

Russian/American Council for Collaboration in Education and Language Study (ACTR/ACCELS) and the Soros Foundations/Open Society Institute (Soros/OSI). Under these agreements ACTR and Soros/OSI will be responsible for recruitment, selection, academic placement, and monitoring of Fellows. Interested institutions should contact these organizations for additional program and application information:

For programs in Business Administration, Economics, Library and Information Science, Public Administration, and Public Policy, Kent Lewis, ACTR/ACCELS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036, E-Mail: fellows@actr.org.

For programs in Law, Education Administration and Journalism/Mass Communications: Kristin Crosby, Open Society Institute, 888 Seventh Avenue, Floor 31, New York, NY 10106, E-Mail: kcrosby@sorosny.org.

Current host institutions should contact the above organizations for renewal applications.

Applications must be received by 5pm Washington, DC time, Friday, February 28, 1997. Faxed copies or applications mailed on Friday, February 28, 1997, but received later will not be accepted.

**Additional Information:** Increases in program expenses together with reduced overall government funding for exchange programs make cost-sharing arrangements with host institutions a critical part of the Muskie and FSA Graduate Fellowship Programs. Preference will be given to institutions that can provide cost-sharing toward tuition, fees, and/or room and board expenses. Cost-sharing may also be in the form of other direct program and participant costs.

The Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Programs are not intended as precursors to doctoral studies in the United States. At the end of their designated academic and internship Programs, Fellows are required to return to their home countries to fulfill the two-year home residency requirement as specified in the Exchange Visitor (J-Visa) regulations and the Muskie and FSA Graduate Fellowship Programs Terms and Conditions.

ACTR/ACCELS and Soros/OSI will not approve the transfer of visa sponsorship to universities or the extension of visas for the purpose of Ph.D. programs, extended practical training, or other additional academic study. Universities that do not comply with the policies of the Muskie and FSA

Graduate Fellowship Programs and J-Visa regulations will be removed from the pool of host institutions.

\*Please note: Programs with Azerbaijan are subject to restrictions of Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act: Employees of the Government of Azerbaijan or any of its instrumentalities are excluded from participation, and no U.S. participant overseas may work for the Government of Azerbaijan or any of its instrumentalities. In addition, the Government of Azerbaijan or any of its instrumentalities will have no control in the actual selection of participants.

Dated: October 25, 1996.

Dell Pendergrast,

Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 96-27926 Filed 10-30-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

### Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this information collection. This request for comment is being made pursuant to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Public Law 104-13; 44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)). Comments should address the accuracy of the burden estimates and ways to minimize the burden including the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology, as well as other relevant aspects of the information collection.

**DATES:** Written comments and recommendations on the proposal for the collection of information should be received on or before December 30, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. All written comments will become a matter of public record and will be summarized in the VBA request for Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval. In this document VBA is soliciting comments concerning the following information collection:

OMB Control Number: 2900-0423.

**Titles and Form Numbers:** Invitation, Bid, and/or Acceptance or Authorization, VA Form 26-6724.

**Type of Review:** Revision of a currently approved collection.

**Need and Uses:** The form is used to solicit competitive bids or serves as a work order for the repair of properties acquired by the VA. In addition, the form serves as a record of a contractor's bid, the VA's acceptance of a bid, inspection of completed work, and a contractor's invoice and payment authorization.

**Current Actions:** In the operation of home loan activities authorized by 38 U.S.C., Chapter 37, the VA acquires residential properties which are rehabilitated and rented or sold. Without the use of VA Form 26-6724, the VA would have to rely on contractors to submit bids on separate documents and would not have the advantage of a single record of each repair program's specification, bid, acceptance, inspection, and payment authorization.

**Affected Public:** Business or other for-profit.

**Estimated Total Annual Burden:** 25,000 hours.

**Estimated Total Average Burden Per Respondent:** 30 minutes.

**Frequency of Response:** On occasion.

**Estimated Total Number of Respondents:** 50,000.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the form should be directed to Department of Veterans Affairs, Attn: Nancy Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, telephone (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-4884.

Dated: October 18, 1996.

By direction of the Secretary.

William T. Morgan,

Management Analyst.

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### Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

**AGENCY:** Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** As part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, the Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA) invites the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on this