

only be awarded to eligible organizations with four years or more experience in conducting international exchange programs.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as a break-down reflecting both the administrative budget and the program budget. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete formatting instructions. For better understanding or further clarification, applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity in order to facilitate USIA decisions on funding.

Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- (1) International travel (via American flag carrier);
- (2) Domestic travel for foreign participants only;
- (3) Travel and lodging for academic or professional meetings (not to exceed \$700 per participant);
- (4) Stipend/Maintenance costs;
- (5) Housing;
- (6) Materials allowance/curriculum translation (not interpretation);
- (7) Orientation costs;
- (8) Insurance;

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines.

Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will also be reviewed by the program office, the appropriate geographic area office, the USIA post overseas, and the budget and contracts office. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the USIA Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA grants officer.

Review Criteria

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

1. Quality of the program idea—Proposals should reflect academic rigor and excellence, thorough conception of project, demonstration of meeting

participants' needs, contributions to partner country, proposed follow-up, and qualifications of program staff and participants.

2. Program planning—Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

3. Ability to achieve program objectives—Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the organization will meet the program's objectives and plan.

4. Multiplier effect/impact—Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

5. Support of diversity—Proposals should demonstrate the substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities). Proposals should demonstrate organizational capacity to recruit from and place program participants in areas outside Moscow and St. Petersburg and countries in the NIS outside the Russian Federation.

6. Organizational capacity—Proposed personnel and organizational resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals.

7. Organization's record/ability—Proposals should demonstrate an organizational record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Agency grants as determined by USIA's Office of Contracts. The Agency will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

8. Follow-on activities—Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without USIA support) which insures that USIA supported programs are not isolated events.

9. Project evaluation—Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended. Award-receiving

organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

10. Cost-effectiveness—The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate.

11. Cost-sharing—Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as organizational direct funding contributions.

12. Value to U.S.-partner country relations—Proposed programs should receive positive assessments by USIA's geographic area desk and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner country(ies).

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.

Notification

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: April 12, 1996.

Dell Pendergrast,

Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 96-9597 Filed 4-17-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

Foreign Language and Area Studies—U.S. Students and Scholars; Request for Proposals

ACTION: Notice—Request for Proposals.

SUMMARY: The Office of Academic Programs of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c)(3)-1 may apply to develop and administer programs in

cooperation with USIA that will assist U.S. citizens who are graduate students and postdoctoral scholars in North African, Middle Eastern and South Asian studies. Activities permitted under this program include foreign language training, foreign area studies and foreign area research for periods ranging from two to twenty-four months abroad.

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 cited above is provided through the Near and Middle East Research and Training Act (Pub. L. 102-138 section 228 as amended by Pub. L. 103-236 section 233).

Programs and projects must conform with Agency requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package. USIA projects and programs are subject to the availability of funds.

For the purpose of this program, the geographic area refers to the region consisting of countries and peoples covered by the Bureau of Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs of the U.S. Department of State as of October 1991, and Turkey.

Current eligible locales for overseas research are: Mauritania, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, the West Bank and Gaza, Jordan, Syria, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, Yemen, Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal.

Funding of proposals for the above places is subject to official security and/or travel restrictions.

NMERTA grantees are required to provide proof of insurance to the grant-making organizations before fellowship funds can be released. Health and accident, MEDEVAC and repatriation insurance is recommended.

ANNOUNCEMENT TITLE AND NUMBER: All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the above title and reference number E/AEN-96-01.

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on Friday, May 31, 1996. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked May 31, 1996 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposals are received by the above deadline. Grants should begin no earlier than September 1, 1996 and no later than September 31, 1996 and end no later than 24 months thereafter.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Patricia Spann or John Sedlins in the North Africa, Middle East and South Asia Branch, E/AEN, Room 212, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, telephone number (202) 619-5368, fax number (202) 205-2466, Internet address PSPANN@USIA.GOV or JSEDLINS@USIA.GOV to request a Solicitation Package continuing more detailed award criteria, required application forms, and standard guidelines for preparing proposals, including specific criteria for preparation of the proposal budget.

TO DOWNLOAD A SOLICITATION PACKAGE VIA INTERNET: The Solicitation Package may be downloaded from USIA's website at <http://www.usia.gov/> or from the Internet Gopher at <gopher://gopher.usia.gov>. Select "Education and Cultural Exchanges", then select "Current Request for Proposals (RFPs)." Please read "About the Following RFPs" before beginning to download.

Please specify USIA Program Assistant Patricia Spann on all inquiries and correspondences. Interested applicants should read the complete Federal Register announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, Agency staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

SUBMISSIONS: Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and nine copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/AEN-96-01, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547. Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposed Narrative" sections of the proposal on a 3.5" diskette, formatted for DOS. This material must be provided in ASCII text (DOS) format with a maximum line length of 65 characters. USIA will transmit these files electronically to USIS posts overseas for their review, with the goal of reducing the time it takes to get posts'

comments for the Agency's grants review process.

Diversity Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and physical challenges. 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 the total proposal.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

Pursuant to the Agency's authorizing legislation, (the Fulbright-Hays Act, Pub. L. 87-256), programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social and cultural life.

Support is offered in two categories. Organizations may address one or both categories, but must submit a separate proposal for each category. Special emphasis will be given to the social sciences and humanities.

Category A—Pre-doctoral students. Organizations that are awarded funding shall solicit and receive applications from U.S.-citizen, graduate students nationwide who seek to conduct overseas study and research in the eligible locales listed above. Eligible fields of study and research shall be open to students of all disciplines with a new or established interest in topics requiring study or research in the geographic area(s). Eligibility shall be restricted to applicants who have a baccalaureate degree and who are already enrolled in graduate-level academic programs.

Category B—Postdoctoral scholars. Organizations that are awarded funding shall solicit and receive applications from U.S.-citizen, postdoctoral scholars nationwide who seek to conduct overseas study and research in the eligible locales listed above. Eligible fields of study and research shall be open to students of all disciplines with a new or established interest in topics requiring study or research in the geographic area(s). Eligibility shall be

restricted to applicants who have a Ph.D. and who have postdoctoral college or university teaching experience.

Guidelines

In preparing a proposal, organizations should address the subjects of program design and scheduling, as well as program administration. At a minimum, a successful proposal should clearly cover publicity, selection process, orientation for participants, and logistical and scheduling measures. A basic plan for post-program follow-up and evaluation should also be included. The proposal must be typewritten, double-spaced and may not exceed twenty (20) pages including budget attachments.

Proposed Budget

Awards will not exceed \$200,000. Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive, line-item budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as a break-down reflecting both the administrative budget and the program budget. For better understanding or further clarification, applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity in order to facilitate USIA decisions on funding.

Budget guidelines apply to both category A and B described above.

Allowable costs for the program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- (1) Roundtrip international travel via an American flag carrier;
- (2) Domestic travel;
- (3) Maintenance and per diem;
- (4) Academic program costs (e.g. book allowance);
- (5) Orientation costs (speaker honoraria are not to exceed \$150 per day per speaker);
- (6) Cultural enrichment costs (e.g. admissions, tickets, etc.);
- (7) USA-based administration costs (e.g. advertisement, recruitment and selection costs).

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

Administrative costs are not to exceed 20 percent of the requested budget. Cost-sharing is encouraged.

Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be

deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the appropriate USIA Area Office and the USIA post overseas, where appropriate. Proposals may be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the USIA Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA grants officer.

Review Criteria

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

1. *Quality of the program idea:* Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to Agency mission.
2. *Program planning:* Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.
3. *Ability to achieve program objectives:* Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.
4. *Multiplier effect/impact:* Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.
5. *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).
6. *Institutional Capacity:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals.
7. *Institution's 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 Agency grants as determined by USIA's Office of

Contracts. The Agency will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

8. *Follow-on Activities:* Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without USIA support) which ensures that USIA supported programs are not isolated events.

9. *Project Evaluation:* Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended. Successful applicants will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

10. *Cost-effectiveness:* 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.

11. *Cost-sharing:* Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

12. *Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations:* Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by USIA's geographic area desk and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner country(ies).

Notice

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Notification

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: April 6, 1996.

Dell Pendergrast,

*Deputy Associate Director for Educational
and Cultural Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 96-9361 Filed 4-17-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M