

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2017 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-17-002

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415

Key Date/Application Deadline: November 11, 2016

Program Description/Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division (ECA/PE/C/PY), of the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (the Bureau) announces an open competition for the FY 2017 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) program. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501 (c) (3) may submit a proposal to facilitate educational exchanges between American and German students under one of three CBYX components: Secondary School, Vocational Studies, and Young Professionals for the 2017-18 academic year. The CBYX program supports the exchange of American and German young people in order to sustain and strengthen the American-German friendship based on the common value of democracy. The program also builds lasting personal and institutional relationships.

Pending the availability of FY 2017 funds, it is the Bureau's intent to award seven cooperative agreements – five for the Secondary School Component, one for the Vocational Studies component, and one for the Young Professionals component – totaling approximately \$4,000,000. Please see section B.) Federal Award Information below for additional details.

A. Program Description:

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

Purpose: The primary objective of the program is to encourage American and German youth to learn about each other's society and culture through educational exchange while promoting American-German friendship based on the common value of democracy. In addition, the program seeks to promote the participants' roles as young ambassadors with influence on future American-German relations, and to promote and strengthen linkages between members of Congress and their Bundestag counterparts. The program provides a scholarship for an academic year experience of living and studying in the host country.

The Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs administers the CBYX program in the United States. The program is known in Germany as the Parlamentarisches-Patenschafts Program (PPP), and is administered by the German Bundestag Administrative Office.

Inaugurated in 1983 through a bilateral agreement between the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag, each government provides funding to exchange organizations through assistance awards for the costs of home country participant recruitment and selection, international airfare, orientation and debriefing, and hosting and monitoring support for the respective exchange participants.

An open competition is held every four years for the administration of the CBYX program. The German Bundestag Administration Office holds a simultaneous open competition to select the German counterpart organizations that will manage the program in Germany. Up to five U.S. organizations will be partnered with up to five German organizations to administer the secondary school exchange program. One U.S. and one German organization will be paired to administer the Vocational component. One U.S. and one German organization will be paired to administer the Young Professionals component. Within the proposal narrative, applicants must name their intended German partner organization, provide pertinent institutional background and support materials as appropriate, including documentation of the partnership agreement, and demonstrate their ability to cooperate with foreign partners in implementing exchanges.

According to an agreement between the Department of State and the Bundestag Administration Office, the maximum number of participants to be exchanged in any given year is 400 Germans and 400 Americans. However, the actual number of participants exchanged each year is dependent on the amount of funding made available by the U.S. Congress and the German Bundestag. For program year 2017-2018, up to 350 American and 360 German participants may be included across the several components of the CBYX program. Throughout the four-year program cycle, representatives of both governments and the respective program organizations will hold annual discussions to determine the final participant numbers for each academic year. Participants are chosen according to procedures and criteria established by each government.

For all program components, applicants must submit the health and accident insurance plans that they and/or their German partners intend to use for the American and German students participating in this program. The Bureau offers the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) plan for students participating in the program at no cost to grantee organizations. Applicants are encouraged to use ASPE but may choose to use their own plan instead. Plans must meet requirements of 22 CFR 62.14.

In the United States, the CBYX program has three components:

1. **Secondary School Component:** In FY 2017, this component will provide a maximum of 250 scholarships (approximately 50 per organization) for an

academic year educational and cultural homestay experience in Germany for American secondary school students ages 15 to 18 years and 6 months at the start of the program, and a maximum of 285 German secondary students (approximately 57 per organization) reciprocally hosted in the United States, also ages 15 to 18 years and 6 months at the start of the program. German students may be placed in host homes and schools throughout the United States.

Secondary school exchange organizations are invited to bid to conduct merit-based selection among American secondary school students in one or more of five designated regions of the United States, as follows:

Northeast: Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

Southeast: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Puerto Rico, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia

Central States: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, Wisconsin

Southwest: Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Southern California* (*the northern border of this region include the counties of Monterey, San Benito, Fresno, and Inyo)

Pacific/Northwest: Alaska, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington, Wyoming, Northern California* (*the southern border of this region includes the counties of Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Merced, Madera, and Mono).

American secondary school exchange organizations may bid on more than one region, indicating the most preferred region(s) in priority order. The Bureau anticipates that five organizations will be selected to conduct all aspects of the recruitment and selection of approximately 50 American participants in one of the five regions.

Organizations that are awarded a cooperative agreement to recruit American secondary school participants in their assigned U.S. regions will conduct advertising, recruitment, processing of applications, screening, selection, management of administrative and travel logistics, and pre-departure orientations, and they will work with their German partner to ensure that arrival and re-entry orientations are conducted for American secondary school participants. These organizations will also provide arrival and re-entry orientations for German secondary school students and place them in host families and schools nationwide. The U.S. recipient organizations will screen (including conducting criminal background checks), select, and orient host

families, and provide program monitoring, supervision and counseling to students and host families per the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) regulations at 22 CFR Part 62. The U.S. organization will also arrange program enrichment activities throughout the year for the German secondary school students, and will manage all administrative and logistical matters related to their program. U.S. recipient organizations' partners in Germany will be responsible for recruiting, orienting, and arranging international travel for German secondary school students, and will provide logistics and program arrangements, including host family screening, school placement, participant monitoring and support to students and host families for U.S. students paralleling to the extent possible the arrangements that the U.S. partners provide for German students.

Administrative Supplemental to Secondary School Component: The administrative supplemental will provide additional funds to one secondary school component organization to:

- a. Produce and distribute the secondary school scholarship promotional materials, and
- b. Maintain a CBYX scholarship application website.

Secondary School component applicants interested in applying to implement the administrative supplemental should include, in addition to the 20-page program narrative, an addendum of up to four pages with a proposal to produce and distribute promotional materials and maintain a CBYX scholarship application website. Applicants should submit a separate budget of up to approximately \$55,000 to support these activities. Additional information regarding this supplemental activity is provided in the POGI.

2. **Vocational Component:** This component provides scholarships to graduating American secondary school seniors with a vocational specialization for a one-year professional study and training experience in their fields of interest in Germany. One U.S. organization will be selected to conduct all aspects of the nationwide selection competition in the United States for 25 U.S. students, including advertising, recruitment, processing of applications, screening, selection and pre-departure orientations, and management of all administrative and logistical matters including domestic and international travel. During the selection process, the program organization is encouraged to work with vocational educational offices at the state level, as well as administrators of secondary schools with vocational education curriculum.

The German partner organization chosen by the Bundestag Administrative Office will coordinate arrival and re-entry orientation for the U.S. students and will place them in host families and schools. The German partner organization will screen, select, and orient host families as well as provide program monitoring, supervision and support to students and host families. The German partner organization will also arrange enrichment activities for the students throughout

the year and an internship in the participants' field of study, and will manage all administrative and logistical matters including in-country travel and the provision of health and accident insurance.

- 3. Young Professionals Component:** This component provides scholarships for a one-year professional study and training experience in the host country in business, professional, technical, vocational and agricultural fields to young Americans and Germans ages 18-24. One U.S. organization will be selected to conduct programming for approximately 75 American and 75 German Young Professionals.

In the United States, the U.S. recipient organization will conduct nationwide advertising, recruitment, processing of applications, screening, and selection of U.S. students; provide pre-departure orientations; manage all administrative and logistical matters; and arrange domestic and international travel, as well as coordinate arrival and re-entry orientations for German students, place them with host families or arrange other suitable housing, place them in colleges or universities, arrange internships in the participants' field of study, and arrange program enrichment activities. The U.S. recipient organization will conduct the recruitment, screening, selection and orientation of host families; provide participant monitoring, supervision and support to students and host families; and manage all administrative and logistical matters including in-country travel arrangements. The partner organization in Germany will coordinate arrival and re-entry orientations for U.S. students, place them with host families or arrange other suitable housing, place them in colleges or universities, arrange internship in the participants' field of study, and arrange program enrichment activities.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/PE/C/PY is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. These activities and the roles and responsibilities of the Department and your organization are outlined in the attached POGI.

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement

ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2017

Approximate Total Funding: \$4,000,000

Approximate Number of Awards: 7 (5 Secondary School Component Awards, approximately \$574,000 per award with approximately \$55,000 in additional funding for one of the five award recipients to produce and distribute promotional materials and

maintain a CBYX scholarship application website; 1 Vocational Component, approximately \$125,000, 1 Young Professionals Component, approximately \$950,000)

Floor of Award Range: \$125,000

Ceiling of Award Range: \$950,000

Approximate Average Award: \$571,000

Anticipated Award Date: January 1, 2017

Anticipated Project Completion Date: August 31, 2018

Additional Information: Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this grant or cooperative agreement for three additional consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing it again. Final funding will be pending a FY 2017 Congressional Appropriation. For proposal development purposes, applicants may use \$4,000,000 as an approximation of the expected amount available in FY 2017. For illustrative purposes, the current average per capita costs for each program component are: \$5,470 for the secondary school component, \$6,240 for the young professionals component, and \$4,760 for the vocational component. Applicants' budget submissions should be realistic and reflect anticipated actual costs required to implement the program(s) and the varying costs specific to the German participants' hosting needs, and the American participants' programming needs.

C.) Eligibility Information:

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

C.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs. When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$130,000.

b.) **Technical Eligibility:** All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in 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.

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 the Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, Floor 3, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone 202-632-6072, fax (202) 632-9355, or email forestal@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 Amy Forest and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

D.2a. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3p. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

D.3a. You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF-424 which is part of the formal application package.

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

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

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

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

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

- 1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- 2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

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

Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of exchange visitor (J-1 visa) programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of exchange visitor programs as set forth in 22 CFR Part 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR Part 62, including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening

and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA as sponsor will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to German participants in this program. The J-1 visa category for German secondary school students is the U.S. Secondary School Program; the J-1 visa category for German Young Professionals participants is International Visitor. The Office may assign, under its J-1 program designation, Assistant Responsible Officer (ARO) duties to one or more recipient organization staff members to assist the Office in preparation of DS-2019 forms and in maintenance of SEVIS records. For the 2017-18 program year, the Office will request such assistance from the organization chosen to implement the Young Professionals component, for that component's participants; applicants for that component should include appropriate staff time in their budget request.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of exchange visitor (J-1 visa) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

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

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 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: Friday, November 11, 2016.

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays

Email: support@grants.gov

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

application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

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

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

D.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. Please see POGI for a detailed list of the review criteria.

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.

F.2 **Administrative and National Policy Requirements:**

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB circular cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

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

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

F.3. **Reporting Requirements:**

You must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here: http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68. The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Grant Note* under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to GrantSolutions.gov, in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.
- 2.) A 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.

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: Amy Forest, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/PY, SA-5, Floor 3, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, telephone (202) 632-6072, email ForestAL@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

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

H. Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section F3. Reporting Requirements above.

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

Date

