

Department of State

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

(NOFO): *FY 2018 American English E-Teacher Program*

Announcement Type: *New Cooperative Agreement*

Funding Opportunity Number: *ECA-ECAALW-18-002*

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: *19.421*

Key Date/Application Deadline: *March 12, 2018*

Program Description/Executive Summary: The Office of English Language Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA/A/L) announces an open competition for the FY 2018 American English (AE) E-Teacher Program, which offers foreign English teaching professionals the opportunity for professional development through high-quality virtual exchange components including online university-level Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) methodology courses, online English language learning courses, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), webinars, digital libraries, communities of practice and other types of engaging and innovative virtual learning.

In cooperation with ECA/A/L, the recipient will manage the selection, development, and delivery of appropriate online learning courses in the field of TESOL which will be offered to English language educators or learners through U.S. embassies. Courses may be offered globally, regionally, or to specific countries at the request of U.S. embassies. All courses are to be university-level English as a Foreign/Second language professional development courses developed by U.S. higher education institutions to familiarize participants with U.S. student-centered teaching methods, introduce current methods and techniques in teaching English as a Foreign/Second Language, and prepare participants to formally disseminate the newly acquired knowledge to their colleagues. All courses will be openly licensed with a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) License.

Pending the availability of FY 2018 funds, ECA/A/L anticipates approximately 3,000 English language educators worldwide will participate in online courses under this award and an unlimited number of educators will benefit from the openly licensed virtual learning tools developed under this award. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code, Section 26 U.S.C 501 (c) (3) may submit proposals to administer and manage the FY 2018 AE E-Teacher Program for academic year 2018-2019.

It is ECA/A/L's intent to award one cooperative agreement in the amount of \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds, to an applicant that has the ability to achieve these objectives and provide the necessary infrastructure and experience conducting online academic exchange programs. ECA/A/L reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of 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 is provided through legislation.

Purpose:

The AE E-Teacher Program offers professional development for English language teaching professionals through online courses and other virtual learning tools developed by accredited U.S. educational institutions. The courses introduce English language teaching methods and techniques while offering participants the opportunity to engage in a distance learning program that employs the latest in educational technology, and provides direct access to U.S. experts in the field of TESOL. Participants are expected to share their newly-acquired knowledge with their colleagues in their home countries.

Program Categories:

Global Online Courses:

The award recipient will issue sub-awards to accredited U.S. educational institutions through open competitions to develop and provide online courses appropriate for foreign teachers of English as a Foreign/Second Language or for English language learners. These courses will include participants from multiple geographical regions in global, regional, or country-specific cohorts. These courses will familiarize participants with U.S. student-centered teaching and learning methods and with current teaching English as Foreign/Second Language methods and techniques, while preparing participants to formally disseminate the newly acquired knowledge to their colleagues. The courses must include appropriate content that provides participants insights into U.S. culture, society, and values. The award recipient may not issue a sub-award to itself to create or provide courses.

The proposal must demonstrate the award recipient's capacity to draft a request for proposals (RFP) and the capacity to administer an open competition for issuing sub-awards. The award recipient must explain how it will identify the topics of the courses to be provided based on the needs of U.S. embassies and specific regions and countries. In order to select appropriate courses, the award recipient should demonstrate that it has the appropriate staff with expertise in the field of TESOL, particularly in working with non-native English speaking teachers.

The award recipient should submit a plan and timeline for the administration of an open competition, or competitions, to select sub-awards to design and deliver global online courses for a series of academic quarters beginning in 2019. The recipient should, in collaboration with ECA/A/L and the sub-award recipients once they are selected, continue developing strategies for participant placement in courses and for participant retention.

The award recipient and sub-award recipients will collaborate with ECA/A/L and Creative Commons to license all online courses with the most recent CC BY License to ensure that the courses and materials developed with this award will have a significant multiplier effect, be cost-effective, and encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials. As a condition of the FY 2018 AE E-Teacher Program award, all work (except for computer software source code, discussed below) created with the support of this award and any sub-awards will be required to be licensed under a CC BY license. Work that must be licensed in this manner includes new content created using sub-awards; modifications made to pre-existing sub-recipient-owned content using sub-awards; and new works and modifications made to pre-existing works commissioned from third parties using sub-awards. This license will allow subsequent users to copy, adapt, distribute, and transmit the licensed work, and will require users to attribute the work in the manner specified by the award recipient. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the work. For general information on CC BY, please visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>. The award recipient may also contract with Creative Commons for services, such as technical assistance, implementation, and on-going maintenance associated with CC BY licensing.

Regional and Country-specific Online Course Offerings:

Regional and country-specific course offerings will be managed through sub-awards or contracts issued by the recipient to accredited U.S. educational institutions and approved individuals through open competitions or with qualified consultants. The award recipient should conduct a needs analysis in collaboration with ECA/A/L, Regional English Language Officers (RELOs), and U.S. embassies for both regional and country-specific course offerings periodically throughout the period of performance. Regional or country-specific course offerings will be provided online to meet the requests of U.S. embassies, as articulated in the needs analysis and with final approval from ECA/A/L. Such courses could involve repurposing Global Online Courses for a specific regional audience; taking advantage of an existing course through an individual or institution that is not among the Global Online Course providers; or reaching out to an institution or individual to develop a course tailored to a specific context. The award recipient may not issue a sub-award or contract to itself to create or provide these courses.

The award recipient should submit a narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy and timeline for the administration and implementation of regional and country-specific course offerings. This strategy should include how, in coordination with ECA/A/L, the

needs and requests of U.S. embassies will be assessed, and how courses addressing these needs will be implemented throughout the duration of this award.

The award and sub-award recipients will collaborate with ECA/A/L and Creative Commons to license all online courses with the most recent CC BY license to ensure the courses and materials developed with this award will have a significant multiplier effect, be cost-effective, and encourage innovation in the development of new learning materials. As a condition of the FY 2018 AE E-Teacher Program award, all work (except for computer software source code, discussed below) created with the support of the award and any sub-awards will be required to be licensed under a CC BY license. Work that must be licensed in this manner includes new content created using sub-awards; modifications made to pre-existing sub-recipient-owned content using sub-awards; and new works and modifications made to pre-existing works commissioned from third parties using sub-awards. This license will allow subsequent users to copy, adapt, distribute, and transmit the licensed work, and will require users to attribute the work in the manner specified by the award recipient. Notice of the license shall be affixed to the work. For general information on CC BY, please visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0>. The award recipient may also contract with Creative Commons for services, such as technical assistance, implementation, and on-going maintenance associated with CC BY licensing.

Data Management:

The award recipient will use, maintain, and update as necessary the existing Canvas Learning Management System (LMS) which is uniformly utilized for all online course offerings through the AE E-Teacher program. This LMS must accommodate participants in low-bandwidth contexts, while offering participants access to various collaborative multi-media tools during the courses, such as discussion forums or videos. The LMS is customized specifically for the AE E-Teacher Program. The LMS should not be tied to any one institution, as the system must be accessible to multiple institutions and individually-contracted instructors. The LMS should include communities of practice for participants and alumni that facilitate the exchange of teaching and learning content and ideas via a global network of AE E-Teacher Program participants. This system must be accessible at all times to U.S. embassy and ECA/A/L staff involved in nominating and selecting participants, as well as monitoring the online courses.

The award recipient will also use, maintain, and update as necessary the existing application and registration mechanism that allows U.S. embassies to nominate and enroll participants and track participant progress through the AE E-Teacher Program. The application and registration mechanism must remain connected to the LMS. With guidance from ECA/A/L, the award recipient must electronically maintain and regularly update applicant and participant data, and protect personally identifiable information using cyber-secure data collection processes. The award recipient should provide technical assistance and periodic trainings (virtual and/or face-to-face) for ECA/A/L and U.S. embassy staff on how to use the system.

Open Educational Resources:

At the direction of ECA/A/L, the recipient organization will create or issue sub-awards or contracts to accredited U.S. educational institutions and approved individuals through open competitions, or with qualified consultants, to create openly-accessible online English language teaching and learning tools, which may include MOOCs, webinars, course materials, course modules, communities of practice, digital libraries, and other online methods of learning. Open educational resources (OERs) are teaching, learning, and research resources that reside in the public domain or have been released under an intellectual property license that permits their free use and repurposing by others. OERs include full courses, course materials, course modules, textbooks, streaming videos, tests, software, and any other tools, materials, or techniques used to support access to knowledge. OERs may be enriched by utilizing AE E-Teacher Program alumni in supporting roles, such as a facilitator of a webinar or as a contributor to a community of practice. The award recipient will be expected to provide ECA/A/L with access to OERs created during the program at any time during the award. This will allow ECA/A/L to innovatively address additional e-learning opportunities that may arise.

Participants:

Participants will be identified and/or selected by the U.S. embassies and consulates in participating countries, based on allocations determined by ECA with the final selection made by ECA. Each course will host up to 25 participants with approximately 3,000 total participants during the length of this agreement, in addition to the unlimited number of participants who may access OER materials and virtual learning tools.

Participants should:

- Have the ability to complete academic work at a U.S. university level roughly equivalent to a minimum TOEFL score of 525 / iBT 70
- Have an understanding of English technical terms relating to computers and the internet;
- Have regular access (4-5 times per week) to a reliable, up-to-date computer with high-speed internet connectivity;
- Have basic technology skills related to email, internet searches, downloads/uploads, logins/passwords, and e-file use;
- Have the ability to type in English well enough to perform online tasks in real-time and submit written assignments in a timely manner;
- Have at least 8-10 hours per week to devote to the coursework;
- Be a citizen of, and reside in, the nominating country for the duration of the course, with some exceptions for extenuating circumstances; and
- Not hold dual citizenship in the United States.

The successful completion of an online learning program can be challenging due to several factors, such as the participants' level of digital literacy, insufficient access to

reliable internet connectivity, and competing professional and personal obligations. The award recipient should submit a narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for improving participant retention to maximize course completion rates.

Cooperative Agreement:

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/L is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

ECA/A/L activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

1. Grant Management and Program Administration Responsibilities:
 - a) Provide overall program policy design and direction;
 - b) Collaborate on and approve the RFP to solicit appropriate courses through sub-awards from accredited U.S. higher education institutions and through independent contractors;
 - c) Give final approval of all sub-awards and contracts;
 - d) Approve the selection criteria, topics, academic level, and final offerings for all courses;
 - e) Assign scholarship allocations to U.S. embassies;
 - f) Determine revisions to programs as needed, in cooperation with the recipient;
 - g) Approve all major personnel changes in the recipient organization that are directly involved with this award;
 - h) Monitor the administration of the award, including monitoring all online courses and activities the recipient administers;
 - i) Identify the need for consultants to be hired by the recipient to create, curate, and copyedit OER content for publication and social media purposes.

2. Technical Oversight Requirements:
 - a) Approve data management system and LMS, and coordinate with the recipient to ensure systems are customized for the AE E-Teacher Program;
 - b) Approve all publicity for the program to ensure the program is clearly identified as a U.S. Department of State initiative;
 - c) Approve all CC BY licensing agreements.

The responsibilities of the recipient organization are as follows:

1. Grant Management and Program Administration Responsibilities:
 - a) Manage the RFP process for issuing sub-awards to accredited U.S. higher education institutions and individual contractors to deliver online courses for teachers or learners of English as a Foreign/Second Language overseas;
 - b) Manage sub-award recipients in the development and delivery of online professional development courses, including ensuring that materials and

syllabi are submitted by sub-award recipients by the established deadlines for ECA/A/L approval;

- c) Review, analyze, and approve the curriculum, the syllabi, and the materials of proposed courses to ensure they meet program guidelines, including OER guidelines, Instructional Design and Online Learning guidelines, and TESOL guidelines;
- d) In coordination with ECA/A/L, assess U.S. embassies' needs for online English language teaching and learning courses, and solicit and select appropriate courses that address those needs;
- e) Seek ECA/A/L's guidance and approval in the selection and placement of participants based on nominations from U.S. embassies;
- f) Communicate and work with U.S. embassies to resolve participant issues, including connectivity, academic level, etc.;
- g) Seek approval from ECA/A/L for personnel changes for key personnel;
- h) In coordination with ECA/A/L, develop a plan to be implemented with the sub-award recipients for participant placement in courses and participant retention;
- i) In coordination with ECA/A/L, design and develop an alumni engagement strategy and conduct alumni events in order to strengthen the alumni community and create a network of alumni volunteers for the program.

2. Reporting and Documentation Responsibilities:

- a) Develop and implement a strategic communication plan in close coordination with ECA/A/L;
- b) Submit brief weekly updates to ECA/A/L, as well as required quarterly and final program reports by the established deadlines. Provide additional ad hoc reporting as requested and as appropriate;
- c) Inform and consult with ECA/A/L about the administration of the program, any program or participant-related problems or deficiencies, and the progress of necessary actions;
- d) Draft and finalize official documentation, e.g. sub-agreements and Memoranda of Understanding, before disbursing funds to universities or individual contracts;
- e) Track the entire sub-award and contractor process, e.g. proposals, official documents, reports, and disbursements in addition to sending reminders about when reports are due and overdue;
- f) Manage all ECA/A/L funds for AE E-Teacher Program activities, including submitting required quarterly and financial reports to ECA/A/L by the established deadlines;
- g) Ensure existing ECA/A/L educational materials are integrated into course materials and syllabi, as appropriate (see <http://americanenglish.state.gov/>). The award recipient will also seek guidance on collaborating with other ECA/A/L programs, such as the English Language Fellow and Specialist Programs and the English Access Microscholarship Program;

- h) Review participant evaluations of courses as well as evaluations of participants by course instructors, and provide ECA/A/L an analysis of the evaluations;
 - i) Work with sub-award recipients and individual contractors to ensure that recommendations based on the evaluations are implemented.
3. Technical Oversight:
- a) Manage and improve information-sharing tools [e.g., the LMS, program database, COP, webinars, social media, etc.] for the AE E-Teacher Program. The information-sharing tools must be easy to access and updates must be made in a timely manner. Data must be maintained in a way that will enable the recipient to provide ECA/A/L with information on the AE E-Teacher Program immediately upon request;
 - b) Coordinate with ECA/A/L and Creative Commons to license all online courses with CC BY licenses and ensure proper implementation of such licensing;
 - c) Ensure that communications and database information protects personally identifiable information according to ECA/A/L guidelines;
 - d) Research, develop, and produce OERs for English language teaching and learning in response to the articulated needs of ECA/A/L; coordinate and support the deployment of these resources overseas, including the purchase and shipping of equipment, as necessary; and manage professional development activities to allow educators abroad to effectively use these resources;
 - e) Draft and clear all public advertisements, newsletters, course syllabi, handouts, course materials, webpages, and any OERs with ECA/A/L before dissemination to ensure their proper identification as a U.S. Department of State initiative and adherence to ECA/A/L guidelines.

B. Federal Award Information:

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

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2018, pending the availability of funds.

Approximate Total Funding: \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

Approximate Number of Awards: 1

Floor of Award Range: N/A

Ceiling of Award Range: \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

Approximate Average Award: \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2018, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2021

Additional Information: ECA/A/L reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

Pending successful implementation of the AE E-Teacher Program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA/A/L's intent to renew this Cooperative Agreement for two additional fiscal years before openly competing it again.

C.) Eligibility Information:

C.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by U.S. 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 Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in an amount up to \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds, to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) **Technical Eligibility:** All proposals must comply with the following or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process:

- 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 Curtis Chan or Jacqueline Gardy, Office of English Language Programs, ECA/A/L, U.S. Department of State, SA-5, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone (202) 632-9417 or (202) 632-9274, ChanCM3@state.gov or GardyJA@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 ECA/A/L Program Office Curtis Chan or Jacqueline Gardy 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>.

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

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

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

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

Proposal Contents

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Control Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

Online Forms

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs”
- SF-424B, “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs”
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

Program Narrative

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program

3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

Narrative:

In no more than 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision: Describe the statement of need, objectives, goals, and benefits.
2. Sub-Award Selection Process: Describe the sub-award selection process, including the various stages and criteria to provide the global online courses and the regional and country-specific courses.
3. Program Activities: Describe strategies for soliciting proposals from accredited U.S. educational institutions via the open competition to develop and deliver online courses; selecting proposals for course development and delivery; registering participants in the LMS; ensuring the academic component is appropriate and suitable; monitoring the sub-recipients and program participants; and retaining participants to improve the program completion rates.
4. Program Management: Using the responsibilities listed under the Statement of Work, present a plan for the implementation of the program.
5. Organizational capacity: Describe the staff needed to manage the program. Include sufficient staff with relevant qualifications in program management and with experience in the field of TESOL, Applied Linguistics, or a closely related field. Provide a resume for each program staff person, and identify each person's roles and responsibilities. Administrative personnel do not need to have TESOL background.
6. Monitoring and Program Support: Describe how the applicant organization will maintain on-going communication with ECA/A/L, U.S. embassies, sub-recipients, consultants, and participants during all phases of the award.
7. Program Evaluation: Provide evaluation strategies designed to measure the impact and outcomes of the AE E-Teacher Program.
8. Follow-on: Describe how the applicant organization will develop and maintain a dedicated database of participants. As outlined in the PSI, "ECA's General Policy Guidance on Alumni Outreach/Follow-on and Engagement," the proposal must include a plan outlining alumni outreach, follow-on, and engagement.
9. Project Management: Briefly describe how key staff will manage the various aspects of this program.

Additional Information to be Submitted

- Detailed Budget

Program Costs:

1. Instructional costs (including sub-awards to accredited U.S. colleges, universities, and approved individuals, or with qualified consultants)
2. Equipment
3. Communication (administrative and participant)
4. Certificates and digital badges
5. Technology fees and development, including but not limited to, the LMS, COP, and content management systems.
6. OER costs (for example: MOOCs, online learning tools, and other virtual learning programs)

Administrative Costs:

1. Staff salaries and benefits (each staff member and his/her position must be listed separately). Please also note the percentage of his/her total time spent on this program.
 2. Communication costs (e.g. fax, telephone, postage, communication equipment, etc.)
 3. Printing, purchasing and shipping of materials
 4. Office supplies
 5. Printing and duplication costs
 6. OMB Guidance 2 CFR Part 200, Subpart F Single Audit fees
 7. Other direct costs; and
 8. Indirect costs
- Calendar of activities/itinerary
 - Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
 - First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

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

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

All federal award recipients must maintain 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. 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. Non-Profit Status: You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** 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. FFATA Report: 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. Verifying Non-Profit Status: 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. GrantSolutions: 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 Washington, DC time, 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:

FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY:

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

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

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

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

D.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. The budget request may not exceed \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds. 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:

Program Costs:

1. Sub-awards to accredited educational institutions to develop and deliver online courses;
2. Contracts with qualified individuals to develop and deliver open educational resources and online courses;
3. Contracts to maintain and enhance the information technology suite, including but not limited to the LMS, COP, and knowledge management system;
4. Certificates and digital badges design and development;
5. OER development costs (for example, MOOCs, online learning tools, and other virtual learning programs);
6. Alumni engagement programs, including activities related to the annual TESOL conference.

Administrative Costs:

1. Staff salaries and benefits. Each staff person, his/her position and location must be listed separately. Provide the percentage of his/her total time spent on the program.
2. Facilities;
3. Communications (i.e., telephone, fax, postage, email, digital video conferences);
4. Office supplies

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

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

Application Deadline Date: Monday, March 12, 2018

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.3q. 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 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.

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

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

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov and acknowledges the download of submissions, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgement of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application.

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

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

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov.

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.3r. 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 program objectives:* A detailed and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. The work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.
2. *Multiplier effect/impact and follow-on activities:* The proposed activities should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages. The proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) which insures that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.
3. *Project Evaluation:* The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.
4. *Support of Diversity:* The proposal should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. The proposal 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 the proposal has a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.
5. *Institutional Capacity:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals.
6. *Cost-effectiveness and cost-sharing:* The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

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.

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

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of Iran complies with requirements, please contact (Program Office - Iran Coordinator at telephone or e-mail.) for additional information.

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 (insert program office contact name, telephone and e-mail) for additional information.

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. 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 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](http://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 final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 3.) 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.3j. 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: Curtis Chan or Jacqueline Gardy, Office of English Language Programs, ECA/A/L, U.S. Department of State, SA-5, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone (202) 632-9417 or (202) 632-9274, ChanCM3@state.gov or GardyJA@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.

Alyson Grunder
Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

January 11, 2018