Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2021 J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative (Stevens Initiative)
Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0007908
Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: 19.415

Key Date/Application Deadline: June 3, 2021

Program Description/Executive Summary: The J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative (Stevens Initiative), developed in partnership with the Stevens Family Foundation is a multilateral public-private partnership that will strengthen engagement between young people in the Middle East and North Africa (NEA) and in the United States as a lasting tribute to the legacy of Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens. The Stevens Initiative will use technology and online tools to facilitate educational exchanges between the United States and the Middle East and North Africa. Through intensive, structured online engagements between youth at various education levels, the Initiative will increase mutual understanding and equip more than one million youth with the skills and aptitudes they need to succeed in the 21st century. Launched in 2015, ECA's Stevens Initiative has implemented over 63 projects involving nearly 70,000 participants in 17 NEA countries and the Palestinian Territories. It has also included participants from 47 U.S. states, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands, Washington, D.C., and one tribal community.

A Managing Partner is being sought to manage and coordinate all aspects of the Initiative. ECA anticipates awarding one cooperative agreement for $5,000,000 to support the implementation of the Initiative. With ECA's funds, the award recipient will develop transparent, merit-based subaward competitions for U.S. and NEA-based organizations to administer virtual and blended (virtual and physical) exchange projects between youth in the United States and the Middle East and North Africa as well as coordinate and report on all activities under the Stevens Initiative brand. The award recipient will also facilitate on-going collaboration among the Stevens Initiative partners and conduct research and evaluations of activities undertaken by the Stevens Initiative. The award recipient will not directly implement exchanges.

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

It is the Bureau's intent to award a cooperative agreement (one base year plus two non-competitive continuations) for an estimated total amount of $15,000,000 (total for life of the award). Please see section B.) Federal Award Information, below for additional details.

A.   Program Description:

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

Purpose:

The introduction of technology into the lives of young people is changing the way they engage with the rest of the world. Increased connectivity is inspiring global citizenship, driving young people to seek connections with peers outside of their local communities, and encouraging them to tackle local and global challenges. Yet virtual connections made in the unmediated space of the Internet — in a chat room or on a blog site — also have the potential to fuel misunderstanding and division, rather than foster mutual respect and cooperation. Developing young people's understanding of other cultures and diverse perspectives, and equipping them with the tools they need to communicate and cooperate with confidence, is critical to ensuring that the power of global connectivity is harnessed for good and lays the foundation for a safer and more secure world.

Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens was known for his uncommon goodwill towards others. Always gracious, fascinated by other cultures, and constantly asking questions, he engaged in open and respectful dialogue with everyone he met. His appreciation for the differences that make people unique was fueled by his early experiences abroad. Ambassador Stevens studied as a high-school student in Spain, as a college student in Italy, and served as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Morocco. These experiences shaped his view of the world, fueled his curiosity and respect for others, and earned him the esteem of people everywhere he served. Yet, even though such physical exchange experiences are highly valuable in today's inter-connected world, only a small percentage of young people have the opportunity to participate in them due to limits of time, space, and resources.

The Stevens Initiative was inspired by the meaningful international exchange experiences that Ambassador Stevens had as a young man, which helped to shape the kind of diplomat he became. The Stevens Initiative aims to make similar experiences available to unprecedented numbers of young people in the Middle East and North Africa through programs that connect youth virtually in sustained and meaningful ways.

Program Design

To support the development of transparent, merit-based competitions for U.S. and NEA-based organizations to administer virtual and blended (virtual and physical) exchange projects between youth in the United States and the Middle East and North Africa, as well as, coordinate and report on all activities under the Stevens Initiative brand, facilitate on-going collaboration among the Stevens Initiative partners, the award recipient will be expected to:

- Hire sufficient and appropriately experienced staff to support the implementation, monitoring, and promotion of the Stevens Initiative and of all projects under the Stevens Initiative brand.

- Exercise full financial oversight and provide reporting to all stakeholders.

- Support the programmatic activities of the Stevens Initiative, which includes providing project management and advisory board facilitation.   Additionally, the award recipient is expected to:

  o In consultation and with final approval by ECA, issue subawards by designing transparent, merit-based competition when possible to support virtual and blended (virtual and physical) exchange programming that meets program goals and objectives; expands access to new demographics; and works to reduce cost-per-participant.
  o Establish objective criteria allowing for comparative evaluations across different programming models and impact assessments of new experiments in the field of virtual exchanges. Any funds awarded by the U.S. government are expected to be expended according to the terms and conditions of the award and applicable federal regulations.
  o Monitor the progress, including fiscal management, of awarded projects with regular reporting of results to ECA.
  o Document and share best practices with all Stevens Initiative stakeholders.

- In consultation with the U.S. Department of State the award recipient is to work to expand partnerships with the private sector, civil society, academia, and foundations that add value and substance to the Stevens Initiative.

- Design and manage a governance structure that facilitates transparent, on-going collaboration and communication amongst Stevens Initiative stakeholders.

- As the managing partner, the award recipient is to conduct communications, outreach, and marketing activities to promote the Stevens Initiative. In addition, the award recipient should work closely with subaward partners to expand domestic and overseas media outreach.

Proposals received in response to this NOFO will support subaward open competitions and the issuance of at least eight subawards for a variety of amounts and program models. Applicants should provide details on how its subaward competition(s) would be structured and managed to issue subawards with the funds provided by ECA. Strong proposals will outline a plan for finding a productive balance between funding new virtual exchange program models as well as proven and established models.

Proposals should also include a clear timetable for subaward competitions and program activities. See sample timetable below:

Base Year Award	Subaward Competition 1	Subaward Competition 1 Grantee Program Activity Years			
	NCC 1 Award	Subaward Competition 2	Subaward Competition 2 Grantee Program Activity Years		
		NCC 2 Award	Subaward Competition 3	Subaward Competition 3 Grantee Program Activity Years	
	Minor Subaward Competitions/Actvities Per ECA Priorities (Base Year, NCC 1+2 Funding)				
FY2021	**FY2022**	**FY2023**	**FY2024**	**FY2025**	**FY2026**
		Program Activity Periods			

Applicants for this NOFO should consider striking a balance between 1) commitments to include a large number of subawards that expand partnerships with a diversity of stakeholders; and 2) the challenge of monitoring and evaluation of too many subaward recipients. Due to a potential large number of applications for subawards, this NOFO proposal should detail a plan for objectively reviewing and selecting subaward recipients, such as the use of external experts.

Proposals should also highlight a balance of program designs where American and NEA participants are matched directly via classroom pairings or where anyone in these two regions can sign up under open enrollment opportunities.

ECA is interested in innovative proposals that will use communications technologies to strengthen the bonds between peoples. This includes both commercial and proprietary platforms, but also subaward programs that feature STEAM curriculum. Additionally, NOFO proposals should mention how the choice of a software platform for virtual

exchanges by a subaward recipient will be factored into its selection process. Nonetheless, ECA would like to ensure that a diverse group of organizations can apply for the subawards, regardless of their proposed software platform.

Applicants for this NOFO are also encouraged to incorporate some in-person and blended (virtual and physical) follow-on exchanges that complement the massive reach of the core virtual exchange programming.

A key objective for the Stevens Initiative program is to encourage public-private partnerships and sustainability by soliciting independent funding from private/philanthropic foundations and foreign governments. As such, proposals should outline how the applicant will incorporate a possible addition of funding to the Stevens Initiative from non-U.S. government sources. These details should include how additional funding could result in changes to staffing, administration, awarding of funds to subrecipients and project coordination and evaluation.

Applicants should outline how their organization plans to manage and coordinate the goals, funding requirements, and policies of all donors to the Stevens Initiative into one efficient structure. For example, this could include an advisory board or council of advisors where the future direction of the Stevens Initiative is discussed. Plans for an advisory board or council of advisors should include suggestions for selection criteria, roles of each member, and the length of commitment.

As the Stevens Initiative is focused on youth engagement, applicants should outline how they will build a demand-driven program that is informed by the interests of youth. This should include youth from the United States as well as the Middle East and North Africa. ECA encourages including girls and young women as well as other groups that are underrepresented. See Diversity Statement in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for further information.

The budget should provide funding for staff to administer and manage open competition(s) for subawards, conduct outreach activities, and monitor and provide guidance to subrecipients. New subaward competitions will be required in additional NCC funding cycles, pending the availability of funds and successful performance. Additionally, the budget should detail what percentage of the funds will go towards subawards and the range of subaward amounts. The proposal should explain processes for reviewing and approving multiple subrecipients' budgets.

Proposals should demonstrate:

- Ability to accept funds from governments, foundations, companies, and private individuals, foreign and domestic.
- Depth of experience and capacity in conducting and administering complex and multi-faceted international initiatives.

- Success managing seamless, actively collaborative public-private partnerships.
- Success developing and executing innovative solutions to social challenges.
- Ability and experience in navigating the complexities of large foundations, government entities and international organizations, and the private sector.
- Expertise in administering global grant programs, including a mix of U.S. and non-U.S. grantees.
- Expertise and a track record of success securing sustained support from the public and private sectors, including management of gifts in kind.

Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity with alumni (without Bureau support), such as tracking and maintaining updated lists of all alumni and facilitating follow-up activities that may include listservs and social media.

Stevens Initiative Program Brand: Applicants may not propose to use program names other than "J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative" or "Stevens Initiative" so that all participants and alumni will identify themselves first and foremost with the Stevens Initiative program. All materials produced for program activities undertaken with U.S. government funds should bear the American flag and/or State Department logo, acknowledge the U.S. Department of State as the funding source, and reflect the Department's objectives for the program. An exception to this requirement can only be made upon agreement from ECA and the U.S. Embassy in the respective countries. Please see D.3j. Communications Guidance for ECA Recipients.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. Above and beyond the U.S. government's role as a founding partner of the Stevens Initiative, ECA's activities and responsibilities for this award include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide guidance regarding the overall management of the Stevens Initiative and advice on the design and implementation of new projects to support ECA policy priorities under the Stevens Initiative.

- Support and provide guidance to the Stevens Initiative in all major events domestically or in the NEA region, and collaborate with the partners to find appropriate media outlets and venues (such as conferences and other events) to publicize and amplify the Stevens Initiative's objectives, outcomes, and activities.

- Support and approve the award recipient's initiative to conduct outreach to the private sector, civil society, governments, and multilateral institutions.

- Serve as liaison between the award recipient and personnel within the Department of State, its regional bureaus, and overseas posts.

- When available, represent the U.S. government as the program sponsor at events and orientations.

- Approve all documents for the transparent, merit-based competitions for U.S. and NEA-based organizations to administer virtual and blended (virtual and physical) exchange projects between youth in the United States and the Middle East and North Africa,

- Approve key personnel.

- Approve and provide input on program implementation timelines, audiences, and themes.

- Approve all in-country partners and overseas schools as part of the subaward recipient approval process.

- Review and approve all program publicity and other materials, both online and in print.

- Approve changes to program themes or curriculum.

- Approve decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program.

- Assist with SEVIS-related issues.

- Assist with participant emergencies. and

- Conduct performance evaluation/reviews.

The level of involvement of U.S. Embassies will vary considerably from country to country. The award recipient, subrecipients and in-country partners will be expected to coordinate with the State Department regional bureau in Washington and with the Public Affairs Section – in most cases the Cultural Affairs Officer – in each embassy to establish the appropriate level of involvement as requested by the embassy. U.S. Embassies' activities and responsibilities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Determining populations and priority areas of focus for Stevens Initiative recruitment, which will then be shared with the award recipient to implement.

- Providing guidance and clearance on geographical location and types of institutions or organizations that will be engaged.

- Meeting with in-country implementers to discuss program and participant progress and/or requiring reporting with similar information.

- Providing guidance and approval of timelines, dates of in-country activities and events, and venues for such.

- Coordinating with the award recipient, subrecipients and in-country partners on inclusion of Stevens Initiative participants and alumni in appropriate embassy activities, assisting in or coordination of media coverage as appropriate.

- In those countries or territories where a subrecipient has minimal capacity and/or there are no in-country partners, eligible U.S. Embassies may elect to participate in the Initiative at any time during the award period. The embassies will in such cases serve as the in-country partners, collaborating with the subrecipient to identify and select the overseas participants, schools and other institutions, connect them to the virtual platform, and provide general oversight and coordination of in-country program activities.

Proposal narratives should include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuations, pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two non-competitive continuations are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a non-competitive continuation will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all non-competitive continuations.

B.   Federal Award Information:
Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description.
Fiscal Year Funds: $5,000,000 - FY 2021 base year funding; $5,000,000 – FY 2022 non-competitive continuation year one, pending the availability of funds and successful performance; $5,000,000 – FY 2023 non-competitive continuation year two, pending the availability of funds and successful performance.
Approximate Total Funding: $15,000,000. This figure represents base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years, pending the availability of funds and successful performance.
Approximate Number of Awards: 1
Approximate Average Award: $5,000,000
Floor of Award Range: None
Ceiling of Award Range: $5,000,000
Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2021

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2026. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award-one base year plus two non-competitive continuation years.

Additional Information:

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets, the number of subaward competitions, and the number of subawards issued in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

A) Cooperative agreement(s) will be awarded for a period of 60 months (FY 2021 base year) with overlapping Non-Competitive Continuations for 48- and 36- month periods (non-competitive continuation FY 2022 and FY 2023, respectively). All subaward competitions, issuance of subawards, and projects and program activities must be completed within the 60-month award period. ECA will notify the recipient of its intention to exercise or not to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient 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. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage 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 will be reduced in like proportion.

C.3. 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 award, in an amount of $5,000,000 for the FY 2021 base year 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) 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.

D.) Application and Submission Information:

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

D.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package: Please contact the Joshua Shen, ECA/PE, SA-5, 5th Floor ,U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, (202) 632-6057, ShenJY@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 Joshua Shen and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

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

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

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

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

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.

ECA 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.3g.   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 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):   A performance monitoring framework is vital to tracking the performance and the direction, pace, and magnitude of change that result from ECA programs. This section pertains to performance monitoring in particular – as this type of monitoring is distinct from grants monitoring or other program monitoring discussed elsewhere in this solicitation. Performance monitoring is designed to assess progress against established goals and objectives across the Bureau and as established for each award.

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

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

- Objective 1: Advance participant and beneficiary cross-cultural competence and global perspective
  - Sub-Objective 1.1: Promote cultural exchanges and enhance understanding between participants and their host communities
    - Indicator 1: Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the United States Government
    - Indicator 2: Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the American People
    - Indicator 3: Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values
    - Indicator 4: Percent of foreign participants expressing support of democratic values
  - Sub-Objective 1.2: Improve American participants' understanding and interest in cross-cultural relationships with people in NEA countries.
    - Indicator 5: Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values.
- Objective 2: Increase the impact that participants and alumni have on their communities / countries
  - Sub-Objective 2.2: Foster participant's belief that civic engagement benefits communities/countries
    - Indicator 6: Percent of participants who believe that they can have an impact on their community or country
- Objective 3: Strengthen engagement among participants, alumni, beneficiaries, and institutions
    - Indicator 7: Percent of participants who identify as a Department of State program alumni
    - Indicator 8: Percent of foreign participants who report increasing their network of Americans
    - Indicator 9: Number of Stevens Initiative alumni submitting proposals for ECA Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund.
- Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries
    - Indicator 10: Percent of participants reporting increases in their job skills through training, internships, and/or mentoring they received as part of their exchange program

- ▪ Indicator 11: Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of ECA program participation
  - o Sub-Objective 4.3 Encourage subaward IPs to incorporate innovative technologies in both LMS platforms and participant project deliverables, such as coding, game design, UX/UI, and engineering.
    - ▪ Indicator 12: Number of participant IT projects (websites, apps, video games, etc.)
- Objective 5: Increase public awareness of Stevens Initiative and its association with the U.S. Department of State
  - o Sub-Objective 5.1: Increase U.S. profile of Stevens Initiative.
    - ▪ Indicator 13: Number of placements in U.S. media outlets.
    - ▪ Indicator 14: Number of U.S. educational institutions engaged to explore joining Stevens Initiative programs.
  - o Sub-Objective 5.2: Increase NEA awareness of Stevens Initiative.
    - ▪ Indicator 15: Number of pre-packaged social media products for NEA posts to share.
    - ▪ Indicator 16: Number of NEA educational institutions engaged to join Stevens Initiative programs.
- Objective 6: Solicit independent funding from private/philanthropic foundations and foreign governments to improve expansion and self-sustainability of the Stevens Initiative programs.
  - ▪ Indicator 17: Number of new private/philanthropic foundations and/or foreign governments contributing to Stevens Initiative programs.
  - ▪ Indicator 18: Dollar amount ($) pledged by private/philanthropic foundations.
  - ▪ Indicator 19: Dollar amount ($) given by foreign governments.
- Objective 7: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships
  - ▪ Indicator 20: Dollar amount ($) spent on monitoring and evaluation activities
- Objective 8: Increase participation in and impact of virtual exchange (VE) programs at ECA
  - ▪ Indicator 21: Number of participants in VE programs
  - ▪ Indicator 22: Percent of participants who report VE as their only likely way to interact with Americans
  - ▪ Indicator 23: Percent of participants reporting application of VE skills to other virtual opportunities

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

PMPs

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

- Programmatic objectives, which are statements of the condition(s) or state(s) the program is designed to achieve. Objectives are therefore bound by the resources and timeframe of the program and must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). In addition to those outlined above, the applicant may propose other program objectives from the Functional Bureau Strategy, MODE Results Framework (both found here: https://eca.state.gov/about-bureau) or other applicant-designed program-specific objectives. For more information on SMART see the ECA Evaluation Division's website: https://eca.state.gov/impact/eca-evaluation-division/capacity-building. ECA recommends the proposed PMPs include a minimum of one programmatic objective for each goal included in the PMP.
- Performance indicators are measures used to gauge progress toward programmatic objectives. Indicators should be as specific as possible (following the SMART principles) and include any proposed disaggregations.
  - o In addition to those outlined above, the applicant may propose additional program-specific indicators in the PMP.
  - o ECA recommends the proposed PMPs include a minimum of one indicator for each programmatic objective.
  - o Baseline data (whether collected specifically for the program at the beginning of the award or from a previously existing source) for each indicator shall be included where relevant, as well as the target number to be achieved for each indicator.

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

PROGRAM PERFORMANCE M&E NARRATIVE

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

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

RESULTS PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The State Assistance Management System Domestic (SAMS-D) is a database solution that serves as the official system of record for all U.S. Department of State and ECA awards. The Results Performance Monitoring (RPM) module within SAMS-D is an extension module that enables users to report performance monitoring data in the same system where they currently manage federal assistance actions. As part of ECA's efforts to streamline data collection and management, any recipients of this award will be required to input performance reporting data outlined in this solicitation into the SAMS-D RPM. The data stored in the SAMS-D RPM will provide ECA with a bureau-wide, uniform M&E reporting tool that is already linked with other elements of the awards and that existing awardees are familiar with. There is a one-time 3-hour required SAMS-D RPM module training that designated staff of award recipient organizations will need to attend to gain access to the system. Also as part of the reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to provide ECA with the raw data for surveys in a CSV file through SAMS-D.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING PLAN

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

Instructions: A performance monitoring plan (PMP) describes the proposed indicators to be captured that demonstrate progress toward achieving the objectives of the program. The table below includes the recommended programmatic objectives and indicators as indicated in the solicitation document. Within this table, please provide any additional applicant-designed objectives and indicators that are specific to the proposed program that measure the relevant outputs, outcomes, and impact over the course of the award's

proposed period of performance. (Note: the placement of two rows for applicant-designed indicators is arbitrary – the applicant can add or delete rows as necessary).

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

- **Completion:** All components of the PMP are included.
- **Inclusion of ECA Standard indicators:** Includes the standardized ECA indicators pre-populated in the PMP template and listed in the solicitation without any adapting of the definitions, data sources, collection timelines and responsible entities.
- **Baselines and targets:** Baselines and targets are included and realistic. If there is no baseline to report, there should be a plan for how to obtain or produce the value in the future.

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

- **SMART Objectives and Indicators:** Objectives and Indicators should follow SMART principles (https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/a_good_start_with_smart.pdf).
- **Details of indicators:** All basic information of the indicators (definition, data source and question, collection timeline and responsible entity) should be included. The definitions of the standardized ECA indicators should be used as examples of what to include and the format.
- **Depth of indicators:** Outcomes should be used where possible to demonstrate if a program is meeting its objectives. While outputs are important to understand if a program achieved what it was meant to do, outcomes demonstrate the larger effect of the program.
- **Indicator Structure:** Ensures that the indicator does not measure multiple things (participants AND host families), does not start with a direction ("Increase" is a result, "Number of" is an indicator), and should reports numeric data ("good test results" is not an indicator)
- **Redundancy:** There should be a clear and distinct reason for each indicator, and the indicator should not overlap with ECA standard indicators. Each indicator should be clearly linked to either an ECA standard objective or a custom objective.
- **Consistency with ECA Indicators:** Key terms are defined the same way. Disaggregations align where appropriate, and calculations follow the same structure.

Definitions of PMP Columns

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Entity Responsible: Person or entity responsible for collecting the data

Performance Indicator	Definition	Baseline	Target	Data Source and Question	When to Collect	Entity Responsible
ECA Objective 1: Advance participant and beneficiary cross-cultural competence and global perspective						
ECA Sub-Objective 1.1: Promote cultural exchanges and enhance understanding between participants and their host communities						

Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the United States Government and/or people.	Participant - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors". *This indicator only applies only to foreign participants.* **Counting Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "more favorable" about the United States Government while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and multiply by 100 for the percent value.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Sample question: How did your views of the United States government and the American people change as a result of your program participation? • United States government • American People Scale: less favorable, no change – my view remained unfavorable throughout, no change – my view remained favorable throughout, more favorable	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the American People	Participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. **Counting Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who respond "more favorable" about the American people while denominator is the total number of survey respondents.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) How did your views of the United States government and the American people change as a result of your program participation? • United States government • American People Scale: less favorable, no change – my view remained unfavorable throughout, no change – my view remained favorable throughout, more favorable	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient
Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values	Participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. **Counting Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** Responses to each item should be scored in the following manner: No change – 1 Minimal change – 2 Moderate change – 3 Substantial change – 4 The response scores for each item should be summed and divided by	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) How much did participation in the program change your understanding or knowledge of the following topics? • United States democracy • United States economy • Foreign affairs in the United States • Domestic affairs in the United States • United States values and culture • Daily life in the United States • Religious and ethnic diversity in the United States • Freedom of speech and press in the United States • Voluntary community service in the United States	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	the number of items they responded to in order to give a total question score for each respondent. To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents whose response value is 2 or greater while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.			Scale: no change, minimal change, moderate change, substantial change		
Percent of foreign participants expressing support of democratic values	<u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** The values for each response are combined and divided by the total number of response categories answered, producing the average value for an individual respondent to that question. The indicator value is the percentage of respondents whose average value is greater than or equal to 4 on a 1-5 scale (respondents indicating, on average, that they agree or strongly	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below? • Voting is important because real decisions are made in elections • Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy • An independent media is important to the free flow of information • All citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law, regardless of circumstances • The Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy • Individuals and organizations have the right to free speech and to voice opposition • Democratic principles enhance the workplace. Supervisors should incorporate democratic principles into their management practices	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

				[Scale – Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree not Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]		

agree); denominator is total number of respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.

ECA Sub-Objective 1.2: Improve American participant's understanding and interest in cross-cultural relationships with people in NEA countries.

| Percent of American participants with more interest in pursuing cross-cultural relationships with people in NEA countries | <u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.

Counting Frequency
Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.

Calculations
To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "more favorable" about the United States Government while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and multiply by 100 for the percent value. | To be completed by the applicant | To be completed by the applicant | Survey (self-reported data) Sample question: How did your interest and understanding of X country or the region change as a result of your program participation?
• Cultural interest
• Educational interest
• Professional interest
Scale: less interest, no change, more interest, etc. – my view remained disinterested throughout, no change – my view remained interested throughout, more interested | Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended. | Award recipient |

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ECA Objective 2: Increase the impact that participants and alumni have on their communities / countries						
ECA Sub-Objective 2.2: Foster participant's belief that civic engagement benefits communities/countries						
Percent of participants who believe that they can have an impact on their community or country	Participant is a participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and primarily benefits from, an ECA exchange program. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculation** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents that responded "increased" or "stayed the same" while denominator is the total number of survey respondents.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) As a result of your program participation, has your confidence in the following statements changed? [Increased, stayed the same, decreased] • I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of society's most worrisome problems. • I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my local community. I feel I have the ability to make a difference in the global community	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient
ECA Objective 3: Strengthen engagement among participants, alumni, beneficiaries, and institutions						
Percent of participants who identify as a Department of State program alumni	Alumni are program participants who have been exposed to at least 36 hours of an exchange or a cultural exchange element with the possibility of sustained networking. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year, even if they are eligible for data collection through multiple programs **Calculations** To calculate percentage, numerator will be number of alumni who answered "yes" in response to the survey question. The denominator will be	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Do you consider yourself an alumni of a U.S. Department of State program? (yes/no)	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	number of alumni who responded to the survey question. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.					
Percent of foreign participants who report increasing their network of Americans	A <u>network</u> is an interconnected or interrelated group or system intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming. A <u>participant</u> is defined as a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "yes" to the first question item while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Because of your participation in the program, have you increased the number of Americans you are professionally or personally connected with? (yes/no) **If yes:** I have _____ the number of Americans I am connected with (answer options: greatly increased, moderately increased, barely increased)	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient
Number of Stevens Initiative alumni submitting proposals for ECA Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund.	**Alumni:** Any former participant who has completed one of the Stevens Initiative programs, usually 6-8 weeks each.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Annually	ECA Program Office
ECA Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries						

Percent of participants reporting increases in their job skills through training, internships, and/or mentoring they received as part of their exchange program	Knowledge, skills, and abilities of relevance may include, but are not limited to: Networking Technical skills Language proficiency __Participant__ is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply in the affirmative to the survey question below while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Has participating in this program increased your job skills (including language proficiency)? [Yes/No]	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient
Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of ECA program participation	__Soft skills__ are qualities and behaviors an individual demonstrates to interact with others effectively. Examples include communication, listening, self-awareness, awareness of others, self-initiative, cognitive competence skills, self-confidence, resourcefulness/resilience, and decision-making and problem-solving skills A __participant__ is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Do you feel that you have increased your skill level in any of the following areas as a result of participation in this program? *(Please select all that apply)* • communication skills • listening skills • self-awareness • awareness of others • self-initiative • self-confidence • resourcefulness • decision-making skills	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors". **Count Frequency** Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who select any option besides "no skills improvement" (selecting multiple options should only be counted once) while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value			• problem-solving skills - no skills improvement		
ECA Sub-Objective 4.3: Encourage subaward implementing partners to incorporate innovative technologies in both LMS platforms and student project deliverables, such as coding, game design, UX/UI, and engineering.						
Number of participant projects (websites, apps, video games, etc.)	<u>Projects:</u> These can be products created by participants like websites, apps, video games, etc. either during the program or built within six months after completion using skills learned from the program **Counting Frequency** Each project should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion, including if multiple participants worked as a team to deliver the project.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Subaward participants are responsible for communicating to facilitators and participants about self-reporting and showcasing projects, data which would then be passed to primary Cooperative Agreement partner.	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur n0 later than 6 **months** after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

ECA Objective 5: Increase public awareness of Stevens Initiative and its association with the U.S. Department of State						
ECA Sub-Objective 5.1: Increase U.S. profile of Stevens Initiative						
Number of placements in U.S. media outlets	<u>Placement</u> – Media placements include traditional newspapers, TV, blog, newsletters, and vlogs. Placements do <u>not</u> include media content produced directly by the grantee or Stevens Initiative participants.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Semi-annually	Award recipient
Number of U.S. educational institutions engaged to explore joining Stevens Initiative programs	<u>Educational Institution:</u> K-12 schools and districts; post-secondary colleges and universities; vocational colleges; other civil society institutions providing training/capacity building Empirical totals should disaggregate between engaged institutions and active program institutions	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Semi-annually	Award recipient
ECA Sub-Objective 5.2: Increase NEA awareness of Stevens Initiative						
Number of pre-packaged social media products for NEA posts to share.	<u>Pre-packaged Products:</u> Content should be provided in English and readily shareable content by U.S. embassies and consulates on their social media platforms, not just links to a blog entry or video.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Semi-annually	Award recipient
Number of NEA educational institutions engaged to explore joining Stevens Initiative programs.	<u>Educational Institution:</u> K-12 schools and districts; post-secondary colleges and universities; vocational colleges; other civil society institutions providing training/capacity building	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Semi-annually	Award recipient

	Empirical totals should disaggregate between engaged institutions and active program institutions					

<table>
<tr><td colspan="7">ECA Objective 6: Solicit independent funding from private/philanthropic foundations and foreign governments to improve expansion and self-sustainability of the Stevens Initiative programs.</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of new philanthropic foundations and/or foreign governments contributing to Stevens Initiative programs</td>
<td><u>Foundations</u> – Private-sector businesses or charitable foundation (either U.S. for foreign) providing additional funding to cover administrative costs, additional research in the field of virtual education, and programming.

<u>Foreign governments</u> – A direct foreign government entity, not including foreign businesses or charitable foundations.</td>
<td>To be completed by the applicant</td>
<td>To be completed by the applicant</td>
<td>Administrative records</td>
<td>Semi-annually</td>
<td>Award recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar amount ($) pledged by private/philanthropic foundations</td>
<td>Totals should be disaggregated between pledges, allocation timeline, and amount already given</td>
<td>To be completed by the applicant</td>
<td>To be completed by the applicant</td>
<td>Administrative records</td>
<td>Semi-annually</td>
<td>Award recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar amount ($) given by foreign governments.</td>
<td>Totals should be disaggregated between pledges, allocation timeline, and amount already given</td>
<td>To be completed by the applicant</td>
<td>To be completed by the applicant</td>
<td>Administrative records</td>
<td>Semi-annually</td>
<td>Award recipient</td>
</tr>
<tr><td colspan="7">ECA Objective 7: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships</td></tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollar amount ($) spent on monitoring and evaluation activities</td>
<td>This indicator tracks the amount expended to include salary and expenses associated with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities by ECA Award Recipients.

Award Recipient is an entity that undertakes the work of the ECA Bureau</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Survey (self-reported data) What is the total dollar amount for your organization's expenses related to monitoring and evaluation of ECA awards (for programmatic, non-financial reasons) for Fiscal Year 2019?</td>
<td>Semi-annually</td>
<td>ECA Evaluation Division (Note: Award recipients should track this information in order to report back</td>
</tr>
</table>

<table>
<tr><td></td><td>programs, using ECA funding under a formal legal agreement. For ECA Exchange Visitor Programs, these entities are called Exchange Sponsors, which are not ECA-funded, and consist of public, private, or nonprofit entities designated by the Department of State to support persons involved in exchange program activities or events.

Count Frequency
Each Award Recipient should only be counted once per reporting period, even if they have implemented multiple programs.</td><td></td><td></td><td>For your convenience, we have included details below on what activities constitute monitoring and evaluation. These include:

• Reviewing program outputs and any outcomes
• Reviewing web-based analytics
• Data collection with implementing partners
• Program conceptualization through review/reflection
• Developing theory of change and/or logic models
• Working with the ECA Evaluation Division
• Event observation
• Data collection with program participants
• Site visits to U.S. host institutions
• Discussions with program stakeholders regarding program performance
• Reviewing grantee performance monitoring reports (Internal only)
• International monitoring trips
• Data collection efforts to measure against the FBS
• Managing and reviewing external evaluations in conjunction with the Evaluation Division
• Creating or reviewing evaluation data collection tools
• Conducting M&E capacity-building activities for ECA implementing partners
• Attending capacity-building workshops, presentations, or trainings on M&E · Research activities intended to inform program design</td><td></td><td>to the Evaluation Division)</td></tr>
</table>

				Please note: either one person can enter the information in for the costs of the entire organization, or each person responsible for an ECA program can enter the information for ONLY that particular program-- whichever is easier for your organization.		
ECA Objective 8: Increase participation in and impact of virtual exchange (VE) programs at ECA						
Number of participants in VE programs	A <u>participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. <u>Virtual Exchange</u>: sustained, multi-way interactions, that are online, used to build networks and shared knowledge around policy priorities. For a program to be considered a virtual exchange, participants must engage 51% or more virtually. A series of virtual components can be considered an exchange if they are (1) originated as a unit with a collective start and end date and (2) are organized around a unifying theme. For example: a series of MOOCs would be considered an exchange if they are offered as a set (of say six classes) and are centered on a specific topic (on say media literacy). Offering MOOCs as an online resource is not considered a virtual exchange program. <u>Virtual Elements</u>: expand the reach of programs and increase engagement for	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Administrative records	Semi-annually	Award recipient

	participants and alumni. Unlike virtual programs, virtual elements are single, stand-alone components, offered either as add-on enrichment to an in-person exchange or as general outreach by ECA. For example, offering single MOOCs to the general public or virtual pre-departure orientation webinars are both considered virtual elements. Additionally, online spaces for participants to communicate (such as a program Facebook page) is considered a virtual element. This indicator counts participants involved in virtual exchange programs (see definition above) and WILL NOT count participants engaging with virtual program elements. **Calculations:** This indicator counts participants involved in virtual exchange programs (see definition above) and WILL NOT count participants engaging with virtual program elements.					
Percent of participants who report VE as their only likely way to interact with Americans	A <u>participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA <u>virtual exchange</u> program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors."	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Are virtual exchanges likely to remain your only way to interact with Americans? [yes/no]	Post-Program: Data collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later	Award recipient

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					than 6 weeks after an activity has ended	
	Virtual Exchange: sustained, multi-way interactions, that are online, used to build networks and shared knowledge around policy priorities. For a program to be considered a virtual exchange, participants must engage 51% or more virtually. A series of virtual components can be considered an exchange if they are (1) originated as a unit with a collective start and end date and (2) are organized around a unifying theme. For example: a series of MOOCs would be considered an exchange if they are offered as a set (of say six classes) and are centered on a specific topic (on say media literacy). Offering MOOCs as an online resource is not considered a virtual exchange program. Virtual Elements: expand the reach of programs and increase engagement for participants and alumni. Unlike virtual programs, virtual elements are single, stand-alone components, offered either as add-on enrichment to an in-person exchange or as general outreach by ECA. For example, offering single MOOCs to the general public or virtual pre-departure orientation webinars are both considered virtual elements. Additionally, online spaces for participants to communicate (such as a					

	program Facebook page) is considered a virtual element. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who respond affirmatively to the question, while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value. This indicator counts participants involved in virtual exchange programs (see definition above) and WILL NOT count participants engaging with virtual program elements.					
Percent of participants reporting application of VE skills to other virtual opportunities	A <u>participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA <u>virtual exchange</u> program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors." <u>Virtual Exchange</u>: sustained, multi-way interactions, that are online, used to build networks and shared knowledge around policy priorities. For a program to be considered a virtual	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) I will apply the experience from this VE program to other virtual opportunities in the future [Response Options: strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree]	Post-Program: Data collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended	Award recipient

	exchange, participants must engage 51% or more virtually. A series of virtual components can be considered an exchange if they are (1) originated as a unit with a collective start and end date and (2) are organized around a unifying theme. For example: a series of MOOCs would be considered an exchange if they are offered as a set (of say six classes) and are centered on a specific topic (on say media literacy). Offering MOOCs as an online resource is not considered a virtual exchange program. Virtual Elements: expand the reach of programs and increase engagement for participants and alumni. Unlike virtual programs, virtual elements are single, stand-alone components, offered either as add-on enrichment to an in-person exchange or as general outreach by ECA. For example, offering single MOOCs to the general public or virtual pre-departure orientation webinars are both considered virtual elements. Additionally, online spaces for participants to communicate (such as a program Facebook page) is considered a virtual element. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per					

| | reporting year following their program completion.

Calculations
To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who respond "strongly agree" or "agree" to the question, while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.

This indicator counts participants involved in virtual exchange programs (see definition above) and WILL NOT count participants engaging with virtual program elements. | | | | | |

Program Goal: To promote understanding, cultural knowledge, and career-building skills as well as develop linkages among youth in the United States and the NEA region.

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

ECA's goal is to resume in-person exchanges beginning in FY2022 (October 1, 2021 – September 30, 2022). Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on travel and university operations, it is unclear when current travel restrictions and health

advisories will allow for in-person program activities to take place. As such, proposals should include language to demonstrate maximum flexibility, creativity, and a rapid response capability for program planning and administration. Applicants should also address the steps taken to ensure continuity of services should the current situation continue for an extended period of time. The applicant should present innovative options for virtual activities to augment, and/or substitute for, in-person engagement with all program stakeholders, if exchange travel continues to not be possible.

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. Budget requests may not exceed $5,000,000 for the FY 2021 base year. 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. Non-Competitive Continuations: For competitions that will exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation applicants must submit:
   - the SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program;
   - a detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding (Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget guidance.). The narrative should also include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus one/two additional non-competitive continuation years, pending successful program performance and the availability of funds; and
   - an abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus one/two non-competitive continuation years).

To exercise the Non-Competitive Continuation mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:

1.   performance and financial reports on time;
2.   a request in writing to ECA at least 30 days in receipt of the NCC invitation;
3.   a summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;
4.   a detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested non-competitive continuation year; and
5.   a brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

1.) closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional non-competitive continuations. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)

2.) review and evaluate all mandatory quarterly program and financial reports;
   _   All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before the Bureau will exercise additional non-competitive continuations.
- Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.
- The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent non-competitive continuations.

3.   Prior Grants Officer approval is required to utilize the remainder from an unobligated balance from a prior funding period to the subsequent funding period. If the Grants Officer determines that some or all of the unobligated funds are not necessary to perform the program activity, the Grants Officer may decline the Recipient's request to utilize the remainder from the unobligated balance.

   The Grants Officer may, at their discretion, use the unobligated balance to reduce or offset future funding for a subsequent funding period. An unobligated balance at the end of a funding period is not sufficient justification to utilize the remainder of funds. A final determination and approval to utilize the remainder of any funds will be communicated via a cost amendment with adjustment, if any, to new obligation amounts.

      i. The request to utilize the remainder from an unobligated balance must include:

a. A brief narrative why funds remain unobligated and how the unobligated funds will be used to complete the previously approved goals and objectives of the program; and,

b. A detailed budget that reflects the amount of unobligated funds to date, and anticipated expenditures in the subsequent period of performance for all cost categories under the authorized budget.

D.3n. Allowable costs for the program include the following:
1) Staff travel (including regional travel for staff of in-country partners to conduct trainings/manage activities in neighboring countries)
2) Website development and support
3) Stipends or other benefits for U.S. and overseas teachers directly involved in the program
4) Honoraria
5) Educational materials
6) Training modules (including expenses related to any in-person training)
7) Curriculum Development/Integration
8) Online Professional Development
9) Promotional or outreach activities
10) Software or supplies such as digital cameras, flip-cams, webcams, etc. to support online project work. Applicants should primarily seek out donations or acquisition of supplies through outside sources
11) Internet access fees
12) Monitoring and evaluation
13) Justifiable expenses directly related to program activities
14) Administrative expenses: The award funds may be used to pay reasonable costs for program administration, technical support, and other administrative needs. Cost sharing in these areas is strongly encouraged.

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

D.3o. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:
Application Deadline Date: Thursday, June 3, 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.3p. Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures
Eligible organizations should follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov
Applicants should read instructions carefully and prepare the information requested
before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required
information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches
for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration
should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet
required application submission deadlines. Applicants should check with appropriate
staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or
determine their registration status with Grants.gov. Organization applicants can find
complete instructions here: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-
registration.html

How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov
For access to complete instruction on how to apply for Notice of Funding Opportunities
on Grants.gov, refer to: https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-
grants.html

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

Grants.gov Customer Support
Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays
Email: support@grants.gov

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission
Applicants have until 11:59 p.m., Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that
their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. <u>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.</u>

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

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 and acknowledges the download of submissions, 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.

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

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

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

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

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

E.   APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1.   REVIEW CRITERIA

1. Quality of the program idea: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission.

2. Program planning and ability to achieve program objectives: The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity to meet the program's objectives. Proposed programs should maximize long-term institutional linkages. The objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible.

3. 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.

4. Institution's Record/Ability and Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

5. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a fully developed Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) narrative and a PMP that includes the goals, objectives, and indicators outlined in the M&E section, as well as any applicant-designed,

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

6. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing: 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, including plans for follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

7. Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations: Proposed projects should receive positive assessments from the U.S. Department of State's Regional Bureau(s) and from Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at U.S. Embassies overseas of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner country(ies).

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 identified in the application.

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

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 and Topic 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 Joshua Shen at (202) 632-6057 or at ShenJY@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 Joshua Shen at (202) 632-6057 or at ShenJY@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/grant 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;

4. Because the Competition will allow for the exercise of Non-Competitive Continuations (NCC), applicants must submit program and financial reports on time. The due dates for these reports will be included in the cooperative agreement. The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.

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.

G.   Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Joshua Shen, U.S. Department of State, Office of Professional Exchanges, ECA/PE, SA-5, 5th Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, (202) 632-6057, ShenJY@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 27, 2021
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State