

Department of State

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

(NOFO): FY 2020 Fulbright Student Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0005700

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.400

Key Date/Application Deadline: June 14, 2019

Program Description/Executive Summary

The Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for a cooperative agreement to assist in the administration of the FY 2020 Fulbright Student Program. The Fulbright Student Program is a major component of the worldwide Fulbright Program, which also includes the Fulbright Scholar and Fulbright Specialist Programs, as well as the Fulbright Teacher Exchanges and the Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program.

For over 70 years, the Fulbright Student Program has offered awards for college and university graduates to engage in degree-study, to teach and to conduct research abroad and in the United States. The hallmark of the Fulbright Student Program is the selection of all participants through open and transparent merit-based competition. Tens of thousands of U.S. and foreign students have participated in these academic exchanges since the Fulbright Program's inception in 1946.

The Fulbright Student Program sends approximately 2,220 U.S. students and early career professionals abroad annually to conduct independent research, serve as teaching assistants and cultural resources in English classrooms, and pursue academic studies at overseas institutions. Reciprocally, the program brings approximately 2,534 foreign participants from approximately 160 countries to the United States for similar activities hosted primarily by U.S. colleges and universities.

Responsibility for the management of the Fulbright Student Program is shared between the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C., 49 bilateral Fulbright commissions and approximately 100 U.S. embassies overseas, and private sector cooperating agencies in the United States. Overall policies and selection guidelines for the Fulbright Student Program are determined by the Presidentially-appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB).

The organization(s) awarded a cooperative agreement under this competition will be responsible for placement, monitoring, organization of enrichment activities for program participants, disbursement of funds, and record keeping for the FY 2020 cohort of U.S. students and foreign students as well as the program promotion and recruitment and selection of the FY 2021 cohort of U.S. and foreign students. This work will be supervised by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

U.S. public and private non-profit organizations or consortia of eligible organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3) may submit

proposals to cooperate with ECA in the administration and implementation of one or more of the following:

- Proposals will be accepted from eligible organizations or consortia of organizations seeking to administer the entire worldwide Fulbright Student Program or the entire Fulbright U.S. Student Program.
- Proposals will also be accepted from eligible organizations or consortia of organizations wishing to administer the Fulbright Foreign Student Program for one or more regions of the world. Organizations or consortia applying for the foreign student program in two or more world regions must also include a creative and detailed plan to administer enrichment seminars and programs for foreign students; short-term English language, pre-academic, and orientation programming for all foreign students; and the worldwide Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program.
- For East Asia and the Pacific, proposals must include a comprehensive plan to provide administrative and programmatic support for the Fulbright Program in China.
- For Europe, proposals must include a comprehensive plan to provide administrative and programmatic support for the Fulbright Program in Russia and Ukraine.
- For Near East Asia, organizations proposing to administer the Foreign Student Program must also administer the Junior Faculty Development Program for the region.
- For the Western Hemisphere, organizations may propose to administer the Foreign Student Program, the Faculty Development and Regional Specialty Programs, or both.

It is anticipated that the total amount of funding available for all FY 2020 administrative costs to support the program components listed above will be approximately \$19,000,000, pending the availability of funds and will involve management of approximately 4,754 new students.

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.

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 annual Congressional legislation. The Fulbright Program also receives significant annual funding and other support from partner governments and private donors worldwide.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, as sponsor and manager of the Fulbright Student Program, plays a significant role in the planning and implementation of all program initiatives, publicity, promotion, and enrichment activities, as well as liaison with overseas field partners. The Bureau will work closely with the recipient organization(s) on participant selection procedures, development of selection panels, and stipend and benefit issues. Regular ongoing contact with Bureau managers will be required throughout the program year. Through this NOFO, the Department seeks new ideas to develop effective responses to changing conditions in U.S. academia, to improve the outreach of the Fulbright Student Program in the U.S. and overseas, and to propose innovative program models for academic exchange.

Purpose: The U.S. Department of State will provide funding to the successful applicant organization(s) to assist in the administration of the worldwide Fulbright Student Program.

The Fulbright Program was created by the U.S. Congress at the end of World War II to provide the opportunity for future leaders to observe and better comprehend the political, economic, and cultural institutions and societies of other countries and people. In the intervening years, the Fulbright Program has evolved into the premier educational exchange program sponsored by the people of the United States through their federal government, and an important component of U.S. foreign affairs. These exchange experiences have helped established a strong foundation for international mutual understanding and peaceful interaction. The Fulbright Program, which now extends to more than 160 foreign countries and involves approximately 8,000 participants per year, has helped to form and inform thousands of the world's leaders in every academic and professional field.

The United States and foreign governments, educational institutions and other public and private entities are all partners in the Fulbright Program. In many countries of the world, financial contributions from governments or public/private sources match or exceed those of the United States. Because of its binational nature, the profile of the Fulbright Program worldwide reflects a range of objectives and interests.

Administration of the Fulbright Program is programmatically and administratively complex. It must accommodate a variety of circumstances in every geographic region of the world and be responsive to and supportive of many different constituencies in the United States and abroad, each with its own sets of goals and concerns. The integrity of the program requires maintenance of the highest and most consistent standards of academic and professional quality in the selection of candidates and the implementation of projects. While the Fulbright Program is active in many countries, it is important that it maintain a single worldwide identity. Overall policy guidelines and selection criteria

for the Fulbright Program is determined by the Presidentially-appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, while responsibility for conducting the program rests with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State.

Fulbright U.S. Student Program:

Under the auspices of the J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board, approximately 2,220 U.S. citizens are awarded Fulbright Student awards each year through a merit-based, competitive process, to pursue individual research, assist in English language instruction and complete degree-study at universities and classrooms overseas.

Only one cooperative agreement will be awarded for all administrative services in support of the Fulbright U.S. Student Program. Under the Fulbright U.S. Student Program, graduating college seniors, recent graduates, developing artists and professionals or graduate students who are U.S. citizens are awarded scholarships each year through a competitive process to study, undertake research, or assist in the teaching of English at institutions in countries overseas. Students must hold a bachelor's degree, or its equivalent, before the start of the individual grant. Award opportunities for U.S. students are determined overseas by binational Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies, in coordination with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in Washington. In FY 2020, the Fulbright U.S. Student Program expects to send abroad approximately 2,220 U.S. students, developing professionals and artists, and Fulbright English Teaching Assistants to study and conduct research.

In addition to "traditional" research awards, candidates for awards under the U.S. student program may apply for Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships. Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETA) teach English language and conversation classes in schools and universities abroad while simultaneously pursuing individual study and research.

U.S. students applying for a Fulbright grant to selected countries may request an enhancement of their award to provide up to six months in-country language training prior to beginning their research project. This initiative may include Arabic, Bahasa Indonesian, Chinese (Mandarin), Russian, and Indic languages, pending the availability of funding.

Fulbright Foreign Student Program

One or more cooperative agreements will be awarded for administration of the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. Fulbright Foreign Student candidates are nominated through open, merit-based competitions in each participating country, conducted by a binational Fulbright commission or, in the absence of a commission, by the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of U.S. embassies. Scholarship opportunities for foreign students are determined through consultations between commissions or embassies and the Bureau similar to the process for the U.S. Student Program nominees. The Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board makes the final selection of all foreign student nominees.

The Fulbright Foreign Student Program expects to bring to this country approximately 2,534 new foreign students for study and research in the United States for FY 2020. This total includes new foreign students in the two activities listed below.

Applicants for cooperative agreement(s) should submit program proposals and budget projections for new FY 2020 students only. Renewal awards to foreign students from prior years will be managed by the organizations currently administering the program. If the Fulbright Student Program is awarded to (an) organization(s) that does/do not currently administer the Fulbright Student Program, the new organization(s) and the current administrators of the Fulbright Student Program will need to collaborate closely to ensure a successful transition.

In addition to the traditional foreign student program operating in more than 160 countries, the Fulbright Foreign Student Program also includes a special activity that is competed and funded on a worldwide basis.

The Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program (FLTA) aims to strengthen foreign language instruction at U.S. educational institutions while providing young teachers or teacher trainees of English as a Foreign Language the opportunity to refine their teaching skills, increase their English language proficiency, and broaden their knowledge of American society and culture. FLTAs are placed for an academic year at a U.S. college or university where they teach their native language and enroll in at least two courses in U.S. studies or teaching methodology. Languages taught by FLTA participants may include Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, Dari, French, Gaelic, German, Hausa, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Korean, Malay, Mongolian, Pashto, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, Tagalog, Tajik, Thai, Turkish, Urdu, Wolof, or other languages. In FY 2020, the Bureau intends to support approximately 410 FLTAs, pending availability of funds.

Orientation and Enrichment Programs:

The Bureau funds a range of activities designed to deepen the mutual understanding outcomes of the Fulbright Program. Pre-academic English language training and arrival orientations are designed to introduce Fulbright foreign students to U.S. academic life. These programs strengthen the participants' communication and classroom skills, allowing them to make the most of their Fulbright experience. Throughout the academic year, the Bureau offers a range of enrichment seminars for Fulbright Foreign Students that enhance their engagement and understanding of U.S. culture and issues.

Program Management:

Management of the Fulbright Student Program is shared among the Office of Academic Exchange Programs (ECA/A/E) of the U.S. Department of State in Washington, bilateral Fulbright commissions in 49 countries, Public Affairs Sections of more than 100 U.S. embassies abroad, and cooperating private sector organizations in the United States. Grantee cooperating agencies must ensure full and proper identification of the Fulbright Program with the U.S. government and the U.S. Department of State.

The responsibilities of the cooperating organization(s) for the administration of the Fulbright Student Program are as follows:

For the “Core” U.S. Student Program:

The cooperating organization administering the Fulbright U.S. Student Program is responsible for advertising the program and recruiting applicants in the U.S. for all available opportunities.

The Bureau continues to seek innovative recruitment approaches and creative strategies to attract U.S. students to parts of the world that have been underrepresented in the program, and to increase participation of U.S. students from underrepresented academic disciplines, professional fields, and institutions.

The cooperating organization administering the Fulbright U.S. Student Program is responsible for managing a merit-based academic national screening process to recommend candidates for participation in the program. The integrity and independence of that review process is a hallmark of the Fulbright Program.

For the “Core” Foreign Student Program:

The cooperating organization(s) administering the Fulbright Student Program is responsible for monitoring all foreign students during their program in the United States, including providing enrichment opportunities. The cooperating organization will produce DS-2019s for all foreign students and their dependents.

All individual grant opportunities are determined by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in Washington, D.C. and by binational Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies overseas; however, the Bureau welcomes proposals from applicant organizations proposing additional new exchange activities consistent with Fulbright principles that are relevant to changing circumstances in the global academic community.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA's Office of Academic Exchange Programs is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA activities and responsibilities for this program include the following:

- Participating in and approving the design and direction of all program activities;
- Approving key personnel;
- Providing guidance in execution of all program components, in particular execution of program policy and guidelines;
- Approving and providing input on program timelines, agendas, and administrative procedures;
- Reviewing and approving all program recruitment, publicity, and outreach materials;

- Overseeing the selection of participating students, in cooperation with Fulbright commissions and U.S. embassies, and subject to final selection by the FFSB;
- Providing final approval for all student placements;
- Approving any changes to Fulbright students' proposed field, program, or host institution;
- Approving decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program;
- Assisting with non-immigrant status and other SEVIS-related issues;
- Providing guidance and assisting with participant emergencies and medical evacuation;
- Monitoring correspondence with Fulbright commissions and/or U.S. embassies; and
- Liaising with relevant U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions, and Public Diplomacy desk officers at the U.S. Department of State.

Additional information about the activities listed above and the roles and responsibilities of ECA and the award recipient(s) 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.

Fiscal Year Funds: 2020

Approximate Total Funding: \$19,000,000, pending the availability of funds

Approximate Number of Awards: One or more

Floor of Award Range: None

Ceiling of Award Range: \$19,000,000, pending availability of funds

Anticipated Award Date: October 1, 2019, pending the availability of funds

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 30, 2024

Additional Information: The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for approximately four additional fiscal years, before openly competing it again. The Bureau further reserves the right to renew this cooperative agreement beyond that period.

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.

The successful recipient organization will be expected to continue to provide cost-sharing in future renewal applications at levels comparable to those provided in the initial competition.

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 or more awards, in a total amount of \$19,000,000 to support administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.
- b.) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO, POGI, and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) documents; non-compliance will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.
- c.) Organizations or consortia applying for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program should note the following:
 - For East Asia and the Pacific, proposals must include a comprehensive plan to provide administrative and programmatic support for the Fulbright Program in China.
 - For Europe, proposals must include a comprehensive plan to provide administrative and programmatic support for the Fulbright Program in Russia and Ukraine.
 - For Near East Asia, organizations proposing to administer the Foreign Student Program must also administer the Junior Faculty Development Program for the region.
 - For organizations proposing to administer the Fulbright Foreign Student Program in two or more world regions, proposals must include a creative and detailed plan

to administer enrichment seminars and programs for foreign students; short-term English language, pre-academic, and orientation programming for all foreign students; and the worldwide Fulbright Foreign Language Teaching Assistant Program.

d.) To facilitate effective communication of ECA's Office of Academic Exchange Programs with the cooperating organization, preference will be given to award recipients with offices and program staff in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area dedicated to working on the Fulbright Student Program. Applicants that do not currently have offices with program staff in the Washington, D.C. area should include in their proposals a plan for maintaining direct contact with ECA on a regular basis or establishing a presence in Washington, D.C. by October 1, 2019. The award recipient bears the costs of establishing the offices and program staff. No such costs may be included in the budget submission for this program. The award recipients must also have the ability to work electronically with all partners involved in the management of Fulbright Student Program.

e.) 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 Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E, SA-5, 4th Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037 by telephone at (202) 632-3235 or by email at SoursLA@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 Leigh Sours and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <https://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <https://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

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

D.3a. Unique Entity Identifier Number: You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (Data Universal Numbering System or DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a UEI (DUNS) number, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

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

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

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

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts. Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

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

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

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

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

D.3g. Required Registration with SAMS Domestic: All ECA award recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories must be registered with the U.S. Department of State's SAMS Domestic by accessing <https://mygrants.service-now.com> and clicking the "create an account" link. SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). Recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories that have previously used SAMS Domestic as a U.S. Department of State award recipient do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Recipient Organizations and recipient contacts and signatories is available 24 hours, 7 days a week (except federal holidays), and can be reached at 1-888-313-ILMS

(4567) or through the ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsism.service-now.com/ilms/home>.

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

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

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 Solicitation Package for further information.

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

Instructions” document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

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

D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation: Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project’s success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the recipient organization will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project’s objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this NOFO.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.

2. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. **Participant behavior**, such as concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

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

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

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

D.3k. Virtual Exchange Component: ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients: All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in [ECA's Communications Guidance](#) on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.3m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program.

Pending the availability of FY 2020 funds, up to \$19,000,000 in U.S. government funding will be available to support the administration of the worldwide Fulbright Student Program in FY 2020. Applicants should provide separate administrative sub-budgets, and unit costs, for each program component, phase, or activity to provide clarification. *[Note: In addition to the administrative funds provided in response to this NOFO, an estimated total of \$70,000,000 in program funds will be transferred to the recipient organization(s) in approximately three installments per fiscal year to cover individual participant costs. Prior to the transfer of funds, the recipient must provide programmatic summary budgets by region, by country and/or global program as well as financial reports reflecting both administrative and program costs to date.]* ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase funding amounts pending the availability of funds, the needs of the program, and U.S. Department of State foreign policy priorities.

D.3o. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- 1) staff salaries and benefits;
- 2) office rent, furniture, and equipment;
- 3) staff travel;
- 4) Communications, printing, and publishing;
- 5) And other fees associated with the normal administration of exchange programs

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

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

Application Deadline Date: June 14, 2019

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

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

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

How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

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

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

How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov

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

Grants.gov Support and Submission Issues

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

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726

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

Email: support@grants.gov

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

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

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

Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant Authorized Organization Representative (AOR)

will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, 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. Please also be mindful of any Grants.gov generated error messages that may appear during the application process as they may result in some documents not transmitting correctly.

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. Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

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 U.S. Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1. REVIEW CRITERIA

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. *Quality of the Program Idea:* The proposal should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's priorities and mission. Proposed programs should strengthen mutual understanding and the establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.
2. *Program planning and ability to achieve program objectives:* Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the applicant will meet the program's objectives and plans, while demonstrating innovation, productivity, and a commitment to academic excellence. The proposal should demonstrate a capacity for flexibility in the management of the program.
3. *Institutional Capacity and Institution's Record/Ability:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals. The applicant should demonstrate well-established links to the scholarly and professional community in the U.S. and knowledge of other educational environments as they apply to academic and professional exchange programs. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by the Bureau's Grants Division. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

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. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.
5. *Support of Diversity:* The proposal should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. The proposal should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including individual grantee/participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.
6. *Project Evaluation:* The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

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.

The following additional requirements apply to this project:

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

Department will collect information from grantees and sub-grantees regarding the identity and background of their key employees and Boards of Directors.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of Iran complies with requirements, please contact ECA/A/E/NEA Branch Chief Katharine Bartels at 202-632-3228 or BartelsKV2@state.gov for additional information.

All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S. laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact ECA/A/E/NEA Program Officer Danielle Spitzer at 202-632-3275 or SpitzerDM@state.gov for additional information.

SPECIAL PROVISION FOR PERFORMANCE IN A DESIGNATED COMBAT AREA AND FUTURE CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS (CURRENTLY IRAQ AND AFGHANISTAN)

(Revised August 2014)

Each federal assistance award within areas of combat operations or future contingency operation, as designated by the Secretary of Defense (currently Iraq and Afghanistan), over \$150,000 or providing for performance over 30 days must be registered in the Department of Defense maintained Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (SPOT) system. Each federal assistance award shall be registered in SPOT before personnel deployment. The DoS SPOT Program Office can assist with entering awards in SPOT. Please send an email to AQMOps@state.gov for information.

Information on how to register in SPOT and how to report the total number of recipient personnel deploying under each award will be contained in a Special Provision within each assistance award.

Recipients that do not utilize personnel who are performing a private security function; or require access to U.S. facilities, services, or support can be entered through the SPOT aggregate functionality. Upon the award of a grant/and or cooperative agreement in a designated area of combat operations or future contingency operation (currently Iraq and Afghanistan), the Grants Officer or his/her designee will enter the following award information into SPOT to include (i) a brief description of the contract (to the extent consistent with security considerations); (ii) the total value of the contract; and (iii) whether the contract was awarded competitively. The Recipient should send updated deployment numbers for each award sent to the Grants Officer and his/her designee and the Department of State's SPOT program office on a quarterly basis as follows:

The Recipient is required to submit with the quarterly financial report submission information regarding the number of individuals receiving payment from the funds being granted under this award. This report is due 30 days after the calendar year quarter and 90 days after the award period end date and also should be sent to AQMOps@state.gov with the subject line “SPOT Quarterly Report -- Award Number”. The following information shall be provided:

1. Total number of individuals receiving payment from the funds being granted:
 - a. Total Number U.S. Personnel Deployed:
 - b. Total Number Host Country Personnel:
 - c. Total Third Country Personnel Deployed:

These reports should be sent to AQMOps@state.gov. The SPOT program office will enter the numbers into SPOT.

Recipients utilizing personnel who are performing a private security function; or require access to U.S. facilities, services, or support must be entered into SPOT individually with all required personal information. The recipient organization will designate a SPOT administrator who will obtain a SPOT company administrator account. Recipients of federal assistance awards shall register personnel in SPOT before deployment, or if already operational in the designated operational area, register personnel upon becoming an employee under the award and maintain current data in SPOT. Procedures on how to register in SPOT will be provided by the Grants Officer and his/her designee.

Recipient performance may require the use of armed private security personnel. To the extent that such private security contractors (PSCs) are required, Recipients are required to ensure they adhere to Chief of Mission (COM) policies and procedures regarding the operation, oversight, and accountability of PSCs.

In a designated area of combat operations or future contingency operation, the term PSC includes any personnel providing protection of the personnel, facilities, property of a Recipient or sub-recipient at any level, or performing any other activity for which personnel are required to carry weapons in the performance of their duties.

As specific COM policies and procedures may differ in scope and applicability, recipients of federal assistance awards are advised to review post policies and procedures carefully in this regard and direct any questions to the Embassy Regional Security Office (RSO) via the Grants Officer Representative (GOR). Any exclusion to these policies must be granted by the COM via the RSO. COM policies and procedures may be obtained from the RSO via the GOR. Recipients of federal assistance awards are also advised that these policies and procedures may be amended from time to time at the post in response to changing circumstances.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements: Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management

and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

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

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

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

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

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this Cooperative Agreement/Grant in the U.S. Department of State's [SAMS Domestic](#). SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). For assistance, please contact the U.S. Department of State's ILMS Help Desk at 1-888-313-4567 (toll free for US callers) or through the U.S. Department of State's ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsism.service-now.com/ilms/home>. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [SAMS Domestic](#), in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

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

- 2.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;

- 3.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: FFATAECA@state.gov. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.)

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Leigh Sours at SoursLA@state.gov or (202) 632-3235 or Stephen Money at MoneySD@state.gov or (202) 632-3258, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchange Programs ECA/A/E, SA-5, 4th Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037.

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

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

H. Other Information:**Notice:**

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

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

March 29, 2019