

**Department of State**

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for**

**Grant Proposals:** FY 2014 Southeast Asia Youth Leadership  
Program

**Announcement Type:** New Cooperative Agreement

**Funding Opportunity Number:** ECA-ECAPEC-14-002

**Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:** 19.415

**Application Deadline:** September 27, 2013

**Executive Summary:** The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program, pending the availability of FY 2014 funding. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3), including accredited, post-secondary U.S. educational institutions, may submit proposals to provide a three-week, U.S.-based youth leadership program in April, 2014 for 60 youth and educators from the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. The activities will focus on civic education, leadership, diversity, and community engagement and address ways youth 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 cooperative agreement for one base year plus two option years for an estimated total amount of \$1,470,000. 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 and Purpose:** The Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program (SEAYLP) began in 2009 to provide high quality leadership training and cultural exchange opportunities to

promising youth and adult mentors from the member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. During the first four years of the program, two exchange delegations, each consisting of participants from five countries, came to the United States each year. With this solicitation, the Bureau seeks to change the structure of the program to give participants from all ten ASEAN countries the opportunity to interact with and learn from each other in one exchange delegation.

SEAYLP aims to foster relationships among young people of ASEAN countries and the United States and to build strong linkages and an awareness of shared values to enable youth to face global challenges together. Through the program, a group of diverse and intellectually-curious students aged 15 to 17 will participate in an intensive, three-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. The program will be designed to promote high-quality leadership, civic responsibility, and civic engagement among future leaders. It will offer an examination of shared global challenges faced by the United States and ASEAN countries and provide participants

with training that allows them to develop their leadership skills. 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 American high school students will be involved.

**Goals of the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program:**

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

**During a successful program participants will:**

- Demonstrate an increased understanding of the shared challenges their nations face in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century;

- Work together to identify and overcome misunderstandings and preconceptions;
- Develop leadership skills that allow them to become effective advocates in their home communities; and
- Learn the skills needed to effectively organize their follow-on projects.

**Participants:**

The U.S. Embassy in each ASEAN country will recruit and select six participants for the program. They may select six youth, aged 15-17, or five youth and one adult mentor to participate; not all countries will send an adult participant. The program will have 60 participants total; between four and ten adult mentors will participate. Participants will be proficient in English and will demonstrate leadership potential, an interest in learning about other cultures, and a commitment to successfully participate in the program and plan and implement a follow-on project. The adult mentors will be high school teachers or community leaders who work with youth and have demonstrated an interest in promoting youth leadership and development. The names and details of the participants will be provided to the recipient organization in early 2014.

The U.S. recipient will recruit and select at least 12 American high school students to participate in a portion of SEAYLP (see program section for further details).

**Program:**

The three-week exchange will take place in April 2014 on a U.S. university or college campus, or at a similar venue, to capitalize on regional, subject matter, and/or training expertise of the faculty and staff. The venue may be connected with a Southeast Asian or American Studies center or an international training office.

SEAYLP will focus primarily on an exploration of the shared challenges the United States and ASEAN nations face in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century as viewed through the three pillars of ASEAN: political and security cooperation, economic cooperation, and socio-cultural cooperation. Applicants may obtain further information on the U.S. relationship with ASEAN at the website of the U.S. Mission to ASEAN, <http://asean.usmission.gov/>. For example, an applicant could propose to explore the challenge of climate change through a political lens, youth engagement in modernizing societies through socio-cultural avenues such as theater, or

ways in which ASEAN countries and the United States are attempting to decrease poverty through international economic cooperation. Applicants should identify the specific shared challenges (no more than four) the program will focus on and propose creative ways of engaging the youth and adult mentors mainly through interactive activities and practical experiences, with a minimal amount of time devoted to lectures and presentations. The program could be module-based, with different weeks focusing on different topics or different modules offered for sub-groups of participants, or could integrate all the themes and challenges throughout the exchange.

The majority of the program should take place in one community so that the participants can get to know the area and focus on the substantive aspects of the program without the distraction of travel. A study tour of 3-5 days must be included at any time during the exchange to expose participants to another geographic region of the United States. The study tour should be substantive in nature and focus on the goals listed above, while also giving the participants the opportunity to experience the culture of the destination area. It should be a cohesive and coherent addition to the exchange program.

At the beginning of the exchange, the participants will be housed together at a dormitory on campus (or similar communal setting), as living together will facilitate cooperation and interaction among the participants. For at least seven days of the exchange, all ASEAN participants will have homestays with local families; not all participants must be in homestays at the same time. It is acceptable to stagger the homestay placements based on the hosting capacity of the local community.

As the group will be large, applicants must propose a plan to break the group down into smaller, multi-country teams for the majority of program activities to ensure maximum participation and learning among the participants. Community service opportunities relating to the shared challenges should be included in the program.

While addressing the broader themes, the program will teach the participants concrete skills they will be able to use as they move forward in life such as methods and styles of leadership, motivating others, project planning and management, problem solving, conflict resolution, communication skills, and critical thinking. In addition, the participants should gain a respect for diverse viewpoints and the ability to work within a diverse team. The program need not address all of these topics

specifically; however, the overall exchange should provide the participants the opportunity to explore these areas through the program activities. Ample time should be given for participants to work on their follow-on project ideas individually, or as teams, and receive support from the program staff. Cultural and recreational activities will balance the schedule.

The American participants will spend three to seven days with their ASEAN peers as full program participants, depending on what is feasible given the school calendar. This interaction could take the form of a long weekend retreat, consecutive days of activity at the primary program site, and/or participation in the study tour, 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 on the shared challenges faced by young people from the United States and ASEAN member countries and will encourage friendships and cultural sharing through lasting interaction.

In pursuit of the goals outlined above, the award recipient will provide the following:

- Pre-Program Preparation: Information about the U.S. program and pre-departure materials to help the U.S.

Embassies, participants, and their families in preparation for the exchange.

- Recruitment and Selection of U.S. Participants: Manage the merit-based selection of a diverse group of at least 12 American youth, aged 15-17, to participate in three to seven days of the program. 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: A welcome orientation for ASEAN participants upon arrival to the United States and a closing session to summarize the project activities and prepare participants for their return home. Provide a pre-program orientation for American participants, either in-person or virtually.
- Logistics: All logistical arrangements from the ASEAN participants' point of international departure: purchasing international airfare, disbursement of stipends, local travel in the United States, travel between U.S. sites, and lodging and meals when not in the homestay.
- Exchange Activities: Design and plan a substantive program in the United States that focuses on shared challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, leadership development, and community service. Some activities should be school and/or

community-based, as feasible, and the projects will involve as much interaction with American peers as possible, even beyond those directly participating in the program.

- Accommodation: Homestay arrangements with properly screened and briefed American families for at least seven days of the exchange period, as well as appropriately supervised accommodations for the participants when not in homestays.
- Follow-on Activities: Guidance on and support of follow-on activities, in coordination with the U.S. Embassies, to facilitate the implementation of community service projects by the participants. Follow-on projects will allow the participants to apply what they have learned during the exchange to address a community need at home.
- 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.

The applicant organization should outline its capacity for doing projects of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency of the staff directly associated with the program: (1) provision of leadership and civic education programming, (2)

age-appropriate programming for youth, and (3) demonstrated understanding of and experience in programs with Southeast Asia.

**Guidelines:**

The awards will begin on or about January 1, 2014. The first year of the award period will be approximately 12 to 15 months in duration, as appropriate for the applicant's program design. Applicants should propose the period of the exchange(s) in April 2014, but the exact timing of the project may be altered through the mutual agreement of the Department of State and the award recipients. The exchange period should be no less than 21 days and no more than 23 days, excluding international travel time.

Applicants must provide detailed information on the program activities outlined above and should explain and justify their programmatic choices. Proposals must demonstrate how applicants will meet the stated objectives. Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations for the International Visitor and Government Visitor categories.

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.

**Please note:**

The ECA award for the program described above 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 grant monitoring. The Department's activities and responsibilities for the Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 3) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C. as appropriate.
- 4) Approve the final candidate selection and alternates.
- 5) Approve all printed or web-based program materials, including applications, publicity materials, and the final calendar of exchange activities.
- 6) Approve accommodation arrangements.
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the program through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits.

- 8) Conduct an annual performance evaluation/review. Satisfactory performance is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all option years.
- 9) The U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will serve as the in-country partner and manage the recruitment and selection of the participants, cover their in-country expenses, facilitate visa applications, and oversee their follow-on activities.

Proposal narratives should include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional option years, pending successful performance and availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent option years are exercised.

**Additional Information:**

Award recipients will retain the name 'Southeast Asia Youth Leadership Program' or 'SEAYLP' to identify their 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 awardee must inform the ECA Program Officer of their 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 Agreements. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number I above.

**Fiscal Year Funds:** \$490,000, 2014- base year; \$490,000, 2015 - option year one; \$490,000 2016 - option year two, pending successful performance and availability of funds.

**Approximate Total Funding:** \$1,470,000. This figure represents base year plus two option years, pending successful performance and availability of funds.

**Approximate Number of Awards:** One

Approximate Average Award: \$490,000

**Anticipated Award Date:** January 1, 2014

**Anticipated Project Completion Date:** 12 to 15 months after the onset of the award, to be determined by the applicant according to its program design. Each option year will extend the award period by 12 months, if exercised.

**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 one and two). 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.

### **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 multiple awards in amounts exceeding \$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.

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) Organizations may submit only one proposal (total) under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will be given no further consideration in the review process.

Please note: Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document.

**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 Program Officer Jen Bookbinder and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA-ECAPEC-14-002 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://jlvisa.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 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:

- 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.** 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 year, applicants must submit:**

- 1) the SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program;
- 2) 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 two additional option years, pending successful program performance and availability of funds; and

- 3) 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:**

- 1) timely quarterly performance and financial reports;
- 2) a request in writing to ECA in advance of the expiration of the current program year. Additional details will be provided in the initial award agreement;
- 3) a summary budget that projects program expenses through the end of the current year;
- 4) a detailed budget outlining both administrative and program expenses for the requested option year; and
- 5) 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.

**IV.3e.2.** Allowable costs for the program are outlined in the POGI.

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

**IV.3f. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:**

Application Deadline Date: Monday, September 27, 2013

Reference Number: ECA-ECAPEC-14-002

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](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 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 (cooperative agreements) 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:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. The proposed program should be creative and age-appropriate, 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 also include a plan to support participants' community activities upon their return home.
- 2) Program planning:** 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, school-based activities, site visits, and follow on project planning should be described in detail.

- 3) Support of diversity:** The proposal should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (program venue and the recruitment and selection of host families) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).
- 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 of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.
- 5) Program evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives are recommended.
- 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.1. Award Notices:**

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and sent 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. Mandatory 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 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) If the Competition will allow for the exercise of Option Years, applicants must be placed on a mandatory quarterly program and financial reporting cycle. The due dates for these reports will be included in the final assistance award document. The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.
- 6) 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.3.d.3 Application and Submission Instructions 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 Officer and ECA Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.**

**VII. Agency Contacts:**

For questions about this announcement, contact: Jen Bookbinder, Program Officer, Youth Programs Division, by telephone 202-632-6363 or e-mail [bookbinderjb@state.gov](mailto:bookbinderjb@state.gov)

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and reference number ECA-ECAPEC-14-002.

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.

Ann Stock

July 30, 2013

Assistant Secretary

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State