Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity
(NOFO): FY 2021 Leaders Lead On-Demand Program
Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0007872
Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: 19.415
Key Date/Application Deadline: June 1, 2021

Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) invites proposals for the FY 2021 Leaders Lead On-Demand Program (formerly Professional Fellows On-Demand). On-Demand is a program that takes ideas generated by U.S. Embassies and Consulates in the field and develops them into uniquely tailored programs built on the model of two-way exchange programs which may include a significant professional fellowship placement for foreign participants. This exchange program supports U.S. foreign policy goals by enabling the U.S. Department of State to respond in a timely manner to emerging foreign policy priorities. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to provide a series of two-way exchange projects ranging in size and scope, each involving current or potential government, business, and civil society leaders. It is anticipated that this cooperative agreement will support four to six distinct exchange projects for approximately 50 participants, including 40 foreign participants and 10 Americans.

A central component of each project will include a group of foreign participants who will travel to the United States for an intensive, tailored program. The U.S.-based exchange should include an individually-tailored working placement, referred to as the "fellowship placement." The U.S.-based exchange will be followed or preceded by reciprocal overseas programs for American participants. Both foreign and American participants should have experience or expertise in the field of the exchange project and American participants should have an established connection or linkage with the foreign participants. The award recipient will work closely with ECA, U.S. Embassies and in-country or regionally-based partner organizations, as appropriate, to recruit, screen, and select the participants and develop program activities that best address the specific project goal. The final list of participants should be approved by ECA prior to offers being extended. American participants will be selected in close consultation with ECA. Additional project components, such as regional gatherings of participants overseas, small grants competitions, local trainings, or other follow-on components should be developed, as appropriate, based on the scope and goals of the specific exchange.

It is ECA's intent to award one cooperative agreement of approximately $1,000,000. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets, participant numbers, and the number of projects in accordance with the needs of the On-Demand Program and the availability of funds. For additional details on awards, 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:

To complement existing public diplomacy efforts supporting emerging young professionals, and to allow the Department of State to more nimbly respond to emerging foreign policy issues and events around the world, ECA has developed the Leaders Lead On-Demand Program. The Leaders Lead On-Demand Program will allow professionals from countries and regions around the world to take part in a specially-designed exchange focused on a specific U.S. foreign policy priority or foreign policy goal. While the subject matter of each individual On-Demand project will differ, they should focus on strengthening the capacity of civil society and government to respond to pressing challenges that arise within varying regions or countries.

The FY 2021 Leaders Lead On-Demand Program supports the following broad goals:

1. To provide tailored support for emerging foreign policy priority issues where existing public diplomacy resources are not immediately available or accessible;
2. To create lasting partnerships between emerging leaders from foreign countries and the United States in specific and substantive areas of focus;
3. To provide opportunities for foreign and American emerging leaders to collaborate and share ideas, approaches, and strategies regarding challenges to pressing issues;
4. To enhance professional and leadership skills for both foreign and American participants to effect positive change in their workplaces and communities.

A.1. Projects:

"Projects" are defined as a set of exchanges focused on specific and often emerging foreign policy priorities. Examples of previous On-Demand projects include an exchange for Burmese journalists and government officials that contributed to the drafting of four major new media laws in Burma; an exchange focused on open educational resources for 12 countries in the Middle East and North Africa that lead to the creation of a joint action plan to develop open educational resources in the Arab world and training workshops in the region; and a multi-country program on disability

rights that brought together leading activists and key U.S. experts and helped advance long-stalled disability rights law in Sri Lanka.

During the course of this cooperative agreement, it is anticipated that approximately four to six projects will be approved for implementation, on a broad range of thematic topics and geographic focuses. Each project will be identified by the award recipient in consultation with Department of State stakeholders, including regional bureau representatives and U.S. Embassies. The award recipient will be responsible for developing an online application and proposal process for soliciting new projects from U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas and sharing the proposed projects with ECA for approval. Once officially approved by ECA, work on a new project will commence. It is highly likely that multiple projects will take place on overlapping timelines and the award recipient needs to be able to manage several projects in various phases of design and implementation at the same time.

A.2. Participants:
"Participants" are defined as those who travel under federal award funding from their country of origin to a designated exchange country of a project. Foreign participants should, as appropriate, be selected through a merit-based, open competitive process. Unless requested otherwise, participants should be up-and-coming, mid-level government, business, or civil society professionals with experience and current employment directly relevant to the approved exchange project. It is preferable that all selected participants be proficient in written and oral English, have demonstrated leadership ability, and a professional commitment to the project goals. It will be possible to include participants who do not have strong English skills, but specific provisions for the possibility of non-English speaking participants should be included in the proposal and budget if applicable.

U.S. participants should include professionals with relevant expertise in the subject matter or policy issue area on which the project is focused. The U.S. participants should be individuals who have had or will have significant engagement with the foreign participants during their U.S. exchange program.

A.3. Organizational Capacity:
Applicant organizations must demonstrate their capacity for conducting international professional exchanges, supporting short-term fellowship placements in relevant host organizations, administering exchanges focused on a range of different subject areas and geographic regions, implementing exchange projects that address specific policy challenges, and providing substantive programming and leadership training for up-and-coming professionals.

Proposals should illustrate the organization's breadth of experience working in difficult environments, establishing individually-tailored working placements in a range of fields,

and demonstrating flexibility, adaptability, and creativity in programming under challenging conditions. Proposals should include concrete examples in which the organization has responded quickly to rapidly evolving circumstances, including, if possible, examples that demonstrate the organization's ability to initiate international exchanges in countries in which the organization has not previously worked. Proposals should clearly articulate a staffing plan that allows the organization to conduct multiple On-Demand Program projects concurrently, if applicable.

A.4. Partner Organizations:
Applicant organizations should provide examples of programs, businesses, institutions, organizations, and individuals with whom they would collaborate to implement the projects and should describe any previous collaborative activities. A proposal could identify a hypothetical program theme and goal, and include a proposed approach to developing a program, with examples of organizations or individuals upon whom the applicant might rely to develop aspects of the program design. Proposals must demonstrate capacity in the United States to secure suitable short-term, tailored placements for foreign participants and develop professionally relevant, substantive programming. As it is anticipated that program activity may take place in countries where an organization does not have a presence, the proposal should demonstrate a willingness and ability to identify and work with an in-country or regional partner organization to assist with program design and implementation. Proposals should include concrete examples to demonstrate the applicant organization's capacity to establish and work with in-country or regional partner organizations in a short timeframe. Applicant organizations should include in the proposals how they plan to recruit participants for the exchange programs, this may include submitting a list of partner organizations outside of the United States through which participants have been recruited for previous programs as an indication of the organizational capacity to collaborate with foreign partner organizations

A.5. U.S. Embassy Involvement:
It is anticipated that U.S. Embassy staff will generate initial projects ideas and may be actively engaged in each project. U.S. Embassies may work closely with the award recipient on program activities including, but not limited to, recruitment and selection of the participants; pre-departure briefings; U.S. visas; and alumni follow-on projects. The proposal should discuss how the award recipient plans to consult regularly with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) at participating U.S. Embassies to implement the exchange projects. While PAS will be actively engaged in any particular project, the onus will remain with the award recipient to manage the overall program activities.

A.6. Projected Timeline:
The cooperative agreement will begin on or about September 1, 2021. The award period will be approximately 24 months in duration. The exact dates of each exchange project will not be determined until a proposed project is officially approved. Applicant

organizations should propose at least one sample timeline and outline for a hypothetical project.

A.7. Substantial Involvement:
In a cooperative agreement, the Department is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA's activities and responsibilities for the Leaders Lead On-Demand Program are as follows:

1. Provide approval of each Leaders Lead On-Demand Project;
2. Upon approval of a new project, convene an introductory meeting with the award recipient and relevant stakeholders within the State Department and, as appropriate, with outside representatives;
3. Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all project components and activities including the recruitment and selection of the participants, pre-departure orientations, U.S.-based orientation, State Department meetings, briefings, and follow-on activities;
4. Liaise with relevant embassy or consulate PAS staff as well as with country desk officers at the State Department on recruitment, selection, web-based publicity efforts, and DC-based opening and closing events so that the overall program aligns with mission priorities;
5. Monitor and evaluate project activities and project implementation, through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits;
6. Approve key personnel changes at the implementing partner organization who will work on the program. Additionally, the Division will approve, in advance, all international travel paid for using funds of the ECA award;
7. Approve partner organizations, including in-country partner organizations and sub-award recipients and any changes in partners made.
8. Approve decisions related to special circumstances or complex matters that arise throughout the duration of program, including assisting with participant emergencies; and
9. Work with award recipients to publicize the program through various media outlets (such as the social media platforms of ECA and PAS), including approving branding and publicity materials.

A.8. Recipient Responsibilities:
The award recipient will be responsible for the following:

Development of Application/Proposal Process: The award recipient will be responsible for developing an online application/proposal process for soliciting new projects from U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas and sharing the proposed projects with ECA for approval.

Development of Program Model: Once projects have been officially approved by ECA, the award recipient will begin designing the exchange activities that would potentially make up the project and submit a detailed outline to designated Program Officer in the Global Leaders Division (formerly Professional Fellows Division) in the Office of Citizens Exchanges. Each project will be unique, and will likely necessitate a different program model or design. The size, scope, and timing of each project should be designed with a flexible and collaborative approach to maximize program effectiveness and demonstrate impact.

Recruitment and Selection: The award recipient will work closely with the relevant U.S. Embassy(ies), and, if appropriate, an in-country or regionally-based partner to recruit and select qualified participants for an approved project from the countries involved. The recruitment strategy should include:
1.   A recruitment campaign that targets individuals meeting the eligibility criteria for each project, supports a merit-based open competition, and adheres to the project's goals;
2.   A web-based application tool that collects data across projects;
3.   A transparent review process to evaluate candidates. The award recipient will work closely with ECA on the development and implementation of review criteria, involving each applicable embassy or consulate's PAS in the selection process, and selecting eligible applicants; and
4.   Arrangement of English language interviews (virtual or in-person), if appropriate, for semi-finalists as part of the selection process.

Pre-Departure Orientation and/or Arrival Orientation: For both foreign and American participants, the award recipient will be responsible for conducting an in-person or virtual pre-departure orientation (PDO) prior to departing their home country and/or an in-person arrival orientation upon arriving in the destination country, including providing pre-departure materials and information about the program to prepare participants for the exchange. The PDO, to the extent possible, should include representation from the U.S. Department of State. The arrival orientation should, if possible, be held in Washington, D.C. to maximize opportunities for the participants to engage with Department of State officials. The PDO and arrival orientation should cover, at a minimum:
- travel logistics, including arrival information and J-1 visa regulations;
- project goals, programmatic expectations, performance measurement;
- a detailed program schedule, including specific information about the community where each participant will be located; and
- cross-cultural issues and day-to-day considerations, such as professional standards of conduct.

Issue DS-2019 forms and Facilitate the Visa Process: All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program. The award recipient will be responsible for preparing and issuing DS-2019 forms required for J

visas. This includes collecting all biographical information from foreign participants, 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 arrival of the foreign participants in SEVIS no later than three days after their arrival in the United States. The award recipient will work with Public Affairs Sections to assist foreign participants with the J1 visa application process, as well as work directly with the foreign embassy of the partner country to arrange visas for U.S. travelers; see Section D.3f. for additional information related to the administration of J visa programs.

Logistics: The award recipient will manage all logistical arrangements, including international and domestic travel, ground transportation, accommodations, and meals.

Round-trip International Travel: The award recipient will comply with all federal regulations regarding the use of U.S. government funds for travel including the Fly America Act.

Insurance: The award recipient will enroll all U.S. and foreign participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program and issue health benefits identification cards. More information on ASPE is available at https://www.sevencorners.com/about/gov/usdos.

U.S.-based Activities for Foreign Participants: The award recipient will be responsible for arranging individually-designed programming in the United States for foreign participants that best address the overall project goal. English-language skills permitting, programming should be designed to offer hands-on experience for all participants within relevant agencies and/or organizations. While some group activities during the program may be appropriate, site visits where the participants have only a brief glimpse of a variety of organizations should be kept to a minimum. As there may be cases in which exchange participants do not have adequate English–language skills to benefit from an embedded professional experience or fellowship in the United States, the award recipient will need to be creative in designing programs that will maximize relevant professional learning.

Overseas Activities for U.S. Participants: The overseas program for American participants could take place before and/or after the foreign participant travel to the United States, depending on what is most appropriate for the goals of a specific project. For example, American experts in a particular field could be engaged to provide technical support during an overseas program. Proposals should discuss proposed methods for identification of potential U.S. participants, as well as examples of planning for logistical information such as local travel arrangements and suitable accommodations. Activities for the American overseas program components should directly contribute to project goals, build professional relationships, and support sustainable linkages beyond the

project period. Overseas programming must be developed in close collaboration with PAS offices of the U.S. Embassy to allow the embassy's full participation and, where possible, additional programming of the American expert.

Monitoring: The award recipient will develop and implement a plan to monitor participants' safety and well-being while on the exchange. Proposals should articulate how the program will ensure effective communication and feedback loops so potential problems are resolved promptly. Proposals should include clear staffing structures that can support program activity and ensure that participants have safe and rewarding programs.

Program Closing: The award recipient should conduct an appropriate program closing session at the end of each project. The closing component should be interactive in nature with a special emphasis on creating a forum for participants to share best practices and key learnings from their exchange experience. Time should be devoted to discussing follow-on activities and projected outcomes related to the project goal. Preferably, for U.S.-based project activities, this closing session should take place in Washington, D.C., and include sessions at the U.S. Department of State. The award recipient or its in-country partner organization should also conduct an in-country debriefing for foreign participants, in consultation with PAS. ECA would also consider proposals that hold virtual in-country debriefs; proposals should include suggested online platforms to be used for conducting any virtual training, orientations or debriefs.

Promote Sustained Post-Fellowship Engagement: The award recipient should develop enhancement activities that reinforce and support project goals after the participants' return to their home country. This includes encouraging participants' on-going involvement with ECA's on-line International Exchange Alumni community and helping them maintain and expand ties established during the exchange.

Evaluation: The award recipient must design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the short- and medium-term impact of the exchange project in meeting On-Demand program goals. The evaluation plan should include a means of assessing substantive knowledge acquisition, network creation, and, as applicable, leadership skills development for the participants. The award recipient should establish a clear framework under which all On-Demand projects, across all geographic regions and thematic areas, can be evaluated. The award recipient should budget one to two percent of the award for an evaluation if contracting with an outside evaluator; if the evaluation is to be conducted in-house by the award recipient, the proposal should clearly demonstrate both the capacity and prior experience to conduct a comprehensive evaluation. Evaluation data should be included in regular reporting and provided to ECA upon request.

Collection and Maintenance of Program and Participant Data & Reporting: In addition to the reporting requirements outlined in section F.4., the award recipient should

create and maintain a means of tracking all On-Demand projects initiated, ongoing and completed for the duration of the award period. Tracking information should include the amount of the award budgeted for (and already spent on) projects, the number of foreign and U.S. participant numbers overall and within each country/region, as well as other key data to be determined in consultation with ECA. Tracking data should be included in regular reporting and provided to ECA upon request. The award recipient must maintain and regularly update a participant database, always ensuring the protection of personally identifiable information and 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.

Branding: The award recipient should work with ECA on developing a brand identity and promotional materials for the On-Demand Program that can be used with a variety of audiences. The award recipient will be responsible for developing a new "Leaders Lead On-Demand Program" logo to be used in all relevant program materials, applications, websites, and other related materials.

Additional Information:
Award recipients will utilize the name "Leaders Lead On-Demand Program" to identify their project. All materials, publicity, and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of the Leaders Lead On-Demand brand and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

Projects must comply with J-1 visa regulations for the International Visitor and Government Visitor categories. Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package for further information.

A.9. What to Include in Your Proposal

A.9a. Executive Summary. The Executive Summary should be one page in length and include: program title, goals of the program, and a statement outlining the organization's capacity to capably and quickly design and implement exchange programs in any geographic region of the world.

A.9b. Proposal Narrative. In no more than 20, double-spaced pages the narrative should include:

Project Goals, Objectives, Anticipated Outcomes: A clear, succinct statement of project goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes that support program goals as stated in this NOFO. Objectives should be described in specific, measurable, and realistic terms that are achievable within the scope of each project, both in terms of time and funding. They should be framed from the participant perspective, i.e., "By (time), the participants will..." Proposals that clearly delineate salient objectives in measurable terms and plan

activities in a sequence that progressively leads to achieving those objectives, will be considered more competitive.

Online Application/Proposal Process: Proposals should include details regarding the online application/proposal process for soliciting new projects from U.S. Embassies and Consulates overseas and how the proposed projects will be shared with ECA for approval.

Background Information on Implementing Organizations: Information on proposed organizations and staff involved in the implementation of the project including organizational mission, relevant expertise in conducting programs of a related nature, and on-going and planned activities not including the proposed project which demonstrate organizational capacity. If the applicant has received awards from ECA in the past, please include an attachment listing examples of relevant projects by office (Citizen Exchanges, International Visitors, Academic Exchanges, etc.), including project name, countries, year, and amount.

Roles and Responsibilities: A staffing plan and a clear delineation of proposed roles and responsibilities for potential partner organizations in terms of project logistics, management, and oversight.

Support of Diversity: A description on how the Bureau's policy on Support of Diversity will be integrated into all aspects of the project including but not limited to individually-tailored professional placements, program materials, training methodology, etc. Please refer to guidance in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) under "Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines."

Promotion of Post-fellowship Engagement: Proposals should include concrete plans for developing innovative and sustainable enhancement activities that reinforce project goals after the foreign participants return to their home country. Proposals should clearly articulate how the award recipient will provide ECA with regular updates on the foreign participants' professional development, linkages and successes resulting from their participation in the Leaders Lead On-Demand Program.

Evaluation Plan: The evaluation plan should measure the impact of the program in achieving its stated objectives and be focused on four areas: (1) participant assessment of the project, including accommodations, orientation, cultural activities, transportation, meals, etc.; (2) measurement of the increase in knowledge or skills attributable to the program; (3) measurement of the participant's change in behavior or attitudes; (4) measurement of the changes in behavior of organizations or groups with which the participant is associated. Please refer to section D.3h. "Program Monitoring and Evaluation" for further guidance. Detailed evaluation plans, sample surveys and other evaluative instruments should be included as attachments.

Budget and Budget Narrative: Please refer to section D.3m. in this document for "Allowable Costs" and the PSI for guidance on formatting your budget.

Working with Public Affairs Sections: Proposals should include an articulated plan as to how the grantee proposes to work with PAS of the U.S. Embassy(ies) overseas to develop plans for project implementation, select project participants, conduct outreach, and include representatives of the embassy(ies) and/or consulate(s) in program activities.   .

Acknowledging ECA's Financial Support: An acknowledgment to follow guidance in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) entitled "Acknowledgment of ECA's Financial Support and Use of the Department Seal." Proposals should also indicate agreement to use the newly created "Leaders Lead On-Demand Program" logo in all relevant program materials, applications, websites, and other related materials.

A.9c.   Supporting materials. 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.).

Project Management Plan: A simple project management plan for the life of the project that lists, in table format, proposed outputs (major events or tasks performed by the grantee organization or partners), dates and the person or group responsible.

Resumes: Resumes of principal staff of all partner organizations involved in the implementation of the project should be included, limited to not more than two pages in length.

Letters of Commitment and/or Letters of Support: Letters of commitment or support from potential partner organizations/partner institutions that demonstrate a capacity to arrange and conduct U.S. and overseas activities should also be included.

Project Materials: Materials that help demonstrate project design and implementation should be included. These could include:
1. Sample calendar outline
2. Sample program agenda including PDO, orientation, end of program workshops, and debriefs.
3. Draft application, recruitment, selection materials
4. Evaluation plan including a sample evaluation and survey instruments
5. List of potential in-country partners
6. Project management plan
7. Sample social media plan
7. Draft promotional and branding materials

Unsolicited Documents: Attachments that do not directly address the proposed project (i.e., organization brochures, pamphlets, unsolicited reports) are strongly discouraged.

B. Federal Award Information:
Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under section A. Program Description
Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2021
Approximate Total Funding: $1,000,000
Approximate Number of Awards: One
Approximate Average Award: $1,000,000
Floor of Award Range: None.
Ceiling of Award Range: $1,000,000
Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2021
Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2023

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 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 D3a and D3c 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 Nalinee Cain in the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Global Leaders Division, ECA/PE/C/PF, 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 Program Officer Nalinee 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.3n. "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.

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 (FAPIIS):
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 FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313) and accessible through SAM.gov. If an Applicant is currently in FAPIIS, 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 FAPIIS, 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. 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.servicenowservices.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.servicenowservices.com/ilms/.

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.3f.   Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa: The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the

administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of 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 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.3.g. 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.3h. Program Monitoring and Evaluation
Please Note: The Bureau plans to add standardized indicators and corresponding data collection questions for performance monitoring during the period of performance of this

award. Therefore, proposed performance monitoring plans and data collection instruments should be flexible enough to incorporate those once established. Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization 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, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this NOFO.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, such as concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outcomes; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (i.e., surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. 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.

D.3i.   Virtual Exchange Component: Award recipients should have the ability and capacity to transition to virtual implementation strategies that continue to advance foreign policy objectives and achieve lasting benefits for U.S. citizens and international participants. Proposals must include innovative options for virtual activities to augment, or substitute for, in-person engagement with all program stakeholders when changing political and/or environmental situations result in restrictions on international travel that require ECA to temporarily halt in-person exchange activities. Proposals must also address how the organization will conduct virtual exchanges for participants who have limited access to internet and/or limited access to a computer or mobile device.

Additionally, 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.3j.   Communications Guidance for ECA Recipients: All ECA 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.3k.   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.3l. 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.3m. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

COVID-related contingencies.   Personal protective equipment, testing, etc.

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 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 are encouraged to cost-share rates that would exceed that figure.

Subcontracting organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and sub-grantee 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.

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 fellow may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.

Debriefing sessions. Costs related to providing fellows a debriefing session may include per diem, hotel accommodations, material development, and other related expenses.

Health and Travel Insurance. The award recipient will be responsible for working with ECA to ensure that both foreign and American 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 foreign and American fellows in the budget.

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.

In-Country Travel Costs for Visa Processing Purposes. Visas for foreign 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.

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. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner and other sources. Award recipient staff travel 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.

Post-fellowship engagement and Alumni Activities. Reasonable costs related to post-fellowship engagement and alumni activities may be included. The proposal must include an outline of any proposed post-fellowship engagement and alumni activities. Proposals should also demonstrate how the recipient organization will creatively utilize technology and online networking sites to enhance and amplify alumni programming.

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

D.3n. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:
Application Deadline Date:	Tuesday, June 1, 2021
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.3o. 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.3p. 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, direct linkage to the goals of the Leaders Lead On-Demand Program, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should demonstrate ability to develop realistic and achievable programming that fits within the budgetary and time parameters set forth in the NOFO. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how project objectives and key project elements will be achieved through programmatic activities.

2. **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.

3. **Institutional Capacity and Track Record:** Proposals should include (1) the institution's mission and date of establishment; (2) information about potential 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 conducting exchanges in a range of subject areas 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.

4. **Project Evaluation**: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports.

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

6. **Follow-on Activities:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

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. Region Specific requirements: The following additional requirements apply to this project:

F.3a. Iran Programming: A critical component of current U.S. government Iran policy is the support for indigenous Iranian voices. The State Department has made the awarding of grants for this purpose a key component of its Iran policy. As a condition of licensing these activities, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) has requested the Department of State to follow certain procedures to effectuate the goals of Sections 481(b), 531(a), 571, 582, and 635(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as amended); 18 U.S.C. §§ 2339A and 2339B; Executive Order 13224; and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6. These licensing conditions mandate that the Department conduct a vetting of potential Iran grantees and sub-grantees for counter-terrorism purposes. To conduct this vetting the Department will collect information from grantees and sub-grantees regarding the identity and background of their key employees and Boards of Directors.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of Iran complies with requirements, please contact Nalinee Cain at (202) 632-3219 or CainNL@state.gov for additional information.

F.3b. Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza Programming: All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S**.** laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Nalinee Cain, (202) 632-3219, CainNL@state.gov for additional information.

F.3c. Special Provision For Performance In A Designated Combat Area And Future Contingency Operations (Currently Iraq And Afghanistan): Each federal assistance award within areas of combat operations or future contingency operation, as designated by the Secretary of Defense (currently Iraq and Afghanistan), over $150,000 or providing for performance over 30 days must be registered in the Department of Defense maintained Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) system. Each federal assistance award shall be registered in SPOT before personnel deployment. The DoS SPOT Program Office can assist with entering awards in SPOT. Please send an email to AQMOps@state.gov for information. Information on how to register in SPOT and how to report the total number of recipient personnel deploying under each award will be contained in a Special Provision within each assistance award.

Recipients that do not utilize personnel who are performing a private security function; or require access to U.S. facilities, services, or support can be entered through the SPOT aggregate functionality. Upon the award of a grant/and or cooperative agreement in a designated area of combat operations or future contingency operation (currently Iraq and Afghanistan), the Grants Officer or his/her designee will enter the following award information into SPOT to include (i) a brief description of the contract (to the extent consistent with security considerations); (ii) the total value of the contract; and (iii) whether the contract was awarded competitively. The Recipient should send updated deployment numbers for each award sent to the Grants Officer and his/her designee and the Department of State's SPOT program office on a quarterly basis as follows:

The Recipient is required to submit with the quarterly financial report submission information regarding the number of individuals receiving payment from the funds being granted under this award. This report is due 30 days after the calendar year quarter and 90 days after the award period end date and also should be sent to AQMOps@state.gov

with the subject line "SPOT Quarterly Report -- Award Number". The following information shall be provided:

1. Total number of individuals receiving payment from the funds being granted:
      a. Total Number U.S. Personnel Deployed:
      b. Total Number Host Country Personnel:
      c. Total Third Country Personnel Deployed:

These reports should be sent to AQMOps@state.gov. The SPOT program office will enter the numbers into SPOT.

Recipients utilizing personnel who are performing a private security function; or require access to U.S. facilities, services, or support must be entered into SPOT individually with all required personal information. The recipient organization will designate a SPOT administrator who will obtain a SPOT company administrator account. Recipients of federal assistance awards shall register personnel in SPOT before deployment, or if already operational in the designated operational area, register personnel upon becoming an employee under the award and maintain current data in SPOT. Procedures on how to register in SPOT will be provided by the Grants Officer and his/her designee.

Recipient performance may require the use of armed private security personnel. To the extent that such private security contractors (PSCs) are required, Recipients are required to ensure they adhere to Chief of Mission (COM) policies and procedures regarding the operation, oversight, and accountability of PSCs.

In a designated area of combat operations or future contingency operation, the term PSC includes any personnel providing protection of the personnel, facilities, property of a Recipient or sub-recipient at any level, or performing any other activity for which personnel are required to carry weapons in the performance of their duties.

As specific COM policies and procedures may differ in scope and applicability, recipients of federal assistance awards are advised to review post policies and procedures carefully in this regard and direct any questions to the Embassy Regional Security Office (RSO) via the Grants Officer Representative (GOR). Any exclusion to these policies must be granted by the COM via the RSO. COM policies and procedures may be obtained from the RSO via the GOR. Recipients of federal assistance awards are also advised that these policies and procedures may be amended from time to time at the post in response to changing circumstances.

F.4. 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 120 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/Grant 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 120 days after the expiration or termination of the award;

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3h. Program 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.5. 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.

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Nalinee Cain, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Global Leaders Division, ECA/PE/C/PF, SA-5, 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, telephone: (202) 632-3219, email: 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.

Matthew Lussenhop   March 22, 2021
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State