

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2019 Teacher Exchange Program Component A: Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (Semester Research and Short-Term) Programs for U.S. Teachers

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0005088

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.408

Application Deadline: July 12, 2018

Executive Summary:

The Office of Global Educational Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, announces an open competition for a cooperative agreement to administer one of four components of the Office's Teacher Exchange Program in Fiscal Year 2019, Component A: Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (Semester Research and Short-Term) Programs for U.S. Teachers. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations or consortia or other combinations of eligible organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) may submit a proposal to cooperate with the Bureau in the administration of this component of the FY 2019 Teacher Exchange Program. For FY 2019, applicant organizations may submit a proposal to administer component A as characterized below, and should submit separate administrative and program budgets for the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Semester Research and the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Short-Term program. ECA anticipates issuing one cooperative agreement, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds. Although geographic regions or countries are noted below, applicant organizations must demonstrate flexibility and the willingness to work in locations that may not be identified at the present time. ECA reserves the right to add or delete regions or countries depending on Bureau priorities and the availability of funds. Please see section B.) Federal Award Information below for additional details. The amount listed for the two programs within Component A is provided below to enable applicant organizations to prepare budgets for planning purposes and is subject to change. ECA estimates total funding for administrative and program costs of these two programs of Component A to be approximately \$1,750,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds.

To facilitate effective communication between ECA's Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) and the award recipient cooperating on these programs, applicant organizations must have an office and staff located in Washington, D.C. at the time of application.

More specific information for the programs is provided below and in the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document.

The Presidentially appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) is responsible for the programs listed below, and has issued overall policy guidelines and selection criteria, which are available at the following website: <https://eca.state.gov/fulbright/about-fulbright/j-william-fulbright-foreign-scholarship-board-ffsb/ffsb-policies>. The Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) is responsible for the final selection of all Fulbright candidates. Organizations cooperating with the Bureau on a program under the oversight of the FFSB must ensure compliance with all FFSB policies and procedures and fully and properly identify these programs as both Fulbright Programs and U.S. Department of State Programs in all communications.

A. Program Description:

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

Purpose:

The Bureau's Teacher Exchange Programs prepare teachers for leadership in the 21st century so they may help their students develop a global perspective and build the knowledge, skills, and insights needed for future study and careers. Primary and secondary (K-12) teachers participate in professional development exchanges to enhance their teaching abilities, improve education systems, and advance the educational outcomes and broaden the worldview of their students.

Programs prioritize engaging teachers who reach underserved students in both urban and rural communities, minority students, students in career and technical education programs, and students with disabilities to ensure that the next generation is provided with equal opportunities to acquire the global knowledge and skills needed to succeed.

The Teacher Exchange Programs offer a significant multiplier effect, as each teacher shares knowledge and skills with thousands of students over the course of his or her career. Collectively, these same teachers reach hundreds of thousands of students over their professional careers.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity reinforces the Bureau's engagement with U.S. primary and secondary school educators and seeks interested applicant organizations to

administer teacher exchange programming for them. A detailed description of the program component is provided under the Funding Opportunity Description section of this document and in the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document associated with this solicitation. Proposals should reflect a vision for Component A, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act and the Teacher Exchange Programs with creativity, as well as providing innovative ideas and recommendations.

One award recipient will be issued a cooperative agreement under the FY 2019 Teacher Exchange Program Component A: Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (Semester Research and Short-Term) Programs for U.S. Teachers NOFO. The selected award recipient will be responsible for providing complete programmatic and administrative support for each of the two programs within the component including the following broad categories: program planning and management; participant recruitment and placement; orientation and preparation of participants and host/mentor educators; enrichment activities; participant monitoring and support; fiscal management and budgeting; program monitoring and evaluation (including ad hoc program and financial reports as requested by the Teacher Exchange Branch); and alumni programming and follow-on activities. Proposals should include schedules and timelines for notifying ECA, overseas partners, potential applicants and participants of recruitment cycles, placements, travel arrangements and cross-cultural and program information in a timely manner. Programs must comply with FFSB regulations. Teacher exchange participants should be identified through open, merit-based competitions.

The Teacher Exchange Branch's mission reflects a growing body of research that future careers will depend heavily upon the ability of U.S. students to work and collaborate in multiple cultural contexts and navigate in an increasingly competitive and globalized world.

The United States' national security and economic prosperity benefit from U.S. citizens developing a global mindset and gaining and maintaining proficiency in foreign languages and cultures, as well as on developing and deepening people-to-people relationships; however many Americans lack the cross-cultural or language skills necessary to successfully conduct business, advance scientific collaboration, or represent the United States' national interests. The Bureau's Teacher Exchange Programs reflect the critical need for teachers to further develop their own global competencies so they may better help their students develop these skills and abilities at the primary and secondary level.

Component A described below provides professional development opportunities to U.S. teachers from public, private and charter schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas across the United States. U.S. teachers develop the leadership and professional skills to ensure that their students are knowledgeable about the world and prepared for careers in an increasingly competitive global economy. Teachers improve educational outcomes for students as they share best instructional practices from their host countries across their U.S. schools, districts, and communities. Upon returning

to their U.S. classrooms, teachers also implement school action plans, design and teach new courses and curricula, and build international partnerships that bring a global perspective to the teaching of STEM, social studies, foreign languages, language arts, vocational education, special education and the arts, and after school and counseling programs.

Component A

The Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (Semester Research and Short Term) Programs for U.S. Teachers

1. As part of the **Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching (DA) Semester Research program**, U.S. teachers apply to the award recipient to carry out a project of their own design to research and adapt best educational practices from abroad and develop new, global content to use in their classrooms and schools when they return to the United States. During the program, the Fulbright Distinguished Teachers conduct a project, take courses for professional development, and learn from and share their expertise with teachers and students in their host countries. Upon completion of the program, teachers return to the United States with new strategies and resources to improve the education outcomes of U.S. students in their classrooms, schools and communities. Based on proposals submitted by U.S. teachers to conduct these activities in specific eligible countries, the U.S. embassy, Fulbright commission, or other organization in each participating host country will facilitate a relevant academic or professional affiliation in consultation with each U.S. Distinguished Teacher. For FY 2019, approximately 35 U.S. teachers are expected to take part in the program for three to six month periods between September 2019 and July 2020. In FY 2019, the program may take place in the following locations: Botswana, Colombia, Finland, Greece, India, Israel, Mexico, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, the United Kingdom, Vietnam, and the Palestinian Territories. ECA reserves the right to increase, decrease or modify participant numbers and add or remove countries and regions depending on Bureau and Mission priorities and the availability of funds.

2. The **Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Short Term Program** will also offer an exchange opportunity for approximately 25 U.S. master teachers to serve as experts abroad at schools, teacher education institutions, government ministries, or educational organizations for a period of approximately two to six weeks. While sharing their expertise, U.S. teachers hone their skills as consultants and teacher trainers and build global knowledge, skills, and connections to bring back to their home schools and districts.

In FY 2019, the program may take place in the following locations: Botswana, Brazil, Cambodia, Colombia, Ghana, Honduras, India, Kuwait, Mexico, the Palestinian Territories, the Philippines, South Korea, Spain, or Vietnam. The award recipient will work with the Bureau and U.S. embassies or Fulbright commissions in these locations to develop a list of projects at local host institutions for which U.S. teachers may apply. ECA reserves the right increase, decrease or modify participant numbers and to add or

remove countries and regions depending on Bureau and Mission priorities and the availability of funds.

For planning purposes, the budget for program and administration for the semester research program is estimated at approximately \$1,350,000 and the budget for the short-term program is estimated at approximately \$400,000 pending the availability of FY 2019 funds.

Program Administration

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/S/X is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA/A/S/X activities and responsibilities for the two programs within Component A include:

- 1) Participation in the design and direction of program activities;
- 2) Approval of key personnel;
- 3) Approval and input on program timelines, agendas and administrative procedures;
- 4) Guidance in execution of all program components;
- 5) Review and approval of all program publicity and recruitment materials;
- 6) Approval of participating educators, in cooperation with Fulbright commissions, U.S. embassies, and other partner organizations (all Fulbright program candidates are also subject to selection by the FFSB);
- 7) Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program;
- 8) Assistance with participant emergencies;
- 9) Liaison with relevant U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions, country desk officers at the State Department, and other State Department bureaus and offices.

Programs must conform with Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package, which includes the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI), and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

Award Recipient Responsibilities

For the two programs of Component A, the award recipient is responsible for:

- 1) Outreach, recruitment, and screening of applicants using internet technology and in-person engagement;
- 2) A stand-alone website for the program component with the content to be cleared by the Teacher Exchange Branch, and open/shared access to the broader Fulbright Teacher Exchange program website and associated social media accounts;
- 3) Orientation programs (virtual and in-person), professional in-service meetings, and debriefings;

- 4) Placement, monitoring, supervision, and support of participants; and
- 5) Fiscal management, evaluation, and follow-on and alumni activities for the programs described above.

The FY 2019 award recipient will need to work closely with the FY 2018 and prior year award recipients to ensure alumni from prior years are integrated into alumni activities.

Please see the POGI for details pertaining to these activities for each program. The Bureau's program office and the award recipient will meet regularly and will maintain regular telephone and email communications with each other regarding program implementation.

Additional Guidelines

Proposals should reflect an overarching vision for the program components, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act and the Teacher Exchange Program with creativity to achieve long-term objectives. Proposals should provide ideas for collaboration among participants and alumni across programs, for the benefit of participants, alumni and their schools and communities. Applicant organizations should outline a plan to work with the media and other organizations, in close consultation with the Bureau, to ensure that the programs and their awards and achievements receive appropriate publicity.

The narrative portion of the proposal should not exceed 20 pages. Proposals may utilize appendices as needed to illustrate elements of the narrative.

Where possible, proposals should reflect economies of scale and should demonstrate administrative efficiencies.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information.

B. Federal Award Information:

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

Fiscal Year Funds: 2019

Approximate Total Funding: \$1,750,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds

Approximate Number of Awards: 1

Approximate Average Award: \$1,750,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds

Floor of Award Range: None

Ceiling of Award Range: \$1,750,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds

Anticipated Award Date: Pending the availability of FY 2019 funds, October 1, 2018

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2023

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

Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this grant or cooperative agreement for one additional consecutive fiscal year, 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).

Consortia of eligible organizations applying for cooperative agreements should designate one organization to be the primary recipient of the Cooperative Agreement award: this primary recipient would be responsible for oversight of the other members of the consortium as part of the award. Proposals from consortia should provide a detailed description of the responsibilities of each partner organization.

To facilitate effective communication between ECA's Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) and the award recipient cooperating on these programs, applicant organizations with primary responsibility for the programs in this component should have offices and staffs located in Washington, D.C., at the time of application.

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 of \$1,750,000 to support

program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.

b.) **Technical Eligibility:** All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO, POGI (if applicable), and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI); non-compliance will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

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

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 Betsy Devlin-Foltz, Senior Program Officer in the Teacher Exchange Branch, ECA/A/S/X, SA-5, 4th floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone: (202) 632-6334 and fax number: (202) 632-9479, email: Devlin-FoltzEA@state.gov, to request a Solicitation Package.

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

It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Betsy Devlin-Foltz 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. . The proposal narrative should not exceed twenty (20) total double-spaced pages in length.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) 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. Required Registration with SAMS Domestic: All ECA award recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories must be registered with the U.S. Department of State's SAMS Domestic by accessing <https://mygrants.service-now.com> and clicking the "create an account" link. SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). Recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories that have previously used SAMS Domestic as a U.S. Department of State award recipient do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for help in gaining access.

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

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

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

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. 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 and additional budget guidance are outlined in detail in the POGI document. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

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

Application Deadline Date: Thursday, July 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 Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov 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. Quality of the program idea:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission.
- 2. Program planning/Ability to achieve program objectives:** Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.
- 3. Support of Diversity:** Proposals should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including individual grantee/participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.
- 4. Institutional Capacity:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.
- 5. Project Evaluation:** Proposals should include a 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 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.
- 6. Cost-effectiveness/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. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

7. Follow-on Activities: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

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.

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 Betsy Devlin-Foltz, (202) 632-6334, Devlin-FoltzEA@state.gov, 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 *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this Cooperative Agreement/Grant in the U.S. Department of State's [SAMS Domestic](#). SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system, which is replacing GrantSolutions.gov, and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). For assistance, please contact the U.S. Department of State's ILMS Help Desk at 1-888-313-4567 (toll free for US callers) or through the U.S. Department of State's ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>. 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 [SAMS Domestic](#), in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

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

- 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.

F.4. Program Data Requirements: Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

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

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Betsy Devlin-Foltz, Teacher Exchange Branch, ECA/A/S/X, U.S. Department of State, SA-5, 4th floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, phone: (202) 632-6334, fax: (202) 632-9479; email: Devlin-FoltzEA@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.

Marie Royce
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

May 11, 2018