
Department of State**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO): FY 2017 U.S. – Pakistan Professional Partnership for Journalists in Urdu Program****Announcement Type:** New Cooperative Agreement**Funding Opportunity Number:** ECA-ECAPEC-17-029**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 19.415**Application Deadline:** May 22, 2017

Executive Summary: The Professional Fellows Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) invites proposals for the U.S. - Pakistan Professional Partnership for Journalists in Urdu Program. The two-way exchange program will promote improved knowledge and understanding of newsgathering strategies, media ethics, journalist safety in conflict zones, investigative reporting, and the business of journalism in the U.S. The program will also provide structured interaction between American and Pakistani journalists, which will contribute to stronger professional ties and lasting relationships between the two nations.

Approximately 35 Pakistani and U.S. journalists will participate in the program. Approximately 30 Pakistani print and broadcast journalists on the frontline of information gathering and reporting, ages 25 to 40, will participate in a U.S. program, of approximately two to three weeks in length, which will include multiple site visits to U.S.-based media outlets. Approximately five U.S. journalists will participate in an American Outbound Program to Pakistan of approximately seven to ten days in length to engage with their foreign counterparts.

It is the Bureau's intent to award one cooperative agreement for an estimated total amount of \$600,000, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds. In the event that the levels of Economic Support Funds change, ECA reserves the right to amend or modify the composition of the final award and its funding level based upon the quality of proposals submitted, the availability of funds, and other factors impacting long-term foreign policy objectives.

Please see section B.) "Federal Award Information" for additional details.

A. Program Description

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations... and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation. Funding for this award will be provided from an FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds (ESF) transfer to ECA for obligation in FY 2017.

Purpose

The U.S. – Pakistan Professional Partnership for Journalists in Urdu Program supports the following broad goals:

1. Promote improved knowledge and understanding of newsgathering strategies, media ethics, journalist safety in conflict zones, crisis reporting, and the business of journalism in the U.S.;
2. Provide structured interaction between American and Pakistani journalists which will contribute to stronger professional ties and lasting relationships between the two nations;
3. Expose Pakistani journalists to various U.S. media organizations and their media management practices;
4. Enhance the knowledge and understanding of the Pakistani journalists to the diversity of American society; and
5. Enhance the knowledge and understanding of the American journalists to the diversity of Pakistan society.

Approximately 35 Pakistani and U.S. journalists will participate in the program. Approximately 30 Pakistani print and broadcast journalists on the frontline of information gathering and reporting, ages 25 to 40, will participate in a U.S. program, of approximately two to three weeks in length, which will include multiple site visits to U.S.-based media outlets. Approximately five U.S. journalists will participate in an American Outbound Program to Pakistan that is approximately seven to ten days in length to engage with their foreign counterparts.

Proposals from organizations that have previous experience implementing journalism exchanges involving Pakistan will be rated more competitively under the “Institutional Capacity and Track Record” review criterion.

A.1. Project Outputs

Proposals should fully demonstrate capacity to provide the project outputs highlighted below.

In-Country Partner

Identify an in-country partner and formalize responsibilities and budget arrangements between the award recipient and the in-country partner. Ideally, the proposed in-country partner has demonstrated expertise with journalism and exchange programs for journalists. ECA and the Public Affairs Section (PAS) in Islamabad reserve the right to approve in-country partners.

Recruit and Select Fellows

In this NOFO, exchange participants are referred to as fellows. In collaboration with ECA and PAS, the award recipient will recruit and select foreign fellows and American fellows for participation in the program. The award recipient should develop an online Program Announcement and Program Application. An open, merit-based selection process should be utilized with the goal that a diverse group of fellows will be selected.

While PAS should be involved in participant selection, full responsibility for project coordination and implementation lies with the award recipient.

At a minimum, the participant selection criteria for foreign fellows must include that Pakistani journalists are early- to mid-career journalism professionals who are 25 to 40 years old and who have a minimum of approximately four years of relevant professional experience. The professionals envisioned for participation in the program include reporters, editors, and owners from print, television, radio, and online media outlets. The award recipient will work collaboratively with ECA and PAS to further delineate the participant selection criteria for the program.

U.S. Exchanges for Pakistani Journalists

The award recipient will design and implement U.S. exchanges that are approximately two to three weeks in length for approximately 30 Pakistani journalists. Key program elements for the U.S. exchange include:

1. A “pre-departure orientation” (PDO) in Islamabad which requires that all Pakistani journalists depart Pakistan thru Islamabad for the flight to the U.S. The PDO should be facilitated by the in-country partner before departure to the United States followed by an “arrival orientation” in the United States that will be facilitated by the award recipient. Content covered should include: travel logistics, including arrival information and J-1 visa regulations; project goals and programmatic expectations; a detailed Program Schedule; and cross-cultural issues including day-to-day considerations of living and working in the United States, such as professional standards of conduct.
2. For the duration of the U.S. exchange from beginning to end, effective simultaneous interpretation services from Urdu to English (and vice versa). Two interpreters to every group of ten participants is the industry standard.
4. A substantive U.S. program of meetings, trainings, and presentations that focus on newsgathering strategies, media ethics, journalist safety in conflict zones, investigative reporting, and the business of journalism in the U.S.
5. Site visits to U.S.-based media outlets to learn about their media management practices.
6. Cultural enrichment activities to allow the opportunity to experience American culture and the diversity of the U.S.
7. A portion of the U.S. exchange occurs in Washington, D.C. for approximately three to four days to allow exposure to the large media market of metropolitan D.C. and various meetings in D.C.

American Outbound Program(s)

The award recipient will design and implement an American Outbound Program to Pakistan that is approximately seven to ten days in length for approximately five American journalists to engage with their foreign counterparts. The American journalists will consist of individuals who previously engaged with the Pakistani journalists or who have professional expertise relevant to the program. The award recipient will collaborate with ECA on the final selection of the American journalists.

The American outbound program should be substantive, build upon the U.S. program, and advance the program's goal of building sustainable and lasting professional relationships. The award recipient and in-country partner will be responsible for conducting a PDO before departure from the U.S. and an arrival orientation in Pakistan followed by engagement with PAS. Content covered should include: travel logistics, including arrival information and visa regulations; project goals and programmatic expectations; a detailed Program Schedule including program activities; and cross-cultural issues including day-to-day considerations of living and working in Pakistan, including professional standards of conduct. The American Outbound Programs should include the involvement of Pakistani alumni fellows for ongoing collaboration.

Working in collaboration with ECA and PAS Islamabad, the award recipient may be requested to focus the American Outbound Program on one journalism skills-based training in Pakistan of three days in length to be conducted for up to 40 to 50 Pakistani journalists. For this program element, the award recipient and the in-country partner will need to collaborate closely for planning and implementation purposes. ECA and PAS Islamabad will collaborate with the award recipient on the finalization of the participant selection criteria of the participants for the skills-based training in Pakistan. For more information, please see section D.3.o. "Allowable Costs."

Monitoring and Evaluation

Proposals should include a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that describes in detail the applicant's proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation. For detailed guidance on monitoring and evaluation, please refer to: 1) Section D.3.j. "Program Monitoring and Evaluation"; and 2) Section E.1. "Review Criteria" where there is important information about "Program Monitoring and Evaluation." The Award recipient may employ a professional evaluator not associated with the award recipient to collect and analyze data, draw conclusions, and make recommendations when warranted.

A.2. ECA Responsibilities

In a cooperative agreement, ECA's Professional Fellows Division is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

Responsibilities of the Professional Fellows Division include:

1. Participate and provide guidance in the design and execution of all program activities and program timelines, including approving the selection of all foreign and American fellows, and program agendas;
2. Approve program materials for publicity and outreach efforts;
3. Issue participant DS-2019 forms and assist with Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS)-related issues;
4. Liaise with relevant PAS staff at the respective U.S. Embassies and country desk officers at the State Department;
5. Monitor and evaluate the program through site visits or debriefing sessions.
6. Approve, in advance, all international travel that will be paid using funds of the ECA award;

7. Approve decisions related to special circumstances or complex matters that arise throughout the duration of program, including assisting with participant emergencies;
8. Approve key personnel changes at the award recipient organization who will work on the program.
9. Approve changes to partner organizations, including in-country partner organizations and sub-award recipients;

A.3. Responsibilities of the award recipient are as follows:

1. In collaboration with the Professional Fellows Division, develop a strategy to incorporate PAS Islamabad in all aspects of the program, including, but not limited to: recruitment and selection of foreign fellows, PDOs, arrival orientations, U.S. programs, post-exchange program debriefs, the American outbound programs, follow-on programming; and alumni engagement.
2. Develop a comprehensive recruitment and selection strategy for fellows that clearly delineates the participation selection criteria and adheres to ECA's goals for a merit-based open competition.
3. Help procure U.S. visas for the foreign fellows by working with ECA and PAS. The award recipient will need to collect and submit to ECA all required biographical information necessary to complete the DS-2019 form required for J-1 visas for foreign fellows. For further information, please see section D.3h. "Adherence to All Regulations Governing the J Visa." To procure foreign visas for the American fellows, if necessary, the award recipients will work directly with the respective foreign embassy in the United States.
4. Develop and implement substantive U.S. programs for foreign fellows and an American Outbound Program for American fellows.
5. Facilitate pre-program communication among fellows once selected that includes important program-related information.
6. Arrange all domestic and international travel for the participants;
7. In collaboration with ECA, ensure that all foreign and American fellows are enrolled in the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program and issued health benefits identifications cards.
8. Provide reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities who may be selected for participation in the program as a foreign fellow or as a U.S. fellow. Proposals may allocate up to 5 - 7% of the total requested ECA award funds for this purpose.
9. Evaluate, in close consultation with the Professional Fellows Division, the program and its impact on the foreign and American fellows.
10. Follow guidance in the proposal submission instructions (PSI) entitled, "Acknowledgment of ECA Financial Support and Use of the Department Seal."
11. Manage financial aspects of the program and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending.
12. Prepare a brief monthly email update outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the past month and anticipated programmatic activities to be conducted the following month.
13. Respond fully and promptly to requests for program information from

Professional Fellows Division.

14. Ensure compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight.

A.4. Projected Order of Exchange Components and Program Timeline

At this time, ECA envisions the order of exchange components and the program timeline to be as noted below. Applicants should be prepared that the sequence of the exchange components may vary slightly from the below.

FY 2018

- U.S. Program #1: Ten Pakistani Journalists to the U.S.
- U.S. Program #2: Ten Pakistani Journalists to the U.S.

FY 2019

- U.S. Program #3: Ten Pakistani Journalists to the U.S.
- The American Outbound to Pakistan by five U.S. journalists is expected to occur in FY 2019 but may occur in the fall of 2019.

December 31, 2019

It is anticipated that programmatic activity under the award will conclude by this date.

A.5. What to Include in Your Proposal

Executive Summary

The one-page Executive Summary should include: the project title; the goals of the project, the names of any proposed sub-award recipient organizations responsible for project implementation, the number of fellows (both foreign and American) and the number of days fellows will spend in-country excluding international travel days.

Proposal Narrative

In 20, double-spaced pages, the proposal narrative should include/address all items specifically referenced in this NOFO, in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI), and those items noted below. Proposals should include a clear, succinct statement of project goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes. In particular, proposals for this program should demonstrate professional contacts and experience working with U.S. media outlets, journalism academic professionals, and journalism-related organizations in order to program the components of the U.S. exchange. Since this program will require effective simultaneous interpretation services, proposals should describe the applicant's plan for interpretation and whether the applicant has past experience with strong simultaneous Urdu to English interpreters.

Proposals should include a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan that describes in detail the applicant's proposed approach to monitoring and evaluation. For further guidance, please see Section D.3.j. "Program Monitoring and Evaluation." Detailed evaluation

plans that put the narrative over the 20-page limit and sample evaluation surveys or other evaluation tools may be included as attachments.

Proposals should also include an Alumni Engagement Plan that describes how the award recipient will continue to engage with fellows after their U.S. exchange program concludes so that the goals of the program are reinforced. All participants should be informed of the Bureau's alumni programming and be provided with information to facilitate their enrollment and participation. Please refer to the PSI for additional information at the section entitled, "ECA's General Policy Guidance on Alumni Outreach/Follow-on, and Engagement."

Budget and Budget Narrative

For more budget information including specific allowable costs, refer to both Section D.3.o., as well as the PSI. Proposals should describe how the award recipient will conduct budget oversight as it relates to project management. In addition, proposals must include a detailed budget narrative.

Attachments

The items below may be included as attachments. Please label each attachment in a clear and concise manner (i.e. "Program Management Plan"; "Program Implementation Materials", "Letters of Support", "Resumes", etc.).

- A Program Management Plan for the entire life of the project that lists, in table format, outputs (major tasks that will be implemented by the award recipient and partner organizations), dates, and the organization/staff responsible.
- Draft program implementation materials such as the program announcement, the program application, agendas for the pre-departure orientation and the arrival orientation, and materials on any other key program elements.
- Letters of commitment and/or letters of support from: 1) partner organizations (both U.S.-based and foreign-based); and 2) preferably, from past exchange program participants.
- Resumes (no more than two pages in length) of proposed key staff at the applicant organization and all partner organizations that will be involved in the implementation of the project.

B. Federal Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement.

ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under "A.3. ECA Responsibilities."

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds

Approximate Total Funding: \$600,000, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds

Approximate Number of Awards: one

Approximate Average Award: \$600,000, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds

Floor of Award Range: \$600,000, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds

Ceiling of Award Range: \$600,000, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds

Anticipated Award Date: September 15, 2017, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 Economic Support Funds

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2019

Additional Information:

At this time, ECA cannot predict whether additional Economic Support Funds (ESF) or other funding will be made available in FY 2018 or FY 2019 to support additional programs. However, pending successful implementation of the program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew the cooperative agreement for two additional consecutive fiscal years.

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 Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements: Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years' experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award in the amount of \$600,000, pending the availability of FY 2016/FY 2017 ESF, 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.

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 Karin Brandenburg in the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0503, phone: (202) 632-9368, email:

BrandenburgKL@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package and reference the Funding Opportunity Number at the top of this announcement.

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

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.2.a. 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 Methods of Submission" section below.

D.3.a. Applicant organizations 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 DUNS 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.3.b. 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.3.c. 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 will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

D.3.d. 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.3.e. 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.3.f. 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 the proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

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

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

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

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

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

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of its Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA 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
 ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-44, Suite 668
 301 4th Street, SW
 Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

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

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and represent 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. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Proposals should provide a clearly articulated plan for incorporating diversity into all aspects of the program and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for 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 proposal submissions.

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.3.j. 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 are linked 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.3.k. 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.3.l. 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.3.m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget.

D.3.n. 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.3.o. Allowable costs. Allowable costs for the project include the following:

Administrative Costs: Costs necessary for the effective administration of the project may include salaries for employees, benefits, and other direct and indirect costs per detailed instructions in the PSI. Proposals are benefitted by administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner, and other sources.

Travel: International and domestic airfare (in compliance with the Fly America Act); airline baggage and seat fees; visas; transit costs; and ground transportation costs.

Per Diem: For U.S.-based programming, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>. Foreign per diem rates can be accessed at: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

Working Meal: One working meal may be provided during each U.S.-based and foreign-based component. Costs for working meals may not exceed \$45/person, excluding room rental and other overhead charges. The number of invited guests may not exceed fellows by more than a factor of two-to-one. Please note: inviting speakers to stay for lunch does not constitute a working meal.

Interpretation Services: Applicants should include costs for the provision of effective simultaneous interpretation services from Urdu to English (and vice versa). Two interpreters to every group of ten participants is the industry standard. Budgets should include the cost of renting interpretation equipment, if appropriate.

Consultants: Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Honoraria rates should not exceed \$250 per day per session. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share rates that exceed that figure. Sub-award recipient organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the prospective award recipient and sub-award recipient should be included in the proposal. Such sub-awards should detail the division of responsibilities and proposed costs, and subcontracts should be itemized in the budget. Contractors/contracting

organizations may also be employed in which case the written agreement between the award recipient and the contractors/contracting organizations should be included in the proposal.

Room Rental: The rental of meeting space should not exceed \$250 per day per activity. Any rates that exceed this amount should be cost shared.

Materials: Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for fellows. Costs for high quality translation of materials should be anticipated and included in the budget.

Supplies: Applicants may propose to use award funds to purchase supplies, such as computers and printers; supply costs should be justified in the budget narrative. Costs for furniture are not allowed.

In-Country Travel Costs:

In-Country travel costs within Pakistan should be carefully budgeted. There are multiple reasons for in-country travel costs such as: 1) the interview to apply for participation in the exchange program; 2) the interview for the U.S. visa process; 3) the PDO in Islamabad before the U.S. program; 4) a post-exchange program debrief after the U.S. program; and 5) in-country travel costs within Pakistan for the American Outbound Program. Visas for foreign fellows are provided by DOS and should not be included in the budget but given the requirements associated with obtaining J-1 visas, applicants should include costs for any travel associated with procuring visas, including travel for interviews, delivering or picking up passports, etc.

Journalism Skills-Based Training in Pakistan (during American Outbound Program):

Working in collaboration with ECA and PAS Islamabad, the award recipient may be requested to focus the American Outbound Program on one journalism skills-based training in Pakistan of three days in length to be conducted for up to 40 to 50 Pakistani journalists. For this program element, the award recipient and the in-country partner will need to collaborate closely for planning and implementation purposes. Careful consideration should be given to whether a training logistics coordinator will be needed or whether the in-country partner's staff can fulfill this role.

Budgets should carefully include all anticipated expenses for the three day training, to include among other expenses: domestic travel by up to 40 to 50 Pakistani journalists to the city in which the training will be held; ground transportation; lodging; meal expenses (to include individually purchased meals and catered meals for the training participants); incidental expenses; an appropriate number of interpreters; interpretation equipment rental; and conference facility rental expenses.

Pakistan Visas: The American participants for the American Outbound Program will need Pakistan visas and those costs should be appropriately budgeted.

Book and Cultural Allowances: Participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a book allowance of \$50. Interpreters should be reimbursed up

to \$150 for expenses when they escort participants to cultural events. U.S. project staff, trainers or participants are not eligible to receive these benefits.

Health and Travel Insurance: The award recipient will be responsible for working with ECA to ensure that both foreign and American fellows are enrolled in the ECA-sponsored Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). The premium is paid by ECA and should not be included in the proposal budget. Applicants may include costs for travel insurance for both foreign and American fellows in the budget.

Professional Evaluator: Award recipients may employ a professional evaluator not associated with the award recipient to collect and analyze data, draw conclusions, and make recommendations when warranted.

Return Travel Allowance: A return travel allowance of \$70 for each foreign fellow may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.

Post-Program Debrief for foreign fellows: Costs related to providing foreign fellows a post-program debrief may include per diem, hotel accommodations, material development, and other related expenses.

Wire Transfer Fees: When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to foreign-based partner organizations. Award recipients are urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.

Reasonable Accommodations: Organizations should budget for the reasonable accommodations of individuals with disabilities. Proposals may allocate up to 5 - 7% of the total requested ECA award funds for this purpose, and reflect plans to make the necessary program modifications or participant numbers should these funds be used for reasonable accommodations.

Alumni Engagement Activities: Reasonable costs related to alumni activities may be included. Proposals should include an Alumni Engagement Plan that describes how the award recipient will continue to engage with Pakistani fellows after their U.S. exchange program concludes so that the goals of the program are reinforced.

Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

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

Application Deadline Date: Tuesday, May 22, 2017

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 the applicant not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

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

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:
Grants.gov Customer Support
Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726
Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays
Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, D.C. 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 the applicant 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

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. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, direct linkage to the goals of the Program, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should demonstrate a realistic and achievable scope that fits within the budgetary and time parameters set forth in the NOFO. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how project objectives and key project elements will be achieved through programmatic activities. Proposals for this program should demonstrate professional contacts and experience working with U.S. media outlets, journalism academic professionals, and journalism-related organizations in order to program the components of the U.S. exchange. Since this program will require effective simultaneous interpretation services, proposals should describe the applicant's plan for interpretation and whether the applicant has past experience with strong simultaneous Urdu to English interpreters. Proposals should include careful consideration of content for the journalism skills-based training.

2. Support of Diversity: Proposals should: 1) show substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity; 2) demonstrate how diversity will be integrated into all aspects of the program; and 3) have a clearly articulated diversity plan and not simply express general support for the concept of diversity. Applicants should refer to the Bureau's "Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines" in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applicants should demonstrate readiness to accommodate fellows with physical disabilities.

3. Institutional Capacity and Track Record: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals. Proposals should include (1) the applicant organization's mission and date of establishment; (2) an outline of current and prior awards, including U.S. government and/or private support received for programs of a similar nature and programs in Pakistan; (3) resumes of key staff at the applicant organization, the in-country partner organization, any other partner organizations, as well as resumes of the Urdu to English interpreters; and (4) detailed information about proposed partner organizations including a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities. Proposals should also describe in detail your organization's expertise regarding Pakistan and exchanges for Pakistani journalists, as well as 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 Bureau Grants Staff. ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

4. Program Monitoring and Evaluation: Proposals must include a detailed plan to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the program. Program goals should target clearly defined results in objective quantitative terms, and outcomes should be linked to original project objectives. Proposals should include draft evaluation instruments such as surveys and questionnaires.

5. Cost Effectiveness and Cost Sharing: The applicant should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as is reasonable. 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, which demonstrates institutional and community commitment.

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 mailed to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

F.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements:

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

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

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<http://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb>
<https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/pages/home.aspx>

F.3. Reporting Requirements:

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

Mandatory:

- 1.) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). A SF-PPR, “Performance Progress Report” Cover Sheet must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here: http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68. The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Grant Note* under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at help@grantsolutions.gov. The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [GrantSolutions.gov](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. 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 Section D.3.j “Program Monitoring and Evaluation.”

F.4. Additional 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, including Final Program Schedules for in-country and U.S. exchange components.
- 3) 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: Karin Brandenburg, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division, SA-5. 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, phone: (202) 632-9368, fax: (202) 632-9355, email: brandenburgKL@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this NOFO should reference the title (FY 2017 U.S. – Pakistan Professional Partnership for Journalists in Urdu Program) and the Funding Opportunity Number located 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 F.3. Reporting Requirements above.

Mark Taplin
Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

March 23, 2017