarily selected from those individuals who served as placement hosts for the Fellows at the fellowship placement organizations, and who had significant engagement with the Fellow during the U.S.-based program. Selected American participants should also have expertise and experience to support Fellows' action plans, follow-on projects, special initiatives, and community engagement activities. See section A.4.4. for information about the action plans and section A.4.7. for more information on the Reciprocal Exchange.

A.4. Program Components

The award recipient will be responsible for planning and administering all components and aspects of the YTILI Professional Fellows program. The program should offer a dynamic and substantive professional mentorship experience to European entrepreneurs seeking to scale an existing business or social venture in their home countries. Fellows will be given access to a network of professionals, mentors, and resources aligned to support the growth of their business venture during the program. By exploring entrepreneurship in both a European and transatlantic context, Fellows will develop the expertise to better engage in policy conversations in their home countries, across Europe, and in the transatlantic sphere.

YTILI Professional Fellowship Program Must Include:

1. A pre-departure orientation (PDO) in the Fellows' home countries before traveling to the United States;
2. An arrival orientation in the U.S. for all 50 Fellows in one city determined in consultation with ECA;
3. A four-week individually tailored fellowship placement in the United States;
4. Supplemental workshops, site visits, networking and peer learning activities;
5. At least one hands-on volunteer/community service component;
6. Participation in the closing program in Washington, D.C.;
7. Reciprocal Exchange; and
8. Networking and follow-on alumni activities.

Every effort should be made for the Fellows to engage with a diverse, wide range of U.S. citizens regarding their work and their home country, such as through community/school presentations, business networking events, media interviews, etc.

Proposals must demonstrate the ability to implement all major components of the YTIIL Professional Fellows Program. The details on each of the various components can be found in the relevant sections below. Proposals must also demonstrate subject matter expertise in the thematic areas listed below and the European region. Applicant organizations without an existing organizational presence in the target countries must identify an overseas partner (“in-country partner”) with whom they propose to collaborate. ECA and participating Public Affairs Sections at U.S. embassies and consulates reserve the right to approve in-country partners. In addition, proposals, must demonstrate capacity to secure effective and appropriate fellowship placements for the Fellows in the United States.

A.4.1. Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO)

Fellows must participate in a virtual pre-departure orientation (PDO) prior to their departure from their home country, and American participants must participate in a virtual PDO prior to their departure from the United States. The PDO should be designed to give the Fellows and American participants an overview of the YTIIL Professional Fellows Program, overarching goals, expectations of the exchange experience, cultural, logistical, and health and safety information, along with any additional resources that would assist in their preparations for departure. In coordination with ECA, the award recipient will be responsible for developing and administering all PDOs. PDOs should be interactive, and when possible, engage Posts, ECA, in-country partners, and alumni of the program. In coordination with ECA, the award recipient will develop PDO resource materials, and schedule and host PDOs. PDOs should, when possible, be held in conjunction with U.S. embassy group visa interviews/briefings.

At minimum, all PDOs should include the following:

- Overview of the YTIIL Professional Fellows Program including program goals and objectives and goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act;
- Overview of the U.S. State Department role in supporting international exchanges;
- Expectations of the U.S. Fellowship (including a review of the Terms and Conditions);
- Brief overview of what they can expect from the arrival orientation;
- Overview of Fellow action plan process;
- Expectations about the fellowship placement;
- Discussion on cross-cultural issues including day-to-day considerations of living and working in the United States, ECA guidance on sexual harassment, and U.S. business standards and expectations regarding professional conduct;
- Overview of the closing event in Washington, D.C.;
- Overview of J-1 visa regulations (including two-year home residency requirement);

- Overview of the Accident and Sickness program for Exchanges (ASPE), particularly what is covered and not covered; More information on ASPE can be found at www.sevencorners/usdos
- Travel logistics;
- Opportunities for alumni and network engagement; and
- Social media toolkit and overview of social media engagement.

At minimum, all PDOs for American participants should include the following topics:

- Overview of the YTIPI Professional Fellows Program, including program goals and objectives and the Fulbright-Hays Act;
- Overview of the U.S. State Department role in supporting international exchanges;
- Expectations of the Reciprocal Exchange component;
- Discussion on cross-cultural issues including day-to-day considerations of living and working in the host country and professional standards of conduct;
- Instructions for registering with the local U.S. embassy or consulate using the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP);
- Overview of ASPE, particularly what is covered and not covered;
- Travel logistics;
- Opportunities for alumni and network engagement;
- Social media toolkit and overview of social media engagement; and
- Opportunities to engage with the Department of State and tell the exchange story.

Proposals should include sample PDO materials.

A.4.2. Arrival Orientation

All Fellows must participate in an arrival orientation in the United States in one location, in a city determined in consultation with ECA. The award recipient will be responsible for developing a template presentation and other relevant orientation materials to ensure consistency of common program information, in coordination with ECA. Arrival orientation materials should be designed to give Fellows more specifics about the U.S.-based program and American participants specifics about their Reciprocal Exchange. Proposals should explain how the orientation will work to reinforce and build on key messages presented at the PDO.

At a minimum the arrival orientation materials for the Fellow must include:

- Overview of primary points of contact;
- Reminder of expectations (including review of Terms and Conditions);
- Details of U.S. fellowship (review of schedule of activities, including program activities and deadlines);
- Fellowship placement-specific policies and regulations;

- Details on supplemental entrepreneurship sessions;
- Discussion of Fellow action plans
- Discussion of health and safety (ASPE, emergency contacts, location of nearest clinic/hospital, relevant state laws, ECA guidance on sexual harassment, etc.);
- Overview of the host state and city (including historical landmarks, closest grocery store and pharmacy, closest houses of worship, etc.);
- Discussion on culture, diversity, and respect (including professionalism and sexual harassment);
- Networking and ways to maximize experience;
- Social media and sharing their stories as well as the exchange story;
- Overview of the YTILI Professional Fellows Network; and
- Overview of the closing event in Washington, D.C.

The award recipient should coordinate with post to schedule an arrival orientation for U.S. participants, in consultation with ECA. American participants and their counterparts should have every opportunity to engage with the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. embassy or consulate in the host country. Where possible, additional arrangements should be made for a security briefing with the U.S. Embassy's Regional Security Office (RSO). Minimally, once the American participant arrives in their host country the Fellow(s) who is/are hosting the American participant should provide him/her with a general overview of the host country and the plans for the exchange. The award recipient will be responsible for creating an outline of a guidance document/talking points that the Fellow(s) can use to orient the American participant to their home country. These documents must be submitted to ECA for approval before dissemination to the Fellow(s).

At a minimum the document should include:

- Overview of host country;
- Discussion of health and safety (safety of food and water, where to avoid, who to contact in case of an emergency, etc.);
- Cultural norms;
- Overview of Reciprocal Exchange (review of schedule of activities); and
- Review of Fellow(s) action plan (discussion of goals and expectations)

A.4.3. U.S. Fellowship Placements

The award recipient must secure, at least one month in advance of the Fellows arriving in the United States, a substantive fellowship placement tailored to the individual Fellow's professional goals. "Fellowship placement" refers to the program component where the Fellow is working in a U.S. business or organization relevant to his or her professional experience and interest. Fellowship placements are individually tailored and must be four weeks, minimum four days a week, approximately 32 hours per week. The fifth day or the remainder of the time should be used for opportunities for the Fellows to work on

other professional activities such as entrepreneurship curriculum training, site visits and networking or mentoring meetings.

Host placement organizations may include start-ups, incubators or accelerators, established small or medium-sized enterprises, small business groups, associations or – for the social entrepreneurs – non-profit organizations, social enterprises, or local government offices. Every effort should be made to ensure Fellows are exposed to core values of American businesses and social enterprises such as corporate and social responsibility, business ethics, and volunteerism. The fellowship placements should be thoughtfully chosen to provide participants with experience, networks, and resources to strengthen their entrepreneurial mindset, business skills, and opportunities for developing sustainable projects and building professional relationships with U.S. counterparts.

The fellowship placement should be mutually beneficial to the Fellow and the placement organization. The fellowship placement must provide a substantive experience for the Fellow. Fellowship placements must be developed in accordance with the Fellow's and the U.S. placement host's professional needs, and the Fellow's follow-on project in his/her home country. The placements should provide the Fellows with: 1) direct experience with the day-to-day workings of a U.S. workplace; 2) the opportunity to network and form professional relationships with American colleagues; and 3) help for the Fellows as they develop their action plans to carry-out their follow-on projects.

To ensure that each Fellow has a substantive professional experience and a primary point of contact throughout the placement, each fellowship placement organization must designate at least one person within their organization, who understands the goals and objectives of YTIIL, to serve as a host for the Fellow throughout the duration of the four-week placement.

Proposals should include how the award recipient will recruit and select appropriate U.S. placement host organizations. Proposals must demonstrate the ability to secure fellowship placements by including letters of commitment from potential U.S. placement host organizations.

All Fellows will be grouped together in teams, according to their business industry and areas of professional interest, in five to ten cities across the United States, each with five to ten members. This organization will foster cohesiveness among the Fellows, allow maximum opportunities to network, build a broader group identity, and achieve consistency in the fellowship experience. Each team will be placed in a U.S. city that has an established or emerging entrepreneurship ecosystem with strong, relevant resources for the group's area of focus (a technology-focused cohort will be placed in a high-tech center, etc.). City teams may be administered by the awardee or by sub-award recipients. City teams can be led by a business incubator, university, or other appropriate organization or individuals.

A.4.4. Action Plans

U.S. placement hosts should be willing and able to assist Fellows in developing concrete action plans for scaling up their own businesses or social ventures. Proposals should describe how the award recipient will work with each Fellow and his/her U.S. placement host on the development of the Fellows' action plan and on implementation of the action plan after the Fellow returns to his/her home country.

The action plan should support the Fellows' professional growth throughout all stages of the program and as an alumnus. Proposals should include a plan to ensure a consistent timeline for the Fellows to develop an initial action plan and work to refine the action plan during the U.S. fellowship. Proposals should include creative and thoughtful ways to incorporate the sharing of action plans into the closing program. The award recipient will be responsible for developing an action plan template that will be used by the Fellows.

A.4.5. Supplemental Entrepreneurship Training

All members of the city teams must come together during the four-week fellowship placement for supplemental workshops, panel discussions or sites visits focused on entrepreneurial and leadership skills. Workshops must provide participants with opportunities to network with each other and American business leaders and social entrepreneurs. Workshops should address cross-cultural adjustment issues and offer practical training that will help Fellows complete their action plans and achieve their individual entrepreneurial goals. Sessions must also provide participants with mentorship opportunities with business leaders in their fields of interest. The workshops for all the city teams must be shaped by a single entrepreneurship curriculum to ensure consistency of experience for all Fellows. All the workshops should be designed for experienced business and social entrepreneurs with a record of success and placed within the appropriate cultural context. Content should not be too basic or theoretical as to be irrelevant to the Fellows.

Topics for entrepreneurial trainings and workshops might include:

- Strategic planning; vision and goal setting;
- Pitching business ideas;
- Redefining business plans or canvas;
- Product development and innovation management;
- Teamwork, networking and negotiating skills;
- Website development, social media, e-commerce, digital sales and digital marketing;
- Digitalization and use of new technologies;
- Market research, sales, and marketing;

- Business growth and scaling;
- Building an online brand;
- Financial literacy including accountancy, bookkeeping, data analysis, investment methods and calculating risks;
- Access to finance and funding through venture capitalists, crowdfunding, and angel investors;
- Bootstrapping and noncommercial financing;
- Linking to international supply chains;
- International law, trading regulation, export documentation, intellectual property rights;
- Support for women entrepreneurs, including how to address barriers women face and specialized gender training for staff and participants;
- Accountability, transparency, and ethics; and
- Corporate social responsibility and social entrepreneurship

A.4.6. Closing Program

The award recipient will be responsible for planning and implementing a three-day closing program in Washington, D.C. at the end of the U.S. fellowship placements. All Fellows will convene to share lessons learned, deepen connections with one another, and meet U.S. leaders from the private, public, and non-profit sectors. The closing event should include the following aspects:

1. Opportunities for the Fellows to interact with senior U.S. government officials, business and civic leaders and members of the diplomatic community;
2. Opportunities for the full cohort of Fellows to interact and share their work and experiences with each other, both formally and informally;
3. Opportunities for Fellows to showcase their businesses and attract support and resources for their business or organization;
4. Appropriate workshops and seminars that further complement and reinforce the entrepreneurship and leadership concepts explored during the program;
5. Discussion of YTILI Professional Fellows Network and alumni follow-on activities; and
6. A program evaluation.

A.4.7. Reciprocal Exchange for Americans

The award recipient will administer, coordinate, and support one to two-week reciprocal exchanges (minimum of five business days) that enable American participants to travel to Europe to support Fellows' follow-on projects, long-term collaboration and engagement with YTILI Professional Fellows alumnae; offer skills development sessions and workshops for a broader range of local participants; and promote the YTILI Professional Fellows Program to future participants. American participants will be selected in an

open, merit-based, competitive process in consultation with ECA. American participants will be selected from those individuals who serve as placement hosts to the Fellows at the U.S. fellowship placement organizations and who had significant engagement with the Fellow placed in their organization during the U.S. fellowship period. Americans should apply collaboratively with the Fellow they hosted. The Fellow should be deeply involved in the development of the reciprocal exchange phase of the program, including the conceptualization, scheduling, and implementation of the program. Reciprocal exchange proposals that involve programming conceived in collaboration with the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate will be given priority. American participants must have experience pertaining to the Fellows' individual follow-on projects, in order to assist the Fellows in meeting their action plan goals.

The Reciprocal Exchange for Americans, at a minimum must:

- Be substantive in nature. Applications for the Reciprocal Exchange program must contain a draft schedule of proposed activities, meetings, and/or trainings that cover the duration of the exchange;
- Build on the U.S. fellowship component and support the Fellows' individual action plans and/or follow-on projects;
- Provide direct opportunities for the American participants to implement joint programming with the Fellows and their colleagues; and
- Support U.S. foreign policy objectives, and advance the goal of building sustainable and lasting professional partnerships.

Proposals should include a sample application, a timeline, and describe the selection process for the American outbound components.

The award recipient will prepare for ECA and the relevant U.S. Embassies/Consulates review a proposed slate of American participants with summary information including biographical data of participants, proposed destination cities, a draft agenda, and clear timeline for each project. The selection process must allow ample time for ECA and the U.S. Embassies/Consulates to review and approve American participants. For details on the selection criteria see section A.3.

A.4.8. Online Component

Proposals must demonstrate the applicant's ability to develop a robust online community that will have four main functions: (1) link all the Fellows and their placement hosts together virtually before, during and after the U.S. fellowship program; (2) supplement the fellowship placement and the workshops and serve as an additional source of information on how to be a successful entrepreneur; (3) provide the Fellows with a platform to showcase their follow-on projects and initiatives; and (4) serve as a source of content for success stories that can be used in reporting and recruitment. The online platform used to develop this community must be mobile responsive.

A.4.9. YTILI Professional Fellows Network (Alumni Programming)

Building and maintaining connections among Fellows across Europe before, during, and after the program is a critical part of the program's success. Proposals should include plans to create and maintain an engaged network of alumni, program participants, and program hosts. The network should advance alumni's professional development goals and interests and the Department of State's public diplomacy objectives.

The network should facilitate communication among Fellows and their fellowship placement organizations before, during, and after the fellowship placement; strengthen group identity; and facilitate follow-on/alumni activities. Content should be easily accessible via mobile app and/or a mobile-friendly web platform. The platform should have a space for alumni and participants to collaborate on projects. The network must connect all previous YTILI alumni (approximately 300) to new program participants and alumni. Special administrative access to the online platform should be granted to ECA, potential sub-awardees (if applicable), and other program stakeholders, in consultation with ECA.

Alumni programming should be incorporated into and build upon the YTILI Professional Fellows online platform and regional network. Alumni activities for the YTILI Professional Fellows Program should address ECA alumni program goals that foster:

- U.S. diplomatic mission engagement with exchange alumni;
- alumni implementation and teaching of the concepts they explored during their exchange programs; and
- on-going communication and collaboration with U.S. professional contacts established while the Fellows were on the program.

Alumni programming should be tailored to meet the needs of a diverse and highly motivated network of program alumni (Fellows and American participants). Activities can be virtual, in-person, or blended and must allow alumni to: 1) share their knowledge with broader communities; 2) enhance leadership skills; 3) expand networking opportunities; 4) engage in community service; 5) expand the multiplier effect in home institutions or communities; and 6) engage in continued professional development.

Proposals may include ideas to develop a mentoring component, offer small grants, and provide creative ways to showcase the work of program alumni at all stages of the YTILI Professional Fellows Program, including at the closing event in Washington, D.C. Programming should creatively respond to the needs of the YTILI Professional Fellows program participants and alumni, adhere to research on adult learning, be inclusive in nature, and accommodate diverse learning styles and abilities.

The award recipient will create and maintain an **alumni database** to track all alumni across the YTILI Professional Fellows Program. The award recipient will work in close coordination with ECA to transfer previous alumni data and new data collected as part of the FY2020 and subsequent renewal years. The database must be accessible to ECA and include biographical information on program participants and alumni. The program database should include functionality that allows for tracking success stories and provide statistical reports by country, theme, and year. The database must include search functionality that allows ECA to search by participant name, fellowship placement name, year, keywords, and other search criteria. The award recipient will report to ECA on outcomes and effectiveness related to all alumni activities; coordinate with ECA on alumni surveys throughout the period of the cooperative agreement; and provide information on aggregate data and outcomes of any surveys.

Alumni programming should also provide opportunities to support the long-term evaluation of the YTILI Professional Fellows Program. Proposals must demonstrate award recipient's ability to track all alumni activities, leverage resources, and, where possible, connect various initiatives.

The award recipient should also incorporate ECA alumni initiatives into their plans and communications for alumni programming, including, but not limited to, the online community on the International Exchange Alumni website (alumni.state.gov) and other exchange alumni opportunities offered by the U.S. Department of State such as small grants and professional development seminars. It is important that all alumni programs continue to strengthen a sense of identity with the U.S. government. As such, the applicants should follow ECA communications guidance for crediting the U.S. Department of State.

Proposals should include concrete plans for sustainable engagement between Fellows and host businesses and organizations after the U.S. fellowship ends. Proposals should clearly articulate how the award recipient will track and provide ECA with regular updates on successful business and social outcomes resulting from the YTILI Professional Fellows program.

The proposal should also include a defined strategy for alumni engagement with the Fellows that supports U.S. foreign policy goals. The proposal must include:

1. an outline of proposed activities for alumni engagement;
2. strategies to connect new alumni with alumni from previous years professionally, nationally, and regionally; and
3. a description of how long-term linkages within the alumni community will be encouraged, coordinated, and integrated into existing State Department initiatives.

A.5. Key Administrative Elements/Logistical Considerations

In addition to the major elements listed above, proposals must include a concrete and

detailed plan to address the following logistical considerations:

- The award recipient should work in close coordination with ECA to create **template forms** for program participants, including but not limited to Medical and Disability Accommodation Forms, a program Terms and Conditions document, and a Media Release Form, which will be signed by Fellows and American participants.
- **Housing and meal arrangements** are an important dimension of program planning and must be discussed in detail in the proposal. The award recipient will be responsible for providing housing and meals for the full U.S. fellowship. In general, during the four-week fellowship placement, Fellows should be housed in host families, in university housing, or at a nearby extended stay hotel. The proposal should indicate options for housing, including a plan to provide food options accommodating religious and other dietary restrictions. If possible, Fellows should have access to kitchen facilities, either in their own rooms or in a common area. A combination of a cash allowance for food, combined with a cafeteria meal plan, is allowable. To the extent permitted by budget limitations, Fellows may 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/perdiem> for current U.S. government per diem rates. During the U.S. fellowship, housing should be easily accessible to the fellowship placement site, ideally, within walking distance. The award recipient is responsible for providing Fellows with adequate funds to cover costs associated with **transportation** to their fellowship placements and other required programming during their arrival orientations and U.S. fellowship. The award recipient is responsible for paying for international and domestic flights for all their Fellows.
- The award recipient will prepare and issue **DS-2019** forms to all foreign participants in this program. This will consist of creating the DS-2019 forms in the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS), printing and signing the DS-2019s, shipping the forms through an express delivery service (like FedEx or DHL) to all relevant U.S. embassies and consulates, and validating the Fellows in SEVIS no later than three days after their arrival in the United States. Once packages are shipped, the award recipient will be responsible for notifying post and ECA, including relevant package tracking information. It is advisable to designate one person to be responsible for collecting the participant information required for producing DS-2019 forms. The award recipient is responsible for collecting all necessary information and documentation.
- All program participants, Fellows, and American participants must be enrolled in the U.S. Department of State Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (**ASPE**). ASPE is a self-funded, limited, health care benefit plan, administered by

Seven Corners, Inc., designed to pay covered medical expenses for eligible exchange participants while they are engaged in program activity directly related to the exchange. The award recipient will be responsible for enrolling all participants in ASPE and will produce individual ASPE cards for each participant. The award recipient will be responsible for mailing all cards to the American participants' prior to their departure from the United States and prior to the Fellows' arrival in the United States. It is the responsibility of the award recipient to distribute the ASPE cards to all program participants.

Please note: All Fellows are required to return to their home countries following the conclusion of the U.S. fellowship.

A.6. Program Dates

The anticipated award start date of the cooperative agreement will be on or about September 1, 2020. The pre-departure orientation will take place between June and August 2021. The U.S.-based program will be implemented in one cohort, to be conducted in the fall of 2021, with the cohort in the United States for approximately five weeks. The U.S. fellowship will conclude with a closing program in Washington, D.C. attended by all Fellows.

The Reciprocal Exchanges for Americans will occur three to four months after the U.S. fellowship concludes and are expected to last a minimum of one week (not including travel days).

Proposals must include a proposed timeline. ECA envisions the below timeline for some of the major components of the program as follows:

November 2020 – January 2021	Application period open for Fellows
January 2021	Initial Application Review
February 2021	Semi-Finalist Selection and Interviews
March 2021	Announcement of 2021 Fellows
April 2021	Official Fellowship Begins
June-August 2021	Virtual Pre-departure Orientation
September 2021	U.S. Fellowship Placement

October 2021	Washington, D.C. Closing Program
February-August 2022	Reciprocal Exchanges for Americans

A.7. Monitoring and Evaluation

The award recipient will be responsible for developing standard monitoring and evaluation tools. Monitoring and evaluation helps to evaluate the program’s success and impact, both as activities unfold and at the end of the program.

Proposals must include a monitoring and evaluation plan. The award recipient should develop tools to use on a regular basis to ensure that any problems are identified and acted upon promptly during the U.S.-based program. At the conclusion of the U.S.-based program a formal post-program survey should permit Fellows to comment on all program aspects. Post-program data should be collected no earlier than three days before program completion and no later than six weeks after program completion. Additionally, the award recipient will be responsible for developing a survey to disseminate and collect impact information from alumni. The evaluation should link outcomes of the program to stated program goals and objectives to ensure that all U.S.-based programs meet comparable high levels of quality in fulfilling program goals. The plan should include details on how information will be collected about reciprocal exchanges and Fellows’ individual small projects. The award recipient will be responsible for coordinating with ECA on any Alumni surveys to minimize potential survey fatigue amongst American participants and Fellows.

ECA expects that the award recipient will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, Reciprocal Exchanges and Fellows’ individual small projects, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). For detailed guidance on monitoring and evaluation, please refer to: 1) Section D.3i. “Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation” (M&E); and 2) Section E.1. “Review Criteria”, specifically for the review criterion entitled “Project Evaluation.”

A.8. Knowledge Management

The award recipient must develop a database to electronically and securely maintain all applicant and participant data, as well as alumni data. See section A.4.10 YTILI Professional Fellows Network (Alumni Programming) for more information on the alumni database. Proposals must demonstrate award recipient’s ability and willingness to work to collect and maintain all data in compliance with the U.S. Department of State’s

regulations protecting personally identifiable information (PII). All data gathered and compiled by the recipient on the program participants should be electronically transferable to ECA in a secure manner. Therefore, applicants must work with ECA to ensure that its system for collecting and storing data on participants is compatible with ECA's systems. Award recipients and any sub-awardees must be willing to provide participant data to ECA in the form requested by ECA, which may include, but is not limited to using ECA-provided spreadsheets and ECA-designed databases.

A.9. Collaboration with the Public Affairs Section at U.S. Embassies

The award recipient must work closely with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the respective Embassies in the target countries to develop plans for program implementation, including the recruitment and selection of Fellows and American participation as well as PAS staff participation in various in-country program activities. U.S. participants will likely be subject matter experts on issues pertinent to U.S. foreign policy objectives. American outbound participants may take part in public diplomacy outreach organized by PAS, thereby amplifying the impact of the exchange. The proposal should address plans for maintaining a close working relationship with posts throughout the life of the award, and creative approaches to expanding the impact of the Reciprocal Exchange component.

A.10. Staffing

Proposals must include a staffing plan that details how staff will fulfill all responsibilities. Proposals must outline appropriate staffing levels and structure to effectively implement all proposed activities and initiatives. While the staffing plan as well as titles may vary, the award recipient must designate a single person to oversee all aspects of the award and serve as ECA's primary point of contact. This primary point of contact will coordinate budget, logistical and administrative arrangements, and work with ECA to ensure a clear and consistent brand across the full YTIPI Professional Fellows Program, including the U.S. fellowship. Additionally, staff should be included in the staffing plan to support the various elements such as outreach and promotion, recruitment and selection, opening and closing events, YTIPI Professional Fellows Network, data management, and logistical support. Also see Section D.3m. Key Personnel for more details.

A.11. ECA and Award Recipient Responsibilities:

In a cooperative agreement, the Department and ECA's Professional Fellows Division (ECA/PE/C/PF) is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

ECA's Professional Fellows Division's activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

1. Participate and provide guidance in the design, direction, and execution of all program components and activities;
2. Approve key personnel and any changes that are made to award recipient staff dedicated to the YTILI Professional Fellows program staff;
3. Approve and provide input on recruitment materials, applications, program timelines and agendas;
4. Approve sub-award recipients (if applicable), partner organizations, and fellowship placements;
5. Approve the final selection of all foreign Fellows and American participants;
6. Approve decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program, including assisting with participant emergencies;
7. Liaise with Public Affairs Section staff at the U.S. Embassies and Consulates, country desk officers, and other offices at the State Department particularly in terms of recruitment, selection, web-based publicity efforts, and opening and closing events.
8. Approve the final participants from the slate recommended by the U.S. Embassies and/or Consulates;
9. Work with award recipient to publicize the program through various media outlets (such as the social media platforms of ECA and PAS), including approving all program publicity, outreach efforts, and other materials;
10. Assist in the coordination of the closing program in Washington, D.C. including arranging meetings with key stakeholders within the U.S. Department of State.
11. Monitor and evaluate the program through regular communication with the award recipient, meetings, site visits, and debriefing sessions; and liaise with ECA's Office of Evaluation and the award recipient.

Award Recipient Responsibilities will include but are not limited to the following:

1. In close collaboration with ECA, design, plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate a two-way international exchange program for at least 15 American participants and 50 Fellows, young business and social entrepreneurs from 45 European countries (Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom), that will strengthen the participants' entrepreneurial and leadership skills and provide them with opportunities to network and collaborate. ECA reserves the right to add, decrease or modify the specific countries, based on the availability of funds and other factors;
2. Provide a plan that defines the nature and extent of services required by any sub-award recipient(s) (if applicable). Note: The primary award recipient is

responsible for ensuring the compliance of all sub-award recipients in meeting the requirements of the cooperative agreement.

3. Include potential sub-award recipients (if applicable) in the original proposal and provide a letter of intent from each;
4. Develop a robust recruitment strategy that targets a diverse group of eligible individuals and adheres to ECA's goals for a merit-based open competition;
5. Identify or develop a web-based platform that can seamlessly collect and share applicant information with ECA;
6. Develop a transparent review process to assess candidate applications. The award recipient will work closely with ECA on the development and implementation of review criteria and keep ECA informed about its application and assessment process;
7. In coordination with U.S. embassies and consulates, arrange in-person or virtual English language interviews for semi-finalists during the second round of the selection process;
8. Conduct virtual pre-departure orientations for finalists in home countries, answering their questions on programmatic issues, including, but not limited to, Fellowship placements, program responsibilities and expectations, travel, accident and sickness benefits, housing, etc.;
9. Utilize the Web and other outreach tools to facilitate communication among newly selected finalists and host organizations prior to their arrival in the United States, including the posting of program and community resources, pre-program assignments, and personal travel logs;
10. Create programmatic guidelines and materials for U.S. host businesses and organizations. The award recipient should provide a virtual orientation for U.S. host institutions that clearly outlines hosting roles and responsibilities;
11. Issue participant DS-2019 forms and ship to the applicable embassies or consulates for all international participants and alternates. All international participants will travel on a U.S. government designation for the J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor program;
12. Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program, issue health benefits identifications cards, and assist with claims as necessary. More information on ASPE is available at <https://www.sevencorners.com/gov/usdos>;
13. Arrange round-trip travel for Fellows from their home cities to the United States;
14. Arrange all international and domestic travel and local transportation for all Fellows and American participants;
15. Develop an entrepreneurship curriculum and supplemental entrepreneurial training for all Fellows;
16. Monitor participants and the performance of host institutions for the duration of the Fellowship;
17. Work closely with Fellows in the design and implementation of U.S. participants' outbound travel program;
18. In close coordination with ECA, design, plan, implement, and evaluate the closing

- event to be held in Washington, D.C. for approximately 75 people, including all Fellows, program staff, speakers, facilitators, DOS and other invited guests.
19. Evaluate the YTIIL Professional Fellows Program and its impact on foreign and American participants during their fellowship program and after they return to their home countries. Evaluation plans should include how the award recipient will capture results of the Fellows' follow-on projects and how and when those results will be reported to ECA and work closely with the program office, the assigned grants officer, and ECA's Office of Evaluation to assure coordination of evaluation efforts as much as possible so as not to over-burden participants with redundant or overlapping survey instruments/questions;
 20. Consult closely with ECA on developing a comprehensive outreach strategy for highlighting Fellow achievements while in the United States and after their return home, and the program impact on American participants, including through the use of online and other social media platforms;
 21. Manage financial aspects of the program (including timely disbursement of participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, hosting agreements, and other activity costs) and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending to ECA;
 22. Submit a travel plan to ECA for approval of all proposed domestic and international travel of award recipient staff;
 23. Participate in a pre-, mid-, and post-program review with ECA (in person, by telephone, or video-conference) to identify any programmatic and/or budgetary matters of concern;
 24. Provide monthly programmatic, financial and statistical information to ECA outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the previous month and anticipated programmatic activities to be conducted in the coming month;
 25. Respond fully and promptly to ad hoc requests for program information from ECA;
 26. Ensure compliance with the terms of the cooperative agreement with ECA, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight; and
 27. Develop a post-program support plan to provide ongoing support (networking, mentorship) to Fellows for the year following the completion of their YTIIL Program.

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A1. Substantial Involvement under A. Program Description.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2020

Approximate Total Funding: \$1,050,000

Approximate Number of Awards: One

Approximate Average Award: \$1,050,000

Floor of Award Range: none

Ceiling of Award Range: \$1,050,000

Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2020

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2022

Additional Information: Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional, consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

The Department reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in participant numbers, and participating countries in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

C.) Eligibility Information:

C.1. Eligible applicants: U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit applications for this competition. Applicants must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. Please see the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

All applicants must also have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number and be registered in SAM.gov (see additional information about this requirement in D3.a and D3.c below).

C.2. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one cooperative agreement, in an amount over \$130,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) **Technical Eligibility:** All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI); non-compliance will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process:

c.) Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. **Please note:** Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

C.3. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost sharing required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution may be reduced in like proportion.

D.) Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

D.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package: Please contact the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division ECA/PE/C, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, (202) 632-3219, CainNL@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document, which consists of required application forms and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

Please specify Nalinee L. Cain and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <https://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <https://www.grants.gov>.

D.2a. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3o. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

D.3a. Unique Entity Identifier Number: You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (Data Universal Numbering System or DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a UEI (DUNS) number, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

D.3b. Required Proposal Elements: All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative, budget, and budget narrative.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should be one page in length and include: the project title, the goals of the project, the names of all potential sub-award recipients responsible for project implementation.

Proposal Narrative

In 20, double-spaced pages, the proposal narrative should include/address all items **specifically referenced in this NOFO, in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI),** and those items noted below:

Project Goals, Objectives, Anticipated Outcomes

Proposals should include a clear, succinct statement of project goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes that expand upon the YTIIL goals stated in Section A. of this NOFO. Objectives should be described in specific, measurable, and realistic terms that are achievable within the scope of the project, both in terms of time and funding.

Background Information on the applicant organization, sub award recipients, and partner organizations (both U.S.-based organizations and foreign-based organizations)

For each organization, the mission, the date of establishment, relevant expertise, past programmatic work, and ongoing programmatic work should be described. Previous awards from the Bureau (especially those involving the exchange of young professionals), including both grants and cooperative agreements, should be listed by office (Citizen Exchanges, International Visitors, Academic Exchanges, etc.), project name, countries, year, and amount. Proposals should describe previous collaboration with proposed partner organizations, as well as clearly delineate a division of responsibilities between all organizations that will be involved in the program.

A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Proposals should describe in detail the applicant organization's proposed approach for monitoring and evaluation. For further guidance, please see Section D.3i "Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation" (M&E). Detailed evaluation plans that put the narrative over the 20-page limit and sample evaluation surveys or other evaluation tools may be included as an attachment.

Budget

For more budget information including specific allowable costs, refer to both Section D.3n Allowable Costs as well as the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Proposals should describe how the award recipient will conduct budget oversight as it relates to project management. In addition, proposals must include a detailed budget narrative.

Attachments

The items below should be included as attachments. Please label each attachment in a clear and concise manner (i.e. Program Management Plan; Letters of Support, etc.).

- A Project Management Plan for the entire life of the project that lists, in table format, outputs (major tasks that will be implemented by the award recipient and partner organizations), dates, and the organization/staff responsible;
- Letters of intent from proposed sub-award recipients; letters of commitment and/or letters of support from foreign partner organizations and proposed fellowship placement businesses and organizations;
- Resumes (no more than two pages in length) of proposed key staff at the applicant organization and all proposed sub-award recipients that will be involved in the implementation of the project; and
- Draft program implementation materials including but not limited to the application for the YTILI Fellow, outline of the U.S. fellowship program schedule, the application for the Reciprocal Exchange program and sample schedule, the program announcement, the agenda for the pre-departure orientation, the arrival orientation, opening and closing events, and materials on any other key program elements.

D.3c. Required Registration with the System for Award Management (SAM): All federal award applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain a current registration in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting is completed on any issued award. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is

granted. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts. Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

D.3.d. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIS):

Prior to making a Federal Assistance award over \$250,000, the Federal agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in FAPIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313) and accessible through SAM.gov. If an Applicant is currently in FAPIS, they can comment on any information about its organization that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

D.3e. Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) Report:

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their award activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of program 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.

D.3f. Required Registration with SAMS Domestic: All ECA award recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories must be registered with the U.S. Department of State's SAMS Domestic by accessing <https://mygrants.service-now.com> and clicking the "create an account" link. SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). Recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories that have previously used SAMS Domestic as a U.S. Department of State award recipient do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Recipient Organizations and recipient contacts and signatories is available 24 hours, 7 days a week (except federal holidays), and can be reached at 1-888-313-ILMS (4567) or through the ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>.

In the event the ILMS Help Desk is unable to provide you with assistance in a timely manner, please contact ECA_SAMSDomestic@state.gov and copy the program officer associated with the solicitation.

Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

D.3g. ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA: The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this NOFO, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement) under this NOFO will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving an award under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

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

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

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-4E (Bldg. 3)
2430 E Street, NW

Washington, DC 20037

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.3h. Diversity, Freedom, and Democracy Guidelines: Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. 'Diversity' should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support of Diversity' section of this document as well as the DIVERSITY, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY section in the "Proposal Submission Instructions" document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

D.3i. Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):

A performance monitoring framework is vital to tracking the performance and the direction, pace, and magnitude of change that result from ECA programs. This section pertains to performance monitoring in particular – as this type of monitoring is distinct from grants monitoring or other program monitoring discussed elsewhere in this solicitation. Performance monitoring is designed to assess progress against established goals and objectives across the Bureau and as established for each award.

The Bureau recommends the use of a Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP) to establish your performance monitoring plans for each award. The PMP is an important part of any proposal, as it outlines how the applicant plans to track progress towards the proposed program's goals and objectives through indicators and corresponding data collection questions. These corresponding data collection questions help ensure that the data is being collected in a uniform way across the entire Bureau.

For this proposal and the resulting cooperative agreement(s)/grant(s), the Bureau recommends the applicant include the programmatic objectives and indicators listed below:

- Objective 1: Advance participant and beneficiary cross-cultural competence and global perspective
 - Sub-Objective 1.1: Promote cultural exchanges and enhance understanding between participants and their host communities
 - Indicator 1: Percent of participants reporting that their exchange experience offered opportunities to engage with other cultures
 - Indicator 2: Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the United States Government
 - Indicator 3: Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the American People
 - Indicator 4: Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values
 - Indicator 5: Percent of foreign participants expressing support of democratic values
- Objective 2: Increase the impact that participants and alumni have on their communities / countries
 - Indicator 1: Percent of participants who volunteer or give back to their host communities
 - Indicator 2: Number of hours that participants spend to volunteer or give back to their host communities
 - Objective 2.2: Foster participant's belief that civic engagement benefits communities/countries
 - Percent of participants who believe that they can have an impact on their community or country
- Objective 3: Strengthen engagement among participants, alumni, beneficiaries, and institutions
 - Indicator 1: Percent of participants who identify as a USG exchange program alumni
 - Indicator 2: Percent of participants who report increasing their network of Americans
 - Indicator 3: Percent of participants who report increasing their network of third country stakeholders
 - Sub-Objective 3.1: Alumni subscribe to platforms for resources and information-sharing
 - Percent of participants who are registered or subscribed to a U.S. Department of State platform
- Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries

- Indicator 1: Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft-skills as a result of ECA program participation
 - Indicator 2: Percent of participants reporting an increase in technical skills as a result of ECA program participation
- Sub-Objective 4.1: Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs
 - Indicator 1: Number of total participants
 - Indicator 2: Number of foreign exchange participants in the U.S.
 - Indicator 3: Number of professional placements
- Objective 5: Increase the contribution of exchange programs to local economies in the U.S., and engagement of U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions in ECA programming
 - Sub-Objective 5.3: Exchange participants support local economy during their visit
 - Amount of U.S. dollars spent by foreign exchange participants during their exchange
- Objective 8: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships
 - Dollar amount (\$) spent on monitoring and evaluation activities

ECA recommends that applicants use the indicators listed in this section as the minimum requirement for measurement. Applicant-designed objectives and indicators that are specific to the proposed program and this proposal should be added as necessary to sufficiently measure the relevant proposed program outputs, outcomes, and impact over the course of the proposed period of performance

PMPs

Please see below for a sample PMP and accompanying instructions. While ECA recommends the applicant use the format provided, this is not a requirement. However, all content present below should be included in any presentation of a PMP that the applicant submits. Successful PMPs should include the following:

- Programmatic objectives, which are statements of the condition(s) or state(s) the program is designed to achieve. Objectives are therefore bound by the resources and timeframe of the program and must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). In addition to those outlined above, the applicant may propose other program objectives from the Functional Bureau Strategy, MODE Results Framework (both found here: <https://eca.state.gov/about-bureau>) or other applicant-designed program-specific objectives. For more information on SMART see the ECA Evaluation Division's

website: <https://eca.state.gov/impact/eca-evaluation-division/capacity-building>. ECA recommends the proposed PMPs include a minimum of one programmatic objective for each goal included in the PMP.

- Performance indicators are measures used to gauge progress toward programmatic objectives. Indicators should be as specific as possible (following the SMART principles) and include any proposed disaggregations.
 - In addition to those outlined above, the applicant may propose additional program-specific indicators in the PMP.
 - ECA recommends the proposed PMPs include a minimum of one indicator for each programmatic objective.
 - Baseline data (whether collected specifically for the program at the beginning of the award or from a previously existing source) for each indicator shall be included where relevant, as well as the target number to be achieved for each indicator.

The onus will be on the Bureau to measure outcomes of ECA participants at one-, three-, and five-years after their exchange has ended to capture the long-term impact of ECA programming. Award recipients are responsible for collecting indicator data on participant outcomes only during the period of performance of the exchange itself (see the PMP for guidelines as to when these data collection efforts should occur).

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE M&E NARRATIVE

ECA recommends that there be a narrative section within the program narrative sections of the proposal that outlines how the applicant intends to measure the indicators outlined in the PMP. This will be separate from the PMP and should include but not be limited to:

- An overview of resources available to the applicant that outline the applicant's team structure and responsibilities surrounding performance monitoring
- The mechanism(s) through which surveys and other data collection tools (if applicable) will be administered, including: which platform will be used, how they will be advertised to participants and when – detailing strategies to ensure adequate survey response rates and reduce selection and non-response bias.
- A brief explanation of data analysis and reporting procedures
- An overview of proposed learning plan and feedback loops to ensure that the GO/GOR are informed on performance monitoring issues at regular intervals

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The State Assistance Management System Domestic (SAMS-D) is a database solution that serves as the official system of record for all U.S. Department of State and ECA awards. The Results Performance Monitoring (RPM) module within SAMS-D is an extension module that enables users to report performance monitoring data in the same system where they currently manage federal assistance actions. As part of ECA's efforts

to streamline data collection and management, any recipients of this award will be required to input performance reporting data outlined in this solicitation into the SAMS-D RPM. The data stored in the SAMS-D RPM will provide ECA with a bureau-wide, uniform M&E reporting tool that is already linked with other elements of the awards and that existing awardees are familiar with. There is a one-time 3-hour required SAMS-D RPM module training that designated staff of award recipient organizations will need to attend to gain access to the system. Also as part of the reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to provide ECA with the raw data for surveys in a CSV file through SAMS-D.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

Applicant Name:	Example Organization
Fiscal Year and Program Title:	FY## Example Program
Funding Opportunity #:	SFOP000XXXX

Instructions: A performance monitoring plan (PMP) describes the proposed indicators to be captured that demonstrate progress toward achieving the objectives of the program. The table below includes the recommended programmatic objectives and indicators as indicated in the solicitation document. Within this table, please provide any additional applicant-designed objectives and indicators that are specific to the proposed program that measure the relevant outputs, outcomes, and impact over the course of the award’s proposed period of performance. (Note: the placement of two rows for applicant-designed indicators is arbitrary – the applicant can add or delete rows as necessary).

While ECA recommends the applicant use the format provided, this is not a requirement. However, all content present below should be included in any presentation of a PMP that the applicant submits. Successful PMPs should include the following:

Completion: All components of the PMP are included.

Inclusion of ECA Standard indicators: Includes the standardized ECA indicators pre-populated in the PMP template and listed in the solicitation without any adapting of the definitions, data sources, collection timelines and responsible entities.

Baselines and targets: Baselines and targets are included and realistic. If there is no baseline to report, there should be a plan for how to obtain or produce the value in the future.

If the applicant chooses to include any *applicant-designed objectives* and indicators, successful applicants will include the following elements:

SMART Objectives and Indicators: Objectives and Indicators should follow SMART principles (https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/a_good_start_with_smart.pdf).

Details of indicators: All basic information of the indicators (definition, data source and question, collection timeline and responsible entity) should be included. The definitions of the standardized ECA indicators should be used as examples of what to include and the format.

Depth of indicators: Outcomes should be used where possible to demonstrate if a program is meeting its objectives. While outputs are important to understand if a program achieved what it was meant to do, outcomes demonstrate the larger effect of the program.

Indicator Structure: Ensures that the indicator does not measure multiple things (participants AND host families), does not start with a direction (“Increase” is a result, “Number of” is an indicator), and should reports numeric data (“good test results” is not an indicator)

Redundancy: There should be a clear and distinct reason for each indicator, and the indicator should not overlap with ECA standard indicators. Each indicator should be clearly linked to either an ECA standard objective or a custom objective.

Consistency with ECA Indicators: Key terms are defined the same way. Disaggregations align where appropriate, and calculations follow the same structure.

Definitions of PMP Columns

Performance Indicator: An observable or measurable characteristic that indicates the extent to which a program objective is being achieved. Specify if the indicator is an ECA standard indicator or a custom indicator.

Definition: Clarifies all terms necessary, provides details on how to calculate the data collected to measure the change expected, and includes any disaggregation (male/female; country; region; age; etc.) that needs to be reported for the indicator.

Baseline: The value of an indicator before the implementation of a program

Target: Specific, planned level of result to be achieved within an explicit timeframe

Data Source and Question: Specifies how the data will be obtained (such as a survey, observation, interview, etc.) and the **mandatory** question linked to the data collection.

When to Collect: Specifies when the indicator will be measured, for example: post-program, end of award, etc.

- A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended
- Award recipients are responsible for collecting indicator data on participant outputs and outcomes during the period of performance of the exchange itself. Any anticipated data collection that occurs post-program should include specific details of when the data collection will occur. Note: The onus will be on the Bureau to measure outcomes of ECA participants at one-, three-, and five-years after their exchange has ended to capture the long-term impact of ECA programming.

Entity Responsible: Person or entity responsible for collecting the data

Program Goal: YTILI supports the following broad goals:

1. Promote mutual understanding and lasting partnerships between emerging leaders from Europe and the United States;
2. Strengthen the entrepreneurial and leadership skills of YTILI Professional Fellows so they can achieve success, grow their businesses in size and impact, and lead positive change in their workplaces, communities, and countries;
3. Provide opportunities before, during and after the U.S.-based program, for the YTILI Professional Fellows and American participants to collaborate and share ideas, approaches, and strategies to develop solutions to pressing business challenges;
4. Increase Americans’ global competitiveness through new and expanded partnerships with professionals from Europe;
5. Assist the YTILI Professional Fellows in identifying new resources, networks, and support for their businesses or organizations; and
6. Create a transatlantic network of entrepreneurs, business leaders, and innovators that supports entrepreneurial partnerships and continued business opportunities between the people of Europe and the United States.

Performance Indicator	Definition	Baseline	Target	Data Source and Question	When to Collect	Entity Responsible
ECA Objective 1: Advance participant and beneficiary cross-cultural competence and global perspective						
ECA Sub-Objective 1.1: Promote cultural exchanges and enhance understanding between participants and their host communities						
Percent of participants reporting that their exchange experience offered opportunities to engage with other cultures	<p><u>Participant</u> - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p>	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) My exchange program’s activities offered opportunities for cultural connectedness and sharing. <i>For example: Conversations about each other’s’ countries, attending cultural events, etc.</i> [Y/N]	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	<p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value</p>					
<p>Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the United States Government</p>	<p>Participant - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”. <i>This indicator only applies only to foreign participants.</i></p> <p>Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “more favorable” about the United States Government while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) How did your views of the United States government and the American people change as a result of your program participation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States government • American People <p>Scale: less favorable, no change – my view remained unfavorable throughout, no change – my view remained favorable throughout, more favorable</p>	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	multiply by 100 for the percent value.					
Percent foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the American People	<p><u>Participant</u> - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors". <i>This indicator only applies only to foreign participants.</i></p> <p><u>Host Community</u> - A community or institution that sponsors, supports, or provides exchange programs support or services. Host communities and institutions do not necessarily directly participate in a program. Benefits to this group most often occur through interaction with the participants and/or alumni during or after the program. <i>This indicator applies specifically to the United States as the host community.</i></p> <p>Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p>	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	<p>Survey (self-reported data) How did your views of the United States government and the American people change as a result of your program participation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States government • American People <p>Scale: less favorable, no change – my view remained unfavorable throughout, no change – my view remained favorable throughout, more favorable</p>	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	<p>Calculations</p> <p>To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who respond “more favorable” about <u>the American people</u> while denominator is the total number of survey respondents.</p>					
Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values	<p><u>Participant</u> - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”. <i>This indicator only applies only to foreign participants.</i></p> <p><u>Host Community</u> - A community or institution that sponsors, supports, or provides exchange programs support or services. Host communities and institutions do not necessarily directly participate in a program. Benefits to this group most often occur through interaction with the participants and/or alumni during or after the program. <i>This indicator applies specifically to the United States as the host community.</i></p>	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	<p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>How much did participation in the program change your understanding or knowledge of the following topics?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States democracy • United States economy • Foreign affairs in the United States • Domestic affairs in the United States • United States values and culture • Daily life in the United States • Religious and ethnic diversity in the United States • Freedom of speech and press in the United States • Voluntary community service in the United States <p>Scale: no change, minimal change, moderate change, substantial change</p>	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	<p>Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations Responses to each item should be scored in the following manner: No change – 1 Minimal change – 2 Moderate change – 3 Substantial change – 4</p> <p>The response scores for each item should be summed and divided by the number of items they responded to in order to give a total question score for each respondent.</p> <p>To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents whose response value is 2 or greater while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>					
<p>Percent of foreign participants expressing support of democratic values</p>	<p><u>Participant</u>: A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below? • Voting is important because real decisions are made in elections</p>	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	<p>(ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations The values for each response are combined and divided by the total number of response categories answered, producing the average value for an individual respondent to that question. The indicator value is the percentage of respondents whose average value is greater than or equal to 4 on a 1-5 scale (respondents indicating, on average, that they agree or strongly agree); denominator is total number of respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy • An independent media is important to the free flow of information • All citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law, regardless of circumstances • The Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy • Individuals and organizations have the right to free speech and to voice opposition • Democratic principles enhance the workplace. Supervisors should incorporate democratic principles into their management practices <p>[Scale – Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]</p>	<p>participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	
ECA Objective 2: Increase the impact that participants and alumni have on their communities / countries						
<p>Percent of participants who volunteer or give back to their host communities</p>	<p><u>Participant</u> - A participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and primarily benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) Did you volunteer your time during your exchange? [Yes/ No/ My program did not offer the opportunity to volunteer]</p>		<p>Award recipient</p>

	<p><u>Volunteer</u> - To volunteer or give back means to offer one's time or services to an organization or community effort for free.</p> <p><u>Host Community</u> - A host community is a community or institution that sponsors, supports or provides exchange programs support or services.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "yes" to the question, while the denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>					
Number of hours that participants spend to volunteer or give back to their host communities	<u>Participant</u> - A participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and primarily benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors".			Survey (self-reported data) How many hours did you spend volunteering your time during your exchange? (Please note that volunteer hours do not include time spend working as part of your professional placement)		Award recipient

	<p><u>Volunteer</u> - To volunteer or give back means to offer one’s time or services to an organization or community effort for free.</p> <p><u>Host Community</u> - A host community is a community or institution that sponsors, supports or provides exchange programs support or services.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p>					
ECA Sub-Objective 2.2: Foster participant’s belief that civic engagement benefits communities/countries						
<p>Percent of participants who believe that they can have an impact on their community or country</p>	<p><u>Participant</u> - A participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and primarily benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculation To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents that responded “increased” or “stayed the same” while denominator</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>As a result of your program participation, has your confidence in the following statements changed? [Increased, stayed the same, decreased]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of society’s most worrisome problems. • I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my local community. • I feel I have the ability to make a difference in the global community 	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	is the total number of survey respondents.					
ECA Objective 3: Strengthen engagement among participants, alumni, beneficiaries, and institutions						
Percent of participants who identify as a USG exchange program alumni	<p>Alumni are program participants who have been exposed to at least 36 hours of an exchange or a cultural exchange element with the possibility of sustained networking.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year, even if they are eligible for data collection through multiple programs</p> <p>Calculations To calculate percentage, numerator will be number of alumni who answered “yes” in response to the survey question. The denominator will be number of alumni who responded to the survey question. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	<p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>Do you consider yourself an alumni of a U.S. Department of State program? (yes/no)</p>	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	Award recipient
Percent of participants who report increasing their network of Americans	<p>A <u>network</u> is an interconnected or interrelated group or system intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming.</p> <p>A <u>participant</u> is defined as a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and</p>	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	<p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>Because of your participation in the program, have you increased the number of Americans you are professionally or personally connected with? (yes/no)</p> <p>If yes:</p>	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and</p>	Award recipient

	<p>benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” to the first question item while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>			<p>I have _____ the number of Americans I am connected with (answer options: greatly increased, moderately increased, barely increased)</p>	<p>no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	
<p>Percent of participants who report increasing their network of third country stakeholders</p>	<p>A <u>network</u> is an interconnected or interrelated group or system intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming.</p> <p>A <u>participant</u> is defined as a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>Have you increased the number of individuals from a country other than your own or the United States that you are personally or professionally connected with? (yes/no)</p> <p>If yes, then:</p> <p>I have _____ the number of persons I am connected with who are from a country other than my own or where</p>	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	<p>A <u>third country stakeholder</u> is defined as a person or institution who does not have the same nationality and is not from the country in which the exchange took place or from the country of a participant of the exchange</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” to the first question item while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>			<p>the exchange took place (answer options: greatly increased, moderately increased, barely increased)</p>		
<p>ECA Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries</p>						
<p>Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft-skills as a result of ECA program participation</p>	<p><u>Soft skills</u> are qualities and behaviors an individual demonstrates to interact with others effectively. Examples include communication, listening, self-awareness, awareness of others, self-initiative, cognitive competence skills, self-confidence, resourcefulness/resilience, and decision-making and problem-solving skills A participant is a person or group of persons that</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) Do you feel that you have increased your skill level in any of the following areas as a result of participation in this program? <i>Please select all that apply.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skills • Listening skills • Self-awareness • Awareness of others • Self-initiative 	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	<p>has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who select any option besides “no skills improvement” while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-confidence • Resourcefulness • Decision-making skills • Problem-solving skills • No skills improvement 	<p>an activity has ended.</p>	
<p>Percent of participants reporting an increase in technical skills as a result of ECA program participation</p>	<p><u>Technical skills</u> are the knowledge and/or abilities to perform specific tasks. Technical skills include, but are not limited to project management, entrepreneurship, journalism, teaching instruction, science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) competence.</p> <p>A <u>participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) Have you increased any of the following skills as a result of participating in this program? <i>(Please select all that apply)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • project management skills • entrepreneurship skills • journalism skills • teaching instruction skills • science skills • technology skills • engineering skills 	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	<p>Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who select an affirmative response to the question below (any response besides “no skills improvement”), while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mathematics competence • writing skills • translation skills • other technical skill(s) <p>no skills improvement</p>		
ECA Sub-Objective 4.1: Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs						
<p>Number of total participants</p>	<p>Participant: A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”. <i>This indicator includes American, including those that are part of reciprocal exchanges, and foreign participants.</i></p> <p>Counting Frequency</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Administrative records</p>	<p>Semi-annually</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>

	Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion					
Number of foreign exchange participants in the U.S.	<p>Participant: A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”. <i>For this indicator, only American exchange participants, including those that are part of reciprocal exchanges, should be counted.</i></p> <p>Counting Frequency Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion</p>	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Semi-annually	Award recipient
Number of professional placements	<p>This indicator applies to foreign and American participants and is intended to measure the overall number # of professional placements that are supported by ECA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Professional placement: any program that places a participant into a professional setting in order to develop their professional skills through experience, these can include internships, apprenticeships, or vocational programs but should not include professional 	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant			Award recipient

	<p>development workshops or other structured training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participant or exchange visitor: A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”. Minimum of 0 					
<p>ECA Objective 5: Increase the contribution of exchange programs to local economies in the U.S., and engagement of U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions in ECA programming</p>						
<p>ECA Sub-Objective 5.3: Exchange participants support local economy during their visit</p>						
<p>Amount of U.S. dollars spent by foreign exchange participants during their exchange</p>	<p>Calculations To determine amount of U.S. dollars, participants will complete a survey question that will request participants to report the amount in U.S. dollars spent on food, travel, leisure, and merchandise during the program.</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>To be completed by the applicant</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) In the past [TIMEFRAME], how much money have you spent on food, travel, leisure, and merchandise that was purchased in the United States?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$100 or less \$101 - \$300 \$301 - \$500 \$501 - \$1,000 \$1001 or more 	<p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p>	<p>Award recipient</p>
<p>ECA Objective 8: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau’s resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships</p>						
<p>Dollar amount (\$) spent on monitoring and</p>	<p>This indicator tracks the amount expended to include salary and expenses associated with monitoring and evaluation</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Survey (self-reported data) What is the total dollar amount for your organization's expenses related to monitoring</p>	<p>Semi-annually</p>	<p>ECA Evaluation Division (Note: Award recipients</p>

<p>evaluation activities</p>	<p>(M&E) activities by ECA Award Recipients.</p> <p>Award Recipient is an entity that undertakes the work of the ECA Bureau programs, using ECA funding under a formal legal agreement. For ECA Exchange Visitor Programs, these entities are called Exchange Sponsors, which are not ECA-funded, and consist of public, private, or nonprofit entities designated by the Department of State to support persons involved in exchange program activities or events.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each Award Recipient should only be counted once per reporting period, even if they have implemented multiple programs.</p>			<p>and evaluation of ECA awards (for programmatic, non-financial reasons) for Fiscal Year 2019?</p> <p>For your convenience, we have included details below on what activities constitute monitoring and evaluation. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing program outputs and any outcomes • Reviewing web-based analytics • Data collection with implementing partners • Program conceptualization through review/reflection • Developing theory of change and/or logic models • Working with the ECA Evaluation Division • Event observation • Data collection with program participants • Site visits to U.S. host institutions • Discussions with program stakeholders regarding program performance • Reviewing grantee performance monitoring reports (Internal only) 	<p>should track this information in order to report back to the Evaluation Division)</p>
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				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International monitoring trips • Data collection efforts to measure against the FBS • Managing and reviewing external evaluations in conjunction with the Evaluation Division • Creating or reviewing evaluation data collection tools • Conducting M&E capacity-building activities for ECA implementing partners • Attending capacity-building workshops, presentations, or trainings on M&E · Research activities intended to inform program design <p>Please note: either one person can enter the information in for the costs of the entire organization, or each person responsible for an ECA program can enter the information for ONLY that particular program-- whichever is easier for your organization.</p>		
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Applicant Objective 1: To be completed by the applicant

Indicator	To be completed by the applicant					
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Applicant Objective 2: To be completed by the applicant

Indicator	To be completed by the applicant					
Indicator	To be completed by the applicant					

D.3j. Virtual Exchange Component: ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA’s existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

D.3k. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients: All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in ECA’s Communications Guidance on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.3l. Budget Format: Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

D.3m. Key Personnel

ECA recommends that the applicant identify intended key personnel positions via an asterisk (*) or other marking in the proposal budget, budget narrative, or a separate appendix. If not provided in the application, recipients must submit the names, titles, and brief biographical sketches of key personnel to the Grants Officer and GOR within 30 days of an award being issued. Additional information regarding key personnel requirements can be found in the State Department’s Standard Terms and Conditions, VI. Recipient Responsibility and Compliance with Federal Requirements (link to: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>).

D.3n. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

Travel: International and domestic airfare; airline baggage and seat fees; visas for U.S. travelers; transit costs; ground transportation costs. Please note that all air travel must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. There is no charge for J-1 visas for foreign participants in Bureau-sponsored projects.

Per Diem: For U.S.-based programming, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>. ECA requests applicants to budget realistic costs that reflect the local economy and do not exceed Federal per diem rates. Foreign per diem rates can be accessed at: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

Book and Cultural Allowances: Participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a book allowance of \$50. Interpreters should be reimbursed up to \$150 for expenses when they escort participants to cultural events. U.S. project staff, trainers or participants are not eligible to receive these benefits.

Consultants: Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Honoraria rates should not exceed \$250 per day per session. Organizations encouraged to cost-share rates that would exceed that figure. Sub-award recipient organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the prospective award recipient and sub-award recipient should be included in the proposal. Such sub-awards should detail the division of responsibilities and proposed costs, and subcontracts should be itemized in the budget. Contractors/contracting organizations may also be employed in which case the written agreement between the award recipient and the contractors/contracting organizations should be included in the proposal.

Administrative Costs: Costs necessary for the effective administration of the project may include salaries for employees, benefits, and other direct and indirect costs per detailed instructions in the PSI. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to project costs, proposals in which the administrative costs do not exceed 34% of the total requested ECA funds will be deemed more competitive under the cost-effectiveness and cost-sharing review criterion. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner and other sources. Travel of primary award recipient staff or sub-award recipient staff should NOT be included in the exchange participant numbers.

Reasonable Accommodations: Organizations should budget for the reasonable accommodations of participating individuals with disabilities. Proposals may allocate up to 5 - 7% of the total requested ECA award funds for this purpose.

Arrival Orientation: International travel to the U.S.-based orientation location; ground transportation to and from the airport to the orientation site; food and lodging for all Fellows, adequate meeting space for approximately 75 participants (Fellows, program staff, speakers, facilitators, DOS staff, other invited guests); travel from orientation to fellowship sites.

Fellowships: Lodging, per diem, transportation, and other necessary program-related expenses the Fellows may incur while at their fellowship sites.

Entrepreneurial training sessions: Training materials, trainers, meeting space/equipment rental, etc.

Closing Event: Travel to Washington, D.C; ground transportation to and from the airport to the conference hotel; food and lodging for Fellows for a two to three-day conference, adequate conference space for approximately 75 participants (Fellows, program staff, speakers, facilitators, DOS staff, other invited guests); international travel from Washington, D.C. to home country.

American Participant follow-on travel: Travel, ground transportation, lodging, per diem, for approximately 15 U.S. participants for 7-14 days in relevant European countries.

Room Rental: The rental of meeting space should not exceed \$250 per day per activity. Any rates that exceed this amount should be cost shared.

Materials: Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for fellows. Costs for high quality translation of materials should be anticipated and included in the budget.

Supplies: Applicants may propose to use award funds to purchase supplies, such as computers and printers; supply costs should be justified in the budget narrative. Costs for furniture are not allowed.

Working Meal: One working meal may be provided during U.S.-based and foreign-based components. Per capita costs for working meals may not exceed \$45/person, excluding room rental and other overhead charges. The number of invited guests may not exceed fellows by more than a factor of two-to-one.

Return Travel Allowance: A return travel allowance of \$70 for each foreign participant may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.

Health and Travel Insurance: The award recipient will be responsible for working with ECA to ensure that both foreign Fellows and American participants traveling on overseas for outbound projects are enrolled in the ECA-sponsored Accident and Sickness Program

for Exchanges (ASPE). The premium is paid by ECA and should not be included in the proposal budget. Applicants may include costs for travel insurance for both foreign Fellows and American participants in the budget.

Wire Transfer Fees: When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to foreign-based partner organizations. The primary award recipient is urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.

In-Country Travel Costs for Visa Processing Purposes: U.S. visas for Fellows are provided by DOS and should not be included in the budget. Given the requirements associated with obtaining J-1 visas for ECA-supported participants, applicants should include costs for any travel associated with procuring visas, including travel for interviews, delivering or picking up passports, etc.

Alumni Activities: Reasonable costs related to alumni activities may be included. The proposal must include an outline of any proposed follow-on activities. Proposals should also demonstrate how the recipient organization will creatively utilize technology and online networking sites to enhance and amplify alumni programming. Organizations can propose small grants or a small grant competition for the Fellows to compete for to encourage their continued work on and implementation of their individual Follow-on Projects.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

D.3o. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: Thursday, June 4, 2020

Method of Submission: Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the “Search Grants” portion of the system.

D.3p. Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures

Eligible organizations should follow the instructions available in the ‘Get Started’ portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>).

How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Applicants should read instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Applicants should check with appropriate

staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov. Organization applicants can find complete instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov

For access to complete instruction on how to apply for Notice of Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Grants.gov Support and Submission Issues

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission issues to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays

Email: support@grants.gov

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

Applicants have until 11:59 p.m., Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after the application deadline date and time will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgement of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Please also be mindful of any Grants.gov generated error messages that may appear during the application process as they may result in some documents not transmitting correctly.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "Applicant FAQs" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov. Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

D.3q. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

E. 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 U.S. Department of State's Assistant

Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1. 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. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and directly link to the goals of the YTI Fellowship Program, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should demonstrate a realistic and achievable scope that fits within the budgetary and time parameters set forth in the NOFO. Proposals that secure one fellowship placement during the exchange rather than multiple, short-term placements with different U.S. organizations will be deemed more competitive under the Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives review criterion. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how project objectives and key project elements, especially the development and implementation of individual projects by the foreign fellows, will be achieved through programmatic activities.

2. Institutional Capacity and Track Record: Proposals should include (1) the institution's mission and date of establishment; (2) detailed information about proposed partners including a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities; (3) an outline of prior awards, U.S. government and/or private support received, for programs of a similar nature; and (4) descriptions and resumes of key staff who will implement the program. The proposal should reflect the institution's expertise in the subject area and an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

3. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a fully developed Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) narrative and a PMP that includes the goals, objectives, and indicators outlined in the M&E section, as well as any applicant-designed, program-specific objectives and indicators that sufficiently measure the relevant program outputs and outcomes during the period of performance. Proposals will be evaluated for feasibility and alignment with the M&E section, including: 1) M&E resources, monitoring mechanisms, and data analysis and reporting procedures being sufficiently detailed and realistic; 2) a realistic learning plan that provides a strategy to review, understand, and incorporate M&E data into programmatic decisions and practices in conjunction with the Grant Officer/GOR; and 3) a PMP that is complete, clear, and well-organized. All submitted PMPs and M&E narrative sections will be reviewed to ensure the applicant has provided information on the minimum data required as per the solicitation.

4. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing: The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions, which demonstrates institutional and community commitment. Proposals in which the administrative costs do not exceed 34% of the total requested ECA cooperative agreement amount will be considered more competitive under the Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing review criterion.

5. Follow-on Activities/Alumni Engagement: Proposals should discuss provisions made for follow-up with returned participants as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages. Proposals also should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Emphasis should be placed on how the program will cultivate and provide support for a network of business leaders.

6. 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.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F.1. Award Notices: Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer as identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition following the completion of the review process.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements: Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB Guidance cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb>
<https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm>

F.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

- 1.) Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) shall be required at a minimum annually and no more frequently than quarterly. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the cooperative agreement year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this cooperative agreement in the U.S. Department of State's [SAMS Domestic](#).
- 2.) The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [SAMS Domestic](#), in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

In the event you are having difficulty uploading reports and the ILMS help desk is not providing sufficient assistance, please email ECA_SAMSDomestic@state.gov.

- 3.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 4.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: FFATAECA@state.gov. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3i. Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation information.)

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

F.4. Program Data Requirements: Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

- 1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.
- 2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.
- 3) All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Nalinee L. Cain, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division, ECA/PE/C/PF, SA-5, 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, (202) 632-3219, CainNL@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

H. Other Information:**Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. 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. Awards will be subject to periodic programmatic and financial reporting and evaluation requirements as outlined in the NOFO.

Marie Royce
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

April 3, 2020