

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: FY 2014 Youth Leadership Program with Japan and South Korea**  
**Announcement Type:** New Cooperative Agreement  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** ECA-ECAPEC-14-054  
**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 19.415  
**Application Deadline:** May 30, 2014

**Executive Summary:** The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for the FY 2014 Youth Leadership Program with Japan and South Korea. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to provide a three- to four-week U.S.-based exchange in 2015 that explores the primary themes of civic rights and responsibilities, leadership development, and community engagement and the sub-theme of entrepreneurship and innovation. The group of approximately 18-24 exchange participants will be English-speaking teenage girls and female educators from Japan and South Korea; they will be joined by American students for some of the U.S.-based activities. The program will conclude with follow-on activities in the participants' home communities in which they apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the exchange experience. Applicant organizations must have their own overseas partner organizations, branch offices, or other affiliates in each country that can directly manage the recruitment, selection, and orientation of participants as well as alumni follow-on activities. ECA intends to award one cooperative agreement for \$250,000.

#### **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.

**Purpose:** The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is supporting a Youth Leadership Program with Japan and South Korea that features a substantive three- to four-week exchange in the United States for female students (ages 16-18) and educators. Participants will be engaged in a variety of activities such as training sessions, workshops, community and/or school-based programs, and cultural events. The program will be designed to promote high-quality leadership, civic responsibility, and community engagement among future leaders. It will offer an examination of shared global challenges faced by the United States, Japan, and South Korea and provide participants with training that allows them to develop their leadership skills. Program activities will include a look at entrepreneurial approaches in such areas as business, education, health care, environmental protection, and technology. Participants will explore the process of moving from an idea to an action, both in business and non-business sectors. Activities should be designed to be replicable and provide practical knowledge and skills the

participants can apply to school and civic activities at home, starting with specific projects planned during the exchange. The program will be conducted in English, and specially selected American teenagers will be involved in a portion of the exchange.

The goals of the program are to:

- 1) Promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of the partner countries;
- 2) Inspire a sense of civic responsibility and commitment to community development among youth;
- 3) Develop leadership skills and community service skills among youth appropriate to their needs; and
- 4) Foster relationships among youth from different ethnic, religious, and national groups.

The objectives of the program are for participants to:

- 1) Demonstrate a better understanding of community engagement as practiced in the United States;
- 2) Demonstrate critical thinking skills; and
- 3) Demonstrate skill at developing project ideas and planning a course of action to bring the projects to fruition.

The primary themes of the programs are:

- 1) Civic Rights and Responsibilities (including citizen participation, grassroots democracy and rule of law);
- 2) Youth Leadership Development (such as team building, public speaking, negotiation, goal setting and project planning); and
- 3) Community Engagement (social/corporate responsibility, volunteerism, and philanthropy)

The exchange activities must focus on these primary themes. In addition, applicants should include the sub-theme of entrepreneurship and innovation in their proposed activities and describe how this sub-theme intersects with the more abstract concepts of the primary themes. Through this, participants will learn the project planning skills that will enable them to capitalize on entrepreneurial motivations and bring their ideas to fruition.

The exchange format will be intensive and interactive, allowing participants to thoroughly explore the primary themes in a creative, memorable, and practical way. Participants will engage in a variety of activities such as workshops, teambuilding exercises, community site visits, interactive discussion groups, small group work, presentations, local cultural activities, and other activities designed to achieve the program's stated goals. English language workshops will help the participants learn specialized vocabulary and usage that relate to the program content. The program must feature a substantive community service project and leadership training components that prepare participants for community involvement. Participants will live with American families for the majority of the exchange period.

The activities will take place in no more than two or three U.S. communities so that the participants have an opportunity to familiarize themselves with their host city. One of the venues

will be Washington, DC, which will be included as a program segment at some point during the exchange.

Follow-on activities with the program participants are an integral part of the program, as the students apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired by planning service projects in their home communities. Activities should therefore be geared toward preparing participants to conduct projects at home that serve a community need. A successful proposal will include a detailed plan for alumni activities and follow-on project development with support from the in-country partner organization staff.

Using these goals, objectives, and themes, applicant organizations should identify their own specific and measurable outputs and outcomes based on the project specifications provided in this solicitation. Proposals should indicate how recipients will achieve the short-term program objectives, and how these objectives will contribute to the achievement of the long-term goals.

The exchange should be designed for approximately 18 to 24 teenage and adult participants. The delegation will have equal numbers of Japanese and Korean participants, and all participants will be female. They must be proficient in English, will have demonstrated leadership abilities in their schools and/or communities, and will be recruited from areas outside major metropolitan areas.

The teenage girls may be current high school students or recent graduates between 16 and 18 years of age, as counted in the United States, at the onset of the exchange.

The delegation will include two or four educators. The adult participants will be educators and/or community leaders who work with youth and have demonstrated an interest in promoting youth leadership and development. The adult participants will have the role of exchange participant, chaperone, and post-exchange mentor. Exchange activities must include some programming for adult participants, separate from activities with the youth, specifically geared toward developing their professional development skills. Proposals must include a detailed description of the proposed adult programming.

The U.S. recipient will also recruit and select at least five American students to participate in a segment of at least three days with their Japanese and South Korean peers as full program participants. This interaction could take the form of a long weekend retreat or consecutive days of activity at the primary program site, and may take place at any time during the exchange. The integration of American high school students into the program will allow for deeper interaction and dialogue and will encourage friendships and cultural sharing through lasting interaction.

The Department of State and/or its overseas representatives must approve all selected delegations.

**Organizational Capacity:** Applicants must demonstrate their capacity for implementing programs of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) provision of leadership and civic education programming; (2) age-appropriate programming for youth; and (3) demonstrated understanding of and experience working with these two partner countries.

Applicants must identify overseas partner organizations, branch offices, or other affiliates – one in each country – with the requisite capacity to manage the in-country aspects of the program including recruitment, selection, orientation, and follow-on activities. Applicants should consult with their in-country partners and involve them in the preparation of their proposals, which must detail all activities and the ability of the overseas partners to conduct them.

The Public Affairs Section of the U.S. Embassies in Tokyo and Seoul should review the selection of the in-country partner organizations prior to applicants' submitting their proposals. Please e-mail ECA Program Officer Carolyn Lantz at [LantzCS@state.gov](mailto:LantzCS@state.gov) as early as possible to follow this step.

**Guidelines:**

The award will begin on or about September 1, 2014. The award period will be approximately 15 to 20 months in duration and will cover all aspects of project planning, participant recruitment and selection, in-country pre-departure orientations, exchange activities in the United States, and follow-on activities in the participants' home communities. Once the cooperative agreement is awarded, the award recipient, in collaboration with its overseas partner, must consult with PAS staff at the U.S. embassies to review its recruitment plans in detail, any specific selection criteria, and the screening and selection process.

Applicants, in consultation with their overseas partners, should propose specific exchange dates in 2015. It is likely that the best time for the exchange will be during a school break. The exact timing may be altered through the mutual agreement of the Department of State and the award recipient.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

In pursuit of the goals outlined above, the award recipient will be responsible for implementing the following:

- 1) Conducting open recruitment and competitive selection of a diverse group of youth and adult participants from Japan and South Korea, as well as in the United States, in close consultation with ECA and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. Embassies in Tokyo and Seoul.
- 2) Designing and conducting a pre-departure orientation for the participants, in collaboration with the overseas partner and PAS, to prepare them for the program.
- 3) Conducting orientations for staff, American participants and their families, and individuals participating from the U.S. host communities, including host families, prior to the start of the program.
- 4) Designing and planning exchange activities in no more than two or three U.S. locations, including Washington, DC, that provide a creative and substantive program on the specified themes. Activities should be community-based and involve extensive interaction with Americans. Opportunities for the adult participants to work with their peers must also be

included to help them foster youth leadership, civic education, and community service programs at home.

- 5) Conducting a welcome orientation for participants upon their arrival in the United States to review program goals, objectives, and expectations.
- 6) Managing logistical arrangements, including international and domestic travel, ground transportation, accommodations, group meals, and disbursement of pocket money.
- 7) Arranging homestays with properly screened and briefed host families for a significant portion of the exchange period. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families and others living in the home who are 18 years or older.
- 8) Developing and implementing a plan to monitor the participants' safety and well-being while on the exchange, including proper staff supervision and opportunities for participants to share potential issues and have them resolved promptly. Staff, along with mentors, will assist the youth with cultural adjustments, provide societal context to enhance learning, and counsel students as needed. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for all program staff.
- 9) Providing a closing session to summarize the delegation's activities, prepare participants for their return home, and to further prepare for follow-on activities and projects.
- 10) Planning and organizing follow-on activities for the exchange alumni in their home communities designed to reinforce the ideas and skills imparted during the exchange program.
- 11) [Optional] Arranging visits to Japan and/or Korea by U.S. project staff, trainers, or educators to further the training started during the exchange.

**Please note:**

The ECA award will take the form of a cooperative agreement with the award recipient. In a cooperative agreement, the Department of State is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. The Department's activities and responsibilities for the Youth Leadership Program with Japan and South Korea are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Approve the final candidate selection and alternates.
- 3) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 4) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 5) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C. and the partner countries.
- 6) Approve all printed or web-based program materials, including applications, publicity materials, and the final calendar of exchange activities.
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the program through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits, as necessary.

**Additional Information:**

The award recipient will retain the name "Youth Leadership Program with Japan and South Korea" to identify the project. All materials, publicity, and correspondence related to the

program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

The award recipient must inform the ECA Program Officer of its progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion, and will be required to obtain approval of any program changes in advance of their implementation.

Proposals must demonstrate how the stated objectives will be met. The proposal narrative should provide detailed information on the major project activities, and applicants should explain and justify their programmatic choices. 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. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number I above.

**Fiscal Year Funds:** 2014

**Approximate Total Funding:** \$250,000

**Approximate Number of Awards:** One

**Anticipated Award Date:** September 2014

**Anticipated Project Completion Date:** Approximately 15 to 20 months after the onset of the award, to be determined by the applicant according to its program design.

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

## **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:**

- a) 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 an award in an amount over \$130,000 to support the program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition.
- b) Proposed sub-award recipients are also limited to grant funding of \$130,000 or less if they do not have four years of experience in conducting international exchanges.
- c) The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.
- d) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the requirements or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

**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:**

Please contact the Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY/T, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, telephone (202) 632-6421, fax (202) 632-9355, e-mail [LantzCS@state.gov](mailto:LantzCS@state.gov) to request a Solicitation Package.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. 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 Branch Chief Carolyn Lantz and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement 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://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> 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 registrations in the System for Award Management (SAM) database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) until all program and financial activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. Failure to register in SAM will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

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

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

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

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

#### **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://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

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

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

#### **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):

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

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

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

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

**IV.3d.4. Virtual Exchange Component:** ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage appropriate mobile and/or online technologies to maintain engagement among exchange participants, encourage project collaboration and widen participation in the overall project to a broader audience. ECA strongly encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange

component(s) could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange component(s), defined as technology-enabled, sustainable, people-to-people, cross-cultural exchanges, is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms, including our International Exchange Alumni space. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project by project basis.

**IV.3e. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients:** All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in ECA's Communications Guidance on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

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

IV.3f.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. Budget requests should be for approximately \$110,000. 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.

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

IV.3g. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:  
Application Deadline Date: Friday, May 30, 2014

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

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, 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.3h. 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 and State Department regional bureaus, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the

discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

## **REVIEW CRITERIA**

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

- 1. Quality of the program idea:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives. The proposed program should be creative and 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.
- 2. Program planning:** A detailed agenda and work plan should clearly demonstrate how objectives would be achieved. The agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. The substance of workshops, seminars, presentations, school-based activities, and/or site visits should be described in detail. Proposals should also provide a plan for Bureau-supported follow-on activity, as well as activity supported by other sources, that ensures that the exchange is not an isolated event.
- 3. Support of diversity:** Support of diversity is an important feature of Bureau programs. 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 three areas of competency will be considered. The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants 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 program'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. Please see Section IV.3d.3. of this announcement for more information.
- 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.

## **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 an 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) Additional performance reports shall not be required more frequently than quarterly or, less frequently than annually. Annual reports shall be due 90 calendar days after the grant year; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. (Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer). The first page of the Performance Progress Report form (SF-PPR) must be submitted with all programmatic reports and can be found here:

[http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content\\_id=20&menu\\_id=68](http://aopefa.a.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=20&menu_id=68). The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a Grant Note under the corresponding record for this Agreement in GrantSolutions.gov. For assistance, please contact the GrantSolutions Help Desk at 1 (866) 577-0771 (toll free for US callers) or by email at [help@grantsolutions.gov](mailto:help@grantsolutions.gov). The Federal Financial Report (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR

can be accessed at: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov/>. 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 report should be e-mailed to: [FFATAECA@state.gov](mailto:FFATAECA@state.gov). This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's [USAspending.gov](http://USAspending.gov) website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to 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.

## **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, 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, Telephone (202) 632-6421, E-mail: [LantzCS@state.gov](mailto:LantzCS@state.gov).

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation.

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the 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.

Evan Ryan  
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs  
U.S. Department of State

April 15, 2014