

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2019 Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0005075

Office of Global Educational Programs, USA Study Abroad Branch (ECA/A/S/Q)

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Global Educational Programs, USA Study Abroad Branch (ECA/A/S/Q) for the FY 2019 Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program. Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Overview

The FY 2019 award will be executed as a cooperative agreement between the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and one or more award recipients to support the participation of not less than 550 U.S. undergraduate and graduate students in overseas summer institutes of eight to ten weeks in duration. CLS language institutes will offer an intensive immersion experience in 15 critical languages: Arabic, Azerbaijani, Bangla, Chinese (Mandarin), Hindi, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Punjabi, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, and Urdu. The CLS Program funded by this award will take place during summer 2019 in countries and locations where these languages are widely spoken.

Applicants may submit only one proposal for either Option 1 or Option 2 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.

Option 1: Administrative Components *and* Implementation of Language Institutes.

Submit one proposal to implement both of the following:

- a) Administrative Components including overall program administration, pre-program recruitment and selection of participants, guidance and coordination for all summer institutes, annual meetings, and post-program follow-up activities including programs for alumni of all program years, *and*
- b) Summer language institutes for all of the regional language groups as described in this solicitation.

Option 2: Implementation of Language Institute(s) only. Submit one proposal to implement summer language institutes for *no more than two* of the regional language groups according to the guidance in this solicitation.

Applicants proposing to implement more than two of the language groups must submit a proposal to implement the full program (Option 1), including administrative components and the implementation of all language institutes.

U.S. applicant organizations or consortia must have the necessary capacity in the host country or countries to implement the program either through their own offices or partner institutions. Organizations may demonstrate their direct expertise, or they may partner with other organizations to best respond to the requirements outlined in this solicitation. Organizations should outline all duties and responsibilities of partner and/or subaward organization(s), preferably in the form of subaward agreements and accompanying budgets.

Organizations or consortia applying for this award must demonstrate their capacity for conducting projects of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) provision of foreign language instructional programs for college and university students; (2) successful implementation of overseas immersion programs, including cultural enrichment activities; and (3) experience in conducting programs in the proposed host country or countries.

B. CLS Institute Locations, Language Levels, and Participant Numbers

Applicants for Option 1 must propose programs for all 15 language programs. Applicants for Option 2 may propose to administer institutes for no more than two of the regional language groups detailed below. The approximate minimum target distribution of scholarships by region and language is detailed below. Applicants are encouraged to maximize the overall number of proposed participants to be supported under this award.

The Bureau will select and reserves the right to make changes in eligible countries, locations, languages, or number of proposed participants by language, considering any DOS Travel Advisories and other relevant safety and security concerns, the availability of funding, or other factors. The final slate of all institute locations is subject to approval by ECA. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to accept proposals for Option 1 or Option 2 in whole or in part and to make an award or awards based on the needs of the program and U.S. foreign policy objectives.

1. Near East and North Africa Region – Arabic Institutes

Arabic Language Institutes:

- Participants: 105 participants.
- Language Levels: Advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for countries in North Africa, the Middle East, or the Gulf region, with the exception of Iraq, Libya, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and Yemen. Programs should not be proposed for the West Bank or Gaza.

Note: Classroom instruction should emphasize Modern Standard Arabic with some class time devoted to colloquial Arabic, particularly in the beginning of the program.

2. East Asia and Pacific Region – Chinese, Indonesian, Japanese, and Korean Institutes

Chinese (Mandarin) Language Institutes:

- Participants: 110 participants.
- Language Levels: Intermediate and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for People’s Republic of China, in cities other than Beijing and Shanghai in order to maximize language-learning immersion opportunities. One institute may be proposed for Taiwan.

Note: Chinese instruction should be in Mandarin only. Teaching materials used in the program should be available in both simplified and traditional character versions. The Hanyu Pinyin Romanization system should be used.

Indonesian Language Institutes:

- Participants: 25 participants.
- Language Levels: Beginning, advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for Indonesia.

Japanese Language Institutes:

- Participants: 26 participants.
- Language Levels: Intermediate and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for Japan, in a location other than Tokyo.

Korean Language Institutes:

- Participants: 55 participants.
- Language Levels: Beginning, advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for South Korea, in locations other than Seoul.

Note: The Hangeul alphabet system should be used.

3. Europe Region – Azerbaijani, Russian, and Turkish Institutes

Azerbaijani Language Institute:

- Participants: 6 participants.
- Language Levels: Beginning, advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for Azerbaijan.

Russian Language Institutes:

- Participants: 60 participants.
- Language Levels: Intermediate and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for Russia and countries in the Russian Periphery where Russian is commonly spoken. In Russia, institutes should be proposed for locations other than Moscow or St. Petersburg.

Turkish Language Institute:

- Participants: 25 participants.
- Language Levels: Beginning, advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for countries and locations where Turkish is widely spoken.

4. South Central Asia Region – Indic and Persian Institutes

Indic Language Institutes – Bangla, Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu:

- Participants: 68 participants with the following approximate distribution: Bangla – 10 students; Hindi – 28 students; Punjabi – 10 students; Urdu – 20 students.
- Language Levels: Instruction for all Indic languages should be available at beginning, advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for India, in locations other than New Delhi.

Persian Language Institutes:

- Participants: 22 participants.
- Language Levels: Advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for Tajikistan or other country outside of Iran where Persian is commonly spoken.

Note: Classroom instruction should emphasize Farsi, with some class time devoted to the local Persian dialect, particularly at the beginning of the program.

5. Sub-Saharan Africa Region AND Western Hemisphere Region – Swahili and Portuguese Institutes

Swahili Language Institute:

- Participants: 28 participants.
- Language Levels: Beginning, advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for countries where Swahili is commonly spoken.

Portuguese Language Institute:

- Participants: 20 participants.
- Language Levels: Advanced beginning, intermediate, and advanced.
- Locations: Programs may be proposed for Brazil.

Note: A bridge course for Spanish-speaking participants may be proposed as part of the Portuguese institute.

C. U.S. Department of State Responsibilities

In a Cooperative Agreement, ECA/A/S/Q is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine award monitoring. The ECA/A/S/Q program office's activities and responsibilities for this program are detailed below.

1. Administrative Components:

- Provide guidance in the execution of all major program components.
- Review and approve all CLS print and online materials prior to publication.
- Review and approve the recruitment and outreach strategy.
- Work with the award recipient to publicize the program through various media outlets; ECA must review and approve all publications, feature stories, and interview requests.
- Review and approve official CLS website and social media platforms.
- Review and approve the CLS application form and all award documentation, including Terms and Conditions.
- Review and approve the selection process; observe selection committee panels.
- Approve the selection of finalists and alternate candidates.
- Review and approve subaward recipients, subaward budgets, and plans.
- Approve any changes in key project staff members.
- Approve the scope of work and resumes for consultants hired to perform key program functions.
- Facilitate cooperation with other federally-supported programs aimed at critical language learning and/or U.S. study abroad.
- Provide input on meeting topics and participate in annual Institute Directors' meeting.
- Participate in the annual planning meeting, sharing U.S. Department of State priorities.
- Provide substantive input on alumni activities and follow-up events.
- Monitor the progress of the award recipient at each stage of the project's implementation.

2. Implementation of Language Institutes:

- Review and approve all print and online materials regarding the institutes before publication and dissemination.
- Review and approve CLS institute plans and schedules including plans for language instruction, cultural enrichment activities, excursions, housing arrangements, language partners, and teacher training.
- Review and approve subaward recipients, subaward budgets, and plans.
- Advise on and participate in pre-departure orientations in Washington, DC.
- Coordinate with U.S. Embassies to provide security briefings at arrival orientations.
- Facilitate the inclusion of CLS participants in Embassy/Consulate activities as appropriate.
- Assist in liaison with appropriate U.S. Department of State offices, including the regional bureaus and overseas posts.
- Consult on participant support issues and approve all participant early returns from the program.
- Approve any changes in key project staff members.
- Approve the scope of work and resumes for consultants hired to perform key program functions.
- Review and approve modifications to program locations, placement numbers, implementing organizations, or program structure.
- Facilitate access to the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE).
- Monitor the progress of the award recipient(s) at each stage of the project's implementation.

D. Award Recipient Responsibilities

Responsibilities under the CLS award(s) are divided between Administrative Components and Implementation of Language Institutes. Award recipients under Option 1 would be responsible for both the Administrative Components and Implementation of Language Institutes. Award recipients under Option 2 would only be responsible for the Implementation of Language Institutes.

1. Administrative Components

Award recipient responsibilities include the following:

- Develop and implement plans for outreach and recruit a strong pool of qualified candidates that represent the diversity of the United States.
- Develop an online application form, and application and screening process.
- Respond to and manage a significant volume of queries and applications.
- Conduct a merit-based selection process with clearly identified criteria for the selection.
- Recommend final participants and alternates to ECA for approval.
- Prepare and send notifications of selection or non-selection to all applicants.
- Notify all institute program administrators of final participants and alternates.
- Maintain, and regularly update, a database of applicant and participant information, protecting personally identifiable information.
- Arrange standardized pre-program testing of all participants' language proficiency.
- Collaborate with all award recipients to conduct post-program language proficiency testing.
- Consult with ECA on a plan for notifying Congressional representatives and state governors of the participation of students from their districts/states and prepare notification letters.
- Create and manage an official website and social media accounts for CLS.
- Consult with ECA on a plan to create and distribute press release notifications.
- Plan and facilitate an annual planning meeting with key staff of all award recipients and ECA.
- Plan and facilitate an annual Institute Directors' meeting.
- Propose and implement effective ways to communicate the impact of the CLS Program to stakeholders and the public.
- Design and implement a virtual re-entry orientation that is available to students shortly after returning from their overseas experience.
- Create and maintain a database to track CLS alumni of all program years.
- Propose and develop alumni activities to further language learning, development career opportunities, strengthen alumni networks, and promote effective outreach to potential applicants.
- Work collaboratively with all award recipients for all language institutes.
- Manage all subawards, both programmatically and financially.
- Submit all reports and requested program information to ECA in a timely manner.

2. Implementation of Language Institutes

Primary responsibilities of the award recipient(s) include the following:

- Provide management and coordination for all language institute activities under the award.
- Design, plan, and implement overseas courses of intensive study for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students that focus primarily on the acquisition of language.
- Design and implement program activities that build relevant cross-cultural skills.
- Manage all subawards, both programmatically and financially.
- Coordinate with the award recipient for the Administrative Components on overall administrative activities, including the implementation of institutes, orientations, outreach, publicity, and follow-up activities.
- Adhere to CLS program policies and operational guidelines.
- Collaborate in the planning and participate in the implementation of the annual planning meeting and the annual institute directors' meeting.
- Provide participants with program information and pre-departure materials, including virtual webinars, in advance of the in-person pre-departure orientation.
- Provide a substantive pre-departure orientation in Washington, DC for each institute.
- Make international and domestic travel arrangements for the participants.
- Enroll participants in ASPE or other health benefits, and assist with claims as necessary.
- Register all participants in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP).
- Design and execute a comprehensive in-country arrival orientation, including a security briefing by the appropriate U.S. Embassy/Consulate whenever possible.
- Develop institute-specific handbook(s).
- Provide all housing and meals for the participants.
- Ensure that all participants receive the required hours of language instruction.
- Develop and facilitate educational and cultural enrichment activities that enhance language learning.
- Monitor participant safety and well-being, and ensure on-program support for participants.
- Provide an in-country closing session and re-entry workshop for each institute.
- Respond fully and promptly to requests from ECA and/or the Administrative Components award recipient for information relating to participants and alumni.
- Submit all reports and requested program information to ECA in a timely manner.

E. Scholarship Coverage

The award recipient(s) will ensure that the CLS Program scholarship covers the following expenses in accordance with guidance in this solicitation:

- **Travel:** Round-trip domestic travel between the participant's city of residence, to the pre-departure orientation in Washington, DC, and to the overseas CLS institute location
- **Orientations:** Pre-departure, arrival, and re-entry orientations
- **Visas:** Host country entry/exit and transit visas, as needed
- **Tuition and related academic expenses:** Including support and testing for placement and language acquisition
- **Educational and cultural programming:** Include extra-curricular activities, academic programs, and language-focused excursions within the host country

- **Meals:** Three meals per day, provided through the program, host family, or stipend
- **Accommodations:** With a host family or in a dormitory or other appropriate group housing
- **Health Benefits:** Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits, provided by the U.S. Department of State, or equivalent health insurance
- **Stipend:** To cover additional living expenses, local transportation, and incidentals

The CLS Program **does not cover** the following:

- **Passports:** Costs associated with obtaining a valid U.S. passport
- **Medical:** Required medical examinations and immunizations; health benefits beyond ASPE.
- **Additional Funds:** Pocket money in addition to the stipend, except in cases of unusual hardship, as determined by the award recipient(s) and approved by ECA

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Responsibilities under the CLS award(s) are divided between Administrative Components and Implementation of Language Institutes. Award recipients under Option 1 would be responsible for both the Administrative Components and Implementation of Language Institutes. Award recipients under Option 2 would only be responsible for the Implementation of Language Institutes. Program specific guidelines below are detailed accordingly.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE COMPONENTS

One award recipient will be selected to manage the Administrative Components of the CLS Program comprising the following key areas of responsibility: Program Planning and Management; Program Promotion and Outreach; Application and Selection of Participants; and Post-Program and Alumni Activities.

A. Program Planning and Management

Annual Planning Meeting: Convene a kick-off planning meeting at the start of the award for key personnel of all CLS award recipients and ECA staff.

Institute Directors' Meeting: Plan and implement a meeting for all overseas institute directors and relevant ECA staff to ensure that a single worldwide program identity is cultivated and maintained, and to discuss policies, procedures, and best practices. This two- to three-day meeting should be held in Washington, DC in January or February of the program year and be planned in close consultation with ECA and other award recipient(s), if any. Each award recipient and each overseas CLS institute should be represented by at least one participant at the meeting. ECA will present U.S. Department of State foreign policy priorities that are relevant to the CLS Program.

Program Coordination: Provide overall coordination of key program activities with ECA and other award recipient(s). Conduct regular meetings in-person or virtually with ECA Program Officer and key personnel, including staff of other award recipients. Provide ECA with minutes of

these meetings, including action items and key deadlines. Develop a calendar and timeline of key program activities.

Database: Develop and maintain a secure database for applicant and participant information. All statistical information collected on ECA-funded program participants should be transferable to databases maintained by ECA. All records and data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and be provided to ECA upon request. Secure and protect all personally identifiable information. Refer to F.4. Program Data Requirements in the NOFO for further guidance.

Language Assessment: Identify and use a standardized language assessment tool to evaluate the baseline and post-program language skills of all CLS participants. After the completion of the post-program assessments, provide ECA with the assessment results, including analyses by language and institute.

Congressional and Gubernatorial Notifications: Manage all administrative tasks associated sending notifications to Members of the U.S. Congress and Governors of U.S. states and territories, as well as the Mayor of Washington DC, about CLS participants in their respective locales.

Operational Guidelines: Work with ECA and other award recipient(s) to gather CLS Program policies and procedures into one comprehensive set of Operational Guidelines to help ensure consistency of policy and procedures across all organizations and institutes. In consultation with ECA, develop and/or refine additional policies and procedures to be included in the Operational Guidelines.

Build Relationships: For purposes of program promotion, leveraging resources, and providing alumni opportunities, the award recipient should cultivate relationships with organizations that implement other ECA-sponsored exchange programs including, but not limited to, the National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y), Teachers of Critical Languages Program (TCLP), Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant (FLTA) program, the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship Program, and the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, as well as other U.S. government-funded critical language programs, such as STARTALK and The Language Flagship.

B. Program Promotion and Outreach

Outreach Plan: Propose a comprehensive plan to publicize and recruit a strong pool of qualified candidates from U.S. colleges and universities nationwide. Propose ideas to ensure that applicants represent the diversity of the United States. The definition of diversity includes, but is not limited to, ethnicity, race, gender, disabilities, religion, socio-economic status, geographic location, and educational institution. To the fullest extent possible, the proposal should address and encourage the participation of traditionally underserved audiences and those who may not otherwise have the opportunity to study language abroad. Special attention should be paid to the recruitment and

support through the application process of eligible students from Minority-Serving Institutions and community colleges.

The proposal must describe how the CLS Program will be publicized to colleges and universities, relevant organizations, and media outlets, including print, online, and broadcast, to reach the widest possible audience of qualified students. The proposed recruitment plan should include print and online promotional materials; mail and email notifications; campus visits and presentations; conference participation (presentations and exhibits); outreach to CLS advisors; and other in-person or online recruitment activities. The recruitment plan will be subject to ongoing coordination and approval by ECA. ECA may request that the award recipient collaborate with other ECA-sponsored programs on some outreach activities, including but not limited to, conference participation, campus visits, and advisor workshops.

Print and Electronic Materials: Ensure that all print and electronic materials (online application, websites, digital resources, brochures, press releases, announcements, etc.) developed for promotional purposes and related to the program comply with [ECA's Communications Guidance](#). The award recipient must ensure that ECA and the U.S. Department of State are prominently identified as the program sponsor in all publicity and other scholarship program materials. All recruitment materials must prioritize the U.S. Department of State and the CLS Program branding identities, which should predominate in the materials. The award recipient must use the U.S. Department of State seal, the U.S. flag, and the CLS logo on all materials related to the program as delineated in ECA's Communications Guidance. All CLS-related print and electronic materials must be submitted to ECA for approval in advance of publication and distribution. ECA retains copyright use of materials and will determine how and where to distribute materials related to this program.

Publicity: On a regular and timely basis, and on an ad hoc basis as requested, provide ECA with participant and alumni highlights, photos, videos, press coverage, and the like that may be used to publicize the program. Work closely with ECA to publicize the achievements of CLS participants. Inform ECA of any publicity that highlights the CLS program or CLS participants, or otherwise strengthens outreach efforts, particularly those that involve government officials and the media. When the media interacts with CLS participants or alumni, the award recipient should make every effort to identify CLS as a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program, unless otherwise advised by ECA or the Public Affairs Section of a U.S. Embassy/Consulate.

CLS Digital Presence: Develop and maintain a dedicated CLS Program website. The CLS website should include comprehensive information about the CLS institutes; application information and frequently asked questions; lists of past CLS participants by institution; resources for CLS campus advisors; program highlights; impact stories and data; and alumni resources.

Maintain an active and engaging presence on social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) for recruitment, program promotion, and sharing program impacts. Provide ECA with analytics for all CLS digital properties and full administrative access to the CLS digital properties, including user names and passwords. Work closely with ECA to highlight and amplify program

impacts and outcomes on social media. ECA welcomes innovative ideas for leveraging online technologies to enhance participant and alumni engagement. Refer to D.3k. Virtual Exchange Component in the NOFO.

CLS Campus Advisors: Engage with faculty and staff at colleges and universities across the country for the recruitment and advising of CLS applicants. Maintain and further develop the CLS campus advisor network, including training activities as appropriate. Devise a mechanism for sharing the names of CLS applicants with the appropriate campus advisor(s) at key points in the application and selection process, including, but not limited to, when an application is started. The list of CLS campus advisors should be made available to ECA staff upon request and posted on the public CLS Program website to enable students to locate their campus advisors. When registering to serve as a CLS campus advisor, individuals should be permitted to opt out of being listed on the public website. Proposals that describe innovative ideas for campus engagement are encouraged.

C. Application and Selection of Participants

Application: Develop a comprehensive online application. Monitor the online system to minimize and promptly address technical problems. The award recipient must be capable of accommodating applicants who cannot apply online. Any paper-based applications must be entered into the online system by the award recipient. All application materials and associated data must be available in a sortable, searchable, database format that can be easily shared with ECA upon request. Respond to and manage all general inquiries and application questions. Record and track all inquiries related to problems or issues with any part of the application process. The applicant should describe its capacity to manage a significant volume of queries and applications.

Eligibility Criteria: Ensure that the following minimum criteria are used to recruit CLS applicants: U.S. citizenship; 18 years of age prior to the start of the summer institutes (the award recipient may select a cut-off date for the summer programs in consultation with ECA); enrolled in an accredited U.S. degree-granting program at the undergraduate (associate's, bachelor's) or graduate (master's, doctoral, professional degree) level at the time of application; and completed at least one year academic year of study prior to the start of the summer institutes. ECA will provide additional eligibility requirements, including criteria related to employment with the Department or award recipient organizations. ECA reserves the right to amend eligibility requirements.

Review and Selection: Conduct a nationwide merit-based competition for U.S. undergraduate and graduate students with clearly defined criteria and a formal selection process. ECA will approve the overall selection plan and specific selection criteria. A general statement about the selection criteria should be included in the promotional materials for potential applicants.

At a minimum, successful applications should demonstrate the following:

- Strong motivation to learn the target language
- Academic excellence
- A plan to continue language study

- A connection to academic and professional career goals
- Evidence of ability to succeed in an intensive group-based language study program
- Personal qualities associated with successful exchange participants, such as maturity, strong social skills, flexibility, adaptability, open-mindedness, and respect for other peoples and cultures
- Language skills of the appropriate level for the target language, as detailed in this solicitation

Selected students should represent diversity of institutional type and fields of study, a balance between genders, and a balance between undergraduate and graduate students, to the extent possible. All other factors being equal, preference should be given to candidates who have not had extensive recent experience abroad. Duty abroad in the Armed Forces of the United States is not considered experience abroad for the purposes of this program. All other factors being equal, veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces must be given preference in selection, and this preference takes precedence over all other preferences.

Selection Panels: The award recipient should convene selection panels to review applications and rank the candidates for final approval by ECA. Most selection panels should be held in Washington, DC, although some selection panels may be held virtually or in other regions of the United States, with ECA approval. Selection panels should include representatives of a variety of types and locations of U.S. educational institutions. Panelists should include staff and faculty associated with study abroad, fellowships, and regional or language studies, and may be selected from the ranks of CLS campus advisors or may be new to the CLS Program.

Terms and Conditions: In consultation with ECA, develop CLS Program Terms and Conditions. The key conditions, benefits, and terms of the program should be fully described to candidates before they accept the award. Ensure that all finalists agree to the program Terms and Conditions, as well as other forms and documents as required by ECA.

Health Information and Accommodations: Propose a process to collect health history information for finalists and alternates to help ensure participants' health and safety on the program. Work with ECA and institute staff to make reasonable accommodations for participants as needed. Protect all personally identifiable information.

Institute Placement: Work with other award recipients, if any, to assign finalists to particular institutes based on language level, overseas experience, and other relevant criteria to ensure that each candidate is placed into an appropriate program. The proposal should address how the participants' language skills will be assessed for placement purposes, and on what basis program assignments will be made. Provide applicant information as needed to other award recipients and institutes for the purpose of placing and supporting participants on program.

U.S. Department of State Approval: Provide ECA with lists of finalists and alternates for approval prior to notification. Lists should include educational institute, field of study, level of

study (graduate or undergraduate), and should indicate candidates who are alumni of the CLS Program.

Applicant Notification: Prepare and send notifications to all finalists, alternates, and non-selected applicants. Manage the acceptance process, advancing alternates to replace declinations on a timely basis and with ECA approval.

D. Post-Program and Alumni Activities

Re-entry orientation: Develop and conduct one or more online re-entry orientation sessions for participants from all CLS institutes, including information on the following: connecting the CLS experience to career goals; opportunities for further language learning; building alumni networks; sharing the CLS experience; and promoting the CLS Program and U.S. study abroad programs. Develop an online re-entry resource document and ensure that all CLS participants receive the document at or before program completion.

Certificates: Provide program alumni who have successfully completed the program and all requirements with appropriate certificates for program completion, language proficiency test results, and Non-Competitive Eligibility for federal employment.

Alumni Programming: Propose innovative ideas for alumni follow-on activities. Designate one staff member to oversee alumni activities in coordination with ECA and any other implementing organizations. Plan and facilitate alumni activities for CLS alumni of all program years.

Facilitate the involvement of CLS alumni from all program years in supporting the current and future program through recruitment, publicity, outreach, virtual exchanges, mentoring, pre-program preparation, and program planning. Propose and/or develop creative and effective ways to assist alumni in continuing their foreign language studies and utilizing their CLS experiences in their careers.

Encourage alumni from all program years to develop networks and carry out alumni-led activities that promote the CLS Program and/or provide further language learning and career development opportunities.

CLS Alumni Ambassadors: Conduct an annual competition among former participants to select CLS Alumni Ambassadors. Provide training and support for Alumni Ambassadors to assist in program promotion, outreach, networking, career-development, and language-focused activities.

Tracking Alumni: Create and maintain a database to track alumni from all CLS program years, integrating existing alumni data. During the award period, conduct at least one survey of all CLS alumni to help assess long-term program impact. All records and data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and be provided to ECA upon request. Secure and protect all personally identifiable information. The FY

2019 award recipient should be prepared to work with ECA and the current award recipient on building an alumni database.

International Exchange Alumni Website and Non-Competitive Eligibility: Encourage participants and alumni to register on the U.S. Department of State's *International Exchange Alumni* website (<https://alumni.state.gov/>). Ensure that applicants, participants and alumni are aware of the benefit of Non-Competitive Eligibility for federal employment for alumni who have successfully completed the program.

Alumni Program Linkages: Facilitate interactions and cooperation between CLS alumni and alumni of other U.S. Department of State-sponsored programs. Encourage linkages to other federally-sponsored language programs to share resources, pursue common goals, and inspire CLS alumni to pursue language mastery.

2. IMPLEMENTATION OF LANGUAGE INSTITUTES

A. Overall Program Management

The CLS Program provides intensive language instruction in a classroom setting, as well as immersion in the cultural, social, and educational life of the host country. All proposals to implement CLS language institutes must adhere to the following guidance.

Staffing: Propose a Project Director to oversee the entire program supported by the award. The Project Director will serve as the main point of contact for ECA. Provide an overall staffing plan including level of effort for each position. ECA will approve key project staff, as well as any changes in key staff during the program period.

Identify an Institute Director for each overseas language institute. Ensure that all institutes are appropriately staffed to ensure the successful delivery of high-quality language immersion program and provide adequate support and guidance to participants.

Assign and train a Resident Director, preferably a U.S. citizen, who speaks both English and the target language to each institute. The Resident Director serves as the primary on-site resource and support for students regarding academic, social, and/or personal issues on program.

Subawards: ECA anticipates that award recipient(s) will identify qualified overseas subaward recipients to directly implement most or all of the overseas language institutes. The applicant may propose to directly implement some institutes or specific components of one or more language institutes. Work with the overseas subaward recipients to design, plan, and implement CLS institutes focused on language acquisition and cultural immersion. Ensure that all CLS institutes maintain program standards and meet all program requirements.

Annual Planning Meetings: The award recipient for the Administrative Components will be responsible for convening planning meetings for key personnel, all overseas institute directors, and

relevant ECA staff. Each applicant's budget proposal should include travel funds for the annual kick-off planning meeting (U.S. based staff only) and the annual Institute Directors' meeting.

Publicity: Provide ECA with participant and alumni highlights, success stories, photos, videos, press coverage, and the like that may be used to publicize the program. It is essential that ECA receive program highlights in a timely manner during the implementation of the institutes. Collaborate with the award recipient for the Administrative Components to share and amplify program highlights on social media and other publicity materials.

Inform ECA and the award recipient for Administrative Components of any publicity that highlights the CLS Program or CLS participants, or otherwise strengthens outreach efforts, particularly those that involve government officials and the media. When the media interacts with CLS participants or alumni, the award recipient should make every effort to identify CLS as a U.S. Department of State-sponsored program, unless otherwise advised by ECA or the Public Affairs Section of a U.S. Embassy/Consulate.

Print and Electronic Materials: Ensure that all print and electronic materials related to the program comply with [ECA's Communications Guidance](#). The award recipient must ensure that ECA and the U.S. Department of State are prominently identified as the program sponsor in all publicity and other scholarship program materials. ECA retains copyright use of, and may distribute, materials related to this program as it sees fit.

U.S. Embassy/Consulate Coordination: Establish a working relationship with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the relevant U.S. Embassy/Consulate for each institute. Invite PAS to participate in the arrival orientation *and* request a security briefing by the Embassy's Regional Security Officer or other U.S. Embassy official. ECA will assist in facilitating initial communication between PAS and CLS institute staff. ECA encourages PAS staff to engage with CLS participants on program. To that end, institutes should invite PAS participation in CLS events (such as closing ceremonies and project presentations), and respond to requests or invitations from PAS, as appropriate. If the political situation in any country results in the need for the Embassy to assume more responsibility, the award recipient and institute staff should work with the Embassy as appropriate.

Alumni: Work with ECA and the recipient for the Administrative Components to support the planning and implementation of alumni activities. Provide feedback on alumni activities and updates to the alumni database, as appropriate. Costs for follow-on activities may be included in the budget. However, ECA expects that most alumni activities will be conducted by the award recipient for Administrative Components,

Evaluation: Present a plan to monitor and evaluate the program's success, during the program implementation, as well as at the end of the program. ECA expects that the award recipient will monitor participants and be able to respond to evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, language acquisition, cultural learning, and changes in behavior as a result of the program. Evaluation should include assessment of program-specific aspects, such as logistical arrangements

and program components, as well as overall impact on participants and host communities. Refer to D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation information in the NOFO for further guidance.

B. Language Institute Program Design

Institute Duration, Dates, and Size:

- Duration: Each proposed institute should be no fewer than eight weeks in country, not including the U.S. pre-departure orientation.
- Dates: Institutes should take place during summer 2019 (late May to August).
- Size: Each institute should host a maximum of 35 participants, unless otherwise approved by ECA.

Institute Plans: Provide to ECA a detailed schedule and plan for each overseas institute. Describe in detail the major components of the program, including project planning; staffing plan and staff qualifications; host venues; orientations (U.S. and overseas); assessment and testing; language instruction; educational and cultural enrichment activities; participant living arrangements; participant monitoring plan; and logistics.

Capacity Building for Language Instruction: ECA encourages efforts to build capacity to teach critical languages to American students in general as a benefit of engagement with the CLS Program. Proposals should demonstrate the development or expansion of institutional language-teaching capacity with subaward organizations overseas. Proposal budgets may include costs for teacher training and capacity building.

Language Instruction: Formal classroom language instruction should be no less than a total of 20 hours per week, or a minimum of 160 hours per language institute. A regular schedule of four to five hours of classroom instruction in the mornings throughout the week is encouraged. Class size should be approximately five to eight students. ECA approval is required for regular classes of more than ten students.

While conversational language instruction will be necessary to help students function in their immersion setting, classes should also provide instruction in grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation, as well as speaking, listening, reading, and writing, including non-Roman alphabets.

Language Levels and Pre-Requisites: Each institute should provide multiple levels (beginning to advanced) of language instruction in line with guidance in this solicitation. See Section I. B. “CLS Institute Locations, Language Levels, and Participant Numbers” above for levels required for each language. Language levels offered at an institute may be adjusted with ECA approval.

- Beginning: No prior study of the language required
- Advanced beginning: At least one year of formal language study by the start of the CLS Program
- Intermediate: At least two years of formal language study by the start of the CLS Program

- **Advanced:** At least two years of formal language study by the start of the CLS Program

Language Assessment: Develop an assessment plan to ensure the appropriate levels of instruction at the start of and during the program. Make explicit accommodation for learners of varying skill levels. Provide plans for supporting students who do not perform at the level at which they tested and are placed. Collaborate with the award recipient for the Administrative Components to support pre- and post-program standardized language testing.

Language Policy: Establish and enforce particular times or settings in which students are required to speak only the target language to help ensure their commitment to language learning.

Language Partners: Pair students with local peers to practice language outside of the classroom and to connect them to the local culture and community. Participants should meet with their language partners at least weekly.

Academic Credit: The proposal should include a plan for CLS participants who successfully complete the program to receive academic credit from an accredited U.S. college or university.

Pre-departure Language Learning for Novices: Provide participants who are novices in the target language with resources to become familiar with the alphabet or common characters, survival phrases, and basic conversational phrases prior to the start of the program. Set goals and clear expectations for participants' mastery of very basic language skills prior to the pre-departure orientation.

Community Engagement: Propose innovative ideas for participants to use their language skills in both structured activities and unstructured, independent activities while engaging with the host community in a safe and meaningful manner.

Cultural Programs: Propose cultural enrichment activities to enhance the participants' understanding of the host country's culture, history, environment, diversity, social systems, and current events. All cultural enrichment activities should incorporate a language-learning element. At least one of these activities should include an overnight stay in a location outside of the host city. Applicants are encouraged to integrate relevant current events, historical information, and other regionally or culturally relevant subject matter into the language course curricula. Applicants may propose to include a specialized course, optional for participants, taught in the target language and focused on a specific content area such as public health or economic issues.

C. Participant Communication, Travel, Orientations, and Living Arrangements

Communication: Ensure that implementing organizations contact participants in a timely fashion in advance of departure to provide them with program information, language preparation materials, flight details, and accommodations information.

Travel: Arrange round-trip domestic travel between the participant's city of residence, to the pre-departure orientation in Washington, D.C., and to the overseas CLS institute location. Ensure that all travel arrangements are in accordance with the Fly America Act. Provide dates of international and domestic travel to ECA in advance of travel. Make arrangements and pay costs for obtaining all necessary visas, including transit visas.

Orientations:

Collaborate with the award recipient for Administrative Components on the design and content of orientations, ensuring compliance with CLS policies and best practices.

Pre-Departure: Organize substantive, in-person and virtual, pre-departure orientations for all participants, including information on program policies, guidelines on health and safety, tips for success on program, and country-specific information. The in-person orientations must take place in Washington, DC. Comprehensive information packets should be provided, preferably online, well in advance of the in-person orientation. Key sections of the Terms and Conditions should be reviewed in the pre-departure orientations.

Arrival: Provide a substantive orientation for participants on arrival in the host country; request a security briefing by the U.S. Embassy/Consulate.

Re-entry: Provide a re-entry orientation to prepare participants for their return to the United States. Re-entry orientations must include a discussion of the following topics: required post-program language testing; post-program evaluation; tips for cultural re-entry; ideas for future language study; information about other U.S. government-funded scholarships for continued language study; internships and careers that utilize language skills; and suggestions for sharing the CLS experience with other individuals and groups in the United States.

Meals: Arrange for the provision of three meals per day for all participants for the duration of the program. It is expected that the majority of meals will be provided by host families, educational institutions, and/or arranged as group meals with other students. Participant stipends should cover the costs of additional meals as needed.

Housing: Arrange for housing for the duration of the institute, preferably with a host family and/or native language roommates.

Applicants are encouraged to place participants with host families who speak the target language for all or part of the program. Develop a process for identifying and screening host families for suitability, including whenever possible and culturally appropriate, reference and background checks. Provide host families with a substantive orientation and maintain regular contact with host families throughout the institute to answer questions and address concerns. Host families must have adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations, and may receive a reasonable reimbursement to cover the costs associated with hosting a student, but not to serve as a financial incentive.

Ensure that non-host family housing arrangements, such as dormitories or group housing, provide safe and appropriate living accommodations. All accommodations, including host family homes and group housing, must have smoke detectors and appropriate emergency exits. The award recipient may include the cost of smoke detectors and/or other safety-related items in the program budget.

Stipends: Provide a stipend to participants to cover reasonable costs for incidentals during the program. The stipend may also include funds to reimburse students for required program benefits, such as meals, transportation, and housing. All participants in a particular institute or country should receive the same stipend, unless otherwise authorized by ECA.

D. Health and Safety

STEP Registration: Register all participants in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) at <https://step.state.gov/step/> and provide information about STEP registration to all participants prior to the start of the program.

Health Benefits: Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits program and facilitate claims as necessary. Exchange participants may be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) with no charge to the grant or other health benefits program as directed. Please refer to <https://www.sevencorners.com/gov/usdos> for more information on coverage.

Applicants may propose to use a different health plan for some or all of the participants, but must demonstrate that the alternate plan provides comparable or more comprehensive coverage and costs no more than \$50 per person per month and does not have a deductible that exceeds \$500. Premiums may be included in the proposal budget. Coverage must begin when students depart the United States and not conclude until they return to the United States. A copy of the alternate health insurance policy should be included with the proposal.

Emergency Contact Information and Access: Supply each CLS participant with a cell phone with in-country calling capability and the means to communicate with a local representative in an emergency. Provide participants with emergency contact cards and ensure that participants have access to emergency contact information for the institute staff, the award recipient, and the appropriate U.S. Embassy or Consulate prior to international departure.

E. Participant Monitoring and Support

Participant well-being is a top priority of the U.S. Department of State. The applicant must propose a plan for monitoring participants' safety and welfare while on program. Staff from the award recipient(s) should be available throughout the institute to help ensure health, safety, and emotional well-being of participants and deal effectively with misunderstandings, adjustment issues, and emergencies.

Staff roles and responsibilities should be clearly defined and explained to students. Provide guidance and training to overseas staff on handling student support issues. Each institute must have a trained, English-speaking Resident Director whose primary responsibilities include participant support. Ensure that all staff who have regular contact with CLS participants have undergone a reasonable level of screening for suitability and adhere to professional standards of conduct, including standards on sexual harassment and abuse.

Ensure that all participants abide by U.S. and local laws; the CLS Terms and Conditions; and other program standards and requirements. Develop disciplinary procedures that include ECA approval for termination of the scholarship and dismissal from program. Convey serious issues and concerns to ECA in a timely fashion. Inform ECA immediately of any requests from participants to voluntarily leave the program.

Immediately report to ECA any incident or allegation involving the actual or alleged sexual exploitation, harassment, or abuse of any kind of a CLS participant that has been reported to CLS Program or institute staff. Inform ECA promptly of any behavior, incident, or serious problem that could result in a request for program dismissal or that could be expected to bring the Department of State or the exchange program into notoriety or disrepute.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The following guidance applies to all award recipients. Refer to F.3. Reporting Requirements in the NOFO for further guidance.

Reporting: The award recipient(s) will be expected to keep ECA informed of program progress, as well as other aspects of the program throughout the year. During the overseas program time, award recipient(s) will be expected to provide brief weekly updates on each institute, as well as final comprehensive institute report(s) at the conclusion of the program.

Quarterly Performance Reports: The award recipient is responsible for implementing mechanisms to monitor participants and report to the ECA Grants Office and the Program Office success and impact on a quarterly basis through quarterly program and financial performance reports. The award recipient must submit quarterly program performance reports that address, at a minimum, the following topics: past and planned program activities, financial status (e.g., identify significant financial variations from original budgets), and the strengths and weaknesses of program design and implementation. Quarterly reports should include updates on the activities and achievements of each implementing organization, as well as for the overall administration of the program. The award recipient must submit to the ECA Program and Grants Offices electronic copies of all quarterly performance reports no more than 30 days after the reporting period end dates.

Evaluation Reports: The recipient must share program evaluation reports, both interim and summary reports, with ECA in a timely manner, and make appropriate adjustments to the programs

in consultation with ECA. Monitoring and evaluation results should be addressed in the quarterly and final program performance reports.

III. 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. 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.

Executive Summary

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

- Name of organization/participating institutions
- Beginning and ending dates of the program
- Scope and Goals
- Number and description of participants
- Description of the key program activities
- Anticipated results (short and long-term)
- Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources

Program Narrative

In a maximum of 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed

description of the project addressing the areas listed below. Refer to the proposal review criteria in this solicitation for further guidance.

- Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
- Recruitment, Screening, and Selection (Administrative Components only)
- Project Activities outlined in this solicitation, highlighting innovations.
- Follow-on/Alumni Activities
- Program Monitoring and Evaluation
- Diversity
- Institutional Capacity and Project Management
- Partner organizations and/or subaward organizations, including their roles and unique contributions to the program.
- Work plan/Time-frame.

Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative

The anticipated level of base-year funding available for the Critical Language Scholarship Program is \$9,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds. Costs for activities listed under Implementation of Language Institutes should not exceed an average of \$15,600 per participant in Bureau funding (includes program and administrative costs).

The Bureau 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. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to accept proposals for Option 1 or Option 2 in whole or in part and to make an award or awards based on the needs of the program and U.S. foreign policy objectives.

Please refer to the PSI for allowable costs and complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Applicant organizations must provide an explanatory budget narrative, separate sub-budgets for each institute, and copies of any subaward agreements to be implemented under the terms of this award.

Allowable Costs:

- a) Allowable administrative costs include items such as the following:
- Staff salaries and benefits
 - Staff travel and per diem
 - Rent and facilities
 - Furniture and equipment
 - Meetings and conferences

- Emergency/incidentals not to exceed \$300 per student
- Communication costs
- Network charges
- Indirect costs
- OMB Guidance 2 CFR Part 200 Subpart F Audits

Applicant organizations should provide a detailed explanation of administrative overhead (what elements of the budget it is based upon and how it is calculated).

b) Allowable program costs to be funded by the award include items such as the following:

- Publicity, pre-departure, and orientation materials and expenses
- Medical review of health forms
- Costs of national review committees including travel and per diem
- Website/on-line applications/database management
- Expenses of pre-departure orientations in the U.S.
- Program materials
- Participant and staff travel
- Cultural activities
- Standardized language proficiency testing
- Accredited academic credit
- Participant food and lodging
- Participant stipends
- Host family stipends
- Language program tuition
- Teacher training
- Health benefits coverage (if not using ASPE)
- Alumni and follow-on activities
- Evaluation
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities

While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicant organizations to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant organization and other sources.

Additional Information to be Submitted:

Calendar of Activities or timetable that demonstrates the timing and organization of the major program activities.

Letters of Endorsement from collaborating organizations or institutions indicating

their agreement and the role they will play in the program.

Resumes of key staff members of the applicant and collaborating organizations. (No resume should exceed two pages.)

Outreach Plan (Administrative Components only)

Sample Participant Pre-Program Information Packet

Sample Institute Plan that shows the language instruction, educational enrichment activities, and cultural activities in which participants will engage. All educational enrichment and cultural activities must have a clear language-learning component.

Evaluation Plan and Sample Survey Instruments

First-Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable

Applicants should limit attachments to information that is directly applicable to the program as described in this solicitation.

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:

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.

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

As part of 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.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, contact Program

**Officer Carol Radomski at (202) 632-9354; Fax: (202) 632-6489; or email:
RadomskiCA@state.gov.**