

**Department of State**  
**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2016 Arts Envoy Program**  
**Announcement Type:** New Cooperative Agreement  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** ECA-ECAPEC-16-029  
**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 19.415  
**Application Deadline:** May 27, 2016

**Executive Summary:**

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Office of Citizen Exchanges, Cultural Programs Division (referred to throughout this NOFO as ECA/PE/C/CU) announces an open competition to support the Arts Envoy Program. U.S. public and private organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501 (c) (3) may submit proposals to provide administrative support for the Arts Envoy Program. Through this cooperative agreement, ECA plans to support approximately 200 traveling Arts Envoys engaging all six geographical regions of the world. Applicants may only submit 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**

**Authority:**

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

**Purpose:**

The Arts Envoy Program annually enables approximately 200 American artists and cultural experts (known as Arts Envoys) to travel abroad for individual programs or as part of an ensemble or group to engage and consult with key foreign audiences through performances, workshops, meetings, seminars, and appearances in foreign media. By addressing topics identified and developed by U.S. Missions (generally U.S. Embassies and Consulates) worldwide in cooperation with ECA, the program promotes an understanding of U.S. policies and institutions, and the political, economic, social, and cultural context from which they arise. Arts Envoy individuals and groups are programmed in one or more countries with a variety of audiences from a wide range of disciplines in the cultural arena, including in the performing and

visual arts, and in arts management, as well as with museum professionals and other cultural experts. Arts Envoy programs range from five days to six weeks in length.

Arts Envoys represent a broad range of expert knowledge and responsible and informed opinion. ECA/PE/C/CU recruits experts from professional organizations, academic institutions, other State Department and U.S. government entities, and the arts. Arts Envoys may travel as individuals, in pairs, or small delegations to present workshops and masterclasses, or they may travel as ensembles and groups of artists to perform in a range of venues, public spaces, and schools. All Arts Envoys must be at least 18 years of age and U.S. citizens. This NOFO represents the first time that ECA/PE/C/CU is seeking to work with an organization outside the Department of State to help implement the Arts Envoy Program.

**The goals of the Arts Envoy Program are to:**

- Support U.S. foreign policy goals by enabling U.S. citizen cultural experts to interact with key foreign audiences worldwide;
- Identify and recruit the most appropriate U.S. cultural experts to undertake Public Diplomacy programs in response to Department of State strategic initiatives and requests from U.S. missions abroad;
- Promote an understanding among foreign audience of U.S. culture and society, including the political, economic, social, and cultural contexts from which they arise;
- Engage in conversations that enable foreign audiences to learn more about U.S. culture, society and institutions, thereby supporting development and growth of civil society and cultural and social institutions abroad, and countering negative stereotypes;
- Establish sustained relationships and linkages between Arts Envoys and foreign audiences and institutions in order to share knowledge and skills with their peers and broader communities.

Applicant organizations should identify their own specific objectives and measurable outcomes based on these program goals and the specifications provided in this solicitation.

**Program Specific Guidelines:**

This cooperative agreement will begin on or about September 2016, and will be approximately 13 months in duration. Pending successful implementation of this program in the base year, and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing again.

Competitive proposals will include the following:

- Resumes of experienced staff, who have demonstrated a commitment to implement and monitor international exchange projects and ensure outcomes.
- A strategy for preparing and implementing virtual, phone or in-person pre-departure orientations for individual Arts Envoys and Arts Envoy groups.
- A comprehensive plan to monitor, evaluate and report on the program's outcomes in relation to the specific objectives.
- A clear outline and description of the roles and responsibilities of all proposed partner organizations in terms of program logistics, management and oversight (e.g. the travel arranger and the passport/visa facilitator), including letters of intent from any partner organizations and resumes of staff.
- A specific outline of the type of agreement that will be established between the award recipient and the Arts Envoys to specify funding and terms and conditions for each overseas program.
- A specific outline of how honoraria and airline tickets will be disbursed to program participants, and how passports/visas will be provided based on the information in section A below.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/PE/C/CU is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

ECA/PE/C/CU activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

1. Recruit and approve all individual U.S. experts or arts groups for the Arts Envoy program.
2. Communicate directly with U.S. Embassies and Consulates regarding program arrangements and logistics in consultation with the award recipient.
3. Oversee the Program budget and review quarterly budget reports and approve the appropriate allocation of projects among U.S. Embassies and Consulates in all six geographic regions.
4. Work with the award recipient to develop standardized templates for the project authorization and airline travel booking.
5. Work with the award recipient to develop appropriate work flow processes to ensure effective communications between the Department of State and the award recipient.
6. Advise the recipient on the specifics of all travel itineraries and payment amounts for all program participants.
7. Through the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE), provide insurance to all Arts Envoy traveling participants. From the Proposal Submission Instructions

(PSI): ECA provides health and accident insurance that is in compliance with 22 CFR Part 62.14 Insurance. The Bureau insures international and U.S. participants in a variety of exchange-of-persons programs at no cost to the participants. This insurance is not all-purpose health insurance; it is subject to specific limitations. This coverage is not intended to replace any insurance a participant may already have. Instead, the intent is to supplement existing coverage and to ensure that a participant's basic health is protected in a foreign country.

8. Perform an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program.

The responsibilities of the award recipient organization are as follows:

1. **Initial Request:** Confirm receipt of project authorization generally within **one working day** of transmission by ECA/PE/C/CU staff. Please note that the award recipient will work in consultation with ECA/PE/C/CU staff to establish an on-line system for the initiation and approval of projects. This system will also be used as the basis for tracking program expenses and reporting on actual expenditures vis-a-vis the amounts initially requested by ECA/PE/C/CU.
2. **Participate in periodic meetings with ECA/PE/C/CU** to discuss and develop best practices for Arts Envoy program development and implementation. Work with EACA/PC/C/CU to address with U.S. Embassies and Consulates, any variations or complications that may arise with the programs.
3. **As needed and at the request of ECA/PE/C/CU**, research possible artists and arts group to be considered as potential Arts Envoy candidates.
4. **Travel:** Generally within **two working days** of receipt of a travel request form from ECA/PE/C/CU staff, the award recipient will arrange preliminary flight schedules for program participants and submit them back to ECA/PE/C/CU staff for review. Flight requests may include both international travel and in-country program related flights. Please note that the award recipient will develop a travel request on-line application in consultation with the ECA/PE/C/CU. Scheduling of travel may involve several conversations between the award recipient and ECA staff. Travel requests will be for all six geographical regions (Africa, Europe and Eurasia, East Asia and Pacific, Near East and North Africa, South and Central Asia, and the Western Hemisphere) of the world. Travel arrangements will be needed for approximately 200 Envoys. Note: ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposed project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the program's needs and the availability of funds. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust and/or add countries to an Arts Envoy project should conditions change in a particular country and/or if other countries and/or regions are identified as viable alternatives and/or Department priorities.

Please note that the average cost of a round-trip airline ticket to one or more countries will be approximately \$3,000, and this amount is subsumed within the average per participant program cost amount noted in the budget section of this document. This is only an average “suggested amount” for informational purposes, and is not a “not-to-exceed amount.”

- All travel must be Fly America Act compliant and conform to U.S. Government Travel Regulations, including the approved uses of business class travel.
  - All tickets must be refundable, since there may be last minute changes to itineraries, and cancellations for various reasons.
  - Once the flight schedule is approved by participating U.S. Embassy or Consulate, the program participant, and ECA/PE/C/CU, the recipient will be advised that the airline ticket should be purchased and issued.
  - The award recipient must be able to respond to last minute requests for itinerary and/or ticket changes, and to issue tickets with less than 24 hours of notice or on weekends.
- All financial disbursements should be processed within **two working days** of receipt of the detailed project authorization from ECA, including: **Payments to Arts Envoys:** Payments to participants may include an honorarium of U.S. Dollars \$250 per day for non-USG employees, educational allowance, vaccinations, visa fees, pre-departure ground transportation, en-route stopovers, and airport entry and departure fees. Please see PSI for specific allowable line-item amounts. Honorarium is provided for each day of the official project, to include en route stopovers, weekend, travel days, rest days, and holidays recognized by the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. ECA/PE/C/CU will inform the award recipient of the amount to be paid to each program participant in the project authorization. There is a special category of Arts Envoy called a “Target of Opportunity” (TOO). These Arts Envoys are most often already in an overseas country or region on their own business, and are willing to make themselves available for a few days of programming arranged by a U.S. Embassy or Consulate. In these rare cases, the TOO Arts Envoy will generally receive a daily \$250 honorarium and special allowances, as necessary, for each day of the project. In certain cases, airline or other travel expenses may also be covered.
  - **NOTE:** The Arts Envoy Program is a cost-share program in which U.S. Embassies or Consulates cover most **in-country** expenses. U.S Embassies, Consulates, and/or co-sponsors are responsible for in-country participant costs including:
    - USG per diem rates as posted for location
    - Local travel/transportation costs, including lodging
    - Translator costs/script translation
    - Venue rentals
    - Performance rights

- Interpreter fees
- Project and/or art supplies
- Visas: The recipient must arrange, secure and disburse approximately 200 visas (some participants travel to visa waiver countries) and handle up to 15 requests for extra passport pages for U.S. citizens traveling abroad during a period of performance. Visa services should include providing program participants with instructions and necessary application forms; confirming receipt of such information and forms; providing for express mailing of completed applications and passport from the participant back to the recipient or subaward recipient; application drop-off and pickup from the appropriate foreign Embassy, Consulate, visa service provider; and, express mailing of passports/visas back to the program participant. Processing is to be conducted at the award recipient or subaward recipient's site.
- Details and requirements are indicated below:
- The successful completion of a project by an Arts Envoy participant may require the traveler to obtain a visa(s). ECA requires that the award recipient provide support services (possibly through the engagement of a subaward recipient) to assist travelers in obtaining visas.
- The award recipient should use "regular" processing for visas, when time permits. Expedited processing must be approved in advance by ECA/PE/C/CU.
- All visa fees associated with non-program participant travelers (e.g., spouses/dependents), as well as non-program-related travel of the program participant, will be the responsibility of the program participant.
- The award recipient may need to cover costs of overnight and express mailings of applications and passports to and from program participants.
- The award recipient should provide ECA/PE/C/CU staff with a weekly report on status of visa requests. The format for this report can be determined through conversations with ECA/PE/C/CU.
- Keep the, ECA/PE/C/CU staff informed of any current or potential problems, concerns, or lack of response from program participants within a **two working-day period**, and apprised of any issues that occur on an as needed basis throughout the entire passport or visa issuance process.
- Operate a tracking system that can provide up-to-date reports on the status of visa requests, including the expected date of return of the passport to the traveler.
- Be able to provide ECA/PE/C/CU staff and the Program participant the status of a visa request between the hours 8:15 am and 5:00 pm, Eastern U.S. Time (DST or Standard), Monday through Friday.
- Provide the Program Participant and the ECA GOR with contact numbers for after-hours services, including weekends and holidays, for emergency situations.
- Communicate directly via phone or e-mail with ECA/PE/C/CU generally within a **two working-day period**:
- To confirm receipt of visa request worksheet;
- To confirm completion of visa process;

- To advise of status of problems and unexpected delays in processing requests, (e.g. Program Participant has not completed and returned visa applications in a timely manner, has not provided required materials, or foreign Consulate has indicated a difficulty with processing or denial).
- Initiate and hold quarterly status reporting meetings with ECA/PE/C/CU to discuss successes, new procedures, problems, suggestions for improvement, etc.
- Maintain knowledge of up-to-date visa requirements for all foreign embassies, and provide this info to ECA/PE/C/CU, as necessary.
- Advise ECA/PE/C/CU staff of any correspondence (e.g. letters of invitation, forms), or any other special requirements necessary for obtaining a visa, within 24-48 hours of receipt of visa request.

Retain skilled and sufficient staff to handle ALL requests.

5. **Pre-Departure Orientations:** In consultation with ECA/PE/C/CU, the award recipient will provide expert background notes and travel recommendations in order to prepare Arts Envoys for their programs. Additionally, the award recipient will conduct a virtual or in-person pre-departure orientation with each Arts Envoy.
6. **Manage Correspondence and Communication with Envoys:** Ensure all Arts Envoy program payments and other related materials are sent to the Program Participants in an expedited manner (e.g. via FedEx or courier). Under normal circumstances, Arts Envoys should receive their payments, visas/passports, and travel tickets (or e-ticket receipts) **two weeks prior** to the start of their programs. The Department of State will also provide the recipient with letters and materials to be transmitted to Program Participants via these shipments. The award recipient should plan on at least one express mail shipment per program participant, or approximately 200 annually.
7. **Reporting:** The award recipient will submit quarterly and final financial and program reports in accordance with the guidelines provided by the Department. Additionally, the recipient should provide ECA with **Final Project Cost Reports for All Projects**. These reports should be provided to the ECA/PE/C/CU Grants Officer Representative as soon as possible, but no later than 14 calendar days after project completion. The cost categories for each project are the same as those on the Project Authorization. Data such as operating, statistical, and financial information relating to the program may be requested by the Department of State to meet its reporting requirements and answer queries concerning the operation of the Program. While not required, written reports may be submitted when warranted by events during the project, either at the initiative of the recipient, or at the request of ECA. Please see Section F.3. Required Reports for further information.
8. **Oversee Final Program Elements:** Ensure Arts Envoys submit final financial accounting of program expenses. Additionally, the award recipient must comply with all applicable Federal, State and Local laws on tax withholding and/or reporting for all participants funded under this award.

- 9. Alumni Coordination:** The award recipient will work ECA/PE/C/CU and the ECA Bureau's Office of Alumni Affairs to encourage Arts Envoys to register with the ECA Alumni network. The award recipient will also maintain contact with Arts Envoy alumni to broadcast additional cultural exchange opportunities and possibilities for follow-on projects with the U.S. Embassies and Consulates.

## **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:** FY 2016

**Approximate Total Funding:** \$1,300,000

**Approximate Number of Awards:** One

Approximate: Average Award: \$1,300,000

**Minimum ("Floor") Award Amount:** None.

**Maximum ("Ceiling") Award Amount:** \$1,300,000

**Anticipated Award Date:** September 2016

**Anticipated Project Completion Date:** October 2017

**Additional Information:** Pending successful implementation of this program in the base year, and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing again.

## **C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

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

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

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with the Office of Management and Budget's Circular 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In

the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

### **C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:**

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in an amount of \$TBD to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years 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.

1. To facilitate effective communication with the award recipient in the administration of the Arts Envoy Program, the award recipient must have offices and staff in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area dedicated to working on this award. Applicants who do not currently have offices with program staff in the Washington, D.C. area should include in their proposals a detailed plan for establishing a staffed office to work on this award in Washington, D.C. by September 30, 2016. The award recipients bear the costs of establishing the office and hiring staff. No such costs may be included in the budget submission for this program. The award recipients must have the ability to work electronically with all partners involved in the Arts Envoy Program.

2. Organizations must also have the capability to arrange and track travel, visa/passport and funding disbursement for each U.S participant and provide regular updates to the ECA/PE/C/CU staff.

- 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, ECA 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 ECA/PE/C/CU Robert Keith, State Annex 5, Room 3011, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, 202-632-6356 (office telephone), or e-mail Robert Keith at keithrw@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.

Please specify Robert Keith 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.3. Content and Form of Submission:**

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

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

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

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

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

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

D.3d. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key

employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

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

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

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

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

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

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

**FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY:**

**D.3h. ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA**

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division

U.S. Department of State

SA-44, Suite 668

301 4<sup>th</sup> Street, SW

Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

### **D.3i. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines**

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

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

### **D.3j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and

contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

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

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

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

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

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

1. Honorarium - \$250 per day per participant, including travel days; Misc. Expenses which can include excess baggage fees, visa fees, vaccination fees, domestic airport transportation and other costs listed above – Please see PSI for allowable cost amounts. Performance fees – up to approximately \$4,000 per group; Shipping Costs and Insurance for Instruments or artwork. Evaluation costs- 5% of the cooperative agreement. Award recipients are encouraged to provide cost-sharing on any expenses that exceed the maximum allowable amounts.
2. Domestic and international travel for participants, including transit costs if applicable, (American carriers or code-share airlines must be used for overseas travel whenever possible);
3. Airport taxes and country exit fees;
4. Shipping and handling for materials;
5. Excess and overweight baggage fees over the Misc. Expenses amount (excess baggage estimates may be subject to change once actual programs are scheduled);
6. Visa fees

7. Subaward recipient organizations may be used, in which case the written agreement between the prospective award recipient and subaward recipient should be included in the proposal. Subawards must be itemized in the budget under General Program Expenses;

8. Other justifiable expenses related to program activities including but not limited to translation of outreach and/or educational materials.

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.

- A. Salaries
- B. Fringe Benefits
- C. Travel (note: it is not likely that the recipient organization will need to engage in travel)
- D. Equipment
- E. Supplies
- F. Contractual
- G. Construction (note: it is not likely that this construction will be required)
- H. Other Direct Costs

Note on Administrative Costs: Administrative costs should include staff salaries and fringe benefits, other direct expenses (e.g. equipment, supplies, telephone, copying, etc.), and indirect costs.

Note on General Program Costs: For the purposes of this cooperative agreement, applicants should base the “General Program Costs” (i.e. participant program costs) section of their proposal on approximately 200 traveling Arts Envoy Participants. This is a total of approximately \$900,000 for “participant program costs.” The average global cost of airfare for each program is approximately \$3,000, and this figure is subsumed under the participant program cost listed above. Additionally, 200 express mailings (e.g. FedEx) to program participants across the U.S. should also be budgeted. Subawards (e.g. for passport/visa facilitator and travel services organization) should likely be included under General Program Costs.

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

When determining needs for a travel services the subaward recipient, if applicable, please use an average figure of 250 airline tickets to be issued during a period of performance.

When determining needs for a passport/visa services subaward recipient, if applicable, please use an average figure of up to 200 visas (some countries do not require visas), up to 30 passports (new, renewal, and secondary), and up to 15 requests for extra passport pages to be provided during a period of performance.

All travel arrangements must be compliant with U.S. Federal Travel regulations and the Fly America Act.

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

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

Application Deadline Date: Friday, May 27, 2016

Method of Submission:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

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

Email: [support@grants.gov](mailto:support@grants.gov)

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

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from Grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

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

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

## **E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

### **E.1. REVIEW CRITERIA**

#### **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/plan/impact:*** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Detailed agendas and relevant work plans should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical

capacity. Agendas and plans should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages. Program plans should demonstrate ability to administer multiple simultaneous overseas visits by American visual and performing artists.

2. ***Institutional Capacity/Institution's Record/Ability to achieve program objectives:*** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program and the individual Arts Envoy projects' goals. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange program administration, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (Grants or Cooperative Agreements) as determined by the Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.
3. ***Support of Diversity:*** Proposals should show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will be achieved in the different aspects of program administration and of program design, content and implementation, including individual grantee/participant recruitment, selection and placement. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity.
4. ***Project Monitoring and Evaluation:*** Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the success of the Arts Envoy Program, 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-receiving organization/institution will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.
5. ***Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing:*** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

## **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:

**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/PC/C/CU program officer Bob Keith, at (202) 632-6356 for additional information.

## F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

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

For a copy of the OMB circular cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the [www.ecfr.gov](http://www.ecfr.gov) website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

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

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

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

### *Mandatory:*

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

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

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

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

#### **F.4. Program Data Requirements:**

Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required.

At a minimum, the data must include the following:

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

#### **G. Agency Contacts**

For questions about this announcement, contact: Bob Keith, Program Officer, U.S. Department of State, Cultural Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/CU, SA-5, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, 202-632-6356, [KeithRW@state.gov](mailto:KeithRW@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.

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

April 14, 2016

