

To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. Comments or questions concerning this proposed action and the EIS should be directed to FHWA at the address provided above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Program Number 20.205, Highway Planning and Construction. The regulations implementing Executive Order 112372 regarding intergovernmental consultation on Federal programs and activities apply to this program)

Issued: March 15, 1995.

Richard C. Madrzak,

Statewide Projects Engineer, Madison, Wisconsin.

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UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Burmese Refugee Program

ACTION: Notice—Request for Proposals.

SUMMARY: The Office of Academic Programs of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 501 (c) (3) may apply to develop an educational program for approximately 5-7 Burmese students and professionals who left Burma after August 1988 and have since been living outside of Burma as refugees to receive undergraduate and/or graduate training in a variety of fields in the humanities and sciences in American colleges and universities.

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."

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.

ANNOUNCEMENT NAME AND NUMBER: All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the above title and reference number *E/ AEF-95-05*.

DATES: Deadline for proposals: All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Friday, April 28, 1995. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked on April 28, 1995 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposals are received by the above deadline.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Office of Academic Programs; East Asian Programs Branch—E/AEF, Room 208, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, (202) 619-5402 (phone), (202) 401-1728 (fax), to request a Solicitation Package, which includes more detailed award criteria; all application forms; and guidelines for preparing proposals, including specific criteria for preparation of the proposal budget. Please specify USIA Program Officer Wayne Peterson or Carol Elford on all inquiries and correspondences. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before addressing inquiries to the East Asian Programs Branch or submitting their proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, the East Asian Programs Branch officers may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until after the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

ADDRESSES: Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and 10 copies of the complete application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/ AEF-95-05, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 336, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: 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 race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and physical challenges. Applicants are

strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle.

Overview

The goal of the program is to support the economic and democratic development of Burma by helping to educate potential leaders of Burma who could assist that country in future transition to a democratic government. It is USIA's intent to provide grantees with programs of the highest quality that meet their academic and personal needs and to further the Agency's mission to promote mutual understanding.

Guidelines

Project Description

A. The applicant shall design a proposal to recruit, nominate, select, place and monitor the Burmese students in accredited U.S. academic institutions for academic programs lasting a minimum of one year.

Note: Funding for the entire period of the student program should be projected in the proposal.

B. Students should be selected for either an undergraduate program or a graduate level program as appropriate. Programs shall include such enhancements as pre-departure and arrival orientations and interim workshops focusing on assessment of skills development and transition into the workplace and related adjustments.

C. Given the language difficulties experienced by most of the previous Burmese Refugee grantees, the programs may include an intensive English language study component.

D. The organization must work with USIA, INS and the American Embassy in Bangkok to coordinate public interest parole status for the grantees since they are not eligible for J-1 visas.

E. Since it is unlikely that the grantees will be able to return to Burma at the conclusion of the program, the organization must provide relocation assistance to them at the time their studies are terminated.

F. Program participants must carry the requisite level of health and accident insurance.

Proposed Budget

USIA anticipates awarding one grant not to exceed \$300,000 for this program.

Organizations must submit a comprehensive line item budget, including a budget summary page, based on the specific guidance in the Application Package.

Please note that it is required that requested administrative funds, including indirect costs and

administrative expenses for orientation, not exceed 20 percent of the total amount requested from USIA; administrative expenses should be cost-shared. 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 budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as a breakdown 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.

Allowable costs for the program include the following:

A. Program costs

(1) One-way economy fare international travel from their overseas location (on an American flag carrier for as much of the route as possible);

(2) Domestic travel;

(3) Tuition, room and board, incidental expenses, maintenance for university vacation periods;

(4) Educational materials;

(5) Costs of standardized test fees;

(6) Per diem for orientation, professional, academic and cultural enrichment.

B. Administrative costs (not to exceed 20% of the budget)

(1) Staff salaries and benefits;

(2) Staff travel;

(3) Communications (including telephone, fax, postage, etc.);

(4) Office supplies;

(5) Other direct costs.

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

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 Agency contracts office, as well as the USIA Office of East Asian and Pacific Affairs and the USIA post overseas, where appropriate. 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 grant awards resides with the USIA grants officer.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applicants 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. Support of Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate the recipient's commitment to promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity.

5. Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals.

6. 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.

7. 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. USIA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

8. 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.

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

10. Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations: Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by USIA's geographic area desk and USIS Bangkok 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 be 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 needs of the program may require the award to be reduced, revised, or increased. Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Notification

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review process on or about June 16, 1995. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.

Dated: March 15, 1995.

Dell Pendergrast,

Deputy Associate Director, Educational and Cultural Affairs.

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Meeting of the Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting

The Advisory Board for Cuba Broadcasting will conduct a meeting at 10 a.m. on Friday, March 24, 1995, at the Doral Hotel and Resort, 4400 NW. 87th Avenue, Miami, Florida. The intended agenda is listed below.

Presidential Advisory Board Meeting, March 24, 1995

Agenda

- I. Continuation of the Discussion on the Feasibility Study on Radio and T.V. Martí Relocation
- II. Old Business
- III. New Business

Members of the public interested in attending the meeting should contact Ms. Angela R. Washington, at the Advisory Board Office. Ms. Washington can be reached at (202) 401-2178.

Due to the limited availability of Advisory Board members and other scheduling problems and the need to move the project forward, this announcement will appear for less than 15 days.