



thinking, diplomacy, community activism, and the media as ways that young adults can unite around their common goals. Support for individual or small group follow-on projects in the home communities of the exchange alumni will complete the program. It is the Bureau's intent to award one or two cooperative agreements for one base year plus two option years for an estimated total of \$1,350,000. Please see section II.) Award Information below for additional details.

#### **I. Funding Opportunity Description**

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

**Background:** The Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute began in 2006 to honor the 300th anniversary of the birth of Benjamin Franklin, the legendary American statesman and diplomat, whose career, interests, and studies took him across the Atlantic Ocean, bringing about greater understanding between Americans and Europeans. His life offers inspiration to young citizens of today. As a diplomat and a printer, he used the power of diplomacy and the media to increase the exchange of information between Americans and the people of other countries. The Summer Institutes guide participants to examine what we need to know about each other to communicate better and to face the many challenges of the 21st Century together. The Institutes also explore how young people interact with media, both as consumers and producers of information, and how the freedom of expression both provides rights to and imposes responsibilities on citizens.

The Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows initiative aims to foster relationships among the younger generation of Europeans and Americans to build strong linkages and an awareness of shared values and to enable youth to face together the global challenges of the 21st Century. Through these institutes, this group of diverse and intellectually curious students aged 16 to

18 will participate in an intensive, three- to four-week exchange program in the United States. Participants will be engaged in a variety of activities such as training sessions, workshops, community and/or school-based programs, and cultural events. Participants will explore these concepts through the framework of the Benjamin Franklin legacy and will work together to prepare joint projects that present and promote the Institutes' stated goals and objectives.

The goals of the Benjamin Franklin Institutes are to:

- (1) Develop a sense of civic responsibility and a commitment to cooperation among youth;
- (2) Foster relationships among youth from different ethnic, religious, and national groups;
- (3) Promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries; and
- (4) Develop a cadre of young leaders who will share their knowledge and skills with their peers through positive action.

With the specific focus of these institutes, the following outcomes will indicate a successful project:

- Participants from abroad will demonstrate an improved understanding of the United States and its people, and the

American students will better understand the interests of the people of Europe.

- Participants will work together to identify and overcome misunderstanding or lack of understanding among nations both during the institute and after they return to their homes.
- Participants will develop critical thinking skills that empower them to be literate consumers and creators of media.
- Participants will demonstrate a better understanding of international relations and issues.
- Participants will gain an understanding of the roles of the media and public perceptions in diplomacy and global issues.

**Participants:**

Each Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute will be designed for up to 45 students ages 16-18 from Europe, the European countries of Eurasia, and the United States. One or two students will come from each participating country, except for the United States, which will have ten representatives in each institute. U.S. Embassies that wish to participate will screen and select the overseas candidates and nominate them for participation. Officers at the State Department in Washington will select the Fellows and assign them to one of the two Institutes. The award recipient will be responsible for recruiting and selecting the American

participants from across the United States. All students will be able to participate fully in English.

U.S. Embassies will arrange and pay for the Europeans' international travel to and from the United States. The recipient organization will arrange for adult flight escorts for select transatlantic flights (e.g., Frankfurt to the institute site), and adult staff should be available to support the participants during the course of the Institute.

**Program:**

Each Institute will take place on a U.S. university or college campus, or at a similar venue. The venue may be connected with a European or American Studies center. For a portion of each Institute, the Fellows will be housed together at a dormitory on campus, because living together will facilitate greater cooperation on the project and training. For at least ten days of the Institute, all Fellows will have homestays with local families.

The Institutes may take place in one or two communities and should offer the participants exposure to the diversity of American life. A study trip to Washington, DC, must be included either during the Institute or at the end. The State Department

will organize one half-day of activities and the award recipient will arrange other activities in Washington that offer insight into leadership, diplomacy, and the media. A side trip to Philadelphia to visit key sites connected to Benjamin Franklin's legacy is recommended.

The Institutes will focus primarily on the exploration of global issues through interactive activities, practical experiences, and other hands-on opportunities, through which the participants will learn more about democratic practices, volunteer service, conflict resolution, problem solving, communication skills, critical thinking, tolerance and respect for diversity, youth leadership, team building, and the media. The Institutes will provide the participants with a new perspective on their learning, networking, perceptions of each other, the communities they live in, and the broader culture. In addition to the American Fellows, program activities should engage American teenagers wherever possible. Cultural and recreational activities will balance the schedule.

In addition to implementing service projects in their home communities, the participants will present what they have learned during the Institutes, as well as an alumni project plan, to a youth-serving or youth-centered organization in their

home country after they return home. Examples of these organizations include U.S. Embassy Youth Councils (<http://www.state.gov/j/gyi>), American Corners or American Spaces (please see the American Corners Serbia site for a sample of activities available at American Spaces, <http://www.americancorners-sam.net>), and exchange alumni associations (<http://exchanges.state.gov/alumni/projects.html>). The successful applicant will present a plan for connecting participants with the youth-serving or youth-centered resources available in their home countries.

The award recipient should arrange for highly qualified mentors for the Fellows during the course of the Institutes and for follow-on activities; the mentors may also serve as trainers or instructors, as appropriate.

**Guidelines:**

Pending the availability of funds, it is anticipated that the cooperative agreements will begin on or about March 1, 2013. ECA is prepared to award two agreements for the two Institutes, but is also prepared to award one agreement if an applicant presents an appropriate plan to host the two Institutes on two separate campuses.

Applicants should propose a three- to four-week U.S. institute that will take place between late June and late August 2013. Final program dates will be determined in consultation with ECA. The award period will be approximately 12 months in duration, as appropriate to the program design.

The award recipient will be responsible for the following:

- **Recruitment and Selection of U.S. Participants:** Manage the merit-based selection of a diverse group of youth, aged 16-18 at the start date of the institute, from the United States. Diversity addresses, but is not limited to, ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities. The Bureau will have final approval of all selected participants.
- **Orientations:** Provide pre-departure materials and information about the U.S. program to the U.S. Embassies, participants, and their families in preparation for the exchange. Also, provide orientations for those participating from the host communities, including host families.
- **Exchange Activities:** Design and plan a substantive program in the United States that promotes international dialogue on key global issues, critical thinking, democracy and tolerance, media analysis, leadership development, civic

education, and community service, framed by the legacy of Benjamin Franklin. Some activities should be school and/or community-based, as feasible, and the projects will involve as much interaction with American peers, even beyond those directly participating in the Institute, as possible.

- **Logistics:** Manage all logistical arrangements, domestic travel, ground transportation, accommodations, group meals, and disbursement of stipends.
- **Accommodations:** Arrange home stays for the participants in the United States with properly screened and briefed American families for at least 10 days of the exchange. Criminal background checks must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older.
- **Monitoring:** Develop and implement a plan to monitor the participants' safety and well-being during the Institute and to create opportunities for participants to share potential issues and promptly resolve them. The award recipient will be required to provide proper staff supervision and facilitation to ensure that the teenagers have safe and pedagogically rich programs. Staff will assist the youth with cultural adjustments, provide societal context to enhance learning, and counsel students as needed. For the safety and security of both foreign and

American participants, applicants must comply with the monitoring and supervision requirements, as well as the host family screening requirements, outlined in the POGI.

- **Follow-on Activities:** Plan and implement activities that reinforce the ideas, values, and skills imparted during the Institute.
- **Evaluation:** Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the short- and medium-term impact of the project on the participants as well as on host and home communities.

**Please note:**

The ECA awards for the Benjamin Franklin Transatlantic Fellows Summer Institute will take the form of cooperative agreements with the award recipients. In a cooperative agreement, the Department of State is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. The Department's activities and responsibilities are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Recruit and select the European participants, arrange their international travel, and, in coordination with the award recipients, oversee their follow-on activities.

- 3) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 4) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C. and the partner countries.
- 5) Approve the proposed slate of final and alternate U.S. candidates.
- 6) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas for the foreign participants. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 7) Approve recruitment materials, application forms, publicity materials, and final calendar of exchange activities.
- 8) Monitor and evaluate the program, through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits.
- 9) Perform an annual performance evaluation/review.  
Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all option years.

Applicant organizations must demonstrate their capacity for doing projects of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) provision of programs that address the goals and themes outlined in this document; (2) age-appropriate

programming for youth; and (3) previous experience in working in Europe/with Europe. Applicant organizations should be able to work with U.S. embassies in supporting follow-on activities for the alumni of the U.S.-based Institutes.

Proposals must demonstrate how the stated objectives will be met. The proposal narrative should provide detailed information on how the major program activities will be implemented, and applicants should explain and justify their programmatic choices. Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations for the International Visitor category. Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package - this RFGP, the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI), and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) - for further information.

## **II. Award Information:**

**Type of Award:** Cooperative Agreement

**Fiscal Year Funds:** FY-2013 - base year; FY-2014 - option year one; FY-2015 - option year two

**Approximate Total Funding:** \$1,350,000. This figure represents base year plus two option years, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.

**Approximate Number of Awards:** Two

**Approximate Average Award:** \$225,000

**Anticipated Award Date:** Pending availability of funds, March 1, 2013

**Anticipated Project Completion Date:** March 31, 2016

**Additional Information:** Cooperative agreement(s) will be awarded for a period of 12-15 months (base year) with the option for two additional 12-15 month periods (option years). ECA will notify the recipient of our intention to exercise or not to exercise an option year at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise option years will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.

Applicants may apply to conduct one or two institutes. If the applicant submits a proposal for two institutes, each must take place on a separate campus. Organizations or institutions with more than one location, campus, or a partnership with another location or campus are welcome to apply.

### **III.) Eligibility Information:**

**III.1. Eligible applicants:** Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations meeting the

provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c) (3) .

**III.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 OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching. 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.

**III.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 multiple awards in amounts greater than to \$130,000 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. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

**IV.) Application and Submission Information:**

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

**IV.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:**

An electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further information.

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

It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify ECA/PE/C/PY/T Program Officer Carolyn Lantz and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/PY-13-06-OY-B on all other inquiries and correspondence.

**IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:**

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at

<http://exchanges.state.gov/grants/open2.html>, or from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

**IV.3. Content and Form of Submission:**

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

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) 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 DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box of the SF - 424 which is part of the formal application package.

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

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

IV.3c. All federal award recipients must maintain current registration in the System for Award Management (SAM) database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in SAM until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and

more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

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:

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.

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.

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

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

**IV.3d.1 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 RFGP, 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 RFGP 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 their 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://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division  
U.S. Department of State  
ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-5, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
2200 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

IV.3d.2 **Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines**

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and disabilities. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for Diversity' section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into your proposal. Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

#### IV.3d.3. **Program Monitoring and Evaluation**

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

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

should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

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 RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

- **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.
- **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude.

Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.

- **Participant behavior**, 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.
- **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.

IV.3e. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

IV.3e.1. 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.

**For competitions that will be renewed through the option years, applicants must submit:**

- The SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program;
- A detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding (Please refer to the Proposal Submission Instruction Document (PSI) for general budget guidance.). The narrative should also include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus one additional option year, pending successful program performance and availability of funds; and
- An abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected administrative and program costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two option years).

**To exercise the option year mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:**

- Timely quarterly performance and financial reports;
- A request in writing to ECA at least 90 days in advance of the expiration of the current program year. This request should be incorporated/highlighted in the third quarterly program report;
- A summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;

- A detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested option year; and
- A brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

**The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:**

1. Closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory quarterly performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional option years. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)
2. Review and evaluate all mandatory quarterly program and financial reports;
  - a. All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up-to-date before the Bureau will exercise additional option years.
  - b. Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.

The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent option years.

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

IV.3f. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: November 19, 2012

Reference Number: ECA/PE/C/PY-13-06-OY-B

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/GetStarted>).

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 RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

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

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

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

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

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: Monday - Friday, 7AM - 9PM Eastern Time

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

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

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

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

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

## **V. Application Review Information**

### **V.1. REVIEW PROCESS**

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, 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. 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 (grants) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

#### **REVIEW CRITERIA**

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below:

**1. Quality of the program idea:** The proposed program should be well developed, respond to the design outlined in the solicitation, and demonstrate originality. It should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail. Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission.

**2. Program planning and ability to achieve program objectives:**

A detailed agenda and work plan should clearly demonstrate how project objectives would be achieved. The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. The substance of workshops, seminars, presentations, site visits, and study tour should be described in detail. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

**3. Support of diversity:** The proposal should demonstrate the recipient's commitment to promoting the awareness and

understanding of diversity in program content. Applicants should demonstrate readiness to accommodate participants with physical disabilities.

**4. Institutional capacity and track record:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program goals. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards as determined by the Bureau's Office of Contracts. The Bureau will consider the past performance.

**5. Program evaluation:** The proposal should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The proposal should include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The award recipient will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded.

**6. 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 possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as

well as institutional direct funding contributions, which demonstrates institutional and community commitment.

## **VI.) Award Administration Information**

### **VI.1a. 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.

### **VI.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:**

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

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments".

OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

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

<http://fa.statebuy.state.gov>

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

1. Performance reports are required quarterly. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The performance reports (PPR) must be submitted electronically to the Grants Office at [reportseca@state.gov](mailto:reportseca@state.gov) with a copy sent to the Program Officer. 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/> . Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Agreements.
2. A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet must be submitted with all program performance reports.
3. A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
4. A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. 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.

5. Quarterly program and financial report guidelines will be sent once an award is made.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission Instructions (IV.3.d.3) above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

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

All reports must be sent to the ECA Grants Office and ECA Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.

#### VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Carolyn Lantz, U.S. Department of State, Youth Programs Division,

ECA/PE/C/PY/T, SA-5, 3-K11, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington,  
DC 20522, telephone: 202-632-6421, e-mail: LantzCS@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/PE/C/PY-13-06-OY-B.

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

**VIII. Other Information:**

**Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP 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 RFGP 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 VI.3 above.

J. Adam Ereli

September 27, 2012

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State