

Dated: November 22, 2004.

**Patricia Harrison,**

*Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 4904]

### Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Partnership for Learning (P4L) Undergraduate Program

*Announcement Type:* New Cooperative Agreement.

*Funding Opportunity Number:* ECA/A/E/EUR-05-06.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:* 00.000.

*Key Dates:*

*Application Deadline:* January 21, 2005.

*Executive Summary:* The Office of Academic Exchange Programs (ECA/A/E) of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for the Partnership for Learning (P4L) Undergraduate Program for participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Serbia. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to administer the placement, monitoring, and evaluation for the FY 2005 P4L Undergraduate Program. One cooperative agreement will be awarded to administer the program. Organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs are not eligible for this competition.

#### 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.

*Purpose:* The Partnership for Learning (P4L) Undergraduate Program provides scholarships for one-year, non-degree study at U.S. institutes of higher education to outstanding students from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Serbia. Scholarships are available in humanities and social sciences. Scholarships are granted to students who have completed at least two years of study at an accredited university in their home countries. Students must be citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia or Serbia. Participants will be enrolled in one-year, non-degree programs at four-year colleges and universities. Students will enhance their academic education with participation in community service and an internship. Interested organizations should read the entire **Federal Register** announcement for all information prior to preparing a proposal. Programs must comply with J-1 Visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information. Pending the availability of funds, it is anticipated that this cooperative agreement award will begin in March, 2005.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/E is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA/A/E activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

- (1) Participating in the design and direction of program activities;
- (2) Approval of key personnel;
- (3) Approval and input for all program agendas and timelines;
- (4) Guidance in execution of all project components;
- (5) Arrangement for State Department speakers during workshops;
- (6) Assistance with SEVIS-related issues;
- (7) Assistance with participant emergencies;
- (8) Providing background information related to participants' home countries and cultures;
- (9) Liaison with Public Affairs Sections of the U.S. Embassies and country desk officers at the State Department;
- (10) Participating in selection of evaluation mechanisms.

#### II. Award Information

*Type of Award:* Cooperative Agreement. The Bureau's level of involvement in this program is listed under number I above.

*Fiscal Year Funds:* 2005.

*Approximate Total Funding:* 400,000.

*Approximate Number of Awards:* 1.

*Anticipated Award Date:* Pending availability of funds, March 2005.

*Anticipated Project Completion Date:* December 2006.

*Additional Information:* Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this grant for two additional fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

#### 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 U.S.C. 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 grant 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:* 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 awarding one grant, in an amount up to \$400,000 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.

#### IV. Application and Submission Information

**Note:** Please read the complete **Federal Register** 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 Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E/EUR, Room 246, Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Phone: (202) 619-4060; Fax: (202) 260-7985, [boreckaom@state.gov](mailto:boreckaom@state.gov) to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E/EUR-05-06 located at the top of this announcement when making your request.

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 Bureau Program Officer Olivia Borecka and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E/EUR-05-06 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 Web site at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/rfgps/menu.htm>. Please read all information before downloading.

**IV.3. Content and Form of Submission:** Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and eight (8) copies of the application should be sent per the instructions under IV.3e. "Submission Dates and Times 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.

**IV.3c.** 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.** You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. 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 Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is placing renewed emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by grantees and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of 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, recordkeeping, reporting and other requirements. The Grantee 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: United States Department of State, Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, ECA/EC/ECD-SA-44, Room 734, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone: (202) 401-9810, FAX: (202) 401-9809.

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

**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 grantee 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.

*Outcomes*, 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.)

Grantees 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.

Describe your plans for: *i.e.*, sustainability, overall program management, staffing, coordination with ECA and PAS or any other requirements, etc.

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

*IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program.* The level of funding for FY 2005 is uncertain, but is anticipated to be approximately \$400,000. Based on this figure, applicant organizations should submit a budget which will fund 12–15 participants. ECA anticipates awarding one grant under this competition. Applicant organizations are encouraged, through cost sharing and other methods, to provide for as many scholarships as possible based on estimated funding. 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 for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

*IV.3e.2. Allowable costs for the program include the following:*

- (1) Participant expenses.
- (2) Administrative costs.

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

*IV.3f. Submission Dates and Times: Application Deadline Date:* January 21, 2005. *Explanation of Deadlines:* In light of recent events and heightened security measures, proposal submissions must be sent via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (*i.e.*, DHL, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.) and be shipped no later than the above deadline. The 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. 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. ECA will *not* notify you upon receipt of application. Delivery of

proposal packages *may not* 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. Applications may not be submitted electronically at this time.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package.

**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 eight (8) copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/A/E/EUR-05-06, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

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

Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal in text (.txt) format on a PC-formatted disk. The Bureau will provide these files electronically to the appropriate Public Affairs Section(s) at the U.S. Embassies for their review.

## 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 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:*

Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's 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. *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.

5. *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, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

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

7. *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 Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

8. *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. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended.

9. *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.

10. *Cost-sharing:* Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as

institutional direct funding contributions.

## 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 Assistance Award Document (AAD) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The AAD and the original grant proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The AAD 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://exchanges.state.gov/education/grantsdiv/terms.htm#articleI>

*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) Quarterly program and financial reports which should include record of program activities from that period.

Grantees 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.

*VI.4. Program Data Requirements:* Organizations awarded grants will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. As a minimum, the data must include the following:

(1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the grant or who benefit from the grant funding but do not travel.

(2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

## VII. Agency Contacts

*For questions about this announcement, contact:* Olivia Borecka, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E/EUR, Room 246, ECA/A/E/EUR-05-06, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Phone: 202-619-4060; Fax: 202-260-7985, [boreckaom@state.gov](mailto:boreckaom@state.gov).

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/E/EUR-05-06.

Please read the complete **Federal Register** 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.

*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.

Dated: November 16, 2004.

**C. Miller Crouch,**

*Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.*

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**DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

[Public Notice 4905]

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: The Future Leaders Exchange Program: Host Family and School Placement**

*Announcement Type:* New Grant.  
*Funding Opportunity Number:* ECA/PE/C/PY-05-12.

*Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number:* 00.000.

*Key Dates:*

*Application Deadline:* January 28, 2005.

*Executive:*

*Summary:* The Youth Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for the placement component of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) program. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to recruit and select host families and schools for high school students between the ages of 15 and 17 from countries of the former Soviet Union, thereafter referred to as Eurasia. In addition to identifying schools and screening, selecting, and orienting families, organizations will be responsible for: providing English

language enhancement activities for a small percentage of students who are specially identified; orienting all students at the local level; providing support services for students; arranging enhancement activities and leadership opportunities that reinforce program goals; monitoring students during their stay in the U.S.; providing mid-year programming and re-entry training; and assessing student performance and progress. Preference will be given to those organizations that offer participants opportunities to develop leadership skills and raise their awareness of tolerance and social justice through community activities and networks. The award of grants and the number of students who will participate is subject to the availability of funding in fiscal year 2005.

**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.

*Overview*

*Background:* Academic year 2005/2006 will be the thirteenth year of the FLEX program, which now includes over 13,000 alumni. The goals of the program are to promote mutual understanding and foster a relationship between the people of Eurasia and the U.S.; to assist the successor generation of Eurasian countries in developing the qualities it will need to lead in their aspirations for transformation in the 21st century; and to promote democratic values and civic responsibility by giving Eurasian youth the opportunity to live in American society and participate in focused activities for an academic year.

*Objectives:*

- To place approximately 1,200 pre-selected high school students from Eurasian countries in qualified, well-motivated host families.

- To place students in schools that have been accredited by the respective state departments of education.

- To expose program participants to American culture and democracy through homestay experiences and enhancement activities that will enable them to attain a broad view of the society and culture of the U.S.

- To encourage FLEX program participants to share their culture, lifestyle and traditions with U.S. citizens.

- To provide Eurasian students with leadership opportunities that will foster skills they can take back with them and use in their home countries.

- To provide activities that will increase and enhance students' understanding of the importance of tolerance and respect for the views and beliefs of others in a civil society.

Through participation in the FLEX program, students should:

1. Acquire an understanding of important elements of a civil society. This includes concepts such as volunteerism, the idea that American citizens can and do act at the grassroots level to deal with societal problems, and an awareness of and respect for the rule of law.
2. Acquire an understanding of a free market economy and private enterprise. This includes awareness of privatization and an appreciation of the role of the entrepreneur in economic growth.
3. Develop an appreciation for American culture, an understanding of the diversity of American society and increased tolerance and respect for others with differing views and beliefs.
4. Interact with Americans and generate enduring ties.
5. Teach Americans about the cultures of their home countries.
6. Gain leadership capacity that will enable them to initiate and support activities in their home countries that focus on development and community service in their role as FLEX alumni.

*Other Components:* One organization has been awarded a grant to perform the following functions: recruitment and selection of students; targeting recruitment for students with disabilities; assistance in documentation and preparation of DS-2019 visa forms; preparation of cross-cultural materials; pre-departure orientation; international travel from home to host community and return; facilitation of ongoing communication between the natural parents and placement organization, as needed; maintenance of a student database and provision of data to the U.S. Department of State; and ongoing follow-up with alumni after their return to Eurasia. Other organizations have