information in accordance with Federal requirements could result in grantees' being required to return funds that have not been accounted for properly.

USIA therefore requires all organizations use Y2K compliant systems including hardware, software, and firmware. Systems must accurately process data and dates (calculating, comparing and sequencing) both before and after the beginning of the year 2000 and correctly adjust for leap years.

Additional information addressing the Y2K issue may be found at the General Services Administration's Office of Information Technology website at http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov.

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. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Office of East European and NIS Affairs and the USIA posts overseas. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of USIA's 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. Programmatic planning, objectives, and quality: The program should demonstrate originality, substance, precision and relevance to the Agency's mission. Applicant organizations should demonstrate sound judgment in all aspects of the program design and a thorough understanding of the NIS. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

2. 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. Proposals should also include creative ways to involve project participants in their host schools and communities.

3. Institutional Capacity and Record: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. 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. An organization's track record will be evaluated based on the achievement of stated goals and impact on schools in the U.S. and NIS.

4. 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 and host families, program venue, and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

5. Cost-effectiveness/cost-sharing: 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. Overall per-participant costs will be a factor in the review of the proposal. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through U.S. participant contributions and other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions. Applicants should indicate sources of funds for cost-sharing.

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

7. Project Evaluation: Proposals must include a plan to evaluate the project, 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 a description of a methodology to use in linking outcomes to original project objectives for each school partnership. Successful applicants will be expected to submit reports on each partnership.

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 the FREEDOM Support Act of 1992.

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 the 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: December 5, 1998.

William B. Bader,

Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 98–32829 Filed 12–9–98; 8:45 am]

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UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Summer Institute in Social Science Research and Public Policy for Ukrainian Social Scientists; Notice: Request for Proposals (RFP)

SUMMARY: The Branch for the Study of the United States of the U.S. 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) may apply to develop and implement a post-graduate level academic institute and related programs

for a group of 18 Ukrainian social scientists.

The U.S. Information Agency proposes to assist Ukraine through a joint initiative with the European Union (EU) to train young Ukrainian social scientists through an intensive six-week academic Summer Institute in the United States and through joint follow-on activities in Ukraine. Additionally, the EU plans to award a grant to a European ''partner'' organization that will implement a parallel academic institute in Europe. The program is intended to provide participants with a deeper understanding of contemporary social science theory and research methods, together with an understanding of how theoretical and empirical research informs the development and implementation of public policy in the United States in the fields of economics, political science and public administration. USIA-funded activities will include a U.S.-based academic institute in the Summer of 1999; joint follow-on workshops in Ukraine during the 1999–2000 academic year; and, a wrap-up conference in Ukraine in Fall of 2000. The EU-funded academic institute will be held in the Summer of 2000 at a European site yet to be determined.

USIA is seeking detailed proposals from colleges, universities, consortia of colleges and universities, and other not-for-profit academic organizations that have an established reputation in one or more of the following fields: public policy, public administration, political science, economics, and/or other disciplines or sub-disciplines related to the program theme. Applicant institutions must demonstrate expertise in conducting post-graduate programs for foreign educators, and *must have a minimum of four years experience in conducting international exchange programs.* The project director of one of the key program staff responsible for the academic program must have an advanced degree in one of the fields listed above. Staff escorts traveling under the USIA cooperative agreement must have demonstrated qualifications for this service.

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

Program Information

Overview: The U.S. Information Agency, in cooperation with the European Union, proposes to assist Ukraine through a joint initiative aimed at Ukrainian social scientists. Envisioned is a program on social science research methods and public policy that will offer Ukrainian faculty in the early stages of their careers the opportunity for an intensive program on how contemporary social science theory and methods in the fields of political science, economics and public administration are brought to bear on public policy issues.

The program will proceed in five separate phases. Proposals for USIA funding should present a program plan and tentative budget for each of the activities below:

(1) In the first phase, a representative from the U.S. grantee institution will travel to Ukraine with a colleague from the European grantee institution that will be designated as the ''partner'' organization (to be identified by the EU). These individuals will survey the current status of social science research at Ukrainian universities and make a preliminary identification of candidates for the Summer Institute programs in the U.S. and Europe. The proposal for USIA funding should estimate the travel and subsistence costs of U.S. staff for this trip.

(2) In the second phase, the U.S. grantee institution will conduct an intensive U.S.-based academic Summer Institute of six weeks' duration, the elements of which are outlined in detail below. From the perspective of the U.S. grantee institution, this second phase will be the central activity of the grant award, and a detailed program proposal and comprehensive budget should be submitted.

(3) In the third phase, to be implemented during the 1999–2000 academic year, the U.S. grantee institution and European partner organization will conduct approximately five days of joint follow-on workshops in Ukraine. The exact focus of these workshops will be determined at a later date, based on issues and interests identified during the U.S.-based Summer Institute, and on consultations with the European partner organization. The proposal for USIA funding should estimate all of the costs associated with these workshops, including local administrative and venue costs, as well as travel and subsistence for U.S. staff and 18 Ukrainian participants. However, costs for participation of staff from the European partner organization need not be included.

(4) In the fourth phase, which will take place in the Summer of 2000, the European partner organization will plan and implement an academic institute in Europe for a separate group of 18 Ukrainian social scientists. This Institute will be fully funded by the European Union, and the U.S. grantee organization will not be directly involved. However, a representative of the U.S. grantee institution should plan to travel to Europe to observe at least one week of this activity, and estimated travel and subsistence costs associated with this trip should be included in the budget submission.

(5) The fifth phase of the project will take place in the Fall of 2000, and will consist of a joint U.S.-European Union wrap-up conference in Ukraine, approximately three days in length. The proposal for USIA funding should estimate all of the costs associated with the conference, including local administrative costs and venue costs, and travel and subsistence for U.S. staff and a total of 36 Ukrainian participants. However, costs for participation of staff from the European partner organization need not be included.

Objectives: In the United States, public policy issues are debated within an institutional framework that is informed by the theoretical and empirical findings of social science scholarship—in economics, political science and public administration—thus impacting the daily work of officials in the public policy arena, be they elected officials, government managers, or public policy professionals, who are required to make decisions and implement concrete courses of action on a range of issues.

Public policy issues often resist easy solution—partly because of the difficulty in bringing scholarly research (whether theoretical or empirical) to bear on daily institutional practice; partly because of the complex nature of the issues themselves, which frequently involve political, economic and management elements that overlap in complex and often unexpected ways; and, partly by the constraints inherent in democratic decision-making.

The purpose of the six-week Summer Institute is to offer 18 Ukrainian social scientists the opportunity to explore current theory in the social sciences and to examine how the available theoretical models and empirical methodologies can be brought to bear on contemporary public policy issues. In so doing, the program should illuminate how social science scholarship influences the way in which public policy issues are framed, addressed, debated, and resolved.

The program should proceed thematically by examining selected concrete problems, or case studies, in public policy at various levels of government. Among the possible areas that might be examined through the case studies presented are Education, Labor, Banking and Financial markets,

Economic Development, Trade, Macroeconomic Policy, the Environment, Security and Public Safety, Health and Welfare, and Media and Communications. For each case studied, attention should be given to current models used by researchers in political science, economics, and public administration.

The Summer Institute program must be at least six weeks in length, and must include an academic residency segment of at least five weeks at a U.S. college or university campus (or other appropriate location). In addition, a study tour segment of up to one week in length may be added at the discretion of organizers. If so, the study tour segment should, directly and substantively complement the academic program and should, ideally, entail a visit to at least one other region of the United States. Alternately, the program might include shorter, occasional site visits throughout the program.

The Summer Institute should be designed as an intensive, academically rigorous program that is organized through an integrated series of lectures, readings, seminar discussions, research and independent study opportunities, faculty consultations, site visits and, if appropriate, regional travel.

Institutions submitting proposals are encouraged to design thematically coherent programs in ways that draw upon the particular strengths and resources of their institutions as well as upon the nationally recognized expertise of scholars and other experts throughout the United States. Within the limits of the program's organizing framework, the grantee institution should:

A. Ensure that the program's introductory sessions, as well as any pre-departure materials sent to grantees, provide a broad historical and intellectual context for the program that will follow. In addition, opening lectures should provide an overview of the program in its entirety, delineating the Institute's overarching theme as well as the way in which the program's various topics will be integrated into the program and explicitly illuminate that theme;

B. Provide participants with a survey of current scholarship and scholarly trends within the social sciences, with particular attention to current research methods and models in political science, economics, and public administration;

C. Bring an interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary perspectives to bear on each case study undertaken;

D. Give participants a multi-dimensional view of U.S. social science and the complexity of public policy issues by reflecting a broad range of academic perspectives as well as a broad range of views from experts outside the university, such as government officials, public intellectuals, think tank representatives, and other professionals in the public policy arena; and,

E. Ensure access to extensive bibliographic and material resources that will enable grantees to continue their research and study after returning to their home institutions. In addition, the bibliography for the program as a whole must include at least one major survey text for each of the Summer Institute's governing disciplines as well as a number of broad interpretive works directly related to the program's central theme.

Program Dates: The initial trip to Ukraine to survey social science research at local universities (phase one) should be tentatively planned to take place during April-May of 1999. Tentative program dates for the U.S.-based academic Summer Institute program (phase two) are any six-week period between June 1 and August 15, 1999. USIA is willing to consider adjustment of these programs dates, based on the needs of the host institution. However, the Institute must be a minimum of 42 program days in length, and a major portion of the program should take place within the above period. The follow-on workshops in Ukraine should be planned to take place during the 1999–2000 academic year, and the wrap-up conference in Ukraine should take place in the Fall of 2000.

Participants: Program activities should be designed for a total of 18 highly-motivated and experienced Ukrainian social scientists who are interested in acquiring knowledge about how public policy issues are studied and addressed in the U.S. Participants will use the knowledge gained from the Institute to assist them with their own professional research and development, to improve social science instruction in universities in the Ukraine, and to advise government officials at various levels of government on public policy issues.

Most participants can be expected to come from educational institutions where the social sciences are not well-developed. Most will be younger faculty members who are eager to participate in an intensive program on how social science research can be applied to pressing problems and issues in the public policy arena. Most will have had limited study or travel experience in the United States. Participants will be fluent in English.

Participants will be nominated by U.S. Information Service in Kiev. USIA will cover all international travel costs for Ukrainian participants directly.

Program Guidelines: The conception, structure and content of the program is entirely the responsibility of the organizers. However, given the multiple possibilities for the successful design of such a program, potential grant recipients are expected to submit proposals that articulate in concrete and specific detail how they intend to organize and implement it.

Programs must comply with J–1 visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further details on program design and implementation, as well as additional information on all other requirements.

Budget Guidelines: Unless special circumstances warrant, based on a group of 18 participants, the total USIA-funded budget (program and administrative) should not exceed $264,000, and USIA-funded administrative costs as defined in the budget details section of the solicitation package should not exceed $80,000.

Justifications for any costs above these amounts must be clearly indicated in the proposal submission. Any grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to $60,000. Applicant proposals should try to maximize cost-sharing in all facets of the program and to stimulate U.S. private sector, including foundation and corporate, support. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program, and availability of U.S. government funding.

Please note that these figures do not include costs for international travel of the Ukrainian grantees in Phase Two of the program (the U.S.-based Summer Institute). However, they do include costs for domestic and international travel and subsistence of U.S. personnel for all phases of the program. They also include all administrative and program costs associated with the Phase Three workshops and the Phase Five conference in Ukraine, including the subsistence and estimated in-country travel costs for Ukrainian participants.

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

Announcement name and number: All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the following title and reference

number: Summer Institute in Social Science Research (E/AES–99–13).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation, applicants should contact: U.S. Information Agency, Office of Academic Programs, Branch of the Study of the United States, E/AES—Room 252, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, Attention: William Bate; Telephone number: (202) 619–4557; Fax number: (202) 619–6790; Internet address: wbate@usia.gov.

Please specify USIA Program Officer William Bate on all inquiries and correspondence. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before addressing inquiries to the office listed above or submitting their proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, USIA staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until after the proposal review process has been completed.

To download a solicitation package via internet: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from USIA's website at http://www.usia.gov/education/rfps. Please read all information before downloading.

To receive a solicitation package via fax on demand: The entire Solicitation Package may be requested from the Bureau's ''Grants Information Fax on Demand System,'' which is accessed by calling 202/401–7616. The ''Table of Contents'' listing available documents and order numbers should be the first order when entering the system.

Deadline for Proposals: All proposal copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Monday, February 22, 1999. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked February 22, 1999 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposal submissions arrive by the deadline.

Submissions: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and 13 copies of the complete application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Reference: E/AES–99–13, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

Applicants should also submit the ''Executive Summary'' and Proposal 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.

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 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. 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,'' USIA ''shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries.'' Proposals should reflect advancement of this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Year 2000 Compliance Requirement (Y2K Requirement)

The Year 2000 (Y2K) issue is a broad operational and accounting problem that could potentially prohibit organizations from processing information in accordance with Federal management and program-specific requirements, including data exchange with USIA. The inability to process information in accordance with Federal requirements could result in grantees being required to return funds that have not been accounted for properly.

USIA therefore requires all organizations use Y2K compliant systems including hardware, software, and firmware. Systems must accurately process data and dates (calculating, comparing and sequencing) both before and after the beginning of the year 2000 and correctly adjust for leap years.

Additional information addressing the Y2K issue may be found at the General Services Administration's Office of Information Technology website at http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov.

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. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Geographic Area Offices. Eligible proposals will then be forwarded to panels of senior USIA officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Final 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. Overall Quality: Proposals should exhibit originality and substance, consonant with the highest standards of American teaching and scholarship. Program design should reflect the main currents as well as the debates within the subject discipline of the institute. Program should reflect an overall design whose various elements are coherently and thoughtfully integrated. Lectures, panels, field visits and readings, taken as a whole, should offer a balanced presentation of issues, reflecting both the continuity of U.S. scholarship as well as its leading edge.

2. Program Planning: Proposals should demonstrate careful planning. The organization and structure of the institute should be clearly delineated and be fully responsive to all program objectives. A program syllabus (noting specific sessions and topical readings supporting each academic unit) should be included, as should a calendar of activities. The travel component, if included, should not simply be a tour, but should be an integral and substantive part of the program, reinforcing and complementing the academic segment.

3. Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel, including faculty and administrative staff as well as outside presenters, should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals. Library and media resources should be accessible to participants; housing, transportation and other logistical arrangements should be fully adequate to the needs of participants and should be conducive to a collegial atmosphere.

4. Support for Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. This can be accomplished through

documentation, such as a written statement, summarizing past and/or on-going activities and efforts that further the principle of diversity within the organization and its activities. Program activities that address this issue should be highlighted.

5. *Experience:* The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange program activity, indicating the experience that the organization and its professional staff have had in working with foreign educators. Experience in working in the Ukraine or conducting Ukrainian exchanges is a positive factor.

6. *Evaluation and Follow-up:* The proposal should include a plan for evaluating activities during the Summer Institute and at its conclusion. Proposals should comment on provisions made for follow-up with returned grantees as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages.

7. *Administration and Management:* The proposals should indicate evidence of continuous on-site administrative and managerial capacity as well as the means by which program activities will be implemented.

8. *Cost Effectiveness*: The proposals should maximize cost-sharing through direct institutional contributions, in-kind support, and other private sector support. Overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible.

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.''

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

Dated: December 5, 1998.

William Bader,

Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

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