

Department of State

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

(NOFO): FY 2018 Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-18-013

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.009

Key Date/Application Deadline: February 22, 2018

Program Description/Executive Summary: The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State is seeking proposal submissions for one cooperative agreement to design, implement, and oversee the Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds. Begun in 2014, the Mandela Washington Fellowship has enjoyed great success in its first four years, building and sustaining a committed network of approximately 3,000 young African leaders across critical sectors to cement stronger ties between Africa and the United States, and to prepare the African participants (Fellows) for leadership in Africa. The Mandela Washington Fellowship is the flagship program of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI), which aims to strengthen democratic institutions and good governance, spur economic growth and prosperity, and foster peace and security in Africa.

The award recipient will be responsible for planning and administering all components and aspects of the Mandela Washington Fellowship including six-week Leadership Institutes at U.S. campuses for up to 700 Fellows; a Summit for all Fellows; Professional Development Experiences (PDEs) for at least 70 Fellows; follow-on alumni activities; and a Reciprocal Exchange component that includes at least 100 American participants. The award recipient should design the Fellow application materials, develop an outreach and recruitment plan, receive and screen applications in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State, and oversee the final Fellows selection and placement process. The recipient will recruit, select, and oversee the U.S. host institutions that will implement the Leadership Institutes in one of three themes: Business, Civic Engagement, or Public Management.

The Leadership Institutes should be six weeks long and should take place at an accredited U.S. college or university. The Institutes should provide groups of 25 young African leaders with an intensive academic course on one of the three themes, as well as leadership development sessions, community service activities, site visits, networking, and cultural enrichment. Please see Overview of Leadership Institutes, section A.2, and the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) for more information.

The PDEs are professional placements at relevant U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, or U.S. government agencies. The Summit should take place at either the beginning or the end of the Institutes for three or four days. The Reciprocal Exchange component should provide small grants to at least 100 Americans to travel to Sub-Saharan Africa to build upon strategic partnerships and professional connections developed during the Mandela Washington Fellowship in the United States. Please see the POGI for more information on these program components.

Applicants should submit a proposal to administer all Leadership Institutes, the Summit, the PDEs, the Reciprocal Exchange component, and follow-on alumni activities. ECA will award one cooperative agreement for these activities, pending the availability of FY 2018 funds.

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

It is anticipated that the total amount of funding available for this cooperative agreement will be approximately \$14,500,000, pending the availability of funds. Of this total amount, the recipient should be prepared to transfer at least \$200,000 to host universities/non-governmental organizations for the administration of each Institute under sub-award agreements. ECA welcomes applications from U.S. public and private non-profit organizations, consortia of organizations, and accredited post-secondary U.S. education institutions meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3). **It is the Bureau's intent to award one cooperative agreement (one base year plus two non-competitive continuations) for an estimated total amount of \$43,500,000, pending the availability of funds and successful performance. Please see section B.) Federal Award Information, below for additional details.**

ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets, participant numbers, the number of Institutes, and/or countries based on program needs and the availability of U.S. government funding (see Eligibility Information, section C).

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.

A.1. Purpose:

The Mandela Washington Fellowship is the flagship program of the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI). It aims to build the skills of young African leaders to improve the accountability and transparency of government, start their own businesses, and serve their communities. The Fellowship provides African leaders with the opportunity to

develop their skills through six weeks of intensive Leadership Institutes at a U.S. college or university as well as other activities.

A.2. Overview of the Leadership Institutes:

Each Leadership Institute should be approximately six weeks long and held at an accredited U.S. university or college. Non-governmental organizations are eligible to apply as a sub-award recipient; however the Leadership Institutes should take place on a U.S. college or university campus. (See section A.9 for more information on host universities).

The academic program of each Institute should examine American leadership in one of the three themes: Business, Civic Engagement, or Public Management. Institutes should be structured to provide Fellows with exposure to American leadership approaches, challenges, and successes in business, civic engagement, and public management, and enable Fellows to connect American examples to the African context. The recipient will be responsible for providing guidelines for curricula to host institutions to promote a consistent level of quality and thematic content in each Institute. In addition to the academic coursework, the Institutes should include practical hands-on training related to the given theme. Site visits in the community should provide opportunities to observe and participate in varied aspects of American life as they relate to the Institute topic and to discuss lessons learned in the academic program. In addition to promoting enhanced skills in the Institute topic, an important objective of the Institutes is to develop the Fellows' leadership skills. In this context, the academic program should include group discussions, trainings, and exercises that focus on topics such as leadership, consensus building, networking, collective problem solving skills, effective communication and public speaking, and management skills. The recipient should also propose a leadership assessment that each Fellow will complete and a sample curriculum for Institutes to utilize the results of the leadership assessment. Institutes should also include a community service component in which the Fellows experience firsthand the key role of not-for-profit organizations and volunteerism in American civil society.

Institutes should provide Fellows with an in-depth examination of one of the themes outlined below (under Institute Themes). Fellows should gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Institutes should foster ECA's mission to promote mutual understanding between citizens of other countries and citizens of the United States. Thus, the programs should include robust opportunities for Fellows to meet Americans from a variety of backgrounds, to interact with U.S. peers, and to engage with appropriate student and civic groups to share their experiences and life in their home communities.

Institute Themes:

- 1) *Leadership in Business Institutes* should provide Fellows with an overview of U.S. entrepreneurial strategies including those that are employed to address social issues. The Institutes should focus on developing Fellows' skills in business and entrepreneurship while examining the development, history, challenges, and successes of U.S. enterprises and social enterprises, in the United States and globally, with specific relevance to the African continent. The Institutes should encourage

Fellows to elaborate innovative and practical plans to expand their engagement in business and/or entrepreneurship in their communities and to engage with others in this area.

- 2) *Leadership in Civic Engagement Institutes* should provide Fellows with an overview of how citizens both as individuals and in groups, have shaped U.S. history, government, and society, including discussion of similarities and contrasts with experiences and opportunities on the African continent. The academic program should define civic engagement, examine its development in the United States, and build skills in topics such as citizenship, community building, economic development, grass-roots activism, political organizing and leadership, volunteerism, and the use of information and communications technology in advancing civic causes. The Institutes should encourage Fellows to develop innovative and practical plans to expand their engagement as citizens in their own communities and to work with others in this area.
- 3) *Leadership in Public Management Institutes* should provide Fellows with an overview of public management and leadership including regional economic and workforce development; financial management in public and non-profit organizations; planning and the global knowledge economy; and domestic and foreign development policies. Within the broader frame of the public policy process, Fellows should be exposed to specific public management questions on topics such as public finance, rule of law, education, public health, environment, public sector transparency and accountability, and foreign policy. The Institutes should encourage Fellows to create innovative and practical plans to expand their engagement in public management in their communities and to work with others in this area.

A.3. Overview of the Professional Development Experience:

The award recipient will be responsible for arranging four week Professional Development Experiences (PDEs) in the United States for at least 70 of the Fellows. The Fellows selected for the PDEs will have distinguished records of accomplishment in promoting innovation and positive change in their organizations, institutions, and communities. The PDE placements are intended to provide Fellows with substantive professional experiences within U.S. organizations to enhance their leadership skills, expand practical skillsets, and provide opportunities for the Fellows to form mutually beneficial long-term professional relationships with their U.S. counterparts. For U.S. companies and organizations, the PDEs afford a unique opportunity to benefit from the insights and knowledge of dynamic young African professionals. As PDE Fellows often work in the same sector as the host U.S. organization or company, the PDE can allow the U.S. host to build global networks and expand their work to, or throughout, Africa. PDEs should be designed to offer the maximum hands-on experience for Fellows within relevant agencies and/or organizations. The U.S. Department of State requires one placement for the full four weeks (rather than shorter successive placements) in order to allow the Fellow to get an in-depth understanding of the organization. Depending on the size of the host organization, up to five Fellows may be placed at one PDE location.

Proposals must discuss how the award recipient, in collaboration with ECA, will recruit and select U.S. host organizations to serve as PDE organizations.

To ensure that each Fellow has a substantive professional experience at his/her PDE, each PDE should involve the commitment of a designated host supervisor/mentor who understands the goals and objectives of the Mandela Washington Fellowship. The supervisor/mentor will be able and willing to provide the Fellow professional insight in the appropriate field of expertise.

Please note that the award recipient must secure all PDE placements in advance of the U.S. arrival of the Fellows.

A.4. Overview of the Mandela Washington Fellowship Summit

The recipient will be responsible for planning and implementing a Summit either at the beginning or the end of the Leadership Institutes. Fellows will convene for a Summit to forge connections with one another and U.S. leaders from the private, public, and non-profit sectors, setting the stage for long-term engagement. The Summit will occur over the course of three to four days and should include the following aspects: interaction among Fellows and senior U.S. government officials, U.S. business and civic leaders, and members of the diplomatic community; inspirational speeches from distinguished American leaders and/or other prominent leaders; opportunities for Fellows to engage with each other formally and informally; workshops and seminars that further complement and reinforce academic themes explored during the Institute; and information sharing on alumni and follow-on activities. The Summit is also an opportunity for host Institute staff to exchange best practices and ideas for future programming. Institute staff will participate in a debriefing session with program staff.

The Summit budget should include of all housing and meal arrangements for Fellows and Institute staff. The recipient must propose possible locations for the Summit, including but not limited to Washington, D.C.

A.5. Overview of the Reciprocal Exchange Component:

The recipient will be responsible for administering the Mandela Washington Fellowship Reciprocal Exchange component for at least 100 American professionals. The Reciprocal Exchange component should provide funding opportunities for Americans from the private, public, and non-profit sectors to collaborate on projects across Sub-Saharan Africa. Through these projects, U.S. experts and leaders should work with Fellows to tackle critical issues such as promoting peace, stability, and economic prosperity in both the United States and Africa while contributing to U.S. public diplomacy efforts. The recipient is responsible for developing an application form for both the American professionals and for Mandela Washington Fellows from all cohorts since 2014 (as hosts and project partners) to compete in a merit-based open competition for a reciprocal exchange. Please see the attached POGI for more information on this component.

A.6. Overview of Alumni/Follow-on Activities:

Proposals should provide plans for continued follow-on activities that ensure that ECA-supported programs are not isolated events. Proposed follow-on activities for alumni (Fellows and Reciprocal Exchange Awardees) should include innovative ideas, must reflect the goals and objectives of the program and must contribute to ECA's mission to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and of other countries. The proposal should include an outline of follow-on alumni programming (including a timeline), information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts, and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained.

The award recipient is responsible for creating and maintaining an alumni database to track all alumni across the Mandela Washington Fellowship. The award recipient will be responsible for working with the FY 2017 award recipient to transfer previous data. The database must be accessible by ECA and maintain up to date records of alumni from all cohorts of the Mandela Washington Fellowship (since 2014). The database must include biographical information on all participants and should include the ability to track mentions of alumni in the media and success stories. The database must include search functionality that allows users to search by participant name, Leadership Institute name, year, keywords, and other search criteria. Applicants should designate a staff member to oversee alumni activities. The award recipient will report to ECA on outcomes and effectiveness related to all alumni activities and administer an alumni evaluation throughout the period of the cooperative agreement, as well as provide information on aggregate data and outcomes of the evaluation. ECA will collaborate with the award recipient on alumni follow-on activities. Applicants should incorporate the online community on the International Exchange Alumni website (alumni.state.gov) into their alumni outreach plans.

Please see the attached POGI for more information.

A.7. Overview of Recruitment and Selection:

Proposals must demonstrate the capacity for the recipient to conduct a recruitment and selection process for Fellows, PDE participants and host organizations, Reciprocal Exchange Awardees, and Institute Partners. The recipient will be responsible for developing creative and comprehensive plans for the recruitment of applicants through an open competition for all Mandela Washington Fellowship participation and partnership opportunities. The recruitment plans should make clear the primary purpose and audience for key messages, making sure to differentiate between recruitment and general program marketing and promotion. The recruitment plans should include the development of marketing materials including, but not limited to, print materials (flyers, fact sheets, one pagers, brochures), online content (website information, social media campaigns), and outreach to stakeholders in U.S. higher education, sectors related to Fellows' professional backgrounds, and other relevant stakeholders. Successful recruitment plans will provide specific strategies for attracting well-qualified and diverse pools of applicants. All aspects of diversity included in ECA's Diversity Statement should be addressed in the recruitment plans including, where applicable, institutional,

geographic, racial, gender, ethnic, age, religious, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

The recipient will be responsible for creating a Fellow application form that will be posted on the program website (see the Outreach and Marketing section of the POGI for more details about the program website) for an open competition.

Additionally, the recipient is responsible for developing a viable recruitment, selection, and placement plan that allows for U.S. Department of State involvement. The plan should include the development of a Reciprocal Exchange application form for American professionals and Mandela Washington Fellows, from all cohorts since 2014(as hosts and project partners), to apply in an open competition. U.S. embassies and consulates, USAID missions, and other U.S. government agencies throughout Sub-Saharan Africa will play a significant role in recruitment and selection. Proposals should include information about how the recipient plans to collaborate with posts in recruitment efforts. Applicants for the Mandela Washington Fellowship should have the option of applying for the follow-on PDE component.

See the POGI for more information.

A.8. Overview of Outreach:

In addition to the recruitment plans, the proposal must include an outline to describe how the Mandela Washington Fellowship will be publicized to various audiences and media outlets, including print, online, and broadcast, to reach the widest possible audience of qualified applicants, potential U.S. host institutions, host PDE organizations, and other relevant audiences.

Additionally, the proposal should address the recipient's ability to develop a program website independent of the recipient organization's website. The website should describe the Mandela Washington Fellowship and all of its components in a dynamic and interactive manner. The award recipient must regularly check the website content to ensure that all posted material is current and correct and must submit any new strategies for presenting program information or major revisions of current online materials to ECA in advance for approval. ECA may request that website content be added or removed in a timely manner.

Once an award is issued, the recipient should to develop a comprehensive outreach plan designed to raise public awareness of the Mandela Washington Fellowship and to demonstrate inclusiveness, innovations, and the U.S. and international impact of the program. See the POGI for details about what should be included in the outreach plan.

Publications, program materials, the website and all other online programs, including social media and websites, should explain the mission of the Mandela Washington Fellowship and emphasize the U.S. Department of State's role as the program's sponsor and manager. As such, all materials should note that "The Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders is a program of the U.S. Department of State and

is supported in its implementation by [award recipient].” When applicable, the note should include a link to the program website. This language should appear prominently on all print and electronic materials and should precede any language regarding the role of the award recipient in administering the program. Publications should prominently feature the Mandela Washington Fellowship logo and the U.S. Department of State seal in accordance with established guidelines. The outreach strategy and all publication materials, including cover designs, must be submitted to ECA for approval prior to publication and dissemination.

Please see the attached POGI for more information.

A.9. Program Administration:

ECA is seeking detailed proposals from U.S. public and private non-profit organizations, consortia of organizations, and accredited post-secondary U.S. education institutions meeting the eligibility requirements outlined below.

ECA intends to issue one cooperative agreement and is seeking proposals from organizations with the ability to administer a complex recruitment and selection process; develop and oversee Leadership Institutes at host universities around the country; identify, coordinate, support, and monitor PDEs; administer the Reciprocal Exchange component; develop and oversee alumni activities; and to organize the Summit, among other responsibilities. Recipients may be U.S. public or private non-profit organizations, consortia of organizations, and accredited post-secondary U.S. education institutions that will provide up to 28 sub-awards to host colleges, universities, or non-profit organizations to implement the Leadership Institutes. The majority of Institute activities should take place on a U.S. college or university campus. The recipient will serve as the lead administrator and will be responsible for the oversight of all aspects of this project, including managing and monitoring performance of all sub-award recipients. The FY 2018 award recipient will need to be prepared to work with the FY 2017 award recipient in ensuring the success of the program going forward. Please see the attached POGI for more information.

A.10. Program Guidelines:

It is essential that proposals provide a detailed and comprehensive narrative describing the objectives of the overall program; curricula, budgets, plans for the Summit, and specifics on the PDE and Reciprocal Exchange component, as well as alumni activities. The proposal should demonstrate the recipient’s ability to recruit host colleges, universities, or non-profit organizations, for the Leadership Institutes, that reflect regional and other diversity, including public, private, urban, rural, minority serving institutions, and community colleges. Leadership Institutes must take place on a U.S. college or university campus.

Overall, proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their responsiveness to NOFO criteria listed in Section E. Application Review Information. The accompanying Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document provides program-specific guidelines that all proposals must address fully.

Please note: In a cooperative agreement, ECA 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 document. ECA will provide advice and assistance on the Institutes as indicated in POGI document. ECA may request that the recipient make modifications to the program. The recipient will be required to obtain approval of significant program changes in advance of their implementation.

Please see the POGI document for detailed budget information.

Proposal narratives should include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuations, pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two non-competitive continuations are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a non-competitive continuation will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds are conditions of continued administration of the program and execution of all non-competitive continuations.

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement

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

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2018 base year, up to \$14,500,000, pending the availability of funds; FY 2019 Non-Competitive Continuation year one, up to \$14,500,000, pending successful performance and the availability of funds; FY 2020 Non-Competitive Continuation year two, up to \$14,500,000, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Approximate Total Funding: \$43,500,000. This figure represents base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

Approximate Number of Awards: one

Floor of Award Range: none

Ceiling of Award Range: \$14,500,000 for FY 2018 base year (or \$43,500,000 for the base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years)

Approximate Average Award: \$14,500,000 for FY 2018 base year (or \$43,500,000 for the base year plus two Non-Competitive Continuation years)

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

Anticipated Project Completion Date: May 1, 2023. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus two non-competitive continuation years.

Additional Information: A Cooperative Agreement will be awarded for a period of 20 months (base year) with Non-Competitive Continuations for two additional 20 month periods (non-competitive continuation years one and two). ECA will notify the recipient

of our intention to exercise or not to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise a Non-Competitive Continuation will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.

C. Eligibility Information:

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

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

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

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in an amount over \$130,000 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 following or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process. **ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets, participant numbers, the number of institutes, and/or countries based on program needs and the availability of U.S. government funding.**

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 Program Officer Angela Woods, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E/USS, SA-5, 4th floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone: 202-632-9451, email: WoodsAN@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 Angela Woods 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. Unique Entity Identifier Number: You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure

that your UEI (Data Universal Numbering System or DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a UEI (DUNS) number, refer to:

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

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

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

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

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

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. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of 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 award recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

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

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-4E (Bldg. 3)
2430 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information.

D.3i. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines: Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. 'Diversity' should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support of Diversity' section of this document as well as the DIVERSITY, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY section in the "Proposal Submission Instructions" document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation: Proposals must include a monitoring and evaluation plan that explains how the recipient organization will evaluate the project's success and impact, both as activities unfold and at the end of the program. This will include surveying the African participants and American counterparts involved in the project.

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 monitoring and 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 monitoring and 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, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation and demonstrate the results of the program and funding. 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.

While considering the project outcomes, we encourage you to assess the following four types of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO:

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program (e.g. administrative and context) and exchange experience (e.g. relevance, variety, etc.).
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; and changes/impact on personal, academic, and/or professional aspirations.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements. The extent of such collaborations, duration, frequency, type, etc. should be measured.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each type 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 indicator 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 a monitoring and evaluation plan that deals only with the first type of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

After key data collection activities have occurred, the recipient organizations will be

required to provide reports analyzing their monitoring and evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All mixed-method data collection responses and participant 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 ECA 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.

For competitions that will be renewed through a Non-Competitive Continuation applicants must submit:

- the SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program;
- a detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding (Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget guidance.). The narrative should also include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional non-competitive continuation years, pending successful program performance and availability of funds; and
- an abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two non-competitive continuation years).

To exercise the Non-Competitive Continuation mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:

1. timely quarterly performance and financial reports;
2. a request in writing to ECA at least 90 days in advance of the expiration of the current program year;
3. a summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;
4. a detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested non-competitive continuation year; and
5. a brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

1.) closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory quarterly performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional non-competitive continuations. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)

- 2.) review and evaluate all mandatory quarterly program and financial reports;
- All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before the Bureau will exercise additional non-competitive continuations.
 - Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.
 - The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent non-competitive continuations.

- 3.) Prior Grants Officer approval is required to carry forward an unobligated balance from a prior funding period to the subsequent funding period. If the Grants Officer determines that some or all of the unobligated funds are not necessary to perform the program activity, the Grants Officer may decline the Recipient's request to carry forward the unobligated balance.

The Grants Officer may, at their discretion, use the unobligated balance to reduce or offset future funding for a subsequent funding period. An unobligated balance at the end of a funding period is not sufficient justification to carry forward funds. A final determination and approval to carry forward any funds will be communicated via a cost amendment with adjustment, if any, to new obligation amounts.

- i. The request to carry forward an unobligated balance must include:

- a. A brief narrative why funds remain unobligated and how the unobligated funds will be used to complete the previously approved goals and objectives of the program; and,
- b. A detailed budget that reflects the amount of unobligated funds to date, and anticipated expenditures in the subsequent period of performance for all cost categories under the authorized budget.

D.3o. Allowable Costs: Please refer to section F.2. of this document for information on allowable costs. 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, February 22, 2018

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 “Search Grants” portion of the system.

D.3q. Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures

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

How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Applicants should read instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov. Organization applicants can find complete instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov

For access to complete instruction on how to apply for Notice of Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Grants.gov Support and Submission Issues

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

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

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

Email: support@grants.gov

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

D.3r. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by ECA, 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 Program Plan and Ability to Achieve Program Objectives: Proposals should exhibit originality and clearly demonstrate how the Institute will meet the objectives laid out in this solicitation. A detailed itinerary and staff work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Activities should be reasonable, feasible, and form a coherent program for participant exploration of the topic. Competitive proposals will clearly promote ECA's mission: to foster mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries to promote friendly and peaceful relations.

2. Support of Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of ECA's diversity policy. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program design and implementation, and how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity. Proposals should also indicate how reasonable accommodations for participant needs, including disability accommodations, will be implemented.

3. Project Evaluation: As explained in section D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation, proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives are recommended.

4. Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support, as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

5. Institutional Track Record and Ability: 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. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals.

6. Follow-on Activities: Proposals should discuss provisions made for follow-up with returned participants as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages. Proposals also should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without ECA support) ensuring that ECA supported programs are not isolated events. Please refer to the POGI for additional information on follow-on activities.

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 ECA 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 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:

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

<https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm>

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

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Grant Note* under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [GrantSolutions.gov](http://www.dpm.psc.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.
- 4.) Because the Competition will allow for the exercise of Non-Competitive Continuations (NCC), applicants must be placed on a mandatory quarterly program and financial reporting cycle. The due dates for these reports will be included in the final assistance award document. The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.

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: Program Officer Angela Woods, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchanges, ECA/A/E/USS, SA-5, 4th floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, telephone: 202-632-9451, email: WoodsAN@state.gov.

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

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

H. Other Information:

Notice:

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

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

December 20, 2017