

Department of State

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Notice of Funding Opportunity

(NOFO): FY 2019 Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0005453

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415

Key Date/Application Deadline: December 19, 2018

Program Description/Executive Summary: The Professional Fellows Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) invites proposal submissions for the FY 2019 Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean in support of the Young Leaders of the Americas Initiative (YLAI). The Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean is a two-way global exchange program designed to promote mutual understanding, enhance business development and leadership skills, and build a lasting and sustainable network of young business and social entrepreneurs across Latin America, the Caribbean, and the United States. The Program will support approximately 250 participants from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) in a five to six-week Fellowship program, including an orientation, a four to five-week individually tailored working placement in a U.S. business or organization complemented by entrepreneurial training and workshops, an end of program closing event, and follow-on alumni activities. The American outbound exchange component will support approximately 60 American participants traveling overseas for approximately two weeks to assist with the implementation of the YLAI Fellows' Action Plans, follow-on projects, and special initiatives.

YLAI is the U.S. Department of State's flagship program for emerging entrepreneurs and business leaders from Latin America and the Caribbean. YLAI empowers innovative business and social entrepreneurs to strengthen their capacity to launch and advance their entrepreneurial ideas and effectively contribute to social and economic development in their communities and countries. YLAI directly serves U.S. foreign policy objectives in LAC as defined by the National Security Strategy. For more information about YLAI visit <https://ylai.state.gov/>.

It is the Bureau's intent to award one cooperative agreement of up to \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds. For additional details on awards, please see Section B. "Federal Award Information" below. Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional consecutive fiscal years before openly competing it again.

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

ECA reserves the right to modify the composition of the final award and its funding levels based upon the quality of proposals submitted, the availability of funds and other factors impacting long-term foreign policy objectives.

A. Program Description:

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.

A.1. Purpose:

The FY 2019 Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean in support of YLAI (also known as the YLAI Professional Fellows Program) will bring approximately 250 young business and social entrepreneurs from Latin America and the Caribbean to the United States for a five- to six-week tailored fellowship program designed to improve their entrepreneurial and business skills, support long-term collaboration across the region, and promote lasting partnerships between Fellows and counterparts in the United States. Approximately 60 American participants from hosting institutions will travel to LAC countries to work with Fellows on individual or joint initiatives and promote long-term engagement.

A.2. Goals:

1. Promote mutual understanding and lasting partnerships between business and social entrepreneurs from Latin America and the Caribbean and the United States;
2. Strengthen the entrepreneurial and leadership skills of the YLAI Professional Fellows so they can achieve success—growing their business or organization in size and impact—and lead positive change in their workplaces, communities, and countries;
3. Provide opportunities, before, during and after the U.S.-based fellowship, for the YLAI Professional Fellows and U.S. participants to collaborate and share ideas, approaches, and strategies;
4. Foster business partnerships between emerging entrepreneurial entities in LAC with their counterparts in the United States;
5. Assist the YLAI Professional Fellows in identifying new resources, networks, and support for their businesses or organizations; and,
6. Create a network of business leaders committed to sound business practices, ethical management, corporate social responsibility, and community involvement.

A.3. Program Details:

The award recipient will be responsible for planning and administering all components and aspects of the YLAI Professional Fellows Program including orientations, a four to five-week individually tailored fellowship placement with appropriate U.S. organizations or businesses for approximately 250 Fellows; entrepreneurial training and workshops for all Fellows; a three to four-day Closing Forum in Washington, D.C.; alumni and follow-on activities; and an American outbound exchange component for approximately 60 American participants.

Each YLAI Professional Fellow will have a four to five-week custom-tailored professional development placement at a U.S. company or organization carefully matched to the participant's specific interests and professional goals. Host placement organizations could include start-ups, incubators or accelerators, established small or medium-sized enterprises, small business groups, associations or – for the social entrepreneurs – non-profit organizations, social enterprises, or local government offices. Host organizations should be chosen from across the United States. Placements should represent the diversity of the American business community and be comprised of a wide spectrum of business models including, but not limited to small and medium businesses, start-ups, and community-based enterprises. Host organizations and U.S. mentors should be willing and able to assist Fellows in developing concrete plans for scaling up their own businesses and/or social entrepreneurship projects. Every effort should be made to ensure the YLAI Professional Fellows are exposed to core values of American businesses and social enterprises such as corporate and social responsibility, business ethics, and volunteerism. The placements should be thoughtfully chosen to provide participants with experience, networks, and resources to strengthen their entrepreneurial skills, and opportunities for developing sustainable projects and building professional relationships with U.S. counterparts.

In order to foster collaboration among the participants and achieve consistency in the fellowship experience, participants will be grouped in cohorts. To promote peer learning and strong fellowship networks within each cohort, as well as to enhance the participants' business and entrepreneurial skills, all Fellows within a cohort will come together – in-person or virtually - for workshops, training, or other relevant activities focused on key aspects of entrepreneurial activity and skills needed for success. Proposed workshops, training, and activities must be organized according to a single entrepreneurship curriculum to ensure consistency of experience across the cohorts. Every effort must be made to provide opportunities for YLAI Fellows to learn from each other, both within cohorts, as well as across cohorts.

The three to four-day YLAI Closing Forum in Washington, D.C. will provide participants with the opportunity to showcase their initiatives, promote peer learning, network with leading figures in their field, and engage with thought leaders in business, government, and non-profit organizations.

Approximately 60 American participants from the YLAI host organizations will be competitively selected to travel for approximately two weeks to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean after the conclusion of the U.S.-based program. American Outbound Exchanges should directly support YLAI Professional Fellows business Action Plans, support long-term collaboration and engagement with YLAI alumnae, offer skills development sessions and workshops for a broader range of local participants, and promote the YLAI program to future participants.

The YLAI Program will also provide Fellows access to virtual resources, training, mentoring, and a platform to continue the projects they developed during their time in the United States and maximize the positive impact on their businesses, communities, and countries.

A.4. Program Components and Definitions:

1. Program Participants

“Program participants” are defined as those individuals who travel under award funding from their country of origin to a designated exchange country. For this NOFO, program participants are also referred to as “YLAI Professional Fellows” or “Fellows.” Americans participating in follow-on outbound exchanges are referred to as “American participants.”

Employees and family members of employees of the award recipient or of any sub-award recipients are not eligible to participate in the Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean and cannot be included as program participants.

2. Partner Organizations and Sub-Award Recipients

Applicant organizations that do not have an existing in-country presence in each target country must identify a foreign-based partner (ie: “in-country or in-region partner”) with whom they propose to collaborate. Foreign-based partners should be chosen in consultation with the Public Affairs Section in the applicant’s country, and must be approved by the Public Affairs Section in the applicant’s country.

Given that it is unlikely that any one organization will be able to secure 250 meaningful Fellowship placements in diverse communities across the United States, the award recipient may work with sub-award recipients to place Fellows in their fellowships and administer cohorts. Proposals must demonstrate capacity to secure effective and appropriate host placements for all YLAI Professional Fellows in the United States. Proposed sub-award recipients should be included in the proposal with letters of intent stating how placements will be secured and cohorts will be supported.

3. Recruitment and Selection of Fellows

The award recipient must develop an online program announcement and program application that eligible foreign professionals can access and submit online. The online application should include an “opt-in” function allowing applicants to register their

willingness to receive content and participate in online activities from the U.S. Department of State's YLAI Network.

In collaboration with ECA, the award recipient will recruit and select approximately 250 foreign Fellows from 36 countries in LAC: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela. ECA reserves the right to modify the final list of participating countries and the allocation of participant numbers by country in the FY2019 cooperative agreement and up to two subsequent renewal cooperative agreements.

ECA also reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets based on program needs and the availability of U.S. Government funding.

American Participants

The award recipient will select approximately 60 American participants in an open, merit-based, competitive process in consultation with ECA to travel to LAC countries in support of YLAI Fellows. American participants should be selected from host businesses and organizations or others who serve as mentors to the YLAI Professional Fellows. American participants must have significant engagement with one or more of the foreign Fellows during the U.S. fellowship component. Selected American participants should have expertise and experience to support YLAI Fellows' Action Plans, follow-on projects, special initiatives, and community engagement activities.

Foreign Fellows

Foreign Fellows must be selected through an open, merit-based, competitive process in consultation with ECA and the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the respective U.S. Embassies and Consulates ("posts") in relevant LAC countries. While PAS must be involved in participant selection and should interview candidates from a slate of eligible Fellows, full responsibility for recruitment coordination and implementation lies with the award recipient.

Proposals must demonstrate how a diverse cohort of Fellows will be recruited, including an appropriate balance of women, minorities, and marginalized populations, including individuals with disabilities. See reasonable accommodations section under allowable costs section for more information on individuals with disabilities.

Participant selection criteria for foreign Fellows must include the following:

- Emerging business or social entrepreneurs*, 25 to 35 years old, with a demonstrated track record of at least two years of recent or current (and

preferably successful) experience with either small and medium sized businesses or social ventures.

- Little or no experience in the United States; preference will be given to candidates who have not previously participated in U.S. Government programs or spent significant amounts of time in the United States.
- Participants must demonstrate a commitment to develop, enhance, or lead an existing or new venture. During the application process, successful candidates must provide a well-articulated business plan they will work to refine and for which they will seek support during their Fellowships.
- Business entrepreneurs should demonstrate the viability of their ventures through indicators such as: investment to date, expansion plans including current and planned number of employees, profits, social impact, and an overall track record of achievement in the field.
- Social entrepreneurs should be dedicated to one or more of the following areas: (1) alleviating unemployment; (2) creating positive alternatives and economic opportunities for at-risk youth; (3) increasing social inclusion and/or increasing availability of resources to marginalized populations; or (4) combatting corruption and/or enhancing security and stability.
- Demonstrated proficiency in both written and oral English. Participants must have “working-level knowledge of English” that has been verified by the award recipient.
- Self-directed and able to work effectively in a cross-cultural setting.

*In the context of this program “social entrepreneur” is defined as an individual who implements an innovative solution to a pressing social challenge employing a job-creating and/or revenue-generating business model. Such social enterprises can be for-profit or non-profit. “Business entrepreneur” is defined as a person who has successfully started his or her own for-profit business and has successfully maintained the business for at least two years.

4. YLAI Program Components for Foreign Fellows

The award recipient will design and implement a fellowship-based program that is five to six weeks in length. Key program elements must include:

1. A “pre-departure orientation” (PDO) in the YLAI Professional Fellows’ home countries before traveling to the United States;

2. A U.S.-based orientation for all 250 YLAI Professional Fellows in one location, as a launch for their fellowships;
3. A substantive four to five-week fellowship placement in the United States that is tailored to each YLAI Professional Fellow's work/interests;
4. Supplemental entrepreneurship and leadership training for all YLAI Professional Fellows within and across the cohorts;
5. Opportunity for Fellows to network and share lessons learned/best practices with other Fellows in their same or closely related industry throughout the Fellowship;
6. Assistance for each foreign YLAI Professional Fellow in developing an Action Plan to implement in their home country;
7. Upon conclusion of the four-week fellowship placement, a YLAI Closing Forum for all Fellows in Washington, D.C.;
8. A debrief with U.S. Embassy representatives upon return to home country;
9. A well-articulated plan for post-fellowship engagement with the foreign YLAI Professional Fellows, including public promotion of YLAI success stories; and
10. A program evaluation.

Program activities in the United States for foreign YLAI Professional Fellows should also, if possible, include a volunteer/community service element and meetings with Congressional or local government representatives. Also, every effort should be made for the foreign YLAI Professional Fellows to engage with a diverse, wide range of U.S. citizens regarding their work and their home country, such as through community/school presentations, business networking events, media interviews, etc.

5. U.S. Fellowship Placements

The award recipient and/or sub-award recipients must secure, at least one month in advance of the YLAI Professional Fellows arriving in the United States, a substantive fellowship placement tailored to the individual Fellow's professional goals. Placements must be a minimum of four weeks in length. The purpose of the placement is to provide YLAI Fellows with a professional development program that includes direct experience with the day-to-day workings of a U.S. workplace, the opportunity to develop professional relationships with U.S. counterparts, and support in developing a concrete Action Plan that Fellows can implement in their home countries. The U.S. Department of State requires one placement for the entire fellowship period (rather than multiple, short-term placements with different U.S. organizations). Depending on the size of the host organization, up to two Fellows may be placed at one host organization. Proposals should include a clear plan for how the award recipient and/or sub-award recipients will recruit and select U.S. fellowship placement businesses and organizations.

6. U.S. Hosts/Mentors

To ensure that each foreign Fellow has a substantive professional experience, each fellowship placement organization must designate one person within their organization, who understands the goals and objectives of YLAI, to serve as a host/mentor for the Fellow throughout the duration of the four to five-week placement. Proposals should include a clear plan for how designated hosts/mentors will be identified for each fellow.

7. Post-Fellowship Action Plans

Proposals should describe how the award recipient will work with each Fellow and his/her U.S. host/mentor on the development of the Fellows' Action Plan and on implementation of the Action Plan after the Fellow returns to his/her home country. Proposals should include a timeline for the Fellows to create drafts and final versions of their Action Plan, as well as progress report deadlines the Fellows will follow to update the award recipient.

8. Cohorts and Entrepreneurial Training and Workshops

To ensure a successful exchange experience, promote collaboration between fellows, and enhance their skills, all Fellows must be divided into cohorts. Cohorts may be administered by the awardee or by sub-award recipients. Cohorts can be led by a business incubator, university, or other appropriate organization. All members of the cohort must come together – virtually or in person - for workshops focused on entrepreneurial and leadership skills. Workshops must provide participants with opportunities to network with each other and American business leaders (or successful social entrepreneurs). Workshops should address cross-cultural adjustment issues, and offer practical training that will help Fellows complete their Action Plans and achieve their individual entrepreneurial goals. In addition to their cohort affiliation, Fellows must be provided with an opportunity to network and share lessons learned/best practices with other Fellows in their same or closely related industry throughout the Fellowship.

The workshops for all the cohorts will be shaped by a single entrepreneurship curriculum to ensure consistency of experience for all Fellows. All the workshops should be designed for experienced business and social entrepreneurs with a record of success, and placed within the appropriate cultural context. Content should not be too basic or theoretical as to be irrelevant to the Fellows.

Topics for trainings and workshops might include:

- Strategic planning; vision and goal setting
- Public speaking and developing a pitch
- Managing staff
- Marketing
- Social media best practices
- Business growth and scaling
- Accountability, transparency, and ethics
- Intellectual property rights
- Public-private partnerships
- Corporate social responsibility and social entrepreneurship
- Incubator or accelerator
- Building an online brand
- Funding through venture capitalists, crowdfunding, and angel investors
- Bootstrapping and noncommercial financing
- Linking to international supply chains

- The shared economy and emerging markets

9. Online Component

The award recipient will be responsible for developing a robust online community that will have four main functions: (1) link all the YLAI Fellows and their host organizations together virtually throughout their stay in the United States and afterwards; (2) serve as an additional source of information on how to be a successful entrepreneur, supplementing the professional placement and the workshops; (3) provide the Fellows (business entrepreneurs as well as social entrepreneurs) with a platform to showcase their Action Plans and initiatives; and (4) serve as a source of content on YLAI success stories that can be used in reporting and recruitment. The online platform used to develop this community must be mobile responsive.

10. YLAI Closing Forum

The award recipient will be responsible for planning and implementing a YLAI Closing Forum in Washington, D.C. at the end of the U.S. Fellowship placements. All 250 Fellows will convene for a closing event to share lessons learned, deepen connections with one another, and meet U.S. leaders from the private, public, and non-profit sectors. The Forum is also an opportunity for cohort leaders (which could be sub-award recipients) to exchange best practices and ideas for future programming. Cohort leaders will participate in a debriefing session with ECA program staff.

The Closing Forum will occur over the course of three to four days and should include the following aspects: (1) interaction among Fellows and senior U.S. government officials, U.S. business leaders, and members of the diplomatic community from the Fellows home countries; (2) inspirational speeches from distinguished United States, Latin American, or Caribbean leaders and/or business people; (3) opportunities for Fellows to engage with each other formally and informally; (4) opportunities for Fellows to showcase their Action Plans and attract support and resources for their business or organization; (5) workshops and seminars that further complement and reinforce the entrepreneurship and leadership concepts explored during the program; (6) information sharing on alumni and follow-on activities; and (7) a program evaluation.

ECA will be responsible for arranging meetings with key stakeholders within the U.S. Department of State and securing a formal reception at the State Department in the Diplomatic Reception rooms for the closing event. Proposals should include funding for the formal State Department reception.

11. Outbound Program for American Participants

The outbound programs should be approximately two weeks in length and include substantive activities for the American participants traveling to the participating countries. American participants will be selected in an open, merit-based, competitive process in consultation with the Professional Fellows Division in ECA. American participants will be primarily selected from those individuals who serve as placement hosts/mentors to the YLAI Fellows at the U.S. fellowship placement organizations and

who had significant engagement with the YLAI Fellow placed in their organization during the U.S. fellowship period. Americans should apply collaboratively with the YLAI Fellow they hosted. The YLAI Fellow should be deeply involved in the development of the outbound phase of the program, including the conceptualization, scheduling, and implementation of the program. Outbound proposals that involve programming conceived in collaboration with the local U.S. Embassy or Consulate will be given priority. American participants must have experience pertaining to the YLAI Fellows' individual Action Plans, in order to assist the YLAI Fellows to meet their Action Plan goals.

The American outbound component, at a minimum must:

- Be substantive in nature. Applications for the American outbound program must contain a draft schedule of proposed activities, meetings, and/or trainings that cover the duration of the exchange;
- Build on the U.S. fellowship component and support YLAI Fellows' individual projects;
- Provide direct opportunities for the American participants to implement joint programming with the YLAI Fellows and their colleagues;
- Support U.S. foreign policy objectives, and advance the Professional Fellows Program goal of building sustainable and lasting professional partnerships.

Proposals should include a sample application, a timeline, and describe the selection process for the American outbound components.

The award recipient will prepare for ECA and the relevant U.S. Embassies/Consulates review a proposed slate of American outbound participants with summary information including biographical data of participants, proposed destination cities, a draft agenda, and clear timeline for each project. The selection process must allow ample time for ECA and the U.S. Embassies/Consulates review and approval of American participants.

While the ECA award will support the travel of up to 60 American participants, the recipient is strongly encouraged to cost-share travel for additional participants working on joint initiatives with YLAI Fellows.

12. Collaboration with the Public Affairs Section at U.S. Embassies

The award recipient will need to work closely with the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the respective Embassies in the YLAI target countries to develop plans for program implementation, including the recruitment and selection of foreign Fellows and participation of PAS staff in various in-country program activities. U.S. participants will likely be subject matter experts on issues pertinent to U.S. foreign policy objectives. American outbound participants may take part in public diplomacy outreach organized by PAS, thereby amplifying the impact of the exchange. The proposal should address plans for maintaining a close working relationship with the Public Affairs Section throughout the life of the award, and creative approaches to expanding the impact of the American outbound component.

13. Pre-Departure Orientation and Arrival Orientation

The award recipient will be responsible for conducting a pre-departure orientation (PDO) for both the foreign YLAI Professional Fellows and American participants. For American participants, PDOs must cover relevant safety and cross-cultural issues, and require all participants to register with the Embassy(ies) where they will be traveling through the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program at <https://step.state.gov/step/>.

PDOs for the YLAI Fellows, prior to departing their home country, must be coordinated with each participant's Public Affairs Section. The award recipient must conduct an orientation for all Fellows in one location upon arrival in the United States. For YLAI Fellows, the PDO and arrival orientation should cover, at a minimum:

- travel logistics, including arrival information, medical health plan, and J-1 visa regulations;
- project goals, programmatic expectations, performance measurement;
- proposed U.S. placements;
- a detailed program schedule covering the entire fellowship period, including program activities and deadlines, information about the community where each Fellow will be located, volunteer activities, and the YLAI Closing Forum;
- materials regarding the U.S. business landscape and entrepreneurship; and,
- a briefing on cross-cultural issues including day-to-day considerations of living and working in the United States including professional standards of conduct.

14. Debrief with Embassy Representatives upon Return to Home Country

Proposals should include a plan for a scheduled debrief between Fellows and Embassy staff shortly after the Fellows return to their home countries.

15. Post-Fellowship Support

Proposals should include concrete plans for sustainable engagement between Fellows and host businesses and organizations. Proposals should clearly articulate how the award recipient will track and provide ECA with regular updates on successful business and social outcomes resulting from the YLAI program.

16. Alumni Programming

The proposal should include a defined strategy for alumni engagement with the Fellows that supports U.S. foreign policy goals. The proposal must include:

1. an outline of proposed activities for alumni engagement;
2. strategies to connect new YLAI alumni with alumni from previous years professionally, nationally, and regionally;
3. a description of how long-term linkages within the alumni community will be encouraged, coordinated, and integrated into existing State Department initiatives.

A.6. Key Administrative Elements

1. Visas for Entry into the United States and Foreign Countries

To procure U.S. visas for the foreign Fellows, the primary award recipient will work with ECA and PAS at the respective U.S. Embassy. The award recipient will need to collect and submit to ECA all required biographical information on the YLAI Professional Fellows that is necessary to complete the DS-2019 form required for their J-1 visas. To procure foreign visas for the American participants, if necessary, the primary award recipient will work directly with the respective foreign embassy in the United States.

2. International Air Travel

The award recipient must comply with all federal regulations regarding the use of U.S. government funds including the Fly America Act. These regulations apply to both U.S. and foreign travelers.

3. Projected Program Timeline

ECA envisions the Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean calendar as follows:

Spring 2019	Application period for YLAI Professional Fellows
June – July 2019	Initial review of applications
August 2019	Semi-finalist applications circulated for review
September 2019	Interviews conducted
October 2019	Announcement of selected participants and alternates
November – January 2020	DS-2019s issued, visa interviews
Spring 2020	YLAI Professional Fellows in the U.S.
April or May 2020	Closing Forum in Washington, D.C.
Summer 2020	American outbound exchanges begin

A.7. Program Responsibilities

ECA’s Level of Involvement: In a cooperative agreement, the Professional Fellows Division is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. The Professional Fellows Division’s activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

1. Participate and provide guidance in the design, direction, and execution of all program components and activities;

2. Approve key personnel and any changes that are made to dedicated YLAI staff;
3. Approve and provide input on recruitment materials, applications, program timelines and agendas;
4. Approve sub-award recipients, partner organizations, and fellowship placements;
5. Approve the final selection of all foreign Fellows and U.S. participants;
6. Approve decisions related to special circumstances or problems throughout the duration of the program, including assisting with participant emergencies;
7. Liaise with Public Affairs Section staff at the U.S. embassies and consulates, country desk officers, and other offices at the State Department particularly in terms of recruitment, selection, web-based publicity efforts, and opening and closing events.
8. Approve the final participants from the slate recommended by the U.S. Embassies and/or Consulates;
9. Work with award recipient to publicize the program through various media outlets (such as the social media platforms of ECA and PAS), including approving all program publicity, outreach efforts, and other materials;
10. Assist in the coordination of the Closing Forum in Washington, D.C. including arranging meetings with key stakeholders within the U.S. Department of State and securing a formal reception at the State Department in the Diplomatic Reception rooms.
11. Monitor and evaluate the program through regular communication with the award recipient, meetings, site visits, and debriefing sessions; and liaise with ECA's Office of Evaluation and the award recipient.

Award Recipient Responsibilities will include but are not limited to the following:

1. In close collaboration with ECA, design, plan, implement, monitor, and evaluate a two-way international exchange program for approximately 60 American participants and 250 YLAI Professional Fellows, young business and social entrepreneurs from the LAC region (Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Aruba, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Curacao, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Maarten, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela), that will strengthen the participants' entrepreneurial and leadership skills and provide them with opportunities to network and collaborate. ECA reserves the right to add, decrease or modify the specific countries, based on the availability of funds and other factors;
2. Provide a plan that defines the nature and extent of services required by any sub-award recipient(s). Note: The primary award recipient is responsible for ensuring the compliance of all sub-award recipients in meeting the requirements of the cooperative agreement.
3. Include potential sub-award recipients in the original proposal and provide a letter of intent from each;

4. In collaboration with ECA, organize a workshop(s) for sub-award recipients/cohort leaders to discuss program objectives, roles and responsibilities, guidance on fellowship placements, entrepreneurship and leadership training, and other activities to ensure consistency and quality across all host cities. ECA must approve workshop content in advance and be invited to participate in all workshops;
5. Develop a robust recruitment strategy that targets a diverse group of eligible individuals and adheres to ECA's goals for a merit-based open competition;
6. Identify or develop a web-based platform that can seamlessly collect and share applicant information with ECA;
7. Develop a transparent review process to assess candidate applications. The award recipient will work closely with ECA on the development and implementation of review criteria and keep ECA informed about its application and assessment process;
8. In coordination with U.S. Embassies and Consulates, arrange in-person or virtual English language interviews for semi-finalists during the second round of the selection process;
9. Conduct pre-departure orientations (virtual or otherwise) for finalists in home countries, answering their questions on programmatic issues, including, but not limited to, Fellowship placements, program responsibilities and expectations, travel, accident and sickness benefits, housing, etc.;
10. Utilize the Web and other outreach tools to facilitate communication among newly selected finalists and host organizations prior to their arrival in the United States, including the posting of program and community resources, pre-program assignments, and personal travel logs;
11. Create programmatic guidelines and materials for U.S. host businesses and organizations. The award recipient should provide a virtual orientation for U.S. host institutions that clearly outlines hosting roles and responsibilities;
12. Issue participant DS-2019 forms and ship to the applicable embassies or consulates for all international participants and alternates. All international participants will travel on a U.S. government designation for the J-1 Visa Exchange Visitor program;
13. Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) for the duration of the program, issue health benefits identifications cards, and assist with claims as necessary. More information on ASPE is available at <https://www.sevencorners.com/gov/usdos>;
14. Arrange round-trip travel for Fellows from their home cities to the United States;
15. Arrange all international and domestic travel and local transportation for all Fellows and U.S. participants;
16. Develop a standardized (common) entrepreneurship curriculum and organize entrepreneurial training for all YLAI Professional Fellows;
17. Monitor participants and the performance of host institutions for the duration of the Fellowship;
18. Work closely with foreign Fellows in the design and implementation of U.S. participants' outbound travel program;
19. In close coordination with ECA, design, plan, implement, and evaluate the YLAI

Closing Forum to be held in Washington, D.C. for approximately 350 people, including all 250 YLAI Fellows, one representative for each cohort, grantee staff, speakers, facilitators, DOS and other invited guests.

20. Evaluate the Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean and its impact on foreign and U.S. participants during their fellowship program and after they return to their home countries. Evaluation plans should include how the award recipient will capture results of the foreign Fellows' Action Plans and how and when those results will be reported to ECA; work closely with the program office and ECA's Office of Evaluation to assure coordination of evaluation efforts as much as possible so as not to over-burden participants with redundant or overlapping survey instruments/questions;
21. Consult closely with ECA on developing a comprehensive outreach strategy for highlighting foreign Fellow achievements while in the United States and after their return home, and the program impact on U.S. participants, including through the use of online and other social media platforms;
22. Manage financial aspects of the program (including timely disbursement of participant stipends, housing allowances, accident and sickness benefits, hosting agreements, and other activity costs) and promptly report any irregularities in the budget or spending to ECA;
23. Submit a travel plan to ECA for approval for all proposed domestic and international travel of award recipient staff and sub-award recipients;
24. Participate in a pre-, mid-, and post-program review with ECA (in person, by telephone, or video-conference) to identify any programmatic and/or budgetary matters of concern;
25. Provide monthly programmatic, financial and statistical information to ECA outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the previous month and anticipated programmatic activities to be conducted in the coming month;
26. Respond fully and promptly to ad hoc requests for program information from ECA;
27. Ensure compliance with the terms of the Cooperative Agreement with ECA, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight; and
28. Develop a post-program support plan to provide ongoing support (networking, mentorship) to Fellows for the year following the completion of their Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean.

B. Federal Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under A. Program Description.

Fiscal Year Funds: 2019

Approximate Total Funding: \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds.

Approximate Number of Awards: 1 (one)

Approximate Average Award: \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds.

Floor of Award Range: none

Ceiling of Award Range: \$5,000,000, pending the availability of FY 2019 funds.

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds, May 15, 2019

Anticipated Project Completion Date: May 15, 2021

Additional Information: 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.

Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this cooperative agreement for two additional consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

C. Eligibility Information:

C.1. Eligible applicants: Applications may be submitted by U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3).

C.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 the Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. 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.

C.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:

a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to \$130,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates making one award, in an amount \$5,000,000 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.

b.) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the following or they will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

Eligible applicants may not submit more than one proposal in this competition. If more than one proposal is received from the same applicant, all submissions will be declared technically ineligible and will receive 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.

D. Application and Submission Information:

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

D.1. Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact Della Hareland in the Professional Fellows Division, ECA/PE/PF, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, phone: (202) 632-9372, email HarelandD@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package.

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

Please specify ECA Program Officer Della Hareland and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

D.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <https://eca.state.gov/organizational-funding> or from the Grants.gov website at <https://www.grants.gov>.

D.2a. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.3p. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

D.3a. Unique Entity Identifier Number: You are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) 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 UEI number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a UEI number, access <http://www.dnb.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your UEI (Data Universal Numbering System or DUNS) number is included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is part of the formal application package. For more detailed instructions for obtaining a UEI (DUNS) number, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-1-obtain-duns-number.html>

D.3b. Required Proposal Elements: 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 for additional formatting and technical requirements.

PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the Application Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

Online Forms

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, “Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs”
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

1. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary should be one page in length and include: the project title, the goals of the project, the names of all potential sub-award recipients responsible for project implementation.

2. Proposal Narrative

In 20, double-spaced pages, the proposal narrative should include/address all items **specifically referenced in this NOFO, in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)**, and those items noted below:

3. Project Goals, Objectives, Anticipated Outcomes

Proposals should include a clear, succinct statement of project goals, objectives, and anticipated outcomes that expand upon the YLAI goals stated in Section A.2. of this NOFO. Objectives should be described in specific, measurable, and realistic terms that are achievable within the scope of the project, both in terms of time and funding.

4. Background Information on the applicant organization, sub award recipients, and partner organizations (both U.S.-based organizations and foreign-based organizations)

For each organization, the mission, the date of establishment, relevant expertise, past programmatic work, and ongoing programmatic work should be described. Previous awards from the Bureau since 2004 (especially those involving the exchange of young professionals), including both grants and cooperative agreements, should be listed by office (Citizen Exchanges, International Visitors, Academic Exchanges, etc.), project name, countries, year, and amount. Proposals should describe previous collaboration with proposed partner organizations, as well as clearly delineate a division of responsibilities between all organizations that will be involved in the program.

5. A Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Proposals should describe in detail the applicant organization's proposed approach for monitoring and evaluation. For further guidance, please see Section D.3j "Program Monitoring and Evaluation." Detailed evaluation plans that put the narrative over the 20-page limit and sample evaluation surveys or other evaluation tools may be included as an attachment.

6. Budget

For more budget information including specific allowable costs, refer to both Section D.3m as well as the PSI. Proposals should describe how the award recipient will conduct budget oversight as it relates to project management. In addition, proposals must include a detailed budget narrative.

7. Attachments

The items below should be included as attachments. Please label each attachment in a clear and concise manner (i.e. Program Management Plan; Letters of Support, etc.).

- A Project Management Plan for the entire life of the project that lists, in table format, outputs (major tasks that will be implemented by the award recipient and partner organizations), dates, and the organization/staff responsible;
- Letters of intent from proposed sub-award recipients; letters of commitment and/or letters of support from foreign partner organizations and proposed fellowship placement businesses and organizations;
- Resumes (no more than two pages in length) of proposed key staff at the applicant organization and all proposed sub-award recipients that will be involved in the implementation of the project; and
- Draft program implementation materials including but not limited to the application for the foreign YLAI Professional Fellow, outline of the U.S. fellowship program schedule including the Closing Forum, the application for the American Outbound program and sample schedule, the program announcement, the agenda for the pre-departure orientation and the arrival orientation, and materials on any other key program elements.

D.3c. Required Registration with the System for Award Management (SAM): All federal award applicants must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain current registrations in the 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. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts. Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:

<https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html>

D.3d. Non-Profit Status: You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** All applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, 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.

D.3e. FFATA Report: 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.

D.3f. Verifying Non-Profit Status: 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.

D.3g. Required Registration with SAMS Domestic: All ECA award recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories must be registered with the U.S.

Department of State's SAMS Domestic by accessing <https://mygrants.service-now.com> and clicking the "create an account" link. SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). Recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories that have previously used SAMS Domestic as a U.S. Department of State award recipient do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Recipient Organizations and recipient contacts and signatories is available 24 hours, 7 days a week (except federal holidays), and can be reached at 1-888-313-ILMS (4567) or through the ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsism.service-now.com/ilms/home>.

In the event the ILMS Help Desk is unable to provide you with assistance in a timely manner, please contact ECA_SAMSDomestic@state.gov and copy the program officer associated with the solicitation.

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

D.3h. 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 NOFO, 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 NOFO 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 award 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://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
SA-4E (Bldg. 3)
2430 E Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.3i. Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines: Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. 'Diversity' should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity will enhance the program's goals and objectives and the participants' exchange experience. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support of Diversity' section of this document as well as the DIVERSITY, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY section in the "Proposal Submission Instructions" document for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

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

D.3j. 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 NOFO.

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 NOFO (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**, such as 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.

D.3k. 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.

D.3l. Communications Guidance for ECA Grant Recipients: All ECA Grant Recipients must adhere to the requirements in [ECA's Communications Guidance](#) on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

D.3m. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

D.3n. Applicants must submit SF-424A – “Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs” along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. Budget requests may not exceed \$5,000,000. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

D.3o. Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- 1) Travel: International and domestic airfare; airline baggage and seat fees; visas for U.S. travelers; transit costs; ground transportation costs. Please note that all air travel must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. There is no charge for J-1 visas for foreign participants in Bureau-sponsored projects.
- 2) Per Diem: For U.S.-based programming, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287>. ECA requests applicants to budget realistic costs that reflect the local economy and do not exceed Federal per diem rates. Foreign per diem rates can be accessed at: https://aoprals.state.gov/web920/per_diem.asp

- 3) Book and Cultural Allowances: Participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a book allowance of \$50. Interpreters should be reimbursed up to \$150 for expenses when they escort participants to cultural events. U.S. project staff, trainers or participants are not eligible to receive these benefits.
- 4) Consultants: Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Honoraria rates should not exceed \$250 per day per session. Organizations encouraged to cost-share rates that would exceed that figure. Sub-award recipient organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the prospective award recipient and sub-award recipient should be included in the proposal. Such sub-awards should detail the division of responsibilities and proposed costs, and subcontracts should be itemized in the budget. Contractors/contracting organizations may also be employed in which case the written agreement between the award recipient and the contractors/contracting organizations should be included in the proposal.
- 5) Administrative Costs: Costs necessary for the effective administration of the project may include salaries for employees, benefits, and other direct and indirect costs per detailed instructions in the PSI. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to project costs, proposals in which the administrative costs do not exceed 28% of the total requested ECA funds will be deemed more competitive under the cost effectiveness and cost sharing criterion at Section E.1 Review Criteria below. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner and other sources. Travel of primary award recipient staff or sub-award recipient staff should NOT be included in the exchange participant numbers.
- 6) Reasonable Accommodations: Organizations should budget for the reasonable accommodations of participating individuals with disabilities. Proposals may allocate up to 5 - 7% of the total requested ECA award funds for this purpose.
- 7) Pre-departure Orientation: Travel to the Pre-departure location(s); ground transportation to and from the airport to the orientation(s) site; food and lodging for all Fellows, adequate meeting space; travel from orientation to fellowship sites.
- 8) Arrival Orientation: International travel to the U.S.-based orientation location; ground transportation to and from the airport to the orientation site; food and lodging for Fellows, adequate conference meeting space for approximately 350 participants (Fellows, grantee staff, speakers, facilitators, DOS staff, other invited guests); travel from orientation to fellowship sites.
- 9) Fellowships: Lodging, per diem, transportation, and other necessary program-related expenses the Fellows may incur while at their fellowship sites.
- 10) Cohort entrepreneurial training sessions: Training materials, trainers, meeting space/equipment rental, etc.

- 11) YLAI Closing Forum: Travel to Washington, D.C; ground transportation to and from the airport to the conference hotel; food and lodging for Fellows for a three to four-day conference, adequate conference space for approximately 350 participants (Fellows, grantee staff, speakers, facilitators, DOS staff, other invited guests); international travel from forum to home country.
- 12) U.S. Participant follow-on travel: Travel, ground transportation, lodging, per diem, for approximately 60 U.S. participants for 10 to 15 days in relevant LAC countries.
- 13) Room Rental: The rental of meeting space should not exceed \$250 per day per activity. Any rates that exceed this amount should be cost shared.
- 14) Materials: Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for fellows. Costs for high quality translation of materials should be anticipated and included in the budget.
- 15) Supplies: Applicants may propose to use award funds to purchase supplies, such as computers and printers; supply costs should be justified in the budget narrative. Costs for furniture are not allowed.
- 16) Working Meal: One working meal may be provided during U.S.-based and foreign-based components. Per capita costs for working meals may not exceed \$45/person, excluding room rental and other overhead charges. The number of invited guests may not exceed fellows by more than a factor of two-to-one.
- 17) Return Travel Allowance: A return travel allowance of \$70 for each foreign participant may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.
- 18) Re-Entry Seminars: Costs related to providing foreign participants a re-entry seminar may include per diem, hotel accommodations, material development, and other related expenses.
- 19) Health and Travel Insurance: The award recipient will be responsible for working with ECA to ensure that both foreign Fellows and American participants traveling on overseas for outbound projects are enrolled in the ECA-sponsored Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE). The premium is paid by ECA and should not be included in the proposal budget. Applicants may include costs for travel insurance for both foreign Fellows and American participants in the budget.
- 20) Wire Transfer Fees: When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to foreign-based partner organizations. The primary award recipient is urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.

- 21) In-Country Travel Costs for Visa Processing Purposes: U.S. visas for Fellows are provided by DOS and should not be included in the budget. Given the requirements associated with obtaining J-1 visas for ECA-supported participants, applicants should include costs for any travel associated with procuring visas, including travel for interviews, delivering or picking up passports, etc.
- 22) Post-program support: Up to \$500,000 to provide ongoing support to YLAI Professional Fellows through a continuum of networking and mentorship for the year following the completion of their Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- 23) Alumni Activities: Reasonable costs related to alumni activities may be included. The proposal must include an outline of any proposed follow-on activities. Proposals should also demonstrate how the recipient organization will creatively utilize technology and online networking sites to enhance and amplify alumni programming. Organizations can propose small grants or a small grant competition for the Fellows to compete for to encourage their continued work on and implementation of their individual Action Plans.
- 24) Organizational Workshop(s): Award recipients and sub-award recipients who will need to travel for the organizational workshop(s) should budget appropriately for travel, lodging, meals, and incidental expenses.

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

D.3p. Application Deadline and Method of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: Wednesday, December 19, 2018

Method of Submission: Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the “Search Grants” portion of the system.

D.3q. Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures

Eligible organizations should follow the instructions available in the ‘Get Started’ portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>).

How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Applicants should read instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or

determine their registration status with Grants.gov. Organization applicants can find complete instructions here: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html>

How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov

For access to complete instruction on how to apply for Notice of Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html>

Grants.gov Support and Submission Issues

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission issues 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

Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission

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.

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

Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgement of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Please also be mindful of any Grants.gov generated error messages that may appear during the application process as they may result in some documents not transmitting correctly.

Applicants using slow internet, such as dial-up connections, should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports

that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

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 "Applicant FAQs" 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. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

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. Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.

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.

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

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

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 U.S. 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. All awards will be assessed for risk prior to their issuance. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the U.S. Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

E.1. 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 Objectives:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and directly link to the goals of the Special Professional Fellows Program for Latin America and the Caribbean, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. Proposals should demonstrate a realistic and achievable scope that fits within the budgetary and time parameters set forth in the NOFO. Proposals that secure one fellowship placement during the exchange rather than multiple, short-term placements with different U.S. organizations will be deemed more competitive under the Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives review criterion. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how project objectives and key project elements, especially the development and implementation of individual projects by the foreign fellows, will be achieved through programmatic activities.
- 2. Support of Diversity:** Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity and describe how that policy will be integrated into all aspects of the program including but not limited to selection of fellows, fellowship placements, program materials, training methodology, etc. Applicants should demonstrate readiness to accommodate fellows with physical disabilities. Applicants should refer to the Bureau's "Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines" in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).
- 3. Institutional Capacity and Track Record:** Proposals should include (1) the institution's mission and date of establishment; (2) detailed information about proposed partners including a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities; (3) an outline of prior awards, U.S. government and/or private support received, for programs of a similar nature; and (4) descriptions and resumes of key staff who will implement the program. The proposal should reflect the institution's expertise in the subject area and an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.
- 4. 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. Proposals should include draft evaluation instruments, such as surveys and questionnaires, plus a description of a methodology that will be used to link outcomes to original project objectives. Recipients must be prepared to work closely with the program office and ECA's Office of Evaluations to assure coordination of evaluation efforts as much as possible so as not to over-burden participants with redundant or overlapping survey instruments/questions.
- 5. 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. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to project costs, proposals in which the administrative costs do not exceed 28% of the total requested ECA funds will be deemed more competitive under the Cost Effectiveness and Cost Sharing review criterion. 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.

- 6. Multiplier Effect/Follow-on Activities/Alumni Engagement:** Proposals should discuss provisions made for follow-up with returned participants as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages. Proposals also should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without ECA support) ensuring that ECA supported programs are not isolated events. Emphasis should be placed on how the program will cultivate and provide support for a network of business leaders.

F. Federal Award Administration Information

F.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 transmitted 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.

F.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements: Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following: Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Effective December 26, 2014, replacing the previous circulars).

For a copy of the OMB Guidance cited, please contact the U.S. Government Publishing Office or download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

Please reference the following websites for additional information:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb>
<https://www.state.gov/m/a/ope/index.htm>

F.3. Reporting Requirements: You 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 complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the Recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this Cooperative Agreement/Grant in the U.S. Department of State's [SAMS Domestic](#). SAMS Domestic is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system, which is replacing GrantSolutions.gov, and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). For assistance, please contact the U.S. Department of State's ILMS Help Desk at 1-888-313-4567 (toll free for US callers) or through the U.S. Department of State's ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsitsm.service-now.com/ilms/home>. 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/>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the Recipient must upload the approved report to [SAMS Domestic](#), in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the Recipient's eligibility for future Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

In the event you are having difficulty uploading reports and the ILMS help desk is not providing sufficient assistance, please email ECA_SAMSDomestic@state.gov.

- 2.) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration or termination of the award;
- 3.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This report should be e-mailed to: FFATAECA@state.gov. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USA Spending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.3j. 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.

F.4. Program Data Requirements: Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:

- 1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.
- 2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

G. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Della Hareland, U.S. Department of State, Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division, SA-5, 3rd Floor, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20037, phone: (202) 632-9372, fax: (202) 632-9355, email: HarelandD@state.gov

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

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

H. Other Information:**Notice:**

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO 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 NOFO 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 F3. Reporting Requirements above.

Jennifer Zimdahl Galt
Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State

October 17, 2018