[Billing Code: 4710-05]

Department of State

[Public Notice: 7671]

Youth Leadership Program: TechGirls

Overview Information:

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request

for Grant Proposals: Youth Leadership Program: TechGirls

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/PE/C/PY-12-10

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415

Application Deadline: December 15, 2011

Executive Summary:

The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division,

of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)

announces an open competition for the new Youth Leadership

Program "TechGirls." Public and private non-profit

organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal

Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals

to conduct a three- to five-week exchange program in the

United States in Summer 2012 focused on promoting high-

level study of technology for high school girls from the

Middle East and North Africa. U.S. Embassies in the

participating countries and territories will recruit,

screen, and select the teenage girls. The program will provide an exchange of academic study of applied technology for girls who already have a demonstrated aptitude and strong interest in the subject, will empower girls to pursue higher education and careers in technology, and will support activities in the participants' home countries that are designed to reinforce and support the skills and linkages acquired during the U.S. program.

I. Funding Opportunity Description:

Authority:

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The

funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Background:

In July 2011, Secretary Clinton announced the launch of a youth exchange program called TechGirls "to encourage innovation and promote the spread of new technologies to give women and girls the support that they need to become leaders in this field." TechGirls will complement the TechWomen program and echo its goals; this initiative champions two distinct but key themes of President Obama's June 2009 speech in Cairo by supporting development in the field of technology and enabling young women to reach their full potential in the technology industry. For additional background, visit:

http://exchanges.state.gov/programs/professionals/techwomen.html.

The TechGirls program will bring approximately 25 teenage girls from select countries in the Middle East and North Africa to the United States for a three- to five-week exchange program in Summer 2012 focused on promoting high-level study of technology. The program should include participation in a technology camp, perhaps at a

university, that will bring together the program participants with American peers who share similar interests. The camp should be academically rigorous and provide exposure to advanced tools in technology, as well as tools that can be readily adopted for use in the participants' home countries, through hands-on classes, labs, and individual or team-based projects.

The TechGirls program participants may be integrated into an existing camp or residential program, or one may be designed specifically for them. The camp should be complemented by additional activities designed specifically for the TechGirls to include mentoring experiences, job shadowing, mini-internships, and/or site visits to high tech companies in the United States. Participants should be afforded ample opportunity throughout the course of the program to engage in small group work to design and develop projects that are relevant to the field and will produce tangible, presentable outcomes, as well as to plan for follow-on activities. The program will be rounded out by planned social, recreational, and cultural activities; community service activities; home hospitality arrangements such as meals, recreational activities, or homestays with local families; and other activities designed to achieve

the program's stated goals. Multiple opportunities for participants to interact meaningfully with their American peers must be included. Follow-on activities that are designed to reinforce and support the skills and linkages acquired during the U.S. program are an integral part of the program.

The Bureau anticipates that the TechGirls participants will be selected from the same countries that are participating in TechWomen so that TechWomen participants may assist with recruitment and mentoring of the girls once they return home. TechWomen participants are currently expected to be from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestinian territories, Tunisia, and Yemen.

The goals of the program are to:
1) Provide a program of academic study of applied technology for girls who already have a demonstrated aptitude and strong interest in the subject;
2) Empower girls to pursue higher education and careers in technology;
3) Link peers who share interests and abilities;
4) Develop leadership skills of the participants;

5) Promote mutual understanding among the peoples of the
   United States and the countries and territories of the
   Middle East and North Africa.

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

Participants:

U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will recruit,
screen, and select the youth participants. Although the
award recipient is not expected to be involved in
participant selection, it may serve the posts in an
advisory role, as needed. The youth participants will be
high school girls, aged 15 to 17 years old who already have
a demonstrated aptitude and strong interest in the field of
technology. Participants will be proficient in the English
language. The Bureau anticipates selecting two to five
participants from each participating country or territory.

Participants will be provided with opportunities during the exchange program to interact with American peers who are of the same age and share similar interests in the field of technology. American peers will either be participants of an existing technology camp or will be recruited and selected by the award recipient if a technology camp is designed specifically for the TechGirls program.

Organizational Capacity:

Applicant organizations must demonstrate their capacity for providing projects that address the goals and themes outlined in this document, and providing age-appropriate programming for youth, particularly from this region.

Applicants are strongly urged to garner private sector support. The Bureau encourages the expansion of the scope of this program beyond what it is able to fund. Private sector monies and in-kind offerings may be used, for instance, to fund additional visits to technology companies in the United States, to increase the number of American students that participate in exchange program activities, or to ramp up activities during the technology camp.

U.S. Embassy Involvement:

U.S. Embassies in the participating countries will recruit, screen, and select the participants; facilitate visas; arrange and purchase international travel; arrange for adult accompaniment on the international flights; collaborate with the U.S. recipient organization in providing pre-departure briefings and overseeing alumni follow-on activities; and engage TechWomen alumni in their home countries to serve as mentors to the TechGirls alumni.

Guidelines:

The total amount of funding is $175,000, pending availability of funds. It is anticipated that the cooperative agreement will begin on or around March 15, 2012. The award period will be approximately 12 months, and will cover all aspects of the program planning, U.S.-based exchange activities, and support of follow-on activities in the participants' home countries.

Applicants should propose to host one group of approximately 25 participants. The U.S.-based exchange should take place during a three- to five-week period between June 15 and July 19, 2012, to coincide with the school calendars in the participating countries, and also

to allow participants to complete the program and return home before Ramadan (estimated to begin on July 20, 2012). Applicants should propose specific exchange dates in their proposals, but the exact timing may be altered through the mutual agreement of the Department of State and the award recipient.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal project configurations, budgets, and participant numbers in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. In addition, the Bureau reserves the right to adjust the participating countries should conditions change in a partner country or if other countries and/or regions are identified as Department priorities.

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

1) Providing U.S. Embassy Public Affairs staff in participating countries and territories with program materials and logistical information for preparation sessions at the pre-departure orientations.

2) Managing logistical arrangements, including any domestic travel, ground transportation, accommodations, group meals, and disbursement of pocket money.

3) Conducting an orientation for the TechGirls upon their arrival in the United States and for those participating from the U.S. host communities, including American peers and host families.

4) Arranging housing for the participants in a dormitory, hotel, homestay, or some combination thereof and provide staff monitoring of the housing arrangement throughout the exchange. American host families must be properly screened and briefed, and criminal background checks must be conducted for all members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years of age or older.

5) Designing and planning three to five weeks of exchange activities, including a technology camp, that will provide a creative and substantive program aimed at developing the participants' knowledge and skill base in the field of technology. The exchange will include a short trip to Washington, D.C.

6) Developing and implementing a plan to monitor the participants' safety and well-being while on the exchange, and to create opportunities for participants to share potential issues and resolve them promptly. The

award recipient will be required to provide proper staff
supervision and facilitation to ensure that the teenagers
have a safe and pedagogically rich program. Staff, along
with mentors will assist the youth with cultural
adjustments, provide societal context to enhance
learning, and counsel students as needed.

7) Making proper arrangements for participants' religious
observances.

8) Facilitating, in coordination with the U.S. Embassies,
continued engagement among the participants and offering
opportunities to reinforce the ideas, values, and skills
imparted during the exchange.

9) Collaborating with U.S. Embassies to design and implement
an evaluation plan that assesses the short- and medium-
term impact of the project on the participants as well as
on U.S. host and home communities.

Please note:

The ECA award for the TechGirls program will take the form
of a cooperative agreement with the award recipient. In a
cooperative agreement, the Department of State is
substantially involved in program activities above and
beyond routine grant monitoring. The Department's

activities and responsibilities for the TechGirls program
are as follows:

1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all
   program components.

2) Manage the recruitment and selection of the participants,
   arrange and purchase international travel, arrange for
   adult accompaniment on the international flights, and
   oversee pre- and post-exchange activities in each
   country.

3) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas. All foreign
   participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation
   for the J Exchange Visitor Program.

4) Provide the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges
   (ASPE) health benefits plan for foreign participants.

5) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to
   include ECA, the regional bureau, and overseas embassies
   and consulates.

6) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in
   Washington, D.C. and the participating countries.

7) Approve publicity materials and final calendar of
   exchange activities.

8) Monitor and evaluate the program, through regular
   communication with the award recipient and possibly one
   or more site visits.

Additional Information:

Award recipients will retain the name "TechGirls" to identify their project. All materials, publicity, and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

The organization must inform the ECA Program Officer and participating U.S. Embassies of their progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion, and will be required to obtain approval of any significant program changes in advance of their implementation.

Proposals must demonstrate how the stated objectives will be met. The proposal narrative should provide detailed information on the major project activities, and applicants should explain and justify their programmatic choices. Projects must comply with J-1 visa regulations for the International Visitor category. Please be sure to refer to the complete Solicitation Package – this RFGP, the Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation (POGI), and the

Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) – for further information.

II. Award Information:

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under Section I above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY-2012

Approximate Total Funding: Pending availability of funds, $175,000

Approximate Number of Awards: One

Anticipated Award Date: March 15, 2012

Anticipated Project Completion Date: approximately 12 months after start date, to be specified by applicant based on project plan

III. Eligibility Information:

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

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds: There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

III.3. Other Eligibility Requirements:
1) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with
   less than four years experience in conducting

international exchanges be limited to $60,000 in Bureau
funding. ECA anticipates making an award in an amount
exceeding $60,000 to support program and administrative
costs required to implement this exchange program.
Therefore, organizations with less than four years
experience in conducting international exchanges are
ineligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau
encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost
sharing and funding in support of its programs.

2) Proposed sub-award recipients are also limited to grant
   funding of $60,000 or less if they do not have four years
   of experience in conducting international exchanges.

3) The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum
   levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its
   programs.

4) Organizations may submit only one proposal (total) under
   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.

IV. Application and Submission Information:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending

inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline

has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition

with applicants until the proposal review process has been

completed.

IV.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package:

Please contact the Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY,

SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street,

NW, Washington, D.C. 20037, by telephone (202) 632-9261 or

E-mail: ShieldsSD@state.gov to request a Solicitation

Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number

ECA/PE/C/PY-12-10 located at the top of this announcement

when making your request.

Alternatively, an electronic application package may be

obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for

further information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Program Officer Sarah Shields and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/PY-12-10 located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at http://exchanges.state.gov/grants/open2.html, or from the Grants.gov website at http://www.grants.gov.

Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission:

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the

instructions under IV.3f. "Application Deadline and Methods
of Submission" section below.

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data
Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a
grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government.
This number is a nine-digit identification number, which
uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS
number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS
number, access http://www.dunandbradstreet.com or call 1-
866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is
included in the appropriate box of the SF – 424 which is
part of the formal application package.

IV.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary,
proposal narrative and budget.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the
mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document
and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI)
document for additional formatting and technical
requirements.

IV.3c. All federal award recipients must maintain current
registrations in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR)
database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date
information in the CCR until all program and financial
activity and reporting have been completed. Recipients
must review and update the information at least annually
after the initial registration and more frequently if
required information changes or another award is granted.
Failure to register in the CCR will render applicants
ineligible to receive funding.

You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of
application.

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

1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990,
   "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must
   include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit
   information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award
recipients will also be required to submit a one-page
document, derived from their program reports, listing and
describing their grant activities. For award recipients,
the names of directors and/or senior executives (current
officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-
page description of grant activities, will be transmitted
by the State Department to OMB, along with other
information required by the Federal Funding Accountability
and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to
the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its
USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting
requirements.

If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not
received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the
past three years, or if your organization received

nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years,
you must submit the necessary documentation to verify
nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure
to do so will cause your proposal to be declared
technically ineligible.

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following
information when preparing your proposal narrative:

IV.3d.1 Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa
The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of
Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program
sponsor of the exchange program covered by this RFGP, and
an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer"
for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers
the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa
program).   Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations
receiving awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement)
under this RFGP will be third parties "cooperating with or
assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's
program." The actions of recipient organizations shall be
"imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's
compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects
that any organization receiving an award under this

competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should explicitly state in writing that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of their Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the

administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is

available at http://exchanges.state.gov or from:

Office of Designation, Private Sector Programs Division

U.S. Department of State

ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-5, 5th Floor

2200 C Street, NW

Washington, DC 20037

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

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs

must maintain a non-political character and should be

balanced and representative of the diversity of American

political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should

be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass

differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race,

gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic

status, and disabilities. Applicants are strongly

encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle

both in program administration and in program content.

Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for

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

IV.3d.3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation
Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the
project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the
end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your
proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other
technique plus a description of a methodology to use to
link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau
expects that the recipient organization will track
participants or partners and be able to respond to key
evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the

program, learning as a result of the program, changes in

behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the

program on institutions (institutions in which participants

work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should

include indicators that measure gains in mutual

understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on

setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a

program. Your evaluation plan should include a description

of your project's objectives, your anticipated project

outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these

outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes

are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-

oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the

easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should

also show how your project objectives link to the goals of

the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly

distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs

are products and services delivered, often stated as an

amount. Output information is important to show the scope

or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for

information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. <u>Outcomes</u>, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1) **Participant satisfaction** with the program and exchange experience.

2) **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.

3) **Participant behavior**, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.

4) **Institutional changes**, such as increased collaboration
   and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and
   organizational improvements.

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

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

Recipient organizations will be required to provide reports
analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their
regular program reports. All data collected, including

survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

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

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A – "Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. Budget requests may not exceed $175,000. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification. Please refer to the Solicitation Package (POGI and PSI) for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

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

Application Deadline Date: December 15, 2011

Reference Number: ECA/PE/C/PY-12-10

Methods of Submission:

Applications may be submitted in one of two ways:

1) In hard-copy, via a nationally recognized overnight

   delivery service (i.e., Federal Express, UPS, Airborne

   Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail,

   etc.), or

2) Electronically through http://www.grants.gov.

Along with the Project Title, all applicants must enter the

above Reference Number in Box 11 on the SF-424 contained in

the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the

solicitation document.

IV.3f.1 Submitting Printed Applications:

Applications must be shipped no later than the above

deadline. Delivery services used by applicants must have

in-place, centralized shipping identification and tracking

systems that may be accessed via the Internet and delivery

people who are identifiable by commonly recognized uniforms

and delivery vehicles. Proposals shipped on or before the

above deadline but received at ECA more than seven days

after the deadline will be ineligible for further

consideration under this competition. Proposals shipped

after the established deadlines are ineligible for

consideration under this competition. ECA will <u>not</u> notify

you upon receipt of application. It is each applicant's

responsibility to ensure that each package is marked with a legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. Delivery of proposal packages <u>may not</u> be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered.

Important note: When preparing your submission please make sure to include one extra copy of the completed SF-424 form and place it in an envelope addressed to "ECA/EX/PM".

The original and six (6) copies of the application should be sent to:

Program Management Division

ECA-IIP/EX/PM

Ref.: ECA/PE/C/PY-12-10

SA-5, Floor 4

Department of State

2200 C Street, NW

Washington, D.C. 20037

With the submission of the proposal package, please also e-mail the Executive Summary, Proposal Narrative, and Budget sections of the proposal, as well as any attachments essential to understanding the program, in Microsoft Word, Excel, and/or PDF, to ShieldsSD@state.gov. The Bureau may provide these files electronically to the Public Affairs Sections at the relevant U.S. Embassy for its review.

IV.3f.2 Submitting Electronic Applications:

Applicants have the option of submitting proposals electronically through Grants.gov (http://www.grants.gov). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system.

Please note: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

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

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA

bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: Monday – Friday, 7AM – 9PM Eastern Time

Email: support@grants.gov

Applicants have until midnight (12:00 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Please refer to the Grants.gov website, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation.
Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again,

validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

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

V. Application Review Information

V.1. REVIEW PROCESS

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible

proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

REVIEW CRITERIA

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

1) **Quality of the program idea:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. The proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan. The proposed program should be creative, age-appropriate, respond to the design outlined in the solicitation, and demonstrate originality. It should be clearly and accurately written, substantive, and with sufficient detail.

Proposals should also include a plan to support
participants' follow-on activities upon their return
home.

2) **Program planning and ability to achieve program
objectives:** A detailed agenda and work plan should
clearly demonstrate how project objectives will be
achieved. The agenda and plan should adhere to the
program overview and guidelines described above. The
substance of exchange activities, such as workshops,
presentations, and/or site visits, should be described
in detail.

3) **Support of diversity:** The proposal should demonstrate
the applicant's commitment to promoting the awareness
and understanding of diversity in both program
administration (selection of participants, program
venue, and program evaluation) and program content
(orientation and debriefing sessions, and follow-on
activities). Applicants should demonstrate readiness to
accommodate participants with physical disabilities.

4) **Institutional capacity and track record:** Proposed
personnel and institutional resources should be adequate
and appropriate to achieve the program goals. The
proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of
successful implementation of similar programs, including

responsible fiscal management and full compliance with
all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards
(grants or cooperative agreements) as determined by
Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past
performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated
potential of new applicants.

5) **Program evaluation:** The proposal should include a plan
to evaluate the program's success in meeting its goals,
both as the activities unfold and after they have been
completed. The proposal should include a draft survey
questionnaire or other technique, plus a description of
a methodology to link outcomes to original project
objectives.

6) **Cost-effectiveness and cost sharing:** The applicant
should demonstrate efficient use of Bureau funds. The
overhead and administrative components of the proposal,
including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low
as possible. All other items should be necessary and
appropriate. The proposal should maximize cost-sharing
through other private sector support as well as
institutional direct funding contributions, which
demonstrates institutional and community commitment.

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1a. Award Notices:

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been
appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through
internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will
receive an Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's
Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with
subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only
binding authorizing document between the recipient and the
U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized
Grants Officer, and mailed to the recipient's responsible
officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the
results of the application review from the ECA program
office coordinating this competition.

VI.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements:
Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA
agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost
Principles for Nonprofit
Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost

Principles for Educational

Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and

Indian Governments".

OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative

Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of

Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit

Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements

for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local

Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional

information:

http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants

http://fa.statebuy.state.gov

VI.3. Reporting Requirements:

You must provide ECA with a hard copy original plus one copy of the following reports:

1) A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award;

2) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov website - as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

3) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet with all program reports.

4) Quarterly or interim reports, as required in the Bureau cooperative agreement.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission Instructions (IV.3.d.3) above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

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

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Sarah Shields, Youth Programs Division, ECA/PE/C/PY/T, SA-5, 3rd Floor, U.S. Department of State, 2200 C Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20522-0503, by telephone (202) 632-9261 or e-mail ShieldsSD@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/PE/C/PY-12-10.

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

VIII. Other Information:

Notice:

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding
and may not be modified by any Bureau representative.
Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that
contradicts published language will not be binding.
Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award
commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau
reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal
budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the
availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to
periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section
VI.3 above.

_____   October 27, 2011

J. Adam Ereli   Date

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. Department of State

[FR Doc. 2011-28420 Filed 11/02/2011 at 8:45 am;

Publication Date: 11/03/2011]