I. STATEMENT OF WORK

In a cooperative agreement, the Department is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA anticipates working closely with the recipient organization to ensure that all aspects of the program model support YSEALI Professional Fellows program goals. ECA activities and responsibilities for this program include participation in the design and direction of program implementation including recruitment and selection strategies, development of publicity and program materials, creation of internet-based components, execution of U.S.-based and reciprocal exchange programming, and development of alumni strategies and programming.

A. Award Recipient responsibilities:

1. Develop a recruitment campaign that targets individuals meeting the eligibility criteria for the program, supports a merit-based open competition, and advances ECA’s diversity goals;
2. Design, launch, and support an online application tool, which is mobile-friendly;
3. Design, launch and support a mobile-friendly program website (independent of the applicants’ organizational website) to convey program information and highlights;
4. Develop and implement a social media plan, with a specific emphasis on supporting recruitment and highlighting program impact;
5. Develop a transparent review process to evaluate applicants for the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program that provides opportunities to involve Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at involved U.S. Embassies and Consulates (“Posts”) in the selection process. The award recipient will work closely with ECA on the development of review criteria and selection of applicants;
6. Arrange semi-finalist interviews (virtual or in-person) as part of the selection process;
7. Create program materials (both electronic and print) to assist finalists in preparing for their U.S. fellowship, and answer questions on programmatic issues, including, but not limited to, fellowships, fellowship community locations, program responsibilities and expectations, travel, accident and sickness benefits, housing, leadership development, etc.;
8. Conduct pre-departure orientations (virtual or in-person) for Fellows before their departures from their home countries;
9. Utilize mobile-friendly online, social media, and/or other communication tools to facilitate communication between finalists and host organizations and communities prior to participants’ departure to the United States, including but not limited to program and community resources, pre-program fellowship assignments, and leadership and professional development activities;
10. Manage and monitor subawards recipients,
11. Collaborate with subaward recipients to identify four-week fellowship placements with relevant U.S. non-profit, public, or private sector organizations, and ensure U.S. placement host organizations match the YSEALI Fellows’ area of interest with the objective of supporting their follow-on projects and the development of their Action Plans;
12. Create program guidelines and other relevant materials for U.S. placement host organizations and U.S. homestay hosts. The recipient organization should host a virtual orientation, in collaboration with subaward recipients, for U.S. placement host organizations and U.S. homestay hosts that clearly outlines hosting roles and responsibilities.
13. Develop and support communication platforms and systems to share resources and facilitate communication among U.S. placement organizations, YSEALI Fellows, and as possible the greater YSEALI Professional Fellows network of alumni;
14. Develop and support concrete strategies to facilitate U.S. placement host engagement in and support for the YSEALI Program and related activities;
15. Create opportunities for YSEALI Fellows’ to develop professional affiliations in U.S. communities;
16. Conduct a comprehensive arrival orientation for YSEALI Fellows at the start of their U.S. fellowship;
17. Develop and implement a system for monitoring the health, safety, and welfare of the Fellows;
18. Develop and integrate a leadership and professional development curriculum to support the YSEALI Fellows;
19. Craft a comprehensive outreach and social media strategy that amplifies YSEALI Professional Fellows Program goals, supports host engagement, highlights participant and alumni achievements, collaborative projects, and new initiatives;
20. Conduct YSEALI Fellows Forums (YFF) at the conclusion of each Spring and Fall cohort in Washington, D.C.;
21. Promote and support YSEALI Fellows development of their Action Plans and implementation of their follow-on projects after their U.S.-based exchange;
22. Provide reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities who may be selected for participation in the program as a YSEALI or U.S. Fellow. Proposals should allocate up to 5% of the total requested ECA award funds for this purpose;
23. Develop and implement a Fellow monitoring plan, with an emphasis of the health, safety, and welfare of the Fellows;
24. Evaluate the program and its impact on the participants, host organizations, host families, and participants’ communities;
25. Develop and implement alumni programming and related activities that supports the goals of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program, and engages Posts, YSEALI Fellows, U.S. Fellows, and U.S. placement hosts;

26. Arrange and cover the cost of all appropriate program-related travel for YSEALI Fellows, U.S. Fellows, and alumni participating in collaborative projects, including but not limited to transportation, lodging, and meals and incidental expenses, etc.;

27. Manage financial aspects of the program including timely disbursement of participant stipends, housing allowances, etc. and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending to ECA;

28. 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 provide instructions on host claim forms. More information on ASPE is available at www.usdos.sevencorners.com;

29. Issue DS-2019 forms for international participants and alternates. All international participants will travel on a U.S. government designation for the J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor program.

30. Participate in regular program reviews with ECA (in person or by telephone) that provide general updates on program implementation and matters of concern including but not limited to a review of the effectiveness of past activities, progress on anticipated programmatic activities, and issues that may impede the implementation of planned programming;

31. Respond fully and promptly to requests for program or statistical information from ECA, including but not limited to providing information through ECA-supplied spreadsheets and databases; and

32. 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.

B. U.S. Department of State responsibilities:

1. Participate in the design and direction of all program activities. As needed, ECA will provide guidance in the execution of all program components;

2. Approve key personnel, subaward recipients, contractors, and in-country partners;

3. Approve program materials (both electronic and print), agendas, schedules, and timelines;

4. Approve the final selection of participants and U.S. fellowship placement organizations;

5. Assist with SEVIS-related and ASPE issues;

6. Approve decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program, and assist as needed with participant emergencies;

7. Liaise with relevant U.S. embassies and country desk officers at the State Department regarding issues, including but not limited to recruitment and selection, web-based publicity efforts, and D.C.-based closing events;

8. Review and approve program staff travel plans;

9. Work closely with the recipient organization to share program successes and publicize the program through various media outlets and ECA and Posts’ social media platforms; and

10. Monitor and evaluate the program as necessary through site visits or debriefing sessions.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES
A. Overview

In support of the Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative (YSEALI) the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of the FY 2020 YSEALI Professional Fellows Program focusing on the themes of Civic Engagement, Economic Empowerment, Governance and Society, and Sustainable Development and the Environment. The program will consist of eight Professional Fellows Program Institutes, with one Institute in each theme conducted in each cohort (four Institutes in the Spring and four Institutes in the Fall). Proposals should provide a full, detailed, and comprehensive narrative describing how the applicant and subaward recipients will achieve the goals of the program. Draft agendas and schedules related to each Institute should be included in the proposal. They should identify the proposed location for each Institutes’ arrival orientation and integrated professional study tour. They should also contain details about proposed activities, including but not limited to proposed speakers and site visits. Proposals will be reviewed under the criteria in section E.1. of the NOFO.

B. Program Administration

Applicants must discuss their capacity to successfully manage international exchange programs, including institutional strengths such as experience, relevant departments, and major administrative units. Proposals should include a staffing pattern that details how staff will fulfill all responsibilities. The staffing plan as well as titles may vary; however, the following positions must be designated. The award recipient should designate a Program Director to oversee and coordinate all program elements, including all eight of the Institutes and the two YSEALI Fellows Forums. The Program Director will coordinate logistical and administrative arrangements to ensure an appropriate level of continuity and consistency among the various Institutes, serve as the principal liaison between ECA and the subaward recipients, and serve as ECA’s primary point of contact. The Program Director will be required to attend a briefing in Washington, D.C. tentatively scheduled for summer of 2020, pending final award approval.

The award recipient should also designate an Institute Director for each Institute subaward recipient. The Institute Director should be involved with YSEALI Professional Fellows Program application review process, identify and coordinate fellowship placements, and ensure the continuity, coherence, and integration of all common program activities and elements. The Institute Director will also plan and implement the Institute’s program activities, oversee day-to-day management of the Institute, monitor the Institute’s program participants and hosts, and assist in the promotion and development of the Reciprocal Exchange Program for Americans. Other staff may be incorporated as appropriate. Each Institute Director should attend each YSEALI Fellows Forum.

Special note: Applicant organizations and subaward recipients may choose to incorporate “cultural ambassadors” to support Institute programming. Cultural ambassadors should be U.S. citizens with a professional background related to the Institute theme, who exhibit cultural sensitivity, and understand the program’s objectives. At Institute locations with small groups of YSEALI Fellows, the cultural ambassadors may be utilized to help arrange community service projects, cultural excursions, and home hospitality experiences.
C. Participants

**YSEALI Fellows** - The YSEALI Professional Fellows Program will support a minimum of 200 mid-level, emerging leaders from the 10 ASEAN countries (Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) and Timor-Leste. The primary award recipient will be involved with the recruitment and selection process.

At a minimum, the selection criteria for YSEALI Fellows include the following:

- be a citizen of the eligible country for which the applicant is applying (Note: Citizens of eligible countries residing in a different eligible country due to specific geo-political reasons may apply and will be considered by the Department of State on a case-by-case basis);
- be an emerging leader in government, civil society, or the private sector who has demonstrated expertise pertaining to the respective theme under which he/she is applying;
- be mid-level professional, 25 to 35 years old at the time of application, who is currently employed and has two or more years of relevant professional work experience;
- demonstrate proficiency in both written and oral English. Applicant must have a “working-level knowledge of English” that has been verified by the award recipient or post;
- be self-directed and able to work effectively in a cross-cultural setting;
- identify an objective/project of his/her own selection that the applicant would like to achieve/complete in his/her home workplace or community; and
- show genuine interest in developing an Action Plan to meet a specific objective/complete a specific project through their participation in the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program.

The YSEALI Fellows will be assigned, based on their area of interest and follow-on project, to one of eight Institutes occurring during the program (one in each of the four themes occurring in the Spring and one in each of the four themes occurring in the Fall). Each Institute will support a minimum of 25 YSEALI Fellows, with each Institute accommodating at least one YSEALI Fellow representing each of the 10 ASEAN countries and Timor-Leste.

**U.S. Fellows** – The YSEALI Professional Fellow Program will support a minimum of 50 U.S. Fellows. U.S. Fellows will be working professionals who either hosted, or had substantive engagement with, the YSEALI Fellows during their U.S.-based program. U.S. Fellows must be U.S. citizens who are interested in supporting the YSEALI Fellows’ Action Plans. The primary award recipient will be responsible for identifying, in partnership with Institute subward recipients, YSEALI Fellows and U.S. Fellows candidates who are interested in further collaboration in the YSEALI Fellows’ home country.

D. Projected Program Timeline

ECA envisions the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program calendar as follows:

- **September 1 – October 31, 2020:** Application period opens. Recruitment of YSEALI Fellows for the Spring and Fall 2021 U.S.-based exchange program;
• **November 2020 – February 2021**: YSEALI Fellow selection and securing of individually-tailored fellowship placements for the Spring 2021 U.S.-based exchange program;  

• **April – May 2021**: Travel by the YSEALI Fellows for the first U.S.-based exchange program, which will take place in Spring 2021 and will include four Institutes (one on each of the four themes: Civic Engagement, Economic Empowerment, Governance and Society, and Sustainable Development and the Environment). **Travel should be carefully planned around the Spring 2021 YSEALI Fellows Forum in Washington, D.C., to take place from Thursday, May 13 to Friday, May 14, 2021, with arrival in D.C. no later than Wednesday, May 12, 2021;**  

• **June – July 2021**: Confirming YSEALI Fellow selections and securing of individually-tailored placements for the Fall 2021 U.S. Program;  

• **Late Spring/early Summer 2021**: Begin planning for the U.S. Fellows who will travel abroad on the first Reciprocal Exchange for Americans, as a follow-up to the Spring 2021 U.S.-based exchange program;  

• **Summer/Fall 2021**: Travel by the U.S. Fellows on the first Reciprocal Exchanges for Americans. Continue planning for the YSEALI Fellows to travel to the United States for the Fall 2020 U.S.-based exchange program;  

• **September – October 2021**: Travel by the YSEALI Fellows for the second U.S.-based exchange program, which will take place in Fall 2021 and will include four Institutes (one on each of the four themes: Institutes on Civic Engagement, Economic Empowerment, Governance and Society, and Sustainable Development and the Environment). **Travel should be carefully planned around the Fall 2021 YSEALI Fellows Forum in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, to take place from Thursday, October 14 to Friday, October 15, 2021, with arrival in D.C. no later than on Wednesday, October 13, 2021;**  

• **Fall 2021**: Begin planning for the U.S. Fellows who will travel abroad on the second Reciprocal Exchange for Americans, as a follow-up to the Fall 2021 U.S.-based exchange program; and  

• **Winter 2021/Spring 2022**: Travel by the U.S. Fellows on the second Reciprocal Exchanges for Americans.  

**E. Program Promotion and Outreach**  

In order to ensure a strong and consistent brand identity for the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program, the primary award recipient will be responsible for developing an outreach and program promotion plan to raise public awareness of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program, the impact of international exchanges, and
the contributions of exchange participants in building long-lasting peaceful relations between the United States and Southeast Asia. Proposals should include an outline to describe how the YSEALI 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. host families, 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 YSEALI 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 YSEALI 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.

**Special Note:** All program materials, including but not limited to the YSEALI Professional Fellows website, program templates, and social media content should support and reference the mission of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program. Materials should note that “The YSEALI 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 Professional Fellows Program and YSEALI logos 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.

**F. Recruitment and Selection**

The primary award recipient, in collaboration with Posts, Institute subaward recipients, and in-country partners, will be responsible for recruitment and selection of YSEALI Professional Fellows. The primary award recipient will work with ECA to ensure that recruitment materials make clear the primary purpose and audience for key messages, and include specific strategies for attracting well-qualified and diverse applicants involved in activities related to the four program themes. All aspects of diversity included in ECA’s Diversity Statement should be addressed in the recruitment plans including, where applicable, geographic, racial, ethnic, age, religious, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

The primary award recipient will be responsible for developing adaptable marketing materials (including, but
not limited to country and theme specific social media campaign content, and digital and/or print materials), an online application system (which will be linked to the program website), and a standard scoring rubric and system to aid in the consistency of selection of all YSEALI Professional Fellows.

Proposals should include detailed plans outlining how the primary award recipient will collaborate with ECA, Posts, Institute subaward recipients, and in-country partners in all recruitment and selection efforts. The plans should delineate each partner’s roles, contain recruitment and selection timelines, and indicate how participant information will be shared with Institute subaward recipients. Primary award recipients will be the primary point of contact for all communications with Posts regarding the selection process and must be involved in all candidate interviews.

Required Elements for YSEALI Fellows selection:

1. Technical eligibility review of all applicants;
2. All applications must be read and scored using a standard scoring rubric. Each application must be read and scored by three reviewers;
3. Once applications have been reviewed and scored, all proposed semi-finalist candidates must be sent to the assigned ECA Program Officer for approval and then sent to post, copying ECA;
4. The primary award recipient will work with Posts to identify a slate of potential finalists; and
5. Finalist slates must be sent to ECA for final approval.

Special note: Applicants without an existing organizational presence in the target country must identify at least one overseas (in-country) partner with whom they propose to collaborate in each eligible Southeast Asian country. In-country partners should assist with program recruitment efforts. In-country partners may also assist with the coordination of candidate interviews, visa interviews, and the Reciprocal Exchanges for Americans. ECA and participating Public Affairs Sections at U.S. embassies reserve the right to approve in-country partners.

G. Leadership and Professional Development Curriculum

The primary award recipient will be responsible for the development of a leadership and professional development curriculum to support the broader goals of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program. The curriculum should enhance the U.S.-based exchange, augment what YSEALI Fellows learn at their fellowship placements, and contribute to the development of a global professional network. The leadership and professional development curriculum should be appropriate to adult professionals and accommodate individuals with disabilities.

The leadership and professional development curriculum should focus on: 1) professional development in management, community action, and building resilient communities; 2) storytelling and communications; and 3) media literacy/countering disinformation. Applicants should also feel free to propose additional leadership and professional development curriculum topics that align with YSEALI Professional Fellows Program goals.

Applicants should consider incorporating the leadership and professional development curriculum into
program elements scheduled to occur before, during, and after the U.S.-based exchange, including the YFF. Applicants are also encouraged to use online platforms to deliver the leadership and professional development curriculum content to the YSEALI Professional Fellows. If utilizing online platforms, applicants should identify alternative mechanisms for delivering curriculum content in the event some YSEALI Fellows are unable to access the primary platform.

H. Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO)

All participants must participate in a virtual pre-departure orientation (PDO) prior to their departure from their home country for YSEALI Professional Fellows, and prior to their departure from the United States for U.S. Fellows. The PDO should be designed to give the YSEALI Professional and U.S. Fellows an overview of the YSEALI 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. PDOS should be interactive, and when possible, engage Posts, Institute subaward recipients, in-country partners, and alumni of the program. In coordination with ECA, the primary 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 for YSEALI Professional Fellows should include the following:

- Overview of the YSEALI 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.-based exchange program (including a review of the Terms and Conditions);
- Overview of and introduction to the leadership and professional development curriculum including time to work on introductory modules;
- Overview of YSEALI 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, including ECA guidance on sexual harassment, and U.S. business standards and expectations regarding professional conduct;
- Overview of the YSEALI Fellows Forum;
- Overview of J-1 visa regulations (including two-year home residency requirement);
- Overview of the accident and sickness health benefits program (ASPE), particularly what is covered and not covered;
- Travel logistics;
- Opportunities for alumni and network engagement; and
- Social media toolkit and overview of social media engagement.

At minimum, all PDOS for U.S. Fellows should include the following topics:

- Overview of the YSEALI 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, including 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.

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

I. Professional Fellows Institutes

The U.S.-based exchange program will be comprised of eight Institutes. Institutes will be organized by theme, with each theme referenced in NOFO section “A.3 Professional Fellow Institute Themes.” One Institute in each theme will be conducted in Spring 2021 (four total) and in Fall 2021 (four total). Each Institute should support at least 25 non-U.S. Fellows and be comprised of YSEALI Fellows representing each eligible Southeast Asian country.

The primary award recipient will plan and implement two Institutes (one in Spring 2021, one in Fall 2021) related to a single theme. The primary award recipient will also manage and oversee three subaward recipients, who will each support two Institutes (one in the Spring, one in the Fall) under a single theme.

Proposals must demonstrate the thematic and regional expertise of the primary award recipient and the subaward recipients implementing the Institutes, as applicable.

Program activities during the U.S.-based exchange program should, if possible, include a volunteer or community service element and meetings with Congressional and/or local government representatives. Also, every effort should be made for the YSEALI 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, professional networking events, media interviews, etc.

Each Institute must include the following components:

Arrival Orientation with Integrated Professional Study Tour - All YSEALI Fellows must participate in
their Institute’s arrival orientation once they arrive in the United States. The arrival orientation should build upon information covered during the YSEALI Fellows’ pre-departure orientation (PDO). To be held in conjunction with the arrival orientation, the Professional Study Tour is an opportunity to provide YSEALI Fellows with an improved understanding of U.S. policies and practices, as well as introduce the Fellows to key expert and organizations, related to their specific Institute theme. Possible Professional Study Tour activities may include, but are not limited to guest speakers, panel discussions and/or site visits.

Applicants and their sub-award recipients are encouraged to identify arrival orientation and integrated professional study tour locations outside the Washington, DC metropolitan area as a means to promote program efficiencies, access key U.S. professional networks and organizations, and ensure geographic diversity. Institutes on a single theme may also vary location between Spring and Fall cohorts.

At minimum, the arrival orientation under each Institute should include:

- Overview of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program including program goals and objectives, the Fulbright-Hays Act; and the role of cultural ambassadors;
- Overview of the U.S. State Department role in supporting international exchanges;
- Overview of primary points of contact;
- Reminder of expectations (including review of Terms and Conditions);
- Details of U.S. based exchange (review of schedule of activities, including program activities and deadlines);
- Fellowship placement-specific policies and regulations;
- Details on leadership development sessions;
- Fellow Action Plans;
- Discussion of health and safety (details on who they need to contact in case of an emergency, using ASPE, where the closest clinic and hospital is located, any specific state laws they should be aware of, 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.);
- Culture, diversity, and respect in the U.S. work place (including discussion on professionalism and sexual harassment);
- Networking and ways to maximize their experience;
- Social media and sharing their story and the exchange story; and
- Overview of YSEALI Fellows Forum.

Proposals should include sample arrival orientation materials, and draft Professional Study Tour agendas and schedules for each Institute.

Fellowship Placement - “Fellowship placement” refers to the program component where the YSEALI Fellow is working in a U.S. office 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 32-40 hours per week. The fifth day or the remainder of the time up to eight hours per week can be programmed at the discretion of the primary award recipient, in collaboration with the Institute’s subaward recipient(s) where applicable. The time should be used for opportunities for the Fellows to work on other professional activities such as leadership and professional development curriculum training, site visits and networking meetings. All cultural programming during the fellowship placement component should be scheduled on evenings and/or weekends.

The fellowship placement should be mutually beneficial to the YSEALI Fellow and the U.S. placement host organization. The fellowship placement must provide a substantive experience for the Fellow. Fellowship placements must be developed in accordance with the Fellow’s and U.S. placement host’s professional needs, and the Fellow’s follow-on project in his/her home country, which the Fellow will identify during the recruitment and selection process. The fellowship placement should provide the YSEALI Fellows direct experience with the day-to-day workings of a U.S. organization and the opportunity to network and form professional relationships with American colleagues. The experience and relationships that YSEALI Fellows gain through their fellowship placements should help them to develop their Action Plans and carry-out their follow-on projects upon their return home.

The locations of fellowship placements should be diverse in geographic scope. The primary recipient, in collaboration with the Institutes’ subaward recipients, is encouraged to pair or cluster fellowship placements within the same community/metropolitan area; however, no more than five YSEALI Fellows may be placed any one community/metropolitan area during any given Spring or Fall cohort. The primary recipient, in collaboration with the Institutes’ subaward recipients, should also continuously work to incorporate new U.S. placement hosts into the program. At least two-thirds of any given cohort should be comprised of U.S. placement hosts who have not served as hosts in the previous two program cohorts. The primary award recipient, in collaboration with the Institutes’ subaward recipients, should not place more than one YSEALI Fellows at the same at a U.S. placement host organization without strong justification. Applicants that propose to secure one fellowship placement for each YSEALI Fellow 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 include how the primary and subaward award recipients will recruit and select appropriate U.S. placement host organizations under the Institute themes that each is supporting. Proposals must demonstrate the ability to secure fellowship placements by including letters of commitment from potential U.S. placement host organizations.

Fellowship placements must be sent to ECA for review and approval no later than four weeks in advance of the U.S.-exchange program.

Special note: The primary award recipient must arrange for the YSEALI Fellow and the U.S. placement host to connect at least one time, either by email or virtually/over the phone, prior to the YSEALI Fellow's arrival in the United States. The purpose of the pre-arrival discussion is for the U.S. placement host and Fellow to discuss their mutual goals and expectations for the placement, and for the host to
introduce their organization and what to expect. This will also be an opportunity for the YSEALI Fellow to discuss the goals of his/her follow-on project. Connections between the YSEALI Fellow and the U.S. placement host should be made immediately after ECA approves the fellowship placement.

J. YSEALI Fellows Forum (YFF)

The U.S.-based program concludes with the YSEALI Fellows Forum, a program-wide conference at the conclusion of the Institutes that brings together all the YSEALI Fellows for further networking and knowledge sharing.

As the capstone event of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program, each YFF will:

- Promote active engagement among YSEALI Fellows, encouraging the Fellows to interact and share their work and experiences with each other, both formally and informally;
- support planning around YSEALI Fellows’ Action Plans;
- provide opportunities for Fellows to reflect on how their U.S. experiences that can translate into actionable projects in their home communities and workplaces;
- offer YSEALI Fellows exposure to speakers and workshops that further their professional competencies, including but not limited to activities related to the leadership and professional development curriculum;
- Allow YSEALI Fellows the opportunity to interact with senior U.S. government, business, and civic leaders, members of the diplomatic community, and other ECA exchange program alumni; and
- Address alumni follow-on activities, in consultation with ECA and other U.S. government agencies.

Proposals should outline how the goals and objectives of the YFF will be integrated into all activities, propose possible workshop themes and sessions, and discuss how the YFF will support the exchange of ideas between participants and invited guests. Proposals should include opportunities to showcase the Fellow’s work and advance U.S. Department of State strategic priorities in core areas. Special attention should be paid to incorporating adult learning styles into the YFF design. The YFF should have a strong focus on leadership, community development, and civic engagement. Proposals should discuss how the use of mobile and web-based applications will be thoughtfully and creatively integrated into the YFF design to ensure maximum opportunities for networking, collaboration, and learning.

Proposals should reflect a program design that builds on the themes of the Institutes. Proposals must demonstrate the ability to engage a diverse group of program participants who are involved in different thematic areas.

Each YFF should conclude with a program-wide closing event such as a reception or banquet for approximately 150 attendees, which would include at least 100 YSEALI Fellows and select invitees.

The primary award recipient is responsible for the overall design and implementation of the YFF and must work in close cooperation with ECA to coordinate this event. Effective management of this high-profile event is essential to the overall success of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program.
K. Follow-on Projects and Action Plans

All major elements of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program should identify and support the YSEALI Fellows’ follow-on projects, through their Action Plans. The recruitment and selection process should provide YSEALI Fellows with an opportunity to identify and discuss challenges they are hoping to address through their participation in the program. The leadership and professional development curriculum, and the fellowship placements, should then expose the YSEALI Fellows to information, resources, and tools that will enable them to develop an Action Plan for addressing their specific challenge. The primary award recipient will develop an Action Plan template and ensure the Fellows complete their Action Plans by the end of their U.S.-based exchange. Action plans should serve as the basis for the Reciprocal Exchange Program for Americans and be supported through alumni engagement efforts.

I. Reciprocal Exchange for Americans

The Reciprocal Exchange component allows an opportunity for an American to travel to the YSEALI Fellow’s home country to support the YSEALI Fellow’s individual Action Plan and contribute to the achievement of program goals. The exchange must be at least one week in duration (excluding travel days). Additionally, in locations where it is not safe for an American to travel, virtual exchanges should also be considered.

American participants for the Reciprocal Exchange will be identified by the primary award recipient in collaboration with ECA in an open, merit-based, competitive process. U.S. Fellows must be U.S. citizens who had significant engagement with a YSEALI Fellow during the U.S.-based exchange and who are primarily selected from those individuals who served as a placement host for a YSEALI Fellows at a fellowship placement organization. The YSEALI Fellow must take an active role in the American participant’s Reciprocal Exchange application process. Americans should apply collaboratively with the YSEALI Fellow they hosted. The YSEALI Fellow should be the primary person responsible for the development of the Reciprocal Exchange, including the conceptualization, scheduling, and implementation of the exchange, and assist with the coordination of logistical arrangements for the U.S. Fellow.

The Reciprocal Exchange should be substantive in nature. It must build on the U.S.-based exchange, allow the U.S. Fellow to conduct joint programming with the YSEALI Fellows and their colleagues, directly support U.S. public diplomacy objectives, and advance the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program goals of building sustainable and lasting professional partnerships.

The primary recipient will be responsible for developing selection criteria and a scoring rubric and system for the Reciprocal Exchanges. A minimum of six U.S. Fellows’ Reciprocal Exchanges should be connected to each Institute.

Once ECA approves a Reciprocal Exchange, the primary award recipient will be responsible for sharing
key program information with Posts including bios, the exchange objective, the proposed dates, and travel destinations. Draft program books should be sent to ECA for review six weeks before the program start date. The final program book is due to ECA for approval no later than two weeks before the program. Program books must identify the purpose and objective of each proposed activity.

Proposals should describe how the primary award recipient will meet the requirements of the Reciprocal Exchange component and work collaboratively with the subaward recipients to support the Reciprocal Exchanges.

Due to the Reciprocal Exchange component’s emphasis on reinforcing relationships established during the U.S.-based exchange, and supporting the YSEALI Fellows to implement their follow-on projects through their Action Plans, most Reciprocal Exchange programming should support individual U.S. Fellow’s travel, rather than groups of U.S. Fellows travelling at the same time.

**Special note:** It is important that all proposed Reciprocal Exchange program schedules are reviewed by ECA and Posts a minimum of six weeks prior to the start of any U.S. Fellow travel, so that Posts have the opportunity to request that U.S. Fellows take part in their local public diplomacy outreach programming. Many U.S. Fellows will be experts on issues pertinent to various U.S. foreign policy objectives in the respective country. U.S. Fellows that take part in public diplomacy outreach can greatly complement Post programs, thereby enhancing the exchange’s impact and value to Posts. Proposals should address plans for maintaining a close working relationship with Posts throughout the life of the award.

M. Alumni Engagement

Building and maintaining connections among Fellows before, during, and after the program is a critical part of the program. Proposals should include plans to create and maintain a network of alumni and program participants through creative and engaged alumni programming that ensures that ECA-supported programs are not isolated events.

Alumni activities for the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program should address ECA alumni program goals that foster:

- U.S. diplomatic mission engagement with exchange alumni;
- ongoing examination of the themes explored during their exchange programs; and
- on-going communication and collaboration with U.S. 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. Activities can be virtual, blended, or in-person, and must allow alumni to: 1) share their knowledge with broader communities; 2) enhance leadership skills; 3) provide opportunities to continue to network with and mentor each other; 4) engage in community service; 5) expand the multiplier effect of the program in home organizations or communities; and 6) engage in continued professional
development.

Proposals may include ideas to develop a mentoring component, offer small grants to support YSEALI Fellows’ follow-on projects, and/or provide creative ways to showcase the work of program alumni at all stages of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program, especially at the YFF. Alumni programming should be creative in responding to the needs of the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program alumni that is in keeping with the research on adult learning, is inclusive in nature, and accommodates a range of diverse learning styles and individual abilities.

N. Logistical and Administrative Support

In addition to the elements listed above, proposals should discuss how applicants will address the following logistical considerations:

*Template and Form Development:* The primary award recipient will create program form templates, including but not limited to Medical and Disability Accommodation Forms, program Terms and Conditions, and Media Release Forms. The primary award recipient will ensure forms, if applicable, are signed by all YSEALI and U.S. Fellows, and notify ECA of any potential issues or concerns.

*DS-2019s Processing:* The primary award recipient will issue DS-2019 forms to all non-U.S. participants in this program. This will consist of creating the forms in SEVIS, as well as printing, signing, and shipping the forms to Posts. Once form packages are shipped, the primary award recipient will be responsible for notifying Post and ECA, including by emailing them relevant package tracking information. DS-2019s forms must be shipped to Posts no later than nine weeks before YSEALI Fellows travel to the U.S.

*ASPE Processing:* The primary award recipient will enroll all YSEALI Fellows and U.S. Fellows 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 primary award recipient will also produce and disseminate individual ASPE cards for each Fellow.

*Housing and Meal Arrangements:* Housing and meals arrangements are an important dimension of program planning and must be discussed in detail in the proposal. In general, during the four-week fellowship placement, YSEALI 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. During the U.S.-based exchange, housing should be easily accessible to the fellowship placement site, ideally, within walking distance. 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](http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem) for
current U.S. government per diem rates. The primary award recipient will be responsible for paying for international and domestic flights for all Fellows.

Data Management: The proposal must provide a clear plan for managing and sharing key data points with ECA and Posts in participating countries. All statistical information gathered and compiled by the recipient organization should be transferable to databases maintained at ECA. The recipient organization may be asked to provide data submissions, via electronic upload or data transfer, to an ECA database. Data fields should include, but are not limited to the following: first name; middle name; last name; gender; date of birth; country of citizenship; country of residence; participant type; field of study; home/host institution or affiliation; program category; fiscal and calendar year of participation; and U.S. state where fellowship takes place. The recipient organization will be expected to meet all statistical requirements including the submission of all grantee data for the Bureau’s annual statistical report. Please refer to ECA’s General Policy Guidance on Alumni Outreach/Follow-on and Engagement and Commitment to Public Private Partnerships in the PSI for additional details on alumni activities.

O. PROPOSAL CONTENTS
Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:
Microsoft Word
Microsoft Excel
Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
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.
ASCII Text
Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

Online Forms
- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
  See applicability guidance below:
If the applicant organization registered or renewed its registration in SAM.gov after February 2, 2019: no SF-424B required (the organization certified as part of its SAM.gov registration).

If the applicant organization has an active registration in SAM.gov that was either created or renewed before February 2, 2019: SF-424B required.

- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax, SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, etc.

Program Narrative

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
   a. Number and description of participants
   b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
   c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
   d. Fields covered
   e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the proposed YSEALI Professional Fellows Program model addressing the areas listed below.

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

Program Materials
While not a requirement, materials that advance the reviewer’s understanding of the program design and implementation can be included in the proposal submission. Supplementary materials, if included, should be kept to a minimum, tailored to the YSEALI Professional Fellows Program, and labeled clearly such as “RESUMES” or “SELECTION MATERIALS.” These could include:

1. Draft agendas of enhancement activities and professional workshops, conferences, and seminars including pre-departure, orientation, and final conference activities
2. Outline of proposed leadership activities
3. Draft application and recruitment materials
4. Draft selection and interview materials
5. Outline of proposed alumni programming
6. Sample evaluation and survey instruments
7. Timeline for program implementation
8. Program promotional materials or social media toolkit(s)
9. Outline of follow-on and collaboration activities
10. Letters of endorsement
11. Resumes of program staff. No resume should exceed two pages.

Please label each attachment in a clear and concise manner (i.e. Program Management Plan; Letters of Support, etc.

Detailed Budget
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. A list of program costs that are eligible for funding consideration are listed below:

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 prescribed ratio of administrative to program costs, a proposal 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. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner, and other sources.

Website/Mobile Application: Cost necessary for developing and maintaining a program-branded mobile-friendly website and/or mobile applications.
Leadership and Professional Development Curriculum: Costs associated with the development and delivery of leadership and professional development curriculum.

Evaluation and Data Management: Costs associated with conducting evaluation, and storing and presenting key program data.

Travel: International and domestic airfare; airline baggage and seat fees; visas; 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 participants in Bureau-sponsored projects.

Per Diem: For U.S.-based Fellowship, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at: https://www.gsa.gov/travel/plan-book/per-diem-rates. 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: http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78.

Health and Travel Insurance: The primary award recipient will be responsible for ensuring that both YSEALI and U.S. Fellows 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 non-U.S. and U.S. Fellows in the budget.

Shipping Costs: Costs associated with the delivery of DS-2019 forms and other items.

In-Country Travel Costs for Visa Processing Purposes: Visas for non-U.S. Fellows are provided by the U.S. Department of State and costs 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.

Consultants: Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Honoraria rates should not exceed $250 per day per session. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share rates that would exceed that the allowable amount. Subaward recipient organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the primary award recipient and subaward recipient should be included in the proposal. Such subawards 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.
Wire Transfer Fees: When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to foreign-based partner organizations. Award recipients are urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.

Book and Cultural Allowances: Fellows may be provided a one-time cultural allowance of $150 per person, plus a book allowance of $60. Primary award recipient, subaward recipient, in-country partner, contractors and/or consultants are not eligible to receive these benefits.

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 costs to purchase supplies for programming, such as computers or mobile phones; supply costs should be justified in the budget narrative. Supply costs for the purchase of equipment must be kept to a minimum.

Working Meals: No more than two working meals may be provided for each program component. At least one working meal should be budgeted for the YSEALI Fellow Forums. The cost per person should not exceed $45 for the working meal. No charges may be made against U.S. government funds for alcoholic beverages. The number of invited guests should not exceed the number of funded program participants by more than a factor of two (i.e., no more than twenty invited guests for a working meal involving ten funded program participants).

Reasonable Accommodations: Organizations should budget for the reasonable accommodations of individuals with disabilities. Proposals may allocate up to 5-7% of requested ECA award funds for this purpose and reflect plans to make the necessary program modifications or participant numbers should these funds be used for reasonable accommodations.

YSEALI Fellow Forums: Forum-related costs, including:

- Venue rental, including conference space and audio-visual support for approximately 100 Professional Fellows, plus up to three staff from each prime award and Institute recipient, speakers and invited guests;
- Meals and coffee breaks;
- Honoraria for speakers and workshop facilitators;
• Lodging and hotel expenses for three nights for all YSEALI Fellows and the recipient organization representatives;
• One formal reception or closing banquet;
• Ground transportation in the Washington, D.C. area for Fellows, staff, and speakers;
• Printed materials including the production of a conference program book and other related administrative items;
• Mobile apps or other technology designed to enhance communication and networking capacities among conference participants, speakers, and invited guests.

**Return Travel Allowance:** An incoming and return travel allowance of $70 for each Fellow may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.

**Re-Entry Seminars/Debrief:** Costs related to providing non-U.S. Fellows a re-entry seminar may include per diem, hotel accommodations, material development, and other related expenses.

**Alumni Activities:** Reasonable costs related to alumni programming for both U.S. and foreign participants 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 which the Fellows compete in order to encourage their continued work on, and implementation of, their individual projects.

**Subaward recipient budgets**
Separate budgets and budget narratives for subaward recipients should be included and should resemble the Admin Detailed Budget and Program Detailed Budget for the award recipient. Applicants are urged to be detailed and specific as possible, adding line items if needed.

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

**Other**
- Calendar of activities/itinerary for each Institute
- Draft YSEALI Fellows Forum agendas
- Letters of endorsement
- Social Media and Traditional Media Promotion and Outreach Plan
- Resumes and CVs
- First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

**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 award 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](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.
APPLICATION SUBMISSION
The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call Chris Remsen, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division at (202) 632-9432 or email: RemsenCM@state.gov.