

SMALL BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**Region X Advisory Council Meeting;
Public Meeting**

The Northwestern States, Regulatory Fairness Board will hold a public hearing on September 26, 2000, 12:00 p.m., at Z. J. Loussac Library, AC Assembly Chamber, located at 3600 Denali Street, Anchorage, Alaska to receive comments and testimony from small businesses and representatives of trade associations concerning regulatory enforcement or compliance actions taken by federal agencies. Transcripts of these proceedings will be posted on the Internet. These transcripts are subject only to limited review by the National Ombudsman. For further information, call Elestine Harvey (312) 353-1744.

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Counselor to the Administrator/Public Liaison.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 3372]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Request for Proposals: NIS College and University Partnerships Program (NISCUPP)

SUMMARY: The Office of Global Educational Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs in the Department of State announces an open competition for an assistance award program. Accredited, post-secondary educational institutions meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501c may apply to pursue institutional or departmental objectives in partnership with foreign counterpart institutions from the New Independent States with support from the NIS College and University Partnerships Program. These objectives should support the overall goals of the program: to support the transition of the New Independent States to democratic systems based on market economies, and to strengthen mutual understanding and cooperation between the United States and the New Independent States. The means for achieving these objectives may include teaching, scholarship, and professional outreach to professionals and other members of the communities served by the participating institutions.

Program Overview

Underlying the specific institutional objectives of projects funded by this

program should be the goals of encouraging the growth of freedom and democracy through a deepened mutual understanding of fundamental issues and practical applications in the encouragement of civil society, economic stability and prosperity, or the free flow of information. Innovative strategies to address these underlying concerns in the pursuit of clearly defined institutional objectives are encouraged. Outreach from academic institutions to larger communities of citizens and practitioners to extend understanding about these issues is also encouraged.

The Bureau supports institutional linkages in higher education with partners from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union through the NIS College and University Partnerships Program, for which this Request for Proposals invites applications for funding in FY2001. The Bureau also anticipates issuing a separate and additional Request for Proposals for a partnership program for community colleges interested in cooperating with institutions in some or all of the New Independent States. Eligible community colleges may apply for grants under either or both of the above competitions, but the Bureau will not give multiple awards for duplicate partnerships under these competitions.

The Bureau also supports institutional linkages in higher education with partners worldwide through the College and University Affiliations Program; the College and University Affiliations Program Request for Proposals was announced separately and has a deadline of November 13, 2000. Applicants interested in the Bureau's College and University Affiliations Program should contact the Bureau's Humphrey Fellowships and Institutional Linkages Branch at (202) 619-5289.

Applicant Objectives

While the benefits of the project to each of the participating institutions may differ significantly in nature and scope, proposals should outline well-reasoned strategies leading to specific, demonstrable changes at the department or institution in the NIS.

For example, proposals may describe the parameters and possible content of new courses, new research or teaching capacities or methodologies, new or revised curricula or programs, or other changes anticipated as a result of the project. Proposals to pursue a limited number of related thematic objectives at each institution are preferred to proposals addressing a large number of unrelated objectives.

Proposals must focus on curriculum, faculty, and staff development, as well as administrative reform, at the NIS partner institution(s) in one or more of these eligible disciplines. Projects should involve the development of new academic programs or the restructuring of existing programs, and should promote higher education's role in the transition to market economies and open democratic systems. Whenever feasible, participants should make their training and personnel resources and research results available to government, NGOs, and businesses.

Partner institutions may pursue their institutional objectives through exchanges of teachers, researchers, administrators or, in limited circumstances, students for any appropriate combination of teaching, consultation, research, and outreach, for periods ranging from one week to an academic year. The strategy for achieving project objectives may include exchange visits in either or both directions, but no single formula is anticipated for the duration, sequence, or number of these visits. Visits of one semester or more for participants from each of the institutional partners are strongly encouraged. To provide adequate time to meet institutional project objectives, the Program awards grants for periods of approximately three years.

Although strong budgetary and programmatic emphasis may be given to visits in one direction over another, the benefits of all these visits to the sending as well as the receiving sides should be clearly explained. Exchange visits for the purpose of attending conferences are not encouraged except in combination with other grant activities and in support of specific educational objectives at one or more of the participating institutions.

Proposals that realistically assess institutional capacities will be better able to justify the request for support.

Effective proposals will demonstrate that the proposed partnership institutions understand one another and are committed to support and cooperate with another in project implementation. Accordingly, proposals should reflect substantial awareness of the foreign as well as the U.S. partner(s).

If the proposed partnership would occur within the context of a previous or ongoing project, the proposal should explain how the request for Bureau funding would build upon the pre-existing relationship or complement previous and concurrent projects, which must be listed and described with details about the amounts and sources of external support. Previous projects