

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **FY 2014 Community Solutions Program**

**Funding Opportunity Number ECA-ECAPEC-14-038**

### **The Office of Citizen Exchanges Professional Fellows Division**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA/PE/C) requesting proposals for a cooperative agreement to conduct the FY 2014 “Community Solutions Program”. Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

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**Introduction:**

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) expects to award a cooperative agreement for the administration of the FY 2014 Community Solutions Program. Created in 2010, the Community Solutions Program supports and encourages grassroots initiatives led by early- to mid-career professionals, ages 25-38. Prospective Community Solutions Fellows are engaged community leaders currently working to address economic, environmental, political, and social challenges confronting their local communities in areas related to the fellowship themes described in the RFGP and Program Guidelines, Section B. “Themes and Eligible Partner Countries” below. Fellows will undertake a four- to six-month fellowship program in public and government offices, legislatures or non-profit organizations, working with seasoned community leaders on pre-defined substantive issues of mutual interest.

The FY 2014 Community Solutions Program will provide opportunities for approximately 60-70 community leaders to learn how to more effectively address the challenges their communities face through increased civic engagement, leadership development, and improved understanding of the way public and private resources interface for community good. The fellowship experience will enable participants to experience best practices in community development and effective models of public and community engagement, while also allowing them to devise concrete strategies to support their efforts in their home communities.

As a global tool to address community-based challenges, the Community Solutions Program seeks to:

- 1) enhance participants’ ability to address complex local economic, environmental, political, and social challenges through a U.S.-based fellowship;
- 2) provide new skills and resources to enable participants to assume greater leadership roles in their communities
- 3) provide concrete tools for enhanced community leadership and engagement and expand opportunities for collaboration, effective communication, project implementation, and public discourse;
- 4) cultivate professional ties with U.S. economic, environmental, political, and social institutions through collaborative and follow-on projects;
- 5) create a global network of diverse, multi-disciplinary civic leaders committed to problem solving and community engagement; and

- 6) expand and strengthen the relationship between the people of the United States and other countries to work in partnership to identify solutions to common issues facing their local communities.

## I. **Statement of Work**

### A. Recipient Responsibilities

For the overseas administration of the Community Solutions Program, the recipient organization should, as appropriate and tailored to a particular geographic region, utilize the latest in technology and social media to:

1. Develop a global recruitment strategy that targets individuals meeting all the criteria to be eligible for the program.
2. Consult closely with ECA on developing online recruitment and selection procedures for the program that adhere to ECA's goals for a merit-based open competition;
3. Design and launch an online application tool and related recruitment materials;
4. Develop a transparent review process to review and evaluate applications for the Community Solutions Program. The recipient organization will work closely with ECA on the development and implementation of review criteria and keep ECA consistently informed about its application evaluation process;
5. Arrange virtual interviews for semi-finalists in English during the second round of the selection process.
6. Administer an Institutional TOEFL or an equivalent language-based competency assessment to evaluate the English language abilities of the semi-finalists at the time of the interview;
7. Create Web space and outreach tools to assist finalists in securing J-1 visas, answering their questions on programmatic issues, including, but not limited to, fellowship and community placements, program responsibilities and expectations, travel, accident and sickness benefits;
8. Post informational materials online and conduct pre-departure orientations (virtual or otherwise) for finalists in home countries; and,
9. Utilize the Web and other outreach tools to support program activities and facilitate communication among newly selected finalists and host communities prior to their departure to the U.S., including the posting of program and community resources, pre-program assignments, personal travel logs, etc.

For the U.S. administration of the Community Solutions Program, the recipient organization should utilize the latest in technology and social media to:

1. Conduct an open competition for U.S. public and non-profit institutions and organizations to host Community Solutions Fellows for four to six months;
2. Create guidelines and program materials and, when possible, host an online orientation for interested U.S. host institutions that clearly defines hosting roles and responsibilities and provides hosting resources;
3. Create professional affiliations for Community Solutions participants in U.S. communities;
4. Arrange round-trip travel for Community Solutions participants from their home cities to U.S. host institutions;
5. Conduct a comprehensive orientation in the U.S. for newly arrived Community Solutions participants

- prior to the beginning of their community fellowship placements;
6. Conduct a comprehensive “virtual” mid-program conference accessible online on a website created for the Community Solutions participants;
  7. Develop and integrate a strong leadership development component into all program activities.
  8. Develop and facilitate professional enrichment activities that emphasize the goals of Community Solutions, including leadership development, community engagement and the intersection of the private, public and non-governmental sectors;
  9. Consult closely with ECA on developing a comprehensive outreach strategy for highlighting participant achievements while in the United States and after their return home including the use of online and other social media platforms;
  10. Monitor Community Solutions participants and the performance of hosting institutions for the duration of the fellowship;
  11. Conduct an end-of-program workshop in Washington, DC;
  12. Facilitate follow-on collaborative community development projects carried out by participants;
  13. Evaluate, in close consultation with ECA, the program and its impact on the participants and their communities during their stay in the U.S. and after they return to their home countries;
  14. Manage financial aspects of the program (including timely disbursement of participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, and other activity costs) and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending to ECA;
  15. Participate in a mid-program review with ECA (in person or by telephone) to be held at a mutually convenient day and time for the recipient organization and ECA, to identify any program and budget matters of concern;
  16. Report programmatic, financial and statistical information to ECA including a brief monthly email update outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the past month and anticipated programmatic activities to be conducted the following month.
  17. Respond fully and promptly to requests for program information from ECA; and,
  18. Ensure compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement with ECA, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight.

#### B. U.S. Department of State Responsibilities

Please note that in a Cooperative Agreement, the Bureau is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA activities and responsibilities for this program include:

1. Participation in the design and direction of all program activities;
2. Approval of key personnel;
3. Approval and input on program timelines and agenda;
4. Providing guidance in the execution of all program components;
5. Review and approval of all program publicity, outreach efforts, and other materials;
6. Approval of hosting institutions and community-based group;
7. Approval of the final selection of participants;
8. Approval of changes to participants’ proposed community development field or project;
9. Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the

- program;
10. Assistance with SEVIS-related issues;
  11. Assistance with participant emergencies;
  12. Issue participants DS-2019 forms;
  13. Enroll participants in the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program, issue health benefits identifications cards, and provide instructions on host claim forms;
  14. Liaison with relevant U.S. Embassies and country desk officers at the State Department particularly in terms of recruitment, selection, web-based publicity efforts, and DC-based opening and closing events;
  15. Work with the recipient organization to publicize the program through various media outlets and ECA and PAS's social media platforms; and
  16. Monitor and evaluate the program as necessary, through site visits or debriefing sessions.

## **II. Program Specific Guidelines**

### **A. Overview**

The Community Solutions Program builds on existing efforts by young engaged civic and community leaders working to improve the economic, environmental, political, and social conditions of their local communities. Through leadership development training, an enhanced understanding of the core principles of civic engagement as a development tool and an emphasis on the role of public-private partnerships to advance key societal priorities, Community Solutions will provide opportunities for eligible individuals to more effectively address complex problems in their own towns, cities and regions.

Community Solutions program participants will undertake a four- to six-month fellowship program in non-profit organizations, public institutions, government offices and legislatures to work with seasoned civic and community leaders on specific issues of mutual interest. Fellowship sites will provide real life models for Community Solutions Fellows to apply leadership lessons, explore creative approaches to global challenges and develop concrete strategies to apply to existing projects within their local communities. Linking Fellows, program hosts and mentors together, Community Solutions will work to create a network of engaged professionals and civic leaders committed to problem solving, public engagement, and community-building.

The proposal should seek to integrate Community Solutions goals into all aspects of the program design and implementation. Proposed program models should endeavor to mirror both the goals and community engagement principles and provide for a variety of learning style approaches to maximize learning outcomes within the Community Solutions community. Fellowships should be learning laboratories for Community Solutions participants to apply leadership theory, share best practices, ground civic engagement theories and better understand the ways public, private and non-profit sectors work together to advance the common good. Community Solutions fellowships should provide opportunities to observe varied aspects of American life and discuss issues emerging during and connected to the participant's community based projects and fellowships. The program should also include opportunities for the participants to meet American citizens from a variety of backgrounds, to interact with their peers and to speak to appropriate student, community, and civic groups about their experiences and life in their home countries.

## B. Program Dates

ECA envisions the approximate dates of Community Solutions to be as follows:

- August 2014 – December 2014: Recruitment and selection of foreign participants. Recruitment campaign for U.S. hosting institutions.
- January 2015 – May 2015: Securing U.S.-based hosts and host sites.
- July/August 2015: Travel to the United States by all the foreign participants for orientation and placement at hosting sites for a four- to six-month fellowship program.
- July/August 2015 – December 2015: Community Solutions Fellowships
- December 2015: Travel to Washington, DC, for an end of program workshop.
- January 2016 – July 2016: Conduct follow-on collaborative projects.

## C. Eligible Partner Countries

To the fullest extent possible, program participants should be from all of the countries listed below. No guarantee is made or implied that every country will have participants. ECA reserves the right to amend or modify the list of participating countries should conditions change in the host country or if other countries are identified as U.S. foreign policy priorities.

Geographic Regions and Eligible Countries include:

### **Africa:**

Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

### **Europe:**

Albania, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Romania, Slovakia, and Turkey

### **South and Central Asia:**

Bangladesh, Burma, Maldives, Nepal, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

### **East Asia and the Pacific:**

Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam

### **Middle East and North Africa:**

Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Libya, Lebanon, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and West Bank/Palestinian Territories

### **Western Hemisphere:**

Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Haiti, Paraguay, Peru, and Trinidad and Tobago

## D. Thematic Areas:

The proposal needs to embrace a global program design that incorporates all four of the proposed themes under Community Solutions. Thematic areas are as follows:

### **Environmental Issues:**

Fellowships for the “Environmental Issues” theme should focus on issues related to climate change, food

security, community farming, supporting food supplies (at local, regional or national levels), social entrepreneurship (leveraging science and technology to address ecological and environmental issues), water and resource management, low-carbon and renewable technologies, sustainable energies, pollution, and the use of natural resources.

**Tolerance and Conflict Resolution:**

Fellowships in the area of “Tolerance and Conflict Resolution” should expose participants to issues and strategies that address tolerance, inclusion, multi-culturalism, discrimination, and conflict resolution. Negotiation skills, the art of compromise, fair treatment and inclusion of minority and marginalized populations, and civil rights and responsibilities can also be addressed. Based on participants’ specific interests, fellowships may need to be identified that deal with community building, conflict resolution, and crisis response tools for use in failing, failed, and post-conflict states and complex emergencies/disasters. Fellowships may also explore the way technology and social media can be utilized as tools for ensuring peace, promoting tolerance, and resolving conflicts.

**Transparency and Accountability:**

Fellowships in the area of “Transparency and Accountability” should provide participants exposure to institutions and concepts related to civil society, citizen and youth engagement, grass-roots democracy, good governance, anti-corruption, transparency, accountability, and/or free and fair elections. Fellowships may also explore the role technology and social media play in supporting civil society and transparency. Under this theme, the important role of volunteerism and the culture of volunteerism can also be addressed, as appropriate.

**Women and Gender Issues:**

Fellowships for the “Women and Gender” Issues” theme should focus on issues related to women’s empowerment, women’s education, women’s health, women entrepreneurs, gender equality and discrimination, and the prevention of all forms of exploitation, including domestic violence. Special emphasis should be placed on identifying Fellowships that will provide exposure to best practices for grassroots organizations working to advance the political, economic, and social well-being and empowerment of women.

**D. Selection of Participants**

Utilizing the latest in technology including web interfaces, SMS technology, and other social media platforms, the recipient organization will administer an aggressive global recruitment campaign to advertise the Community Solutions Program. Online applications should be distributed through targeted and appropriate media sites and reach out to young community leaders meeting the eligibility requirements. The recipient organization should work closely with ECA and Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of U.S. Embassies in participating countries to ensure that outreach efforts are appropriately tailored to have the broadest reach.

It is anticipated that the participants’ backgrounds will be varied and will include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education, business, law, human rights, and other professional fields but with a unifying commitment to using community participation and dialogue as the basis for confronting global and local challenges. Every effort should be made to attract a large and diverse grantee pool, including persons with disabilities, a balanced mix of male and female participants, participants who are from non-elite backgrounds,

from both rural and urban sectors.

### Eligibility

Competition for the Community Solutions Program is merit-based and open to community leaders, ages 25-38, who meet the following criteria:

- Is living and working in his/her home country at the time of application;
- Is currently working on a community engagement initiative in his/her home country and has at least two (2) years of professional experience in this capacity at the time of application;
- Submits a complete application, with all required documents, by the application deadline;
- Is able to begin the Community Solutions Fellowship program in the United States in 2015;
- Is able to receive a U.S. J-1 visa;
- Is committed to returning to his/her home country after completion of the program; and
- Is proficient in spoken and written English at the time of application.

Individuals in the following circumstances are NOT eligible for the Community Solutions Program:

- U.S. citizens and/or permanent residents of the United States;
- Individuals participating in academic, training or research programs in the United States at the time of application;
- Individuals residing or working outside their home countries at the time of application;
- Individuals who have participated in an exchange visitor program sponsored or funded by the U.S. Government (e.g., U.S. Department of State, Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies or other U.S. Government agencies) who have not fulfilled their two-year home residency requirement by the time of application;
- Individuals who have applied for U.S. permanent residency in the past three years;
- Other criteria to be determined in consultation with ECA.

### Selection Process for Program Participants

After collecting and screening applications for completeness, the recipient organization will identify a selection committee comprised of community leaders and organizers, citizen advocacy groups, policy makers, and scholars with expertise in the applicants' designated fields to read and evaluate each application using a form that is designed in consultation with ECA. Based on the written application evaluations, the recipient organization will invite a certain percentage of the applicants (approximately three candidates for every placement available) for virtual interviews. Interview teams should be comprised of at least one experienced U.S. community developer and regional expert to conduct the interviews in English. Each panelist will complete an interview evaluation form designed by the recipient organization and approved by ECA. The panelists will rank order the candidates interviewed based on the anticipated number of Community Solutions finalists and alternate candidates. An Institutional TOEFL will be administered to each semi-finalist who does not already possess a valid TOEFL score of 550 (or 213 on the Computer-Based Test) or higher.

The recipient organization must work closely with ECA and PAS on all aspects of the selection process. Where possible, PAS should be invited to participate in the interviews either virtually or in a designated location.

Based on the written applications, interviews, TOEFL scores, and PAS comments, the recipient organization will select the Community Solutions finalists and alternates, according to the number of fellowships designated by ECA. Each PAS will receive a list of candidates nominated for fellowships for its concurrence. After consulting with ECA, the recipient organization will inform all finalists, alternate candidates and rejected applicants *in writing* of their status in the competition. ECA will review all placements before they are finalized.

Recruitment and selection of candidates for the Community Solutions program is the responsibility of the recipient organization in collaboration with ECA. U.S. Embassies in participating countries are unable to offer more than minimal support for these processes. It is required, however, that the recipient organization maintain ongoing communication with the Public Affairs Section of the relevant embassies and coordinate its operations during the interview, selection and pre-departure orientation phases of the program. The proposal should address the recipient organization's plans for maintaining a close working relationship with the Public Affairs Section throughout the entire program cycle.

#### E. Selection of Community Placements

The proposal must discuss how the recipient organization expects to recruit and select U.S. hosting organizations and community placements in collaboration with ECA. The proposal must outline the level of support that it will require of the U.S. hosting organizations and institutions to provide the participants and how the community mentors will be selected. Community placements should identify key individuals to assume responsibility for the Community Solutions Fellowship experience. Community "mentors" should be individuals with experience engaging communities around critical issues and must be willing to provide their Community Solutions Fellows with guidance and key insights into civic and community engagement and leadership.

ECA encourages the selection of community placements that reflect the diversity of the American socio-economic and cultural landscape. Host institutions should be selected on the basis of their demonstrated track record of successes in community endeavors, commitment to collaborative approaches to problem solving, ability to provide active mentoring and participant support, ability to cost share, and ability to engage the local community to assist with the program. Participants can be placed in public and government offices, legislatures and non-for-profit organizations working with seasoned community leaders on substantive issues. Fellowship sites should provide real life models for Community Solutions Fellows to apply leadership lessons and explore creative approaches to real world challenges.

The community placements should be specially designed to facilitate a deeper understanding of the role community development plays in U.S. political, social, economic and social life, while at the same time providing useful skills and concepts for further leadership. Community placements and the mentoring should complement online discussions and trainings. Furthermore, community placements should be experiential in nature and reinforce key learning objectives embedded in other parts of the Community Solutions Program. Placements should allow for ongoing community service organizations to provide participants the opportunity to experience firsthand the American tradition of grassroots approaches to solving community problems, as well as additional opportunities to meet and interact with a variety of Americans. The proposal should also include a

strategy for ensuring that participants are offered maximum opportunities for additional professional and leadership development within their local communities.

#### F. Pre-Departure Orientation

Online pre-departure orientations should be conducted for Community Solutions finalists before they leave their home countries. Pre-departure orientations should facilitate the safe passage of the Community Solutions Fellows to the United States, clarify their understanding of the program's goals and regulations, including each Fellow's mandatory compliance with the J-1 visa two-year home residency requirement, and generally prepare fellows for adjustment to the U.S. cultural and work environment. Each fellow must understand his/her obligation to maintain communication with the recipient organization throughout the duration of the program.

Each fellow must receive a copy of the Community Solutions Terms and Conditions. Each fellow must sign these Terms and Conditions prior to his or her departure to the United States.

#### G. U.S.-Based Orientation

In addition to a comprehensive introduction to the program design, goals and activities, the program orientation in the United States should contain the following components:

- Broad introduction to the problems and challenges facing American society in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;
- Overview of democratic institutions and processes;
- Leadership skills development;
- Team building activities that model civic and community engagement;
- Introduction to concepts of U.S. civic and community development;
- Discussion of ethical leadership and public good;
- Financial management issues, with a discussion of U.S. income tax obligations;

If possible, the U.S. based orientation program should also address the Community Solutions themes of Environmental Issues, Tolerance and Conflict Resolution, Transparency and Accountability, and Women and Gender Issues.

#### H. Professional Development Activities: Conferences and Seminars and Enhancements

Physical and virtual professional activities should be an integral part of the program and directly complement and reinforce the fellowship portion of the program. Professional development activities should consist of a carefully integrated series of lectures, panel presentations, seminar discussions, individual and group activities, and reading assignments before and during the fellowship period. All activities should place a strong emphasis on the use of analytic tools, communications skills, and leadership development. Participants should be exposed to a variety of civic leaders, community developers and policy experts representing diverse background, viewpoints, and occupations on the topics and issues to be explored.

Technology should be a cornerstone for all program activities, particularly as they pertain to and strengthen core

learning objectives, create a forum for substantive dialogue on pressing global issues and allow a robust repository for resources and best practices. The recipient organization should develop a comprehensive and collaborative approach to leadership development that is reinforced through the fellowship placement and enhanced through online discussions. The leadership component should include at least one leadership training session per month. These workshops should be creative, highly interactive and team oriented. They should require input and contribution from all participants and provide Fellows with enhanced leadership skills. The recipient organization may recruit qualified instructors for these sessions from other organizations.

#### I. Virtual Mid-Program Conference and Online Leadership Development

The proposal must discuss the goals and objectives of the mid-program virtual (online) conference and the online Leadership Institute. The proposal should include tentative dates for online activities and possible session topics. Special attention should be given to an examination of how the online conference and the Leadership Institute will further participant understanding and encourage dialogue around the issue of leadership, civic engagement, social challenges and collaborative approaches to problem solving.

#### J. End of Program Conference

At the end of the Community Solutions Program, a closing conference will be held in Washington, DC, to highlight key learning objectives and outline plans for follow-on projects. The recipient organization will work closely with the Office of Citizen Exchanges to coordinate this event. The recipient organization will be responsible for setting up meetings in the Washington, DC area and providing transportation, lodging, per diem, working lunches, reception and miscellaneous expenses for all program Fellows. The Office of Citizen Exchanges will be responsible for arranging meetings with key stakeholders within the U.S. Department of State.

The proposal should discuss the goals and objectives of the event, propose possible conference themes and topics, forums for dialogue and exchange of ideas between participants and invited guests, as well as ways to highlight the program. Special attention should be given to an examination of how Community Solutions Fellows will translate and utilize their U.S. experiences in their home communities.

#### K. Program Monitoring at Placement Site

The proposal must discuss how the participants' progress in achieving program goals and objectives will be monitored at their U.S. hosting organization (e.g., surveys, interviews, work plans, email, etc.). The proposal should cite the intended frequency of communication with the participants and representatives of the U.S. organizations, and outline performance goals or benchmarks for the participants' time in the United States. The proposal should also discuss how the quality of the participants' experience will be evaluated.

#### L. Program Measurement and Evaluation

The proposal must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the program, both as the activities unfold, at the end of the program, and once the participants return to their home communities. The recipient organization should

develop a set of outcomes that can be tied to the Community Solutions goals and address plans to administer a pre- and post-program survey to the Community Solutions Fellows. ECA requests that the proposal provide a description of a methodology to link outcomes to original program objectives. These evaluation tools should complement ECA surveys, not duplicate them. ECA expects that the recipient organization will track participants and 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.

#### M. Follow-On Projects

The proposal should provide concrete ideas and approaches to encourage and support follow-on projects between Community Solutions participants, U.S. hosts, as well as with the broader Community Solutions community. The proposals should exercise creativity in the conceptualization of the follow-on component and its support for Community Solutions goals. The proposal should include plans for an outbound exchange program with a limited number of U.S. host mentors. Competitive outbound programs will directly support ongoing collaborative efforts between participants and the Community Solutions goal of creating a global network of diverse, multi-disciplinary professionals and civic leaders committed to problem solving and community engagement.

#### N. Alumni Programming

The proposal must include a defined strategy for alumni engagement that reflect the goals and anticipated outcomes of the Community Solutions Program. The proposal must include an outline of any proposed follow-on activities; information on how these will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts; strategies to connect newly minted alumni with past program participants and how long-term linkages within the alumni community will be encouraged; and how they will be both coordinated and integrated into existing Bureau initiatives. Alumni activities should be conducted with minimum financial support of the Bureau, demonstrated cost-share by the recipient organization, and where possible, enhanced through private-public partnerships including organizations that directly support ECA and Community Solutions goals.

The proposal should also demonstrate how the recipient organization will creatively utilize technology and online networking sites to engage with program participants before, during and after they take part in the international exchange. As appropriate, the proposal should elaborate on creative ways to encourage discussion about international exchange and hosting opportunities on the ECA and the State Department's Facebook and other social networking sites. The proposal should detail how the State Department websites will be promoted to exchange participants and how the recipient organization will facilitate participant registration.

The tracking of alumni is crucial for the evaluation of the program and for the implementation of follow-on programs. The proposal must provide a clear plan for alumni tracking and cite how it will be coordinated with ECA and PAS. All statistical information gathered and compiled by the recipient organization on the participants should be transferable to the database maintained at ECA. The recipient organization will be required to provide quarterly data submissions via electronic data transfer to the ECA database that are

compatible with and meet ECA database standards. Data fields should include, but are not limited to the following: first name; middle name; last name; gender; date of birth; country of citizenship; country of residence; participant type; field of study/research topic; home/host institution or affiliation; program category; fiscal year; U.S. state, and SEVIS ID number. The recipient organization will be expected to meet all statistical requirements including the submission of all grantee data for the Bureau's annual statistical report. Please refer to ECA's General Policy Guidance on Alumni Outreach/Follow-on and Engagement and Commitment to Public Private Partnerships in the PSI for additional details on alumni activities.

### **III. Budget Submission**

- 1) Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- 2) Detailed Budget.

The proposal must include a comprehensive line-item budget, the details and format of which are contained in the PSI. In addition, the proposal must include a comprehensive budget narrative demonstrating how costs were derived. **The total amount of funding requested from ECA may not exceed \$1,500,000.** Program activity will begin when the cooperative agreement is awarded (anticipated in May 2014) and end in July 2016. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise or increase the proposed budget in accordance with funding availability and the needs of the program.

Review of your budget will benefit from your professional judgment of costs or activities in the proposal. The Bureau is committed to containment of administrative expenses, consistent with overall program objectives and sound management principles. Please refer to the PSI for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

### **IV. Proposal Content**

The recipient organization should submit a complete proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for the recipient organization to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

**NOTE:** Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist:

## **Online Forms**

SF-424, "Application for Federal Assistance"

SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs

SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs"

Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

## **Program Narrative**

*Executive Summary* - In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
  - a. Number and description of participants
  - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
  - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
  - d. Fields covered
  - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

*Narrative* - In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation and conference activities, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring, follow-on programming)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

## **Additional Information to be Submitted**

*Program Materials.* While not a requirement materials that advance the reviewer's understanding of the program design and implementation should be included as attachments. Please label each attachment in a clear and coherent manner. These could include:

1. Draft agendas of professional workshops, conferences and seminars including pre-departure, orientation and final conference activities

2. Draft application and recruitment materials
3. Draft selection and interview materials
4. Outline of proposed alumni programming
5. Sample evaluation and survey instruments
6. Timeline for program implementation
7. Program promotional materials
8. Outline of follow-on activities including a pilot outbound component (if applicable)
9. Budget narrative
10. Letters of endorsement
11. Resumes of new or anticipated program staff should be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages.

**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:

- 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.
- Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of 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.

Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

## **V. Application Submission**

### **APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which the proposal must be submitted. There are **NO EXCEPTIONS** to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, call Linnéa E. Allison at (202) 632-6060, Office of Citizen Exchanges Professional Division (ECA/PE/C/PF) ; Fax: (202) 632-6492; email: allisonle@state.gov.