

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2016 MediaMakers Studio

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-16-001

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415

Application Deadline: July 15, 2015

Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for the FY 2016 MediaMakers Studio, pending the availability of FY 2016 funds. MediaMakers Studio expands on the American Film Showcase program model and other well established and successful ECA film programs. 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 conduct an innovative professional development program with leading U.S. entertainment and media mentors that will enhance the creative impact of filmmaking professionals from participating countries. This program, like other ECA film program models, seeks to elevate influential voices that are building resilient civil societies by using film, television and new media to address critical local issues including, but not limited to, human rights, pluralism, women's empowerment, and tolerance.

The MediaMakers Studio will connect approximately 12-18 talented film and video professionals from approximately four to six countries with mentors in the U.S. entertainment industry, who will help facilitate behind-the-scenes access, bolster participants' technical skills and creative content development, and build the foundations for lasting professional networks. This program will focus on film projects in development and match participant areas of interest with mentor expertise. Fellows will travel to Los Angeles, California to work on projects with a team of American mentors and receive state-of-the-art training and industry access to support conceptual development of independent, authentic and compelling content for distribution in their home countries. Following this intensive, hands-on exchange, Mentors will travel to a select number of the Fellows' countries, when possible, for continued creative consultation and engagement. Both Mentors and Fellows will mutually benefit from the extended creative and professional development, which will promote dialogue and understanding and lead to greater creative and entrepreneurial connections.

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

It is the Bureau's intent to award one cooperative agreement for an estimated total amount of \$1,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2016 funds. (Please see section B.) Federal Award Information, below for additional details.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

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

Purpose: The U.S. Department of State's Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs proposes an innovative professional mentoring program with leading U.S. entertainment and media partners and film professionals to enhance the capacity and creative reach of socially-engaged filmmaking professionals from select countries. The MediaMakers Studio seeks to elevate creative voices that are crucial to building strong civil societies and use film, video and new media to amplify the importance of issues such as human rights, pluralism, women's empowerment, and tolerance. MediaMakers seeks to create a holistic creative and professional experience through a robust exchange of ideas and training. This program will provide Fellows with creative and technical support needed to develop story concepts and works-in-progress through specially-tailored mentorships, job shadows, masterclasses and other enhancement opportunities. The program will provide substantial creative and technical insight for Fellows and include ongoing creative counsel and support by Mentors when Fellows return to their home countries.

The MediaMakers Studio will take place in Los Angeles, California. Pending the availability of funds and successful performance of the award recipient, ECA reserves the right to expand the program to implement the U.S. component in other U.S. cities in subsequent fiscal years. The award recipient will design an innovative mentoring and hands-on training program that takes full advantage of the range of talent, technical skills and business expertise found throughout the entertainment industry in Los Angeles, from individual experts and small, niche companies to independent studios, mid-sized production companies, and larger entertainment studios.

Approximately 12-18 Fellows from approximately four to six countries will participate in an exchange that will refine storytelling techniques, introduce technology and multi-

media platforms, establish professional networks, and expand business skills by offering training in development, financing and distribution.

Fellows will be talented, mid-career film makers between the ages of approximately 20-40, and will come to the MediaMakers Studio with a project in development, possibly already supported by established media partners or film companies. The projects in development should explore civil society themes in an organic, compelling way. Projects could include documentary films, narrative features, comedies, serialized television dramas and/or web-based series. Fellows will outline goals at the outset of the program and also production and distribution plans for the projects upon completion of the program. The program will also explore how content can be shared across platforms to reach and connect with broader audiences.

Ideally, the program will invite multiple participants (up to 3 film makers) from a single country - each participant bringing different but complementary creative skills, to include writers, directors, producers, editors and cinematographers. Participants can also join as a creative team working on a project together. Multiple Fellows from one country will amplify the creative exchange experience and increase potential for transfer of skills.

Mentor/Fellow matching will be critical, and each participant and/or team may have different needs. Once Fellows are identified, the award recipient will ensure that Mentors possess the relevant skills and experience to meet Fellows' needs and interests. The award recipient will need extensive expertise regarding the on-ground realities of production and distribution in select countries in order to pair Fellows with Mentors and to design training that can be transferable and relatable. To that end, the first program component will include overseas visits by a U.S. advisory team to meet with each Fellow to better understand and assess the media landscape in each participating country and to define specific project goals with each Fellow. This information will inform the program design, allowing for tailored programs for participants with Mentors and film education and training that meet participant needs. In some cases, working with independent and/or lower budget productions would be more relevant for participants.

Program design will allow Fellows to take full advantage of the range of professional expertise in Los Angeles. Fellows will be paired with a team of creative and business mentors in the industry. Each team will have a lead mentor, who will be more senior and offer Fellows a unique industry overview with behind-the-scenes insight and access. Mentors will represent a spectrum of expertise from the creative, financial, and technical sides of storytelling. Mentors will be assigned in carefully matched teams to offer Fellows a broad range of highly individualized and close-up professional experiences such as: access to pitch sessions, writers' rooms, production lots, editing bays, sound mixing studios, production budget meetings, costume and set design, and marketing meetings. Through diverse access and relationship-building with multiple mentors, Fellows will experience the many different stages of creative development, production and distribution. This range of expertise will allow Fellows to refine skill sets and learn

new ways to connect with audiences, especially younger audiences who access stories on a range of platforms.

The award recipient will be expected to identify and recruit U.S. film professionals to serve as Mentors, as well as technical experts to create unique, tailored activities and present workshops for Fellows. The award recipient will arrange Mentor pairings according to each Fellow's and/or creative team's needs. Pairings may vary, and some mentor engagement may be longer and more substantial than others.

In addition, the program will offer hands-on training, master classes, and labs for Fellows to further develop works in progress and offer expertise, refinement and critical review. Participants could form multi-country creative teams in workshops and create short content.

There will be additional networking opportunities and enhancement activities to take full advantage of the educational, cultural and professional opportunities in Los Angeles. For example, each week, the Fellows could attend seminars on funding, marketing and distribution, film festivals or television markets, pitch sessions, and/or discussions with established filmmakers, television writers and film professionals. Fellows will be in Los Angeles together at the same time, helping foster network development and building a community of socially-engaged film and video makers who will maintain connections once they return home, creating a global network. The program design should allow for a common workspace or hub for filmmakers to congregate each day to work on their projects and or hold meetings and consultations with experts.

During the exchange, Fellows could also have the opportunity to observe and work with Los Angeles-based non-profit community-based groups, who use film, video and new media to enhance understanding and awareness of important social issues to different audiences. Participants should receive training in how to impart these critical skills and advocacy techniques to civil society groups upon return to their home countries.

At the start of the program, each Mentor and Fellow will work together to develop a concrete project plan for each mentoring period, as well as an action plan that the Fellow will implement once he or she returns home.

Upon program completion, Fellows will have had exposure to leading practices for creating and developing engaging film, television or web series. MediaMakers Studio seeks to enable Fellows to develop, shape, and amplify their compelling creative content for their local markets and beyond.

The Los Angeles program will conclude with a one to two day closing session with the Fellows, Mentors and industry leaders discussing and summarizing core successes of the program and areas where collaboration and skill sharing need to continue. The Fellows will share and receive feedback on action plans for developing their projects once they

return home and establish specific ways for continued engagement with the mentor networks. Similarly, Fellows will discuss how they plan to share the skills they have acquired with emerging filmmakers and creative communities in their home country.

After the Los Angeles portion of the program, Fellows will remain in contact with their Mentors as projects develop and will have access to an Advisory Creative Council (to be designed the award recipient), comprised of experts offering a range of expertise for Fellows to consult as their projects develop. The award recipient will propose ways Fellows and Mentors will maintain contact and how the Fellows can interact and share work with Mentors and the advisory council.

After approximately four to six months, select U.S. mentors will travel to re-connect with 4-6 Fellows in their home countries. During their approximately 10- day visit, Mentors will work with Fellows on their projects and develop a fuller understanding of the film industry in those countries.

As the budget allows, Mentors and Fellows could also reconnect as a group at a regional location to address issues of mutual interest and concern and showcase their work.

The goal of this program is to enhance participant capacity and professional networks. . During the program in Los Angeles, Fellows may produce short pieces for workshop and lab assignments, but there is no expectation that they will complete the major projects they have in development. Further, all Fellows will maintain full editorial and creative control of their projects.

MediaMakers will (1) enable participants to more effectively harness the power of visual storytelling to explore the critical issues confronting their communities, (2) connect participants with a range of creative and business leaders through mentorships, (3) help visual storytellers acquire innovative narrative skills, enabling them to create compelling content for multi-media platforms, (4) establish professional networks linking participants with each other and with professional leaders in the U.S. entertainment industry, (5) develop business skills and connections necessary to secure film financing and increase market distribution, and (6) expose filmmakers to community-based organizations that either provide media-focused training for youth and underserved populations or use film as a tool of social change so they may replicate similar models in their home countries

The below listed countries include those from which participants may be selected in 2015. **Note:** ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposed project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the program's needs and availability of funds. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust and/or add additional countries and/or regions should conditions change in a partner country and/or if other countries and/or regions are identified as viable alternatives and/or Department priorities. For proposal planning purposes, the program may include participants from

the following countries: Egypt, Indonesia, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Turkey, Tunisia, Pakistan and Nigeria.

Applicants must identify the U.S. and foreign organizations and individuals with whom they are proposing to collaborate to recruit and select Fellows overseas through an open, merit-based competition, to secure mentorships in the United States, and to implement follow-on mentoring in participant countries. Proposals should contain letters of commitment or support from any established film professionals and partner organizations with which the applicant plans to work to secure the mentorships, and for the follow-on mentoring overseas. A description of any previous cooperative activities with these partner organizations should be included in the proposal, along with information about their mission, activities, and accomplishments. Applicants should clearly outline and describe the roles and responsibilities of all partner organizations in terms of project logistics, management and oversight. Proposals should also include letters of intent and/or commitment from established individual film professionals and/or U.S.-entertainment and media companies that would be willing to mentor participants. Mentors should represent a wide range of expertise from independent film and new media to larger film and TV productions, and offer expertise in such areas as writing, directing, producing, editing, cinematography, physical production, film financing, and distribution.

Applicants should outline training through masterclasses/labs/workshops that will enhance participants/creative teams' skills in the craft and business of content making. In addition, proposals should outline cultural and professional engagement programs.

Competitive proposals for MediaMakers Studio should include the following:

- A description of the recruitment and merit-based selection processes for approximately 12-18 Fellows. Fellows can be considered individually or can identify as creative teams. Selection process should reflect how this might work and should also allow multiple participants from the same country.
- A description of a program that will build capacity and expand professional networks through tailored mentorships, masterclasses, job shadows, networking events.
- A description of the recruitment and the securing of mentorships and mentors in American entertainment and media and content companies and how Fellows will be matched with appropriate mentoring teams. An outline for mentor teams and how these teams would allow Fellows a broad and in-depth exposure to industry in practice. A description of how the applicant will ensure the experience and skills are transferable to different cultural media landscapes.
- A description of how Fellows will work individually and collectively and a detailed description of proposed participant workshops/labs/masterclasses that will address individual and group needs and also include topics on business

development, such as film financing, marketing and distribution, and pitch sessions.

- A description of weekly activities to show how Fellows would spend time with mentors in creative discussions or job shadowing or attending cultural or networking events. The program design will be flexible enough to meet individual participant needs and also accommodate group interests. Applicants should include descriptions of daily and weekly activities to show how participants will work with mentors, further develop their works in progress and work as a group.
- A plan for monitoring and evaluation of participants during the L.A. program and when participants have returned to their home countries.
- A plan for developing background and assessment briefs for mentoring teams that outline the entertainment and media landscapes for each participating countries and the on-ground realities and challenges participants face in different media environments. A plan for participants to have pre-departure information, a group arrival orientation; and an evaluation session at the conclusion of the program. A description of how the applicant will work with participants to identify individual and project development goals for MediaMakers Studio and how the applicant will work with participants throughout program to achieve their goals.
- A description of how the applicant will assist participants to develop and execute action plans after they return home from the United States.
- A workshop plan to assist Fellows with delivering new skills and expertise to aspiring filmmakers and creative content developers in their home countries.
- A description of how participants and mentors will maintain contact after the US based program concludes and how participants/creative teams can consult experts as their projects develop.
- Resumes of experienced staff who have experience and understanding of entertainment industry and film education and demonstrated a commitment to implement and monitor international exchange projects and ensure outcomes.
- A comprehensive plan to evaluate how the program's outcomes will achieve the specific objectives described in the narrative that includes a data collection strategy to demonstrate the program's effectiveness both in the United States and all participating regions overseas.
- A proposed timeline detailing MediaMakers activities and how they support the program's goals.
- Letters of commitment from U.S. entertainment and media companies and film professionals and experts to serve as mentors.
- Letters of commitment from entertainment and media film educational professionals or schools who will create tailored training programs for participants.

- Letters of commitment from any proposed partner organizations/sub-recipients that will assist the applicant in implementing MediaMakers. Applicants should clearly outline and describe the roles and responsibilities of all proposed partner organizations/sub-recipients in terms of project logistics, management and oversight.
- A post-award plan that demonstrates how both the mentors and mentees can maintain contacts initiated during the program.
- A budget reflecting a cooperative agreement request not to exceed \$1,000,000 for the FY 2016 program.

U.S. Embassy Involvement:

In consultation with ECA, the award recipient must actively engage the relevant U.S. Embassies for the assessment trip, the final selection of all participants and the follow-on in-country program with Fellows.

Before submitting a proposal, all applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with the program officer at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in Washington, DC, in charge of : Catherine Collins; (202) 632-9301 (tel); (202) 632-9355 (fax); e-mail: collinacs@state.gov.

Project Details:

Audience: Fellows will be film, television and online content maker professionals (ages approximately 20-40) who are established or rising in professional careers that require expertise/knowledge in the craft and business of film, television and online content such as innovative narrative and storytelling techniques and effective marketing and distribution practices and other related professional skills, and who already are, or show promise of being, role models for others in their countries, particularly for youth. “Filmmaking” should be interpreted broadly to include – but not be limited to – storytelling across traditional and new media and to include the fields of writing, producing and directing film, television, web-based content.

Candidates will need to have an established track record within their respective media markets; submit work for review and letters of support from members of the professional/artistic/NGO community; and come with story ideas and /or works in progress that incorporate a creative narrative that includes key social issues and themes (e.g. human rights, pluralism, women’s empowerment and tolerance).

Candidates should outline their production and distribution plans for proposed works in progress and how their content will facilitate and contribute to dialogue within their communities. Candidates need to outline their intended goals for participation and outline areas of the kinds of support and training they need. Candidates should identify

general challenges filmmakers face in local markets and how participation might address some of these challenges.

Multiple participants (up to three film makers), can come from one country, each participant possibly bringing different but complementary creative skills from writing, directing and producing. Participants could submit independently or as creative teams with a story concept to be developed or a work in progress.

All participants must be proficient in written and spoken English.

Fellows will be matched with Mentoring Teams with one lead U.S. mentor who is a mid-level to senior professional and other mentor team members who complement each other and address participants' needs and goals. Participants will also have access to a team of cultural mentors to help ease the participant's adjustment to, and familiarize him/her with, American society.

The Applicant will offer a program design that is flexible and responsive to the different creative team needs and also professional workshops and seminars that address more general interests.

Successful applicants will clearly demonstrate the capacity to achieve the following:

- Demonstrate capacity to design and lead an innovative film, TV and new media-oriented mentoring program that entails international and domestic programs with significant connections and relationships with individuals in the entertainment, media and film industry in Los Angeles.
- Identify qualified and established partner organizations/offices overseas to identify and recruit applicants to MediaMakers, in consultation with ECA and relevant U.S. Embassies and Consulates.
- Conduct a comprehensive selection process of foreign participants from eligible countries, and provide them with the opportunity for meaningful and effective professional development and collaboration, as well as cultural awareness through project-based mentorships with American industry leaders for approximately 4-6 weeks, and through activities conducted in select countries overseas after the conclusion of the U.S.-based program.
- Identify U.S.-based companies and individuals with whom collaboration on mentorships and networking opportunities is possible.
- Promote mutual understanding and partnerships between key professional groups in the United States and counterpart groups in eligible countries.
- Create sustainable professional mentoring relationships between U.S. and foreign participants.
- Expand the network of film professionals in eligible countries.

Ideal Program Model:

- A program for 12-18 participants (who apply with story concepts or works in progress) from select countries for a four- to six-week mentoring and professional residency program in Los Angeles, California; a group orientation at the beginning of the program in the United States; mentorship with a team of professional mentors, and also a cultural mentor team for participant cultural/social activities; workshops/labs/masterclasses, job shadow and enhancement seminars tailored to specific and individual and group needs; a debriefing and evaluation session at the conclusion of the U.S.-based mentorship; and additional educational and cultural programming, as appropriate. Follow-on trips to participant countries.
- According to their expertise and interests, participants should be assigned to Mentor teams with established individuals and/or companies located within the entertainment hub area of the United States. The location needs to afford them an in-depth exposure to a range of different film, television, and other media. For the 2016 program, Los Angeles will be that hub. Participants can work with mentors to review previous work and/or works in progress for critical feedback, extend professional networks, and experience the range of creative and business steps as projects develop. The award recipient will ensure that the mentorship is carefully designed for each participant's professional goals and creative interests.
- Robust engagement with the wider private sector to expand networking opportunities.
- Engagement seminars during the course of the Los Angeles based program to take full advantage of the educational, cultural and professional opportunities in Los Angeles.
- Opportunities to work with local Los Angeles-based community groups or schools that work with film to reach local communities on relevant local issues, such as combating gang violence or promoting youth volunteerism or other relatable issues.
- A one to two day closing-session after the conclusion of the U.S. component for all the MediaMakers Studio Fellows and Mentors to discuss the program, and summarize core successes and areas where collaboration and skills sharing needs to continue. Fellows will develop plans for how they will share information and lead film workshops with younger, emerging filmmakers. The award recipient will be responsible for the costs of the retreat and for all travel by the participants.
- After MediaMakers Fellows return to their home countries, they will remain in contact with their mentors as individual projects develop; and Fellows can also connect with a group of mentors who could act as an informal creative and technical advisory council for different stages of production and distribution. Applicants should suggest ways to support this continued dialogue, exchange of

ideas that could include but not limited to virtual cloud platforms designed for MediaMakers community and that would allow for discussions but also for clips and work to be shared.

- Applicants should design follow on trips for a select number of mentors to reconnect with 4-6 Fellows in their home countries approximately four to six months after the Los Angeles program has finished. For approximately 7-10 days, Mentors will work with Fellows on their projects. The award recipient will be responsible for making all international and domestic travel arrangements and work closely with ECA and Embassies to coordinate these trips.
- Share additional, innovative ways for Fellows to explore private sector film financing and ways that finished films/programs/content can receive wider distribution in regional and international markets.
- Specific ideas and approaches to maintaining contact and networking opportunities between the Fellows themselves, and between them and their U.S. Mentors and host institutions/organizations.
- Should budget permit, a regional follow-up for all Fellows to reconnect with Mentors and screen ongoing work or finished projects.
- The publication (both in print and online) of all program materials for designed and arranged in collaboration with ECA and the respective U.S. Embassies. Relevant materials could include those to advertise and promote the program (both in the United States and overseas), orientation materials, mentoring guidelines, and materials for activities conducted in the participants' home countries. Materials and website designs must be approved by ECA prior to publication and/or distribution (allowing ECA a minimum of three weeks for this review process). The award recipient must be prepared to coordinate all public announcements regarding MediaMakers Studio (including press releases, website updates, media notes, etc.) with ECA's Office of Public Affairs and Strategic Communications. Printed materials and websites must prominently display the MediaMakers Studio logo and the U.S. Department of State seal. All official documents and materials developed for promotional purposes must use the MediaMakers Studio and acknowledge the U.S. Department of State's role as program sponsor. Please note: All materials and website resources paid for by funding through the cooperative agreement will become the property of the Department of State. Please refer to D.31. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients for further information.
- Collecting, updating and making available for consumption by the public and Department representatives narrative stories, anecdotes and any quantifiable data that illustrate the impact and multiplier effect of the MediaMakers Studio both overseas and the United States.

ECA envisions the approximate program timeline for the FY 2016 MediaMakers Studio to be as follows:

- *October 2015 – January 2016*: Recruitment and selection of 12-18 foreign participants and mentor teams. On ground media landscape assessments. Visa issuance for participants and pre-departure preparations.
- *March 2016* Travel to the United States by foreign participants
- *March 2016 – December 2016*: Mentors and participants continue creative engagement through virtual platforms
- *January-March 2017*: U.S. mentors travel to select countries overseas to conduct overseas program.
- *April- May 2017*: Final evaluations of the program conducted

Additional information:

All projects proposed for the mentorship should encourage both the American mentors and the Fellows to learn from each other and to build productive relationships.

As needed, ECA will work with the award recipient to finalize host company placements for the MediaMakers Fellows; however, applicants who can demonstrate strong networks within the film, television and new media industry to secure placements through their own resources will be deemed competitive under the Institutional Capacity/Track Record Review Criterion.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/PE/C/CU is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

ECA/PE/C/CU's activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

- Collaborating with the award recipient on the outreach and selection of fellows and mentors;
- Approval of mentors and mentoring sites;
- Review and approval of all program publicity and other materials;
- Final selection of participants;
- Assisting with SEVIS-related issues;
- Assisting with participant emergencies;
- Liaising with relevant U.S. Embassies and country desk officers at the Department of State, particularly in terms of recruitment and selection efforts;
- Issuing DS-2019 forms to participants;
- Enrolling participants in the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program, issue health benefits identifications cards, and provide instructions on host claim forms;
- Working with award recipients to publicize the program ,when relevant, through various media outlets (such as the social media platforms of ECA and PAS), including approving all program publicity, outreach efforts, and other materials;
- Monitoring and evaluating the program, as necessary, through site visits or debriefing sessions.

- Performing an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all renewal years.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number A. Program Description above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY2016, pending the availability of funds

Approximate Total Funding: \$1,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2016 funds

Approximate Number of Awards: One

Floor of Award Range: None

Ceiling of Award Range: \$1,000,000.

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

Anticipated Award Date: October 30, 2015, pending the availability of FY 2016 funds.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: August 31, 2017

Additional Information:

Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this grant or cooperative agreement for two additional consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

C.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

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

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in an amount up to \$1,000,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the following or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process. This program will not fund content creation. Proposals that include content creation will be ineligible for consideration under this funding opportunity.

- Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive no further consideration in the review process.
- **Please note:** Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

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

D.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact Catherine Collins in the Office of Citizen Exchanges (ECA/PE/C) SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, Tel. (202) 632-9301, Fax (202) 632-9355, Email: collinscs@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

Please specify Catherine Collins 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 <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

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. 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 (DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package.

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

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

D.3c. 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 current registrations 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 have been completed. 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. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

D.3d. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

D.3e. In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

D.3f. If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

D.3g. All ECA awards recipient organizations must be registered with GrantSolutions by accessing www.GrantSolutions.gov. To register as a first time user of GrantSolutions, please scroll to the bottom of the home page and click "Getting Started-Request a User Account" at <http://home.grantsolutions.gov/home/home/customer-support/getting-started/>. Organizations that have previously used GrantSolutions do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact GrantSolutions.gov Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Grantee Organizations is available from 8 AM – 6 PM EST, Monday – Friday and can be reached at help@grantsolutions.gov or 1-866-577-0771.

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

D.3h. Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this NOFO, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement) under this NOFO will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization

receiving an award under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

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

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-44, Suite 668
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information.

D.3i. 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.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

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

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

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

1. Participant satisfaction with the program and exchange experience.
2. Participant learning, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.

3. Participant behavior, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. Institutional changes, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

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

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

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

D.3k. 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.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients: All ECA Grant 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.3m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

D.3o. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

1. International and domestic air fares; visas; transit costs; ground transportation costs and airline baggage and seat fees. Please note that all air travel must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. There is no charge for J-1 visas for participants in Bureau-sponsored programs.
2. Per Diem. For U.S.-based programming, organizations should refer to the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at:

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>

ECA requests applicants to budget realistic costs that reflect the local economy and do not exceed Federal per diem rates. Foreign per diem rates for overseas activities can be accessed at:

http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78

3. Housing in the United States. The award recipient will be responsible for providing clean, safe and reasonably located housing for the MediaMakers Fellows during their stay in the United States.
4. Transportation. The Award recipient will be responsible for providing methods of transportation for Fellows during their 4-6 week exchange in Los Angeles.
5. Pre-planning trips to participating countries to assess media landscape for approximately 5-7 days. The award recipient will be responsible for travel and in-country costs such as hotel and per diem. Costs for interpreters/translators may also be included in the budget.
6. Orientation Costs. The award recipient will provide to posts overseas appropriate informational materials about MediaMakers and the logistics involved in traveling to the United States. This information will be used by posts to conduct pre-departure orientations for the MediaMakers participants in each country. The

award recipient will itself conduct a comprehensive orientation for all the MediaMakers participants upon their arrival in the United States.

7. Closing Session Costs. The award recipient will be responsible for organizing and paying for a closing session at the end of the exchange for participants and mentors.
8. Accident and Sickness Insurance. The MediaMakers participants will be covered under the terms of a U.S. Department of State-sponsored health insurance policy. The premium is paid by the U.S. Department of State directly to the insurance company.
9. Consultants. Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Daily honoraria may not exceed \$250 per day. Subcontracting organizations may also be used, in which case the written agreement between the prospective award recipient and the subcontractor should be included in the proposal. Subcontracts should be itemized in the budget.
10. Room Rental. Room rental may not exceed \$250 per day.
11. Materials Development. Your proposal may contain costs to purchase, develop and print materials for participants (both mentors and Fellows).
12. Wire Transfer Fees. When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to partner organizations overseas. Award recipients are urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.
13. In-country Travel Costs for Visa Processing Purposes. Given the requirements associated with obtaining J-1 visas for ECA-supported participants, applicants should include costs for any travel associated with visa interviews or DS-2019 pick-up.
14. Costs involved in MediaMakers overseas follow-on programming (approximately 7-10 day trips) in MediaMakers participating countries, including accommodations, visas and other travel costs. In some cases, Posts may be able to cost share with program partner but this would have to be explored on a case by case basis.
15. Administrative Costs. Costs necessary for the effective administration of the program may include salaries for recipient organization employees, benefits, and other direct and indirect costs per detailed instructions in the Application Package. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, applicants are strongly encouraged to keep administrative costs as low as possible. Proposals

should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, and other sources.

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

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

Application Deadline Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2015

Method of Submission: Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the “Find” portion of the system.

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.

Please follow the instructions available in the ‘Get Started’ portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

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

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 "For Applicants" 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.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission 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

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

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 Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1. Review Criteria

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

1. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives: The proposal should exhibit originality, substance, and precision. The program plan should state the relevance of

your project to the U.S. Department of State's foreign policy goals. Program objectives should be stated clearly and should reflect your organization's expertise in the subject area. Detailed agenda and plans should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Your proposal should include a detailed timeline for accomplishing program activities.

2. Institutional Capacity/Track Record: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful international 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. Applicants who can demonstrate strong networks within the film, television and new media industry to secure placements through their own resources will be deemed more competitive under the Institutional Capacity/Track Record Review Criterion.

3. Cost Effectiveness and Cost Sharing: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries, honoraria and subcontracts for services, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Your proposal should maximize cost sharing through other private sector support, as well as institutional direct funding and in-kind contributions.

4. Support of Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of mentees and mentors, program venue, and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials, and follow-up activities). You should refer to the Bureau's Diversity, Freedom, and Democracy Guidelines in the PSI for guidance.

5. Post-Grant Activities: The proposal should provide a plan to conduct activities after the Bureau-funded project has concluded in order to ensure that Bureau-supported programs are not isolated events. Post-grant activities must be funded by contributions from the applicant or sources outside the Bureau. Costs for these activities should not appear in the proposal budget, but should be outlined/explained in the proposal narrative.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation: Proposals should include a detailed plan to monitor and evaluate the program. How your organization plans to ensure the safety and well-being of the mentees while they are in the United States should be clearly explained. Competitive evaluation plans will describe how applicant organizations will measure the project's success at meeting program objectives in quantitative terms, and should include draft data collection instruments such as surveys and questionnaires. Your proposal should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. ECA is especially interested in the results of project activities both in terms of the impact on audiences as well as on participants. It is the applicant's

responsibility to inform the Bureau of exchange activity results and changes to the program plan and/or project time-line.

7. Stewardship: Your proposal should address how you will utilize innovative tools, low-carbon technologies, and socially responsible approaches to program implementation, including Web-based and other technologies, to reduce the program's carbon footprint and be a faithful steward of federal resources.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1. Award Notices:

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

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

The following additional requirements apply to this project:

For assistance awards involving the Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza:

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

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Catherine Collins at (202 632-9301 and Collinscs@state.gov for additional information.

SPECIAL PROVISION FOR PERFORMANCE IN A DESIGNATED COMBAT AREA AND FUTURE CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (CURRENTLY IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN)

(Revised August 2014)

Each federal assistance award within areas of combat operations or future contingency operation, as designated by the Secretary of Defense (currently Iraq and Afghanistan), over \$150,000 or providing for performance over 30 days must be registered in the

Department of Defense maintained Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) system. Each federal assistance award shall be registered in SPOT before personnel deployment. The DoS SPOT Program Office can assist with entering awards in SPOT. Please send an email to AQMOps@state.gov for information. Information on how to register in SPOT and how to report the total number of recipient personnel deploying under each award will be contained in a Special Provision within each assistance award.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Circular 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 circular 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:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>.

<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

F.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

Mandatory:

- 1) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The first page of the Performance Progress Report form (SF-PPR) must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here:

http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68. The

complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a Grant Note under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the 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 Grantsolutions.gov, in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.

- 2) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all program performance reports.
- 3) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 4) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: FFATAECA@state.gov. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D. Application and Submission Instructions above for D.3.J Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.)

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

G. AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions about this announcement, contact: Catherine Collins, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/CU, SA-5, 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, (202) 632-9301 (tel); (202) 632-9355 (fax); collinscs@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 made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section F3. Reporting Requirements above.

Evan Ryan
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

May 13, 2015