

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity

(NOFO): FY 2021 TechGirls Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0007923

Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: 19.415

Key Date/Application Deadline: June 4, 2021

Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) announces a FY 2021 open competition for the global TechGirls program. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to implement the program, which includes one (or two) four-week, U.S.-based exchange(s) focused on the in-depth exploration of applied technology and STEM topics to be conducted in summer 2022 for a total of approximately 111 foreign young women (ages 15-17) from select countries in the six world regions, and approximately 25-30 competitively selected American peers.

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 one cooperative agreement for an estimated total of approximately \$3,320,000 (one base year plus one Non-Competitive Continuation), pending the availability of funding. 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: Launched in 2012, the TechGirls program is an intensive, educational youth exchange program designed to empower and support young women (ages 15-17) to pursue higher education and careers in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields through hands-on skills development.

Echoing the goals of the Bureau's TechWomen program, the TechGirls program supports development in the field of technology and helps young women to reach their full potential in the

technology industry. The program builds on the U.S. global commitment to advance the rights of women and girls around the world and promote STEM education. It also fosters sustained connections/networks and mutual understanding among the youth of the United States and participating countries around the globe.

Initially focused on countries of the Middle East and North Africa, the TechGirls program expanded to include Central Asian countries in 2019. In 2022, the program will expand further, engaging a talented cadre of technology-minded young women from the United States and countries in all six regions of the world through this new TechGirls global initiative.

The TechGirls program will provide participants who have a demonstrated aptitude and strong interest in STEM fields the opportunity for an in-depth exploration of applied technology through one or two intensive, four-week summer exchange(s) in the United States. Following the exchange(s), the participants will implement required follow-on service projects in their home communities to further the overall impact of the program. Follow-on projects should be participant-driven.

The goals of the program are to:

- 1) Provide a program for in-depth exploration applied technology for young women (ages 15-17) who already have a demonstrated aptitude and strong interest in STEM;
- 2) Empower and encourage participants to pursue higher education and careers in STEM fields;
- 3) Build participants' understanding of technology's integral relationship with the professional world;
- 4) Develop participants' technical skills in current technologies that are relevant and adaptable to the participants' home countries;
- 5) Connect and support the next generation of women who share interests and abilities;
- 6) Promote problem-solving and critical thinking;
- 7) Build participants' self-confidence;
- 8) Equip participants with leadership skills to influence positive change in their communities;
- 9) Encourage and support the development of meaningful cross-regional relationships and friendships; and
- 10) Foster connections and deepen trust and mutual understanding among the youth of the United States and participating countries around the world, creating greater potential for future collaboration and networks between Americans and overseas counterparts.

The objectives of the program are for participants to:

- 1) Enhance their understanding of various technological tools and their specific uses and applications in their countries, as well as how technology is used on a global scale;
- 2) Develop a specific process and step-by-step action plan for designing and implementing follow-on projects in their home communities, utilizing available technologies; and
- 3) Explain and present their community follow-on projects and exchange experiences to broader audiences, such as classmates, community members, among others, in their home communities.

Using these goals, objectives, and the theme of technology, applicant organizations should identify their own specific and measurable outputs and outcomes based on the project specifications provided in this solicitation. Proposals should indicate how recipients will achieve the short-term and long-term program objectives, and how these objectives will contribute to the achievement of the stated long-term goals.

Program Design: The centerpiece of the exchange(s) will be a ten-day (minimum) technology camp specifically designed for the TechGirls participants. The camp should be academically rigorous and provide hands-on exposure to advanced applications and tools in technology through interactive classes, labs, and individual or team-based projects. The technology applications and tools should be relevant to, and easily adapted for use in, the participants' home countries.

The camp should be complemented by mentoring experiences and job shadow opportunities. Additional activities may include site visits to technology companies, career readiness workshops (i.e. job fairs or resume building workshops), and leadership and team-building exercises. A visit to Washington, D.C. should be incorporated into the program schedule at the conclusion of the exchange to give participants the opportunity to meet, and engage in a program debrief, with U.S. Department of State officials and representatives from local technology companies.

The program should afford participants opportunities throughout the duration of the exchange(s) to engage in small group work to design and develop follow-on service projects that are relevant to the field and their home communities and will produce tangible, presentable outcomes. The program will be rounded out by planned social, recreational, and cultural activities; community service activities; home hospitality arrangements with local families such as meals, recreational activities, and homestays; and other activities designed to achieve the program's stated goals. Follow-on activities are an integral and important part of the program, as they support the participants in applying the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their U.S. experience back in their home communities. Follow-on activities therefore should be designed to reinforce and support the skills and linkages acquired during the U.S. program and to prepare participants to conduct required service projects at home that serve a community need. The ECA Program Office and U.S. embassies should be kept informed of, and updated on, follow-on activities (including participant projects) as they unfold. A competitive proposal will include a detailed plan for follow-on activities, project action planning, and participant support (post-exchange).

Eligible Countries: The Bureau anticipates that the TechGirls participants will be competitively recruited and selected from the following regions/countries and territories (3 participants per country):

- **Sub-Saharan Africa (AF)** – Cameroon, Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, and Zimbabwe
- **East Asia and Pacific (EAP)** – Cambodia, Fiji, Indonesia, Mongolia, Taiwan, and Vietnam
- **Europe and Eurasia (EUR)** – Albania, Cyprus, Greece, Kosovo, Montenegro, and

Turkey

- **Middle East and North Africa (NEA)** – Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian Territories, and Tunisia
- **South and Central Asia (SCA)** – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan
- **Western Hemisphere (WHA)** – Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Suriname

The award recipient will take the lead in recruiting eligible, English-speaking participants for the exchange(s), with the support of participating U.S. embassies.

One of the primary program goals is to foster sustained connections and mutual understanding among the youth of the United States and the participating countries through substantive interaction and dialogue during the program. The award recipient therefore will recruit approximately 25-30 competitively selected American secondary school girls to join the foreign participants in planned activities throughout the entire program, including the four-week U.S.-based exchange(s), and any proposed pre- and post-exchange virtual activities. Proposals that include a plan to demonstrate impact on American youth and communities, in addition to overseas communities, will be deemed more competitive.

Please note: The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Additionally, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust countries and/or regions should conditions change in a partner country and/or if other countries are identified as viable alternatives in response to Department priorities.

Organizational Capacity: Applicants must demonstrate their capacity for implementing programs of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) experience in providing leadership and technology-focused programming; (2) experience in providing age-appropriate programming for youth; and (3) demonstrated understanding of and/or experience working with participants from countries in the stated regions. Applicants also must demonstrate their capacity to manage a complex, multi-phase program, and their ability to remain engaged with participants post-exchange.

While not required, applicants are strongly encouraged to identify partner(s) in the participating regions (i.e. branch offices and/or consultants or affiliates) that could assist with, and facilitate, some of the in-country aspects of the program including participant recruitment, in-country travel, pre-departure orientations, and follow-on activities.

Applicants may propose U.S.-based partners to assist with the implementation of program components, such as the technology camp.

Applicants should identify within the proposal any U.S. and foreign partner organizations and/or individuals with whom they are proposing to collaborate on program components. Proposals

should contain letters of commitment or support from any partner organizations. A brief description of any previous cooperative activities with these partner organizations should be included in the proposal narrative (or appendices), along with information about their mission, activities, and accomplishments. Applicants should clearly outline and describe the roles and responsibilities of all partner organizations in terms of project logistics, management, and oversight.

Applicants also are strongly urged to garner private sector support. Private sector monies and in-kind offerings may be used, for instance, to fund additional visits to technology companies in the United States, to increase the number of American students that participate in exchange program activities, and/or to ramp up activities during the technology camp.

Substantial Involvement: In a cooperative agreement, the Department is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. These activities and the roles and responsibilities of the Department and your organization are outlined in the attached Project, Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document.

Proposal narratives should include a commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus one additional Non-Competitive Continuation, 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 Non-Competitive Continuation is 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 Non-Competitive Continuation.

Program Guidelines: The award will begin on or about September 1, 2021. The base year award period will be approximately 15 months in duration and will cover all aspects of project planning, participant recruitment and selection (for international and American participants), in-country pre-departure orientations, exchange activities in the United States, and follow-on activities in the participants' home communities. The base year will be followed by a 15-month Non-Competitive Continuation, the funding of which will support the same activities as the base year (pending the availability of funds and successful performance).

Applicants should propose to host a total of approximately 111 foreign secondary school girls, who will travel to the United States during one (or two) four-week exchange(s) in summer 2022. Approximately 25-30 American peers will join foreign participants in all program activities.

Applicants may propose to have all participants travel to the United States at the same time or could propose to implement two separate summer exchanges of equal or differing delegation sizes, depending on staffing and organizational capacity at the time of the exchanges.

Should applicants propose only one exchange, the proposal should describe a plan to divide the large delegation of participants into smaller cohorts. This will ensure that all participants actively take part in the exchange and that program staff can adequately monitor the safety and well-being of the participants. Applicants are encouraged to hold the welcome and closing orientations with the larger delegation.

Special Note: Given that the foreign participants will be selected from approximately 37 countries/territories of the six world regions, it is expected that they will have varying levels of experience with, and exposure to, current technologies and/or STEM topics. Applicant organizations should take this into serious consideration when designing and proposing exchange activities geared to developing and strengthening skills of all participants, regardless of their level of tech-savviness.

Applicants should propose specific exchange dates in their proposals, but the exact timing may be altered through the mutual agreement of ECA and the award recipient, particularly given the large number of participating countries and varying academic calendars. The successful applicant will demonstrate flexibility regarding exchange dates, as well as delegation sizes and country combinations, should more than one exchange be proposed.

The award recipient must consult with ECA and the participating U.S. embassies before confirming the specific dates of the exchange during the planning phase of the program.

Additional Information: The award recipient will retain the name “TechGirls Program” to identify the exchange program. All materials, publicity, and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit. See ECA’s Communications Guidance in section D.3j. for more information.

The award recipient must inform the ECA Program Officer and participating U.S. embassies of its progress at each stage of the project’s implementation in a timely fashion, and will be required to obtain approval of any significant program changes in advance of their implementation.

Proposals must demonstrate how the stated objectives will be met. The proposal narrative should provide detailed information on the major program activities, and applicants should explain and justify their programmatic choices. Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package for further information.

Note: ECA’s goal is to resume in-person exchanges as soon as it is safe and feasible. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, it is unclear when current travel restrictions and health advisories will allow for in-person program activities to take place. Therefore, proposals should include language to demonstrate maximum flexibility, creativity, and a rapid response capability for program planning and administration. Applicants also should address the steps that will be taken

to ensure continuity of services should the current situation continue for an extended period of time. The applicant should present innovative ideas for virtual activities to augment, and/or substitute for, in-person engagement with all program stakeholders, if exchange travel continues to be an obstacle.

B. Federal Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under Substantial Involvement in the POGI.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2021 - base year, \$1,660,000; FY 2022 – Non-Competitive Continuation year one, \$1,660,000, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Approximate Total Funding: \$3,320,000. This figure represents base year plus one Non-Competitive Continuation year, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Approximate Number of Awards: One.

Approximate Average Award: \$1,660,000.

Floor of Award Range: None.

Ceiling of Award Range: \$3,320,000.

Anticipated Award Date: On or about September 1, 2021.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: March 31, 2024. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus one Non-Competitive Continuation year.

Additional Information:

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

A cooperative agreement will be awarded for a period of approximately 15 months (base year) with a Non-Competitive Continuation for one additional 15-month 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. Other Eligibility Requirements:

- a) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one cooperative agreement in an amount over \$130,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.
- b) **Technical Eligibility:** All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO, POGI, and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI); non-compliance will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.
- c) Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. **Please note:** Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

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

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

D. Application and Submission Information

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

D.1. Contact Information to Request an Application Package: Please contact the Youth

Programs Division by e-mail (ShieldsSD@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. It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Program Officer Sarah Shields and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

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

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

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

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

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

All federal award recipients must maintain a current registration in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting is completed on any issued award. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts. Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

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

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

D.3.d. Federal Awardee Performance & Integrity Information System (FAPIIS): Prior to making a Federal Assistance award over \$250,000, the Federal agency is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in FAPIIS (see 41 U.S.C. 2313) and accessible through SAM.gov. If an Applicant is currently in FAPIIS, they can comment on any information about its organization that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in FAPIIS, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in 2 CFR §200.205 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

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

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

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

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

D.3f. Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa: The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

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

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

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-4E (Bldg. 3)
2430 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.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
 - Indicator 5: Percent of participants who traveled abroad for the first time
 - Indicator 6: Percent of foreign participants who traveled to the United States for the first time
 - Indicator 7: Percent of participants reporting that their exchange experience offered opportunities to engage with other cultures
 - Indicator 8: Percent of participants indicating a change in understanding of a third-country's 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 9: 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 10: Percent of participants who identify as a Department of State program alumni
 - Indicator 11: Percent of participants who report increasing their network of Americans

- Indicator 12: Percent of participants who report increasing their network of third country stakeholders
 - Sub-objective 3.1: Alumni subscribe to platforms for resources and information-sharing
 - Indicator 13: Percent of participants who are registered or subscribed to a U.S. Department of State platform
- Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries
 - Indicator 14: Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of ECA program participation
 - Indicator 15: Percent of participants who report an increase in technical skills as a result of ECA program participation
 - Sub-Objective 4.1: Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs
 - Indicator 16: Number of total participants
- Objective 5: Increase the contribution of exchange programs to local economies in the U.S., and engagement of U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions in ECA programming
 - Sub-Objective 5.3: Exchange participants support local economy during their visit
 - Indicator 17: Amount of U.S. dollars spent by foreign exchange participants during their exchange
- Objective 8: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships
 - Indicator 18: Dollar amount (\$) spent on monitoring and evaluation activities

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

PMPs

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

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

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

Program Performance M&E Narrative

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

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

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

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

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

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| <p>Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p> <p>Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations Responses to each item should be scored in the following manner: No change – 1 Minimal change – 2 Moderate change – 3 Substantial change – 4</p> <p>The response scores for each item should be summed and divided by the number of items they responded to in order to give a total question score for each respondent.</p> <p>To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents whose response value is 2 or greater while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>How much did participation in the program change your understanding or knowledge of the following topics?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • United States democracy • United States economy • Foreign affairs in the United States • Domestic affairs in the United States • United States values and culture • Daily life in the United States • Religious and ethnic diversity in the United States • Freedom of speech and press in the United States • Voluntary community service in the United States <p>Scale: no change, minimal change, moderate change, substantial change</p> | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |
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| <p>Percent of foreign participants expressing support of democratic values</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations The values for each response are combined and divided by the total number of response categories answered, producing the average value for an individual respondent to that question. The indicator value is the percentage of respondents whose average value is greater than or equal to 4 on a 1-5 scale (respondents indicating, on average, that they agree or strongly agree); denominator is total number of respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>[Scale – Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]</p> | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |
| <p>Percent of participants who traveled abroad for the first time</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p> <p><u>Abroad</u> – A country outside of one’s home country</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Before this exchange program, did you travel outside of your home country? [Yes/No] If yes, why did you travel outside of your home country [select all that apply]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism/ • Visit friends/family • Participation in another ECA exchange program • Study • Work <p>Other: _____</p> | <p>Post-Program: Data should be collected no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |

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| | <p>reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “no” while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | | | | <p>than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | |
| <p>Percent of foreign participants who traveled to the United States for the first time</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “no” while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Before this exchange program, did you travel to the United States? [Yes/No] If “yes”, why did you travel to the United States [select all that apply]:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism • Visit friends/family • Participation in another ECA exchange program • Study • Work <p>Other: _____</p> | <p>Post-Program: Data should be collected no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |
| <p>Percent of participants reporting that their exchange experience offered opportunities to engage with other cultures</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>My exchange program’s activities offered opportunities for cultural connectedness and sharing. <i>For example: Conversations about each other’s’ countries, Attending cultural events, etc.</i> [Y/N]</p> | <p>Post-Program: Data should be collected no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |

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| | <p>Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | | | | <p>no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | |
| <p>Percent of participants indicating a change in understanding of a third-country's culture and values</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p><u>Third-party country</u>: A country that is not the participant/alumni’s home or host country. Generally this refers to the home countries of an individual’s fellow participants.</p> <p>Counting Frequency Pre/Post: Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Thinking about the exchange participants you met from other countries (not your home country or the U.S.), how much did participation in the program change your understanding or knowledge of the following topics related to those countries?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political system • Economy • Foreign affairs • Domestic affairs • Values and culture • Daily life • Religious and ethnic diversity • Freedom of speech and press • Voluntary community service <p>Scale – no change, minimal change, moderate change, substantial change</p> | <p>Post-Program: Data should be collected no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |

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| | <p>Responses to each item should be scored in the following manner: No change – 1 Minimal change – 2 Moderate change – 3 Substantial change – 4</p> <p>The response scores for each item should be summed and divided by the number of items they responded to in order to give a total question score for each respondent.</p> <p>To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents whose response value is 2 or greater while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | | | | | |
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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

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| <p>Percent of participants who believe that they can have an impact on their community or country</p> | <p><u>Participant</u> is a participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and primarily benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculation To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents that responded</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>As a result of your program participation, has your confidence in the following statements changed? [Increased, stayed the same, decreased]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of society’s most worrisome problems. • I feel I have the ability to make a difference in my local community. • I feel I have the ability to make a difference in the global community | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |
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| | “increased” or “stayed the same” while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. | | | | has ended. | |
| ECA Objective 3: Strengthen engagement among participants, alumni, beneficiaries, and institutions | | | | | | |
| Percent of participants who identify as a Department of State program alumni | <p><u>Alumni</u> are program participants who have been exposed to at least 36 hours of an exchange or a cultural exchange element with the possibility of sustained networking.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year, even if they are eligible for data collection through multiple programs</p> <p>Calculations To calculate percentage, numerator will be number of alumni who answered “yes” in response to the survey question. The denominator will be number of alumni who responded to the survey question. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | To be completed by the applicant | To be completed by the applicant | <p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>Do you consider yourself an alumni of a U.S. Department of State program? (yes/no)</p> | <p>Post-Program:</p> <p>A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | Award recipient |
| Percent of participants who report increasing their network of Americans | <p>A <u>network</u> is an interconnected or interrelated group or system intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming.</p> <p>A <u>participant</u> is defined as a person or group of</p> | To be completed by the applicant | To be completed by the applicant | <p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>Because of your participation in the program, have you increased the number of Americans you are professionally or personally connected with? (yes/no)</p> <p>If yes:</p> | <p>Post-Program:</p> <p>A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant</p> | Award recipient |

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| | <p>persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” to the first question item while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | | | <p>I have _____ the number of Americans I am connected with (answer options: greatly increased, moderately increased, barely increased)</p> | <p>departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | |
| <p>Percent of participants who report increasing their network of third country stakeholders</p> | <p>A <u>network</u> is an interconnected or interrelated group or system intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming.</p> <p>A <u>participant</u> is defined as a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>A <u>third country stakeholder</u> is defined as a person or institution who does not have the same nationality and is not from the country in which</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Have you increased the number of individuals that you are connected with that are not from the U.S. or your own country? (yes/no)</p> <p>If yes, then:</p> <p>I have _____ the number of persons I am connected with who are from a country other than my own or where the exchange took place (answer options: greatly increased, moderately increased, barely increased)</p> | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |

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| | <p>the exchange took place or from the country of a participant of the exchange</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” to the first question item while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | | | | | |
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ECA Sub-objective 3.1: Alumni subscribe to platforms for resources and information-sharing

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| <p>Percent of participants who are registered or subscribed to a U.S. Department of State platform</p> | <p>A <u>participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>A <u>platform</u> is a place, opportunity, or event for public discussion or interpersonal engagement intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Are you connected with any of the following? [yes/no/I don’t know]: Department of State International Exchange Alumni Network (alumni.state.gov, @Exchangealumni on Twitter, Alumni Affairs on LinkedIn (https://www.linkedin.com/in/alumni-affairs-9b871b103/)</p> | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |
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| | <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply “yes” to at least one of the question items while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.</p> | | | | | |
| ECA Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries | | | | | | |
| <p>Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of ECA program participation</p> | <p><u>Soft skills</u> are qualities and behaviors an individual demonstrates to interact with others effectively. Examples include communication, listening, self-awareness, awareness of others, self-initiative, cognitive competence skills, self-confidence, resourcefulness/resilience, and decision-making and problem-solving skills</p> <p>A <u>participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA’s Office of Private Sector Exchange’s (ECA/EC) “Exchange Visitors”.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> <p>Calculations To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>To be completed by the applicant</p> | <p>Survey (self-reported data)</p> <p>Do you feel that you have increased your skill level in any of the following areas as a result of participation in this program? (<i>Please select all that apply</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication skills • listening skills • self-awareness • awareness of others • self-initiative • self-confidence • resourcefulness • decision-making skills • problem-solving skills - no skills improvement | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | <p>Award recipient</p> |

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

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| | besides “no skills improvement”), while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value. | | | | | |
| Sub-Objective 4.1: Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs | | | | | | |
| Number of total participants | <p><u>Participant</u> is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. <i>This indicator includes American, including those that are part of reciprocal exchanges, <u>and</u> foreign participants.</i></p> <p>Count Frequency Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.</p> | To be completed by the applicant | To be completed by the applicant | Administrative records | Semi-annually | Award recipient |
| ECA Objective 5: Increase the contribution of exchange programs to local economies in the U.S., and engagement of U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions in ECA programming | | | | | | |
| ECA Sub-Objective 5.3: Exchange participants support local economy during their visit | | | | | | |
| Amount of U.S. dollars spent by foreign exchange participants during their exchange | <p>Calculations To determine amount of U.S. dollars, participants will complete a survey question that will request participants to report the amount in U.S. dollars spent on food, travel, leisure, and merchandise during the program.</p> | To be completed by the applicant | To be completed by the applicant | <p>Survey (self-reported data) In the past [TIMEFRAME], how much money have you spent on food, travel, leisure, and merchandise that was purchased in the United States?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$100 or less • \$101 - \$300 • \$301 - \$500 • \$501 - \$1,000 <p>\$1001 or more</p> | <p>Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.</p> | Award recipient |

| ECA Objective 8: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau’s resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships | | | | | | |
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| <p>Dollar amount (\$) spent on monitoring and evaluation activities</p> | <p>This indicator tracks the amount expended to include salary and expenses associated with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities by ECA Award Recipients.</p> <p>Award Recipient is an entity that undertakes the work of the ECA Bureau programs, using ECA funding under a formal legal agreement. For ECA Exchange Visitor Programs, these entities are called Exchange Sponsors, which are not ECA-funded, and consist of public, private, or nonprofit entities designated by the Department of State to support persons involved in exchange program activities or events.</p> <p>Count Frequency Each Award Recipient should only be counted once per reporting period, even if they have implemented multiple programs.</p> | <p>N/A</p> | <p>N/A</p> | <p>Survey (self-reported data) What is the total dollar amount for your organization's expenses related to monitoring and evaluation of ECA awards (for programmatic, non-financial reasons) for Fiscal Year 2019?</p> <p>For your convenience, we have included details below on what activities constitute monitoring and evaluation. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing program outputs and any outcomes • Reviewing web-based analytics • Data collection with implementing partners • Program conceptualization through review/reflection • Developing theory of change and/or logic models • Working with the ECA Evaluation Division • Event observation • Data collection with program participants • Site visits to U.S. host institutions • Discussions with program stakeholders regarding program performance • Reviewing grantee performance monitoring reports (Internal only) • 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 | <p>Semi-annually</p> | <p>ECA Evaluation Division (Note: Award recipients should track this information in order to report back to the Evaluation Division)</p> |

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| | | | | <p>activities intended to inform program design</p> <p>Please note: either one person can enter the information in for the costs of the entire organization, or each person responsible for an ECA program can enter the information for ONLY that particular program-- whichever is easier for your organization.</p> | | |
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Program Goal: To support young women to reach their full potential in the technology industry, while fostering sustained connections and mutual understanding among the youth of the United States and participating countries around the globe.

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.

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 \$1,660,000 (base). 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 additional Non-Competitive Continuation year, 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 Non-Competitive Continuation year).

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

- performance and financial reports on time;
- a request in writing to ECA at least 30 days in receipt of the NCC invitation;
- a summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;
- a detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested Non-Competitive Continuation year; and
- 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 Continuation. (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 the Non-Competitive Continuation.
 - 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 the Non-Competitive Continuation.
- 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 are outlined in the POGI.

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

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

Application Deadline Date: Friday, June 4, 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. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after the application deadline date and time will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

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

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

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

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission

because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

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

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

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

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

E. Application Review Information

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

E.1. Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

- 1) **Quality of the program idea:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. The proposed program should be creative and well developed, age-appropriate, and responsive to the program design outlined in the solicitation. Proposals should be well developed, clearly and accurately written, and include sufficient detail on proposed activities. Proposals also should provide a robust

plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Applicants should include ideas for connecting the TechGirls participants with TechGirls alumnae from previous years (in relevant countries) and alumnae of ECA-funded exchange programs, including the TechWomen program, through activities which would be implemented both pre- and post-exchange, in consultation/coordination with the ECA Program Office and participating U.S. embassies.

- 2) **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Program Objectives:** A detailed agenda(s) and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above and in the POGI. The substance of the technology camp, workshops, seminars, presentations, site visits, among other activities, should be described in detail. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the organization will meet the program's objectives and plan.
- 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) **Institutional Capacity and Track Record:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. Proposals should effectively demonstrate an institutional record of successful youth 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:** Applicants should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private

sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions, which demonstrates institutional and community commitment.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

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

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

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

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

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb>

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

F.3. Region and Topic Specific requirements: The following additional requirements apply to this project:

F.3a. 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 Sarah Shields at (202) 632-9261 or e-mail ShieldsSD@state.gov for additional information.

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; 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 a Non-Competitive Continuation, 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 Performance Monitoring and Evaluation information.)

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

F.5. Program Data Requirements: Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

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

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Sarah Shields, Youth Programs Division, by e-mail: ShieldsSD@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
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

March 29, 2021