

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2017 U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Program and FY 2017 U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-17-017

Office of Academic Exchange Programs East Asia and Pacific Programs Branch

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Academic Exchange Programs, East Asia and Pacific Programs Branch (ECA/A/E/EAP), for the FY 2017 U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Program (USSP) and the FY 2017 U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program (USTL). Proposals must conform to the NOFO, 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 NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

STATEMENT OF WORK

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/E/EAP is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring.

Responsibilities of the award recipient for the administration of the FY 2017 U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Program and the FY 2017 U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program include:

1. Support U.S. embassy Public Affairs Section (PAS) outreach and publicity efforts by announcing and publicizing the annual scholarship competition broadly;
2. Distribute application and informational materials about the scholarship programs to embassy Public Affairs Sections, which will take the lead on recruitment and nomination;
3. Field inquiries from prospective candidates;
4. Convene review panels, including at least one country/regional expert for final academic review and assessment of U.S. university admissibility;
5. Review candidate dossiers to determine competitiveness and suitability for program; review academic credentials for completeness and relevance to proposed field of study;
6. Arrange round-trip travel for the participants from their home cities to their U.S. host institutions;
7. Ensure that participants receive pre-departure and arrival orientations;

8. Enroll participants in the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) Health Benefit Plan, or other health benefits plan as directed by ECA, in order to comply with J-1 visa requirements and assist with claims as necessary;
9. Place the participants at appropriate U.S. institutions for academic degree study leading to a bachelor's or master's degree;
10. Develop and facilitate innovative cultural enrichment activities;
11. Assist participants in arranging local summer internships, including virtual opportunities (optional);
12. Monitor participants' adjustment and academic performance;
13. In close consultation with ECA, evaluate the program and its impact on the participants during their stay in the U.S. and after they return to their home countries; developing follow-on activities to facilitate long-term linkages and relationships;
14. Manage financial aspects of the program (e.g., participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness insurance, host university agreements, activity costs);
15. Report programmatic, financial and statistical information to ECA;
16. Manage and monitor all aspects of the participants' J-1 visa status, including the issuance of DS-2019 forms;
17. Respond fully and promptly to requests for information from ECA or U.S. embassies relating to the participants and alumni.

U.S. Embassy Public Affairs Section responsibilities include:

1. Announce and publicize annual scholarship competition(s) broadly;
2. Distribute scholarship application materials;
3. Advise prospective applicants and/or direct inquiries to the award recipient;
4. Assist with screening applications through secure electronic access provided by the award recipient for minimum eligibility and required documentation;
5. Notify principal and alternate student candidates after final application status has been confirmed by the award recipient in consultation with ECA;
6. Coordinate pre-departure and alumni activities as appropriate.

ECA activities and responsibilities for this program include:

1. Participation in the design and direction of program activities;
2. Approval of key personnel;
3. Approval and input on program timelines and agendas;
4. Guidance in execution of all program components;
5. Review and approval of all program publicity and recruitment materials;
6. Participation in student interviews and selection panels when feasible;
7. Review and approval of selection decisions prior to offer of award;
8. Consultation on and approval of academic placement assignments;
9. Approval of changes to students' proposed academic field or institution;
10. Approval of decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout duration of program;

11. Assistance with SEVIS-related issues;
12. Assistance with participant emergencies;
13. Primary liaison with PAS and country desk officers at the State Department.

PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Program administration activities should cover the time period of approximately August 1, 2017 through July 31, 2022. It is expected that funding will support approximately three (3) students in the USSP program and approximately three (3) students in the USTL program for up to four years of academic study plus English language or bridging semester/year as needed. This federal assistance award will cover the entire program in the U.S. for the candidates selected. Students must return home following the completion of their ECA-funded programs.

For both programs, administrative responsibilities include the following broad categories: program planning and management; recruitment and selection support; placement; orientation; participant supervision and support services; fiscal management and budgeting; and program reporting and evaluation. The proposal should include yearly budget projections for the full duration of the award. Programs must comply with J-1 Exchange Visitor Program regulations.

Participants

The U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Program and the U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program emphasize the selection of young men and women with leadership experience or potential who will have a positive impact on their country's future development. The Bureau seeks scholarship participants who represent all aspects of their home country's diversity. Individuals living in the United States are not eligible and preference is given to those without significant U.S. or third-country undergraduate study experience.

Timorese applicants should have functional English skills but often require pre-academic English training in the United States prior to beginning their undergraduate study. South Pacific applicants will not need pre-academic English training, but at the master's level may benefit from up to one year of preparatory study, known as a bridging semester or year, if they possess the three-year baccalaureate degree commonly offered in the Pacific Islands region.

Recruitment

The award recipient(s) should maintain separate identities for the U.S. South Pacific Scholarship Program and the U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Program and must ensure that the U.S. Department of State is prominently identified as the program sponsor in all publicity and other scholarship program materials. The key conditions, benefits, and terms of the program -- what is and what is not covered under the award, as well as the

two-year home-residence requirement -- should be described in the application materials. The description of study opportunities should include essential information for applicants who are unfamiliar with the U.S. educational system. In addition to recruiting candidates for full bachelors and master's degree programs, the applicant may recruit and fund candidates with prior undergraduate study for the final two to three years of a bachelor's degree.

Selection

U.S. embassy Public Affairs Sections in Dili, Suva, Port Moresby, Apia and Wellington will assist with initial screening for minimum eligibility. The award recipient(s) will convene separate panels for final academic review, including at least one country/regional expert to provide country expertise, and will present final slates of principal and alternate candidates to ECA for approval. Review panels taking place in the region will include one U.S. Mission representative. Embassy Public Affairs Sections will notify primary and alternate candidates after final application status has been confirmed by the applicant in consultation with ECA. The leadership elements and the expectation that students will be active alumni following the conclusion of the program should be prominently reinforced in materials, communications, and selection methodology.

Pre-academic and English Language Training

For the U.S. Timor-Leste Program, the proposal must describe plans for pre-academic preparation and English language training, and for administering TOEFL/IELTS or other placement tests as required by U.S. host institutions. It is assumed that most USTL participants will need up to one year of English language instruction in the U.S. Several levels of intensive English-language courses, from beginning to advanced, should be made available. The Bureau recommends that applicants be tested as part of the screening process using a locally available test instrument, and then given the TOEFL upon arrival in the U.S. to determine which level of English-language course is appropriate. Students who need additional instruction beyond the first year will be required to take the instruction at their placement universities.

Placement

The award recipient(s) will work with those participants who have prior undergraduate study to obtain transcripts from their home institutions and ensure that they receive maximum academic credit. Academic placement of the students should be arranged at appropriate U.S. institutions. The applicant will work to obtain financial aid, scholarships, tuition awards, in-state tuition, etc., and explain the nature of, and funding for, the program to U.S. academic host institutions. Students may be clustered together or receive separate placements. The proposal should provide justification of the approach that will be used and should describe how students will be identified as participants in the

U.S. South Pacific and/or U.S. Timor-Leste Scholarship Programs.

Orientation Programs

Pre-departure orientations will be arranged by the U.S. embassies in-country, as appropriate, in close coordination with the award recipient(s). Proposals should include complete and detailed sample pre-departure orientation information that will be provided to students and the embassy Public Affairs Sections. Key points concerning academic requirements and coursework, housing, U.S. campus life, what to pack, finances, health and safety, policies on dependents, and other critical issues should be included in the material. The material should be designed to serve as a useful post-arrival reference as well, supplemented with additional information.

The award recipient(s) should ensure that upon arrival all participants receive an orientation that will expand upon the topics mentioned above, as well as introduce them specifically to the host institution and community.

Internships

Applicants may propose a U.S. internship experience for students, either physical or virtual, with or without academic credit. The goal of this program is to provide students with a paid or unpaid practical internship of approximately four to six weeks over a summer during their scholarship program, authorized under the Academic Training section of the J-1 Exchange Visitor Program regulations.

Internships must be directly related to the participants' major field of study and the students must be in good academic standing. This component is not intended to provide students with summer jobs. The applicant should estimate internship costs, such as public transportation, within the proposed budget and should guide students in their search and be responsible for approving internship placements, granting academic training in advance, arranging for academic credit, if applicable, monitoring students during their internships, and conducting an overall evaluation of the internship component of the program.

Program Activities

The proposal should describe innovative plans for orientations, goals and approaches for the academic portion of the program, including any special academic enrichment activities, cultural and community projects, evaluation and follow-up, and alumni tracking. Proposed activities might include volunteer work, student presentations to the local community, and matching of students with Americans, such as a local host family. The proposal must demonstrate that the recipient organization(s) can provide effective support systems (such as tutoring, counseling, host family, mentor or buddy system, consultation with student adviser) to the students during the program. The applicant

should assign an adviser or coordinator who can serve as a central resource to students regarding their scholarship, the J-1 visa program, and cross-cultural adjustment. The adviser also serves as a link between the students and ECA.

To support the mutual understanding goal of the exchange, the Bureau is particularly interested in opportunities for academic and enrichment experiences related to U.S. institutions, society, and culture. Students are expected to study in the United States throughout the term of the program, not to travel to third countries for study there, even with other sources of funding. ECA welcomes creative ideas for exposing students to and increasing their understanding of key elements of American civil society, such as discussion groups on community issues, visits to political campaign offices and polling places, attendance at school board or city council meetings, and civic-related volunteer work. Student attendance at museums, concerts, plays, and other cultural or community events should be encouraged and facilitated whenever possible.

As a way to enrich the campus experience and ensure greater interaction with American peers, students may be eligible for part-time campus employment not to exceed ten hours per week with ECA approval. Prior to eligibility, students must successfully complete one academic semester with at least a 3.0 grade point average.

Participant Monitoring and Evaluation

The proposal should discuss how the participants' progress in achieving program goals and objectives will be monitored at their U.S. host institutions (e.g. surveys, interviews, work plans). The proposal should describe the frequency of communication with the participants and with representatives of the U.S. host institutions, and outline performance goals or benchmarks for each semester in the United States. The proposal should also discuss the methods to be used for gauging the quality of program activities, tracking each participant's success, and monitoring and resolving any problems that arise. Program staff working with the participants should demonstrate strong interpersonal and communication skills, sensitivity, and a flexible approach that is responsive to each student and his or her circumstances. Senior management should be involved as appropriate and available to assist as needed.

Participant Responsibilities

In accordance with J-1 regulations, participants are expected to maintain the equivalent of a full course of study. They should also maintain at least a "B" average, and must comply with the academic and other requirements of the program and host institution. USSP and USTL participants are subject to the 212(e) two-year home residency requirement and must return immediately to their home countries upon completion of the academic program. Students may be removed from the program for academic failure, behavioral misconduct, or inability to fulfill the terms of the program. The final decision to remove a student will be made after consultation with and written approval from ECA.

Each student shall be required to read and sign Terms and Conditions.

Alumni Tracking and Follow-On Activities

Alumni activities are an important part of ECA's academic exchange programs. Applicants should indicate how they will facilitate and promote participant and alumni use of the Department of State's International Exchange Alumni website (www.alumni.state.gov). Alumni programming in the form of seminars, newsletters, and listservs provides critical program follow-on and serves to maximize and extend the benefit of the participants' program in the United States. Applicants are strongly urged to outline how they will creatively organize and financially support alumni activities at a minimal cost to ECA, and how these efforts will be coordinated with ECA and embassy Public Affairs Sections.

Alumni tracking is critical for measuring the longer-term impact of the program and for the implementation of worthwhile follow-on activities. Proposals should describe how long-term linkages with alumni will be maintained and should detail how alumni records will be maintained and updated beyond the duration of the award. All statistical information on participants and alumni should be transferred to the alumni database maintained at ECA annually. Therefore, the applicant is responsible for ensuring that its system for collecting, storing, and transferring participant data is compatible with ECA's system. Additionally, noteworthy alumni activities and accomplishments should be shared with ECA regularly.

Visa and Tax Requirements

All participants must be sponsored under an Exchange Visitor Program on a J-1 visa. A representative from the recipient organization will be designated by ECA as an Alternate Responsible Officer and will be responsible for processing DS-2019 forms and ensuring that all needed documentation reaches the relevant overseas U.S. consular offices. In addition, administration of these full scholarships must be in compliance with reporting and withholding regulations for federal, state, and local taxes as applicable.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants 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 Grant Solutions' Application Control Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

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 (One page)

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, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation

5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

Additional Information to be Submitted:

- Detailed Budget
- Calendar of activities/itinerary
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs (resumes of all new staff should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.)
- First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

Detailed Budget: The proposal must include a comprehensive line-item budget, the details and format of which are contained in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). In addition, the proposal must include a comprehensive budget narrative demonstrating how costs were derived, as well as a year-by-year breakdown of expenses. The budget should start with a summary page that breaks out the program and administrative costs for one or both of the regional programs (Timor-Leste and/or South Pacific). **The total amount of funding requested from ECA may not exceed \$700,000 to administer two programs or \$350,000 to administer one program.** The number of participants that the organization proposes to sponsor should be clearly stated. ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase the proposed budget in accordance with funding availability and the needs of the program.

As with other exchange programs, ECA is committed to the containment of costs consistent with overall program objectives and sound management. The program budget narrative should cite areas in which economies can be achieved, short of the full, allowable cost, and should document the proposed cost sharing in the most concrete way possible. Administrative and program costs must be cost-shared to the greatest extent feasible. Administrative costs must be kept to a minimum.

The award recipient(s) may enroll participants in the ECA-funded Accident and Sickness Policy for Exchanges (ASPE) or another policy comparable in terms of cost and coverage. Should the recipient organization(s) choose to propose a comparable policy, detailed information on the policy must be provided and the cost per student per year should be included in the budget. Please see the Insurance section of the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for more information.

Please note: All applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees). 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, applicants will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. 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.

ADHERENCE TO ALL REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE J VISA

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphasis on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

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

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-44, Suite 668
301 4th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20547

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, contact Julia Findlay, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, East Asia and Pacific Programs Branch (ECA/A/E/EAP) by telephone (202) 632-9453, fax (202) 632-9411, or e-mail FindlayJM@state.gov.