

Department of State

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request
for Grant Proposals: Washington Fellowship for Young
African Leaders**

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAAE-14-001

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.009

Application Deadline: August 23, 2013

Executive Summary:

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State is seeking proposal submissions for one assistance award to provide administrative services for a U.S. Government educational initiative: The **Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders**. The Washington Fellowship aims to build and sustain a prestigious network of young Sub-Saharan leaders across critical sectors, cement stronger ties between Sub-Saharan Africa and the United States, and prepare the participants for follow-on leadership opportunities in Africa, with the goal of strengthening democratic institutions and spurring economic growth and development on the continent.

For the Washington Fellowship, the award recipient will be responsible for administering a complex program in the United States for 500 young African leaders aged 25 to 35. The recipient will be responsible for designing the participant application materials, receiving and screening nominations, overseeing the participant final selection process, and placing finalists at U.S. host universities or colleges for six-week academic Institutes. The recipient will also be responsible for coordinating with U.S. host campuses to design and administer 20 academic Institutes, each one including up to 25 participants. The recipient will be responsible for the organization of a Summit for all participants to be held in Washington, D.C. at the end of the Institutes. In addition, the recipient will organize and oversee follow-on internships for up to 100 of the African participants. See the accompanying Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) for more information.

The academic Institutes should be six weeks long and should focus on one of three themes: Business and Entrepreneurship, Civic Leadership, and Public Management. Each Institute should take place at a U.S. academic institution (campuses may host one or more groups in separate cohorts) and should provide groups of 25 young African leaders with an intensive academic course on one of the three project themes, as well as leadership development sessions, community service activities, and cultural enrichment. Institutes should weave in skill-building related to the use of scientific and data-driven approaches to decision-making and the innovative use of technology to improve leadership capacity in each field.

Interested applicants should contact ECA for a list of U.S. colleges and universities that have pre-committed to participate as host institution partners; ECA encourages applicants to incorporate these partners as host campuses for the program, as well as other colleges and universities, as needed. (See Program Guidelines section below).

Host institutions should represent the diversity of U.S. higher education, including public, private, urban, rural, and minority-serving institutions.

The internships should be for a two-month period, at relevant U.S. businesses, non-governmental organizations, or U.S. government agencies. The Summit should be held in Washington, D.C., for three days at the end of the Institute.

Applicants should submit a proposal to administer all 20 Washington Fellowship Institutes, the internships, and the Summit. ECA will award one cooperative agreement for these activities.

It is anticipated that the total amount of funding available for this cooperative agreement will be approximately \$6,028,900, pending the availability of funds. Of this total amount, the recipient should be prepared to transfer at least \$100,000 to host universities for each Institute (of 25 participants) under sub-award agreements. All costs associated with the administration

of the on-campus Institutes that exceed \$4,000 per participant are expected to be covered by host campuses through cost-sharing agreements. It is expected that excess costs will total approximately \$4,000 per participant, rendering a U.S. Government-host university cost-share ratio of 1:1.

ECA welcomes applications from public and private non-profit organizations, consortia of organizations, and accredited post-secondary U.S. education institutions. Currently, this Washington Fellowship is envisioned as a five year program. Pending successful implementation of these programs and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for up to four additional fiscal years expanding the number of participants to 1,000 per year. In addition, ECA reserves the right to modify program themes, topics, and/or countries in subsequent fiscal years to meet the demands and needs of the program. (see Eligibility Information, section III).

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. It is anticipated that additional funding will be provided from Economic Support Funds and will be transferred to ECA for obligation.

Purpose and Background:

In 2010, President Obama launched the Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) by inviting 120 young Africans to the

White House for a dialogue about the future of Africa. Since then, the U.S. has sponsored several high-level dialogues with young African leaders, held an Innovation Summit and Mentoring Partnership, established Youth Advisory Councils, and hosted over 2,000 events across Africa to help connect and train emerging leaders. The Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders is a new flagship program, designed to assist emerging young leaders in Africa to develop leadership and subject area skills and professional networks and to foster mutual understanding between the citizens of the participating Sub-Saharan African countries and of the United States. The Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders will directly respond to the expressed needs and requests of young African leaders for targeted and practical leadership training and academic coursework. Through this initiative, the United States will help build and sustain a prestigious network of African leaders across critical sectors, cement stronger ties between Sub Saharan African and the United States, and offer the participants follow-on leadership opportunities in Africa, with the goal of strengthening

democratic institutions and spurring economic growth and development on the continent.

Overview of the Institutes

Each academic Institute should be approximately six weeks long and held at an accredited U.S. university or college. (See Program Guidelines for more information on host universities).

The **academic program** of each Institute should examine one of the three themes -- Business and Entrepreneurship, Civic Leadership, or Public Management. The recipient will be responsible for providing guidelines for curricula to host campuses to promote a consistent level of quality and related content in each Institute. In addition to the academic coursework, the institutes should weave in skill-building related to the use of scientific and data-driven approaches to decision-making and the innovative use of technology to improve leadership capacity in each field.

Local site visits in the community should provide opportunities to observe varied aspects of American life as they relate to the Institute topic and to discuss lessons learned in the academic program. In addition to promoting

enhanced skills in the Institute topic, an important objective of the Institutes is to develop the participants' **leadership skills**. In this context, the academic program should include group discussions, trainings, and exercises that focus on topics such as leadership, team and consensus building, networking, collective problem solving skills, effective communication and public speaking, and management skills. Institutes should also include a **community service** component in which the participants experience firsthand the key role of not-for-profit organizations and volunteerism in American civil society.

Institutes should provide in-depth study of one of the themes outlined below (under Institute Themes).

Participants should gain both theoretical knowledge and practical skills.

Institutes should foster ECA's mission to promote mutual understanding between citizens of other countries and citizens of the United States. Thus, the programs should include robust opportunities for participants to meet Americans from a variety of backgrounds, to interact with

their U.S. peers, and to speak to appropriate student and civic groups about their experiences and life in their home communities.

Overview of the Internships

The grant recipient will be responsible for arranging eight-week follow-on internships in the United States for up to 100 of the YALI participants. The purpose of each internship placement is to provide a first-hand experience of the day-to-day workings of a relevant U.S. workplace, develop leadership skills, and provide an opportunity for the participant to form professional and personal relationships with U.S. co-workers. This component should be directly tied to the academic theme of the program. Internships should be designed to offer the maximum hands-on experience for participants within relevant agencies and/or organizations. The State Department requests one placement for the full eight weeks (rather than shorter successive placements) in order to allow the participant to get an in-depth understanding of the organization. Depending on the size of the host organization, up to 10 participants may be placed at one internship location.

Proposals must discuss how the grant recipient, in collaboration with ECA and other governmental entities, will recruit and select U.S. host organizations to serve as internship host organizations. Please note that the U.S. Government is working in partnership with the private sector on this initiative and will thus generate internship opportunities as well. Applicants must be willing to work collaboratively with the Government on the final placements.

To ensure that each participant has a substantive professional experience at his/her internship, each internship should involve the commitment of a designated host/supervisor/mentor who understands the goals and objectives of the Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders. Ideally, the mentor/supervisor will be able and willing to provide the fellow professional insight into leadership and Business and Entrepreneurship, Civic Leadership, or Public Management in general, and cultivate the fellows' ability to use data, scientific methods of inquiry, and technology to solve problems and make sound

decisions. Applicants are encouraged to include letters of commitment from prospective U.S. host organizations.

Please note that the grant recipient must secure the internship placements well in advance of the U.S. arrival of the Washington Fellows.

Please see the attached POGI for more information on these components.

Overview of Recruitment and Selection

The recipient will be responsible for creating an application form that can be posted on a central website for an open competition among African leaders. U.S. embassies and consulates, USAID missions, and other U.S. Government agencies throughout Sub-Saharan Africa will assist in the recruitment. Proposals should present a viable application and participant placement plan that allows for post and ECA involvement. African applicants should have the option of applying for the follow-on internship component. (See the POGI for more information).

Institute Themes

1) **Institutes on Business and Entrepreneurship** should provide participants with an overview of entrepreneurial approaches including those that are employed to address social issues. The Institutes should focus on developing participant skills in business and entrepreneurship while examining the development, history, challenges, and successes of U.S. enterprises and social enterprises, in the United States and globally, with specific relevance to the African continent. Topics may include, but are not limited to, strategy; operations; supply chain management; business ethics; social entrepreneurship; microfinance; organizational development and management; marketing; innovation and technology; emerging markets and risk analysis; strategic business planning; and corporate social responsibility. Academic sessions should be complemented with hands-on sessions or workshops designed to build skills in these topics. The Institutes should encourage participants to elaborate innovative and practical plans to become active in business and/or entrepreneurship in their communities and to engage with others in this area.

2) Institutes on Civic Leadership should provide participants with an overview of how citizens have shaped U.S. history, government, and society both as individuals and groups, including discussion of similarities and contrasts with experiences and opportunities on the African continent. The academic program should define civic leadership, examine its development in the United States, and build skills in topics such as citizenship, community building, economic development, grass-roots activism, political organizing and leadership, volunteerism, and the use of technology in advancing civic causes. Sub-themes might include topics such as organizational management, strategic planning, fundraising, community relations and outreach, advocacy, monitoring and evaluation, media, and coalition-building. Academic sessions should be complemented with hands-on sessions or workshops designed to build skills in the topics mentioned above. The Institutes should encourage participants to elaborate innovative and practical plans to become engaged citizens in their own communities and to work with others in this area.

3) The Institutes on Public Management should provide participants with an overview of Public Management and Leadership including regional economic and workforce development; financial management in public and non-profit organizations; planning and the global knowledge economy; and domestic and foreign development policies.

To the greatest extent possible, Institutes should offer a hands-on approach to topics and integrate the use of data, scientific methods of inquiry, and the use of technology to improve public management and public sector accountability. Participants should engage in academic coursework in relevant topics while also building tangible management skills in areas such as transparency, procurement, public financial management, government tender processes, legislative/executive collaboration, human resource management, program implementation, and policy formulation. Study modules might examine specific areas such as taxation, transportation, infrastructure, public health, and education, while comparing and contrasting the U.S. experience and institutions with those of the African continent. Within the broader frame of the public policy

process, students should be exposed to specific public management questions on topics such as public finance, rule of law, education, public health, environment, and foreign policy.

Future iterations of the program are expected to add topics in education administration and science and technology and thus proposals should demonstrate the ability to incorporate these themes in future years, pending successful programs.

Recipient:

ECA is seeking detailed proposals from U.S. public and private non-profit organizations, consortia of organizations, and accredited post-secondary U.S. education institutions meeting the eligibility requirements outlined below.

ECA intends to issue one award and is seeking proposals from organizations with the ability to administer a complex recruitment and selection process; develop and oversee academic Institutes at host universities around the

country; identify, coordinate, support, and monitor participant Internships; and to organize the Summit, among other responsibilities. Recipients may be public or private organizations that will provide sub-awards to up to 20 U.S. institutions of higher education to implement the Institutes. The recipient will serve as the lead administrator and will be responsible for the oversight of all aspects of this project. (Please see the attached POGI for more information).

Program Guidelines:

It is essential that proposals provide a detailed and comprehensive narrative describing the objectives of the overall program; details on the proposed host universities and colleges and their programs, curricula, and budgets; plans for the Summit, and specifics on the internship component. The academic institutions proposed as host colleges or universities for the Institutes should reflect regional and other diversity and should include public, private, urban, rural, and minority serving institutions. **ECA will provide applicants with a list of U.S. colleges and universities that have pre-committed to participate as**

host institution partners; ECA encourages applicants to incorporate these partners as host campuses for the program, as well as other colleges and universities, as needed.

Overall, proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their responsiveness to RFGP criteria listed in Section V. The accompanying Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document provides program-specific guidelines that all proposals must address fully.

Please note: In a Cooperative Agreement, ECA is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA will assume responsibilities for the Institute as indicated in the Program Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI) document. ECA may request that the recipient make modifications to the program. The recipient will be required to obtain approval of significant program changes in advance of their implementation.

Please see the POGI document for detailed budget 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: FY 2013 funds carried over into FY 2014 or transferred to ECA for obligation in FY 2014.

Approximate Total Funding: \$6,028,900

Approximate Number of Awards: One

Ceiling of Award Range: \$6,028,900

Anticipated Award Date: *November 29, 2013, pending availability of funds.*

Anticipated Project Completion Date: June 30, 2015

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. **Other Eligibility Requirements:**

Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchange programs be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates one award, in an amount up to \$6,028,900 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.

III.3. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: The model for this program will require a 1:1 cost-sharing model from the non-governmental sector for the academic Institutes.

Additional cost share may be necessary to carry out the program administration, Summit, and internships. All costs required to support the 20 Institutes that are not provided by ECA must be funded through cost-share from host universities or other sources.

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 include allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, the grant recipient 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.

IV. Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, ECA 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 Britta Bjornlund, BjornlundBS@state.gov, 202-632-3342, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E, SA-5, 4th floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0504, to request a

Solicitation Package. In addition, all potential applicants **must** contact Ms. Bjornlund for the list of pre-committed host institutions as mentioned previously in this solicitation and as discussed further in the POGI. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number **ECA-ECAAE-14-001** located at the top of this announcement when making your request.

Alternatively, 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 Britta Bjornlund and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number **ECA-ECAAE-14-001** 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 ECA's website at <http://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding/open-grant-solicitations>, 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, program-wide proposal narrative, proposal narratives and sample curricula for each host campus, a program-wide budget and individual budgets for each host campus.

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 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.

Applicants 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 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 award recipient organizations** must maintain current registration in GrantSolutions. Failure to register in GrantSolutions will render award recipient organizations ineligible from receiving funding. Award recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in GrantSolutions 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. If an organization is not already registered in GrantSolutions, they may register for it directly at <https://www.grantsolutions.gov/gs/homepage.gs>.

Support for Grantee Organizations when registering on GrantSolutions.gov is available from 8:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. EST, Monday through Friday, and can be reached via email (help@grantsolutions.gov) or phone at 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 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of the Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

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

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

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

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

Pursuant to the ECA'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," ECA "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. ECA 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. ECA 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.)

Recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to ECA 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 ECA 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.

Proposals must include 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 POGI for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

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

Application Deadline Date: August 23, 2013

Reference Number: ECA-ECAAE-14-001

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, 7 days a week

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

V. Application Review Information

REVIEW PROCESS

ECA will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and ECA regulations and guidelines and forwarded to ECA grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Department of State's Office of the Legal Adviser,

other Department of State elements, or other U.S. Government entities. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for cooperative agreements resides with ECA'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 Program Plan and Ability to Achieve Program

Objectives: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to ECA's mission. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should demonstrate clearly how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

2. **Support for Diversity:** Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of ECA's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, presenters, and resource materials).
3. **Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives.
4. **Cost-effectiveness/Cost-sharing:** 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. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through host institution (university) and other private sector support, as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

5. Institutional Track Record/Ability: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past ECA grants as determined by ECA Grants Staff. ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals.

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 ECA procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from ECA'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.

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: Recipients must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following reports: must provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

Mandatory:

- 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 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.

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.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to ECA 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 ECA upon request.

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

Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Britta Bjornlund, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchanges, 4th Floor, ECA-ECAAE-14-001 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, BjornlundBS@state.gov, 202-632-3342.

All correspondence with ECA concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number **ECA-ECAAE-14-001**.

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

Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any ECA representative.

Explanatory information provided by ECA that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. ECA 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

June 25, 2013

Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs

Department of State