Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity
(NOFO): FY 2021 Youth Leadership Programs with Algeria, Iraq, the Philippines, and Russia
Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreements
Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0007741
Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: 19.415
Key Date/Application Deadline: May 10, 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 four distinct, single-country Youth Leadership Programs with Algeria, Iraq, the Philippines, and Russia. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to provide youth with four-week exchanges in the United States focused on the primary themes of civic education, leadership development, respect for diversity, and community engagement and to support the implementation of service projects in their home communities. Each program, with the exception of the Youth Leadership Program with Russia, will also engage approximately 3-5 adult educators/community leaders in programming alongside youth participants. Competitively selected U.S. secondary students will join participants in U.S.-based exchange activities on the Algeria and Iraq programs. It is the Bureau's intent to award four separate cooperative agreements (one per program), for an estimated total of approximately $3,780,000 (one base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuations per program, 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: Youth Leadership Programs provide youth (typically between the ages of 15-17) and adult educators/community leaders (select programs) the opportunity to examine civic education, leadership development, respect for diversity, and community engagement through month long exchanges in the United States. Participants engage in a variety of activities such as workshops on leadership and service, community site visits related to the program themes and subthemes, interactive training, presentations, visits to high schools, local cultural activities, homestays with American families, and other activities designed to achieve the program's stated goals. Upon their return home, the participants apply what they have learned to implement projects that serve their communities. Multiple opportunities for participants to interact meaningfully with their host country peers are included.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is supporting four distinct, single-country Youth Leadership Programs with Algeria, Iraq, the Philippines, and Russia. Each program will feature a substantive four-week exchange in the United States for students (age 15-17) that focus on the four primary themes outlined below. **Please note:** The Youth Leadership Program with Russia includes a slightly older age range (ages 18-20). Specific details of each program option can be found below.

The program goals are to:
1) Prepare youth leaders to become responsible citizens and contributing members of their communities;
2) Empower participants to be actively engaged in addressing issues of concern in their schools and communities upon their return home;
3) Build mutual understanding, tolerance, and respect through shared culture and values; and
4) Foster lasting relationships among youth from different ethnic, racial, religious, and national groups.

The objectives of the program are for participants to:
1) Demonstrate a better understanding of community engagement as practiced in the United States;
2) Deepen critical thinking, problem-solving, and leadership skills; and
3) Develop program planning and implementation skills to bring community project ideas to fruition.

The primary themes of the programs are:
1) Civic Education (such as citizen participation, grassroots democracy, rule of law, anti-bullying, and/or other mission priorities);
2) Youth Leadership Development (such as team building, public speaking, negotiation, goal setting, and project planning);
3) Respect for Diversity (including ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities); and
4) Community Engagement (social/corporate responsibility, volunteerism, and philanthropy)

For each program option, applicant organizations must focus on these primary themes. In addition, applicants should identify specific sub-themes of their own choosing, such as social inclusion, entrepreneurship (including social entrepreneurship), innovation, environmental awareness, media literacy, or health, among others, and describe how these topics will serve to illustrate the more abstract concepts of the primary themes. The applicant should plan on creating participant groups around selected sub-themes based on student interest and host community capacity. For example, the sub-theme of environmental protection can be used to examine how a group of individuals demonstrate leadership and service by initiating a recycling campaign in their community. The sub-theme should be integrated into most aspects of the program, including workshops, presentations and community service.

The exchange format will be age-appropriate and interactive, allowing participants to thoroughly explore the primary themes in a creative, memorable, and practical way. Participants should engage in a variety of activities such as workshops, teambuilding exercises, community site visits, interactive discussion groups, small group work, presentations, local cultural activities, and other activities designed to achieve the program's stated goals. Programs must feature a substantive community service project and leadership training components that prepare participants for community involvement. Participants will live with American families for the majority of the exchange period.

Follow-on activities with the program participants are an integral part of the program, as the students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired by planning service projects in their home communities. Exchange activities should therefore be geared toward preparing participants to conduct projects at home that serve a community need. A successful proposal will include a detailed plan for alumni activity and follow-on project development.

Using these goals, objectives, and themes, applicant organizations should identify their own specific and measurable outputs and outcomes based on the project specifications provided in this solicitation.

Program Options
The Bureau anticipates awarding four separate cooperative agreements, one each for the management of the FY 2021 Youth Leadership Programs with Algeria, Iraq, the Philippines, and Russia**.**

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.

Applicants may apply for one or more of the program options outlined below, but they must submit only one proposal per program option under this competition. Multiple submissions to any one program option will be declared technically ineligible and will not be considered further in the review process. ECA strongly urges applicants to focus their applications on country(ies) where they have the strongest organizational capacity as well as consider staffing capacity, if applying to multiple programs. Additionally, the content of each proposal submission should be tailored to the country-specific program option to which the organization is applying. Organizational and staffing capacity must be thoroughly described in the proposal. Please note the total approximate funding for each option.

Applicants are required to have their own overseas partner organization, branch office, or other affiliates/consultants for all options listed below. Award recipients and their overseas partners will be responsible for the recruitment and selection of program participants and will manage alumni follow-on activities, in consultation and coordination with the ECA Program Officer and the relevant participating U.S. embassies.

For the Algeria, Iraq, and Philippines program options, the proposed overseas partner organizations should be located in those countries. For the Russia program, the partners may be located in another country in the region.

All exchanges will take place in calendar year 2022 (timing specified by program option), and should be conducted entirely in English.

Program Option One: Youth Leadership Program with Algeria
One cooperative agreement. Funding for this award is approximately $250,000

Applicants should propose to implement a four-week, U.S.-based exchange for a total of approximately 28 English-speaking Algerian secondary school students and adult participants in summer 2022. The ratio of students to adult participants should be approximately 7:1 (approximately 3-4 educators). Applicants also should competitively recruit and select approximately 8-10 American secondary school students to join Algerian participants in their U.S.-based activities. ECA encourages the inclusion of as many American participants as possible.

Program Option Two: Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program
One cooperative agreement. Funding for this award is approximately $400,000

Applicants should propose to implement a four-week, U.S.-based exchange for approximately 30 English-speaking Iraqi secondary school students and adult participants in summer 2022. The ratio of students to adult participants should be approximately 7:1 (4-5 educators). Applicants also should competitively recruit and select approximately 10-15 American secondary school students to join Iraqi participants in their U.S.-based activities. ECA strongly encourages the inclusion of as many American participants as possible.

Program Option Three: Youth Leadership Program with the Philippines
One cooperative agreement. Funding for this award is approximately $250,000

Applicants should propose to implement a four-week, U.S.-based exchange for approximately 20-25 English-speaking secondary school students and adult participants, specifically from the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) and surrounding areas, in spring 2022. Please note: The specific geographic area for recruitment should be confirmed annually with the U.S. Embassy in the Philippines, as priorities may shift.

The ratio of students to adult participants should be 6:1 or 7:1 (approximately 3-4 educators)

Program Option Four: Youth Leadership Program with Russia
One cooperative agreement. Funding for this award is approximately $360,000

Applicants should propose to implement a four-week, U.S.-based exchange for approximately 40 English-speaking Russian youth in summer 2022. Please note: The Russia program is the only option that will engage participants from a slightly older age range (ages 18-20).

As this program does not include adult participants, the award recipient, in consultation with the U.S. Embassy Moscow and ECA, will identify and provide flight chaperones to accompany the students to and from the host site in the United States to ensure their safety and assist them in navigating airports. Please note: Flight chaperones are not expected to have any additional role in the exchange program.

The program theme for this exchange must be environmentally focused, and the award recipient must brand the program the "Russian Youth Environmental Program (RYEP)" in all program materials for public distribution.

Participants:
For all program options except Russia, international youth participants must meet the following eligibility requirements:

1) Be secondary school students between the ages of 15 and 17 at the start of the U.S.-based exchange;
2) Be citizens and current residents of the country from which they are applying;
3) Be selected through a merit-based competition;
4) Represent the diversity of their home country; and
5) Have at least one year of secondary school remaining after the exchange.

For the Youth Leadership Program with Russia, the award recipient will recruit and select youth participants who meet the following eligibility requirements:

1) Be secondary or post-secondary school students between the ages of 18 and 20 at the start of the U.S.-based exchange;
2) Be citizens and current residents of Russia;
3) Be selected through a merit-based competition; and
4) Represent the diversity of their home country.

Criteria for selection of the participants will include leadership skills, an interest in community service, strong academic and social skills, and openness and flexibility. To reach beyond the elite, award recipients should make every effort to recruit participants from underserved or disadvantaged populations in these countries, and should include public high schools. American participants on the Iraq and Algeria programs also must meet these requirements.

The programs with Algeria, Iraq, and the Philippines will include adult participants who work with youth and have demonstrated an interest in promoting youth leadership and development. The adult participants may be teachers, trainers, school administrators, and/or community leaders who work with youth. They will have the role of chaperone, exchange participant, and post-

exchange mentor. Adult participants must be recruited and selected through a merit-based competition.

Exchange activities <u>must</u> include some programming for adult participants, separate from activities with the youth, specifically geared toward their professional development skills. Proposals must include a detailed description of the proposed adult programming.

Organizational Capacity: Applicants must demonstrate their capacity for implementing programs of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) provision of leadership and civic education programming; (2) age-appropriate programming for youth; and (3) demonstrated understanding of and experience working with the relevant partner country and/or geographic region.

Applicants of all program options must identify an overseas partner organization, branch office, or other affiliates/consultants that will facilitate the in-country aspects of the program including participant recruitment and selection, pre-departure orientations, and follow-on activities. Applicants of the Russia program may propose a partner in another country in the region, as necessary. **Applicants must detail within their proposals the capacity and experience of the overseas partner(s) to conduct the above activities, and indicate how partner(s) will be monitored.**

<u>Please note:</u> For the Iraq Program, the U.S. Embassy Baghdad and ECA may ask that the award recipient to work cooperatively with other potential organization(s) that are implementing the Embassy-funded Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Programs (IYLEP) to streamline certain program procedures. [The ECA funded exchange shares the same program name with a larger Embassy-led and funded IYLEP initiative.]

U.S. Embassy Involvement:
It is important that the proposal narrative clearly state the applicant's commitment to consult closely with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. embassy in the partner country (in addition to the ECA Program Office) to develop plans for project implementation, including recruitment, selection and orientation of participants, publicity events, and follow-on activities, once a cooperative agreement is awarded.   All program promotional and application forms are subject to ECA and U.S. embassy approval before dissemination. Embassy staff should be invited to participate in semi-finalist interviews. Final participants and alternates <u>must</u> be approved by ECA and PAS staff. No invitations may be issued without the Department of State clearance (ECA and PAS).

Program Guidelines:
The awards 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, where relevant), in-country pre-departure orientations, exchange activities in the United States, and follow-on activities in the participants' home communities.

Applicants should propose specific exchange dates within their proposals, but the exact timing may be altered, if necessary, through the mutual agreement of the U.S. Department of State and the award recipient.

Applicants may propose a plan to divide the delegation of participants into smaller cohorts for most of the exchange activities to 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 entire delegation for group cohesion and bonding.

Substantial Involvement: In a cooperative agreement, the U.S. Department of State 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 brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional Non-Competitive Continuations, pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two Non-Competitive Continuations are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a Non-Competitive Continuation will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all Non-Competitive Continuations.

B. Federal Award Information:
Type of Award: Cooperative Agreements. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under Substantial Involvement in the POGI.
Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2021 - base year total for all four awards, $1,260,000; FY 2022 – Non-Competitive Continuation year one total $1,260,000; FY 2023 – Non-Competitive Continuation year two total $1,260,000, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.
Approximate Total Funding: The figures below represent the base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years (of equal amounts), pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Youth Leadership Program with Algeria	$750,000 (FY 21 base year - $250,000)
Iraqi Young Leaders Exchange Program	$1,200,000 (FY 21 base year - $400,000)
Youth Leadership Program with the Philippines	$750,000 (FY 21 base year - $250,000)
Youth Leadership Program with Russia	$1,080,000 (FY 21 base year - $360,000)

Approximate Number of Awards: 4 (One cooperative agreement issued per program).
Approximate Average Award: See Approximate Total Funding section above.
Floor of Award Range: None.
Ceiling of Award Range: See Approximate Total Funding section above.

Anticipated Award Date: On or about September 1, 2021.
Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2024. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years.

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

Cooperative agreements will be awarded for a period of approximately 15 months (base year) with Non-Competitive Continuations for two additional 12 month periods (Non-Competitive Continuation years one and two). 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:
1) 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 cooperative agreements in amounts over $130,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement these exchange programs. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

2) 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.

3) Eligible organizations may submit separate applications for one or more of the program options outlined within the NOFO. However, if more than one proposal is received from the same applicant for the same program option, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process. As previously stated, ECA strongly urges applicants to focus their applications on countries where they have the strongest organizational capacity.

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: 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, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, by telephone (202) 632-9261 or 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.3p. "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.3d. 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 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 on an ECA exchange program
- Indicator 6: Percent of foreign participants who traveled to the United States for the first time on an ECA exchange program

- 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 7: 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 8: Percent of participants who identify as a Department of State program alumni
    - Indicator 9: Percent of participants who report increasing their network of Americans

- Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries
    - Indicator 10: Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of ECA program participation
  - Sub-Objective 4.1: Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs
    - Indicator 11: 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 12: Amount of U.S. dollars spent by foreign exchange participants during their exchange

- Objective 6: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships

       o   Indicator 13: 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 results 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 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 effects of ECA programming.

Entity Responsible: Person or entity responsible for collecting the data

Program Goal: Prepare youth leaders to become responsible citizens and contributing members of their communities.

Performance Indicator	Definition	Baseline	Target	Data Source and Question	When to Collect	Entity Responsible
ECA Objective 1: Advance participant and beneficiary cross-cultural competence and global perspective						
ECA Sub-Objective 1.1: Promote cultural exchanges and enhance understanding between participants and their host communities						
Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of	Participant - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) How did your views of the United States	Post-Program: A post-program collection should	Award recipient

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

	Counting Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who respond "more favorable" about the American people while denominator is the total number of survey respondents.			throughout, no change – my view remained favorable throughout, more favorable	an activity has ended.	
Percent of foreign participants indicating a change in understanding of United States culture and values	<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". *This indicator only applies only to foreign participants.* **Counting Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** Responses to each item should be scored in the following manner: No change – 1 Minimal change – 2 Moderate change – 3 Substantial change – 4	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) How much did participation in the program change your understanding or knowledge of the following topics? • United States democracy • United States economy • Foreign affairs in the United States • Domestic affairs in the United States • United States values and culture • Daily life in the United States • Religious and ethnic diversity in the United States • Freedom of speech and press in the United States	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	The 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. 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.			• Voluntary community service in the United States Scale: no change, minimal change, moderate change, substantial change		
Percent of foreign participants expressing support of democratic values	Participant: A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors" **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** The values for each response are combined and divided by the total number of response categories answered, producing the average value for an individual respondent to that question. The indicator	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements below? • Voting is important because real decisions are made in elections • Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy • An independent media is important to the free flow of information • All citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law, regardless of circumstances • The Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy • Individuals and organizations have the	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

	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.			right to free speech and to voice opposition • Democratic principles enhance the workplace. Supervisors should incorporate democratic principles into their management practices [Scale – Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neither Agree not Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree]		
Percent of participants who traveled abroad for the first time on an ECA exchange program	Participant - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors". Abroad – A country outside of one's home country **Counting Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "**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.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	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]: • Tourism/ • Visit friends/family • Participation in another ECA exchange program • Study • Work Other: _____	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.	Award recipient

Percent of foreign participants who traveled to the United States for the first time on an ECA exchange program	Participant - A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors". **Counting Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "**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.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	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]: • Tourism • Visit friends/family • Participation in another ECA exchange program • Study • Work Other: _____	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.	Award recipient
ECA Objective 2: Increase the impact that participants and alumni have on their communities / countries						
ECA Sub-Objective 2.2: Foster participant's belief that civic engagement benefits communities/countries						
Percent of participants who believe that they can have an impact on their community or country	Participant - A participant is a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and primarily benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors".	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) As a result of your program participation, has your confidence in the following statements changed? [Increased, stayed the same, decreased] • I know several ways in which I can make a difference on some of	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and	Award recipient

	Count Frequency Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculation** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents that responded "increased" or "stayed the same" while denominator is the total number of survey respondents.			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	no later than 6 weeks after an activity 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	Alumni are program participants who have been exposed to at least 36 hours of an exchange or a cultural exchange element with the possibility of sustained networking. **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year, even if they are eligible for data collection through multiple programs **Calculations** To calculate percentage, numerator will be number of alumni who answered "yes" in response to the survey question. The denominator will be number of alumni who responded to the survey question. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Do you consider yourself an alumni of a U.S. Department of State program? (yes/no)	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

Percent of foreign participants who report increasing their network of Americans	A <u>network</u> is an interconnected or interrelated group or system intentionally convened, sustained, or otherwise facilitated through ECA programming. A <u>participant</u> is defined as a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors". **Count Frequency** Each respondent should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion. **Calculations** To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who reply "yes" to the first question item while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Survey (self-reported data) Because of your participation in the program, have you increased the number of Americans you are professionally or personally connected with? (yes/no) **If yes:** I have _____ the number of Americans I am connected with (answer options: greatly increased, moderately increased, barely increased)	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient
ECA Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries						
Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of ECA program participation	<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,	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	Do you feel that you have increased your skill level in any of the following areas as a result of participation in this program? *Please select all that apply*:	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than	Award recipient

| | cognitive competence skills, self-confidence, resourcefulness/resilience, and decision-making and problem-solving skills

Participant: a person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange Visitors".

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

Calculations
To determine the percent value, numerator is number of respondents who select any option besides "no skills improvement" while denominator is the total number of survey respondents. Divide the numerator by the denominator and then multiply by 100 for the percent value. | | | • Communication skills
• Listening skills
• Self-awareness
• Awareness of others
• Self-initiative
• Self-confidence
• Resourcefulness
• Decision-making skills
• Problem-solving skills
• No skills improvement | before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended. | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **ECA Sub-Objective 4.1:** Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs | | | | | | |
| Number of total participants | Participant: A person or group of persons that has directly participated in, and benefits from, an ECA exchange program. Note that participants also include ECA's Office of Private Sector Exchange's (ECA/EC) "Exchange | To be completed by the applicant | To be completed by the applicant | Administrative records | Semi-annually | Award recipient |

Visitors". *This indicator includes American, including those that are part of reciprocal exchanges, and foreign participants.* **Counting Frequency** Each participant should only be counted once per reporting year following their program completion.						

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	**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.	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	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? • $100 or less • $101 - $300 • $301 - $500 • $501 - $1,000 • $1001 or more	Post-Program: A post-program collection should occur no earlier than before the participant departs the United States and no later than 6 weeks after an activity has ended.	Award recipient

ECA Objective 8: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships						
Dollar amount ($) spent on monitoring and evaluation activities	This indicator tracks the amount expended to include salary and expenses associated with monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities by ECA Award Recipients. Award Recipient is an entity that undertakes the work of the ECA Bureau programs, using ECA funding under a	N/A	N/A	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?	Semi-annually	ECA Evaluation Division (Note: Award recipients should track this information in order to report back to the

	formal legal agreement. For ECA Exchange Visitor Programs, these entities are called Exchange Sponsors, which are not ECA-funded, and consist of public, private, or nonprofit entities designated by the Department of State to support persons involved in exchange program activities or events. **Count Frequency** Each Award Recipient should only be counted once per reporting period, even if they have implemented multiple programs.			For your convenience, we have included details below on what activities constitute monitoring and evaluation. These include: • Reviewing program outputs and any outcomes • Reviewing web-based analytics • Data collection with implementing partners • Program conceptualization through review/reflection • Developing theory of change and/or logic models • Working with the ECA Evaluation Division • Event observation • Data collection with program participants • Site visits to U.S. host institutions • Discussions with program stakeholders regarding program performance • Reviewing grantee performance monitoring reports (Internal only) • International monitoring trips • Data collection efforts to measure against the FBS • Managing and reviewing external evaluations in		Evaluation Division)

				conjunction with the Evaluation Division • Creating or reviewing evaluation data collection tools • Conducting M&E capacity-building activities for ECA implementing partners • Attending capacity-building workshops, presentations, or trainings on M&E · Research activities intended to inform program design 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.		
Applicant Objective 1: To be completed by the applicant						
Indicator	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant
Applicant Objective 2: To be completed by the applicant						
Indicator	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant
Indicator	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant	To be completed by the applicant		

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 total award amounts noted for each program option as outlined under section B. Federal Award Information. 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 two additional non-competitive continuation years, pending successful program performance and the availability of funds; and

- an abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two non-competitive continuation years).

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 continuations. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)

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

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

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

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

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

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

D.3n. Allowable costs for the program 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: Monday, May 10, 2021
Method of Submission: Applications may only be submitted electronically through
                             Grants.gov (https://www.grants.gov). Complete solicitation
                             packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Search Grants"
                             portion of the system.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Email: support@grants.gov

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

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

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

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, 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:** The proposed program should be well developed, respond to design outlined in the solicitation, and demonstrate originality. It should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail. Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should also provide a robust plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

2) **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Program Objectives:** A detailed agenda 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 workshops, seminars, presentations, school-based activities, and/or site visits 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 in both the United States and in the partner countries should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. Proposals should effectively demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

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

6) **Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing:** 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:

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

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

The Recipient is required to submit with the quarterly financial report submission information regarding the number of individuals receiving payment from the funds being granted under this award. This report is due 30 days after the calendar year quarter and 90 days after the award period end date and also should be sent to AQMOps@state.gov with the subject line "SPOT Quarterly Report -- Award Number". The following information shall be provided:

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

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

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

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

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

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

F.4. Reporting Requirements
You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

1) Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) shall be required at a minimum annually and no more frequently than quarterly. Annual reports shall be due 120 calendar days after the cooperative agreement year; semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this Cooperative Agreement/Grant in the U.S. Department of State's SAMS Domestic.

2) The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: http://www.dpm.psc.gov/. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to SAMS Domestic, in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

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

3) A final program and financial report no more than 120 days after the expiration or termination of the award;

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

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3h. Program 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, ECA/PE/C/PY/T, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0503, 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   March 3, 2021
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State