

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 5309]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Teachers of Critical Languages Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement.

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/S/X-06-04.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Application Deadline: April 14, 2006.

Executive Summary

The Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch in the Office of Global Educational Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State (ECA/A/S/X), announces an open competition for an assistance award in the amount of \$500,000 for the Teachers of Critical Languages Program. As part of the National Security Language Initiative, the program aims to strengthen national security and prosperity in the 21st century through education, especially in developing foreign language skills of Americans. The pilot program will bring qualified teachers from China and Jordan to teach their native languages in U.S. school systems. Organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to administer this program. In addition to strengthening foreign language instruction at U.S. schools, the international teachers selected for the program will have the opportunity to learn about U.S. teaching methodologies, culture and society, and to improve their English language proficiency. The program should begin in late July or August 2006 with a comprehensive two-week orientation for Jordanian and Chinese participants on U.S. culture and society, including U.S. foreign language teaching methodologies.

I. Funding Opportunity Description*I.1. 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.

I.2. Purpose

In support of the U.S. government's National Security Language Initiative to improve and strengthen American expertise in foreign languages, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) will partner with a non-profit grantee organization to implement this program. The program will bring primary and secondary school teachers to the U.S. from the following countries: at least ten from China and two from Jordan to teach Chinese and Arabic, respectively, in American primary and secondary schools. To the extent possible, teachers should be assigned to schools with established foreign language programs in the subject languages. It is recommended that the foreign teachers team-teach with a U.S. teacher where possible. In addition to providing language instruction, the international teachers will serve as cultural resources on their home countries in history, geography, social studies and other relevant classes in the U.S. schools. U.S. students will benefit from having native language instructors and from a broadened foreign language curriculum. International teachers will be exposed to U.S. teaching methodologies, refine their teaching skills, increase their English language proficiency, and expand their knowledge of U.S. society and culture. The international teachers will return home to share their experiences with students and colleagues.

I.3. Program Goals

I.3a. To introduce and expand the teaching of critical foreign languages in American primary and secondary schools, thereby improving the language skills of young Americans and motivating increased study of these languages.

I.3b. To enable international teachers to learn first-hand about the culture and society of the United States, improve their English language proficiency, and to expand their knowledge of U.S. teaching methodologies.

I.3c. To increase mutual understanding between U.S. school communities and visiting international teachers, and by extension, their home institutions and students.

I.3d. To provide opportunities for U.S. and participant home country schools to develop lasting ties and to share educational best practices.

I.4. Program Components

In early 2006, ECA/A/S/X will collaborate with colleagues in Beijing and Amman to recruit international teachers. ECA/A/S/X will identify and recruit candidates for the program in cooperation with the Chinese Ministry of Education. In Jordan, ECA/A/S/X will recruit candidates in conjunction with the Regional English Language Officer (RELO) based at the U.S. Embassy in Amman. Simultaneously ECA/A/S/X will coordinate the recruitment of U.S. host schools. The grantee organization will be responsible for the following program components:

I.4a. Final selection of U.S. host schools: Upon the award of a grant in early June, the grantee organization should organize a panel to review applications from U.S. host schools and place international teachers at these schools in collaboration with the Bureau. Then the grantee organization should notify host schools and international teachers of their assignments and help them to prepare for the exchange. The grantee organization should provide an orientation for mentors and administrators from the U.S. schools selected to participate in the program.

Placements in primary and secondary schools will be for an academic year—August/September 2006 through May/June 2007—according to the calendar in the placement school. Placements should immerse teachers actively in the American classroom environment and may include the following elements: teaching their native languages in their own foreign language classes; observing a variety of classroom activities (active classroom, group projects, etc.); working with other teachers on curriculum development; and team teaching. Placements in schools should also include opportunities to learn about local school governance through such activities as faculty, board of education, and Parent-Teacher Association meetings.

I.4b. Pre-departure orientations for international teachers: International teachers should participate in a two- or three-day pre-departure orientation. The partner international organizations in Beijing and Amman will organize an orientation with substantial assistance and input from the grantee organization. The orientation will provide information about the program's goals and the U.S. Department of State's expectations of participants. At the

orientation, organizers will review comparative teaching practices, the teaching of foreign languages in the U.S. (including the development of lesson plans in the target languages) and prepare the participants for their further stay in the U.S. The orientation will provide an introduction to the U.S. government and its role in education, the U.S. educational system, and American culture with an emphasis on cross-cultural adjustment issues.

I.4c. U.S.-based Orientation: The grantee organization should design and conduct a two-week, academic orientation for the teachers upon their arrival in the U.S. in mid-to-late July 2006 that includes information on U.S. society and culture, to occur before the academic year assignment begins. This orientation should focus on the teachers' transition from teaching English as a foreign language at home to teaching Arabic or Chinese in a U.S. classroom. Additionally, participants should consult with U.S. teachers of the foreign languages they will be teaching and should come to understand current foreign language teaching practices in U.S. schools, including student-centered and applied learning methodology. Participants should also receive training in English for specific purposes during this orientation in order to become familiar with English language terms related to U.S. teaching and to the U.S. educational system. During this orientation, international teachers should begin preparing presentations on their own cultures to be made in their host schools and communities during the year.

I.4d. Workshop (4–5 days): During the fall, participants should come together for a workshop aimed at enabling them to make a full transition to their U.S. schools, to share their experiences in their U.S. classrooms, and to develop lesson plans and foreign language curricula for their schools. This workshop might be scheduled in conjunction with a professional development opportunity such as attendance at the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages conference.

I.4f. Final debriefing, Washington, DC (3 days): Participants will share what they have observed and learned through presentations to other participants in the program. The participants should take part in a professional and cultural debriefing that includes relevant professional organizations and language associations, meetings with ECA representatives, and visits to museums and historic sites.

I.4g. Follow-on programming: This component will take place after the

international participants return home. International teachers and U.S. host schools will be eligible to apply for small grants that will support school partnerships or other activities building on this exchange experience. The development and approval of follow-on grants must be coordinated by the grantee organization with the relevant non-governmental organizations, U.S. embassies (including the Regional English Language Officers, in Jordan), and ECA's Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch. Applicant organizations' proposals should suggest a possible range of creative follow-on programming at a total cost of \$35,000 for approximately eight to ten small grants.

The Bureau will work with the recipient of this cooperative agreement on administrative and programmatic issues over the duration of the award.

I.5. Program Planning and Implementation

Applicant organizations are requested to submit a narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and implementation of this program. The narrative should include a strategy for selecting and collaborating with U.S. schools; a plan for selecting and placing international teachers in U.S. schools; a proposed design for orienting international teachers; a plan for monitoring the teachers' professional programs; and a plan for adequate follow-on programming. Employees of the grantee organization will be designated Alternate Responsible Officers, and will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants on behalf of ECA/A/S/X and for performing all actions necessary to comply with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

The comprehensive program strategy should reflect a vision for the program as a whole, interpreting the goals of the program with creativity and providing innovative ideas for the program. The strategy should include a description of how the various components of the program will be integrated to build upon and reinforce one another.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/S/X will be substantially involved in the program activities mentioned above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA/A/S/X activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

- Formulation of program policy;
- Clearing texts and program guidelines for publication;
- Responsibility for seeking and receiving applications from U.S. host schools and international candidates;

- Oversight of the content for all orientations and end-of-program conference and debriefing as well as review and approval of program schedules;

- Regular updates on the progress of international teachers and their programs at the U.S. schools;

- Oversight of selection of follow-on programming awards.

II. Award Information

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

Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2006.

Approximate Total Funding: \$500,000.

Approximate Number of Awards: 1.

Approximate Average Award: \$500,000.

Anticipated Award Date: June 1, 2006.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: June 30, 2008.

Additional Information: Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew and expand 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 that 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 is limited to \$60,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates awarding one grant, in an amount up to \$500,000 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 Global Educational Programs, ECA/A/S/X, Room 349, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, tel. (202) 453-8897, fax (202) 453-8890, or e-mail Mosleypj@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/S/X 06-04 located at the top of this announcement when making your request. Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. Please see section IV.3f for further information.

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 Program Officer Catharine Cashner and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number 06-04 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> or from the Grants.gov Web site at <http://www.grants.gov>.

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 seven copies of the application should be sent per the instructions under IV.3f. "Application Deadline and Methods of Submission" 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.

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 part 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, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

An employee of the Bureau will be named the Responsible Officer for the program; employees of the grantee organization will be designated Alternate Responsible Officers and will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants and performing all actions to comply with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

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) 203-5029. FAX: (202) 453-8640.

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 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 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.

IV.3d.4. Describe your plans for: sustainability, overall program management, staffing, and coordination with ECA/A/S/X, Fulbright Commissions, and partner organization in Beijing. ECA/A/S/X considers program management, staffing and coordination with the Department of State essential elements of the program. Please be sure to give sufficient attention to these elements in your proposal by providing a staffing plan that outlines the responsibilities of each staff person and explains which staff member will be accountable for each program responsibility. Wherever possible please streamline administrative processes. Please refer to the POGI in the Solicitation Package for specific guidelines.

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 budget should not exceed \$500,000 for program and administrative costs. 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.

IV.3f. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission:

Application Deadline Date: Friday, April 14, 2006.

Reference Number: ECA/A/S/X-06-04.

IV.3f.1. Applications may be submitted in one of two ways:

1. In hard-copy, via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (*i.e.*, DHL, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.), or
2. Electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>.

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.3f.2. *Submitting Printed Applications.* Applications must be shipped no later than the above deadline. 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. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of application. 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. 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.

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 copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/A/S/X-06-04, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants submitting hard-copy applications 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 Sections at the U.S. embassies for their review.

IV.3f.2—Submitting Electronic Applications. Applicants have the option of submitting proposals electronically through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Find" portion of the system. Please follow the instructions available in the "Get Started" portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>).

Applicants have until midnight (12 a.m.) of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the grants.gov site. Applications uploaded to the site after midnight of the application deadline date will be automatically rejected by the grants.gov system, and will be technically ineligible.

Applicants will receive confirmation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

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. The program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate will review all eligible proposals. 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 assistance

awards (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. **Program Development and Management:** The proposal narrative should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission as well as the objectives of the Teachers of Critical Languages Program. It should include an effective program plan and demonstrate how the distribution of administrative resources will ensure adequate attention to program administration, including host institution selection.

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.

3. **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).

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

5. **Follow-on Activities:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (both with and without Bureau support) ensuring that the Teachers of Critical Languages Program is not an isolated event. Activities should include tracking and maintaining updated lists of all alumni and facilitating follow-up activities for alumni.

6. **Project Evaluation:** Proposals should include a plan and methodology to evaluate the Teachers of Critical Languages Program's degree of success in meeting program objectives, both as the activities unfold, at the end of the one-year teaching assignment, and at the program's conclusion. Draft survey questionnaires or other techniques plus description of methodologies to use to

link outcomes to original project objectives are recommended. Successful applicants will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded, or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

7. **Cost-effectiveness and 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. 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 Web sites 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:

Quarterly financial reports; Annual program reports for the first and second year of the agreement; and final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award.

Grantees will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to 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.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact Catharine Cashner, Office of Global Educational Programs, ECA/A/S/X, Room 349, ECA/A/S/X-06-04, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, telephone (202) 453-8880 and fax number (202) 453-8890, CashnerCE@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/S/X-06-04.

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.

Dated: February 10, 2006.

C. Miller Crouch,

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

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BILLING CODE 4710-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34822]

Kansas City Southern, The Kansas City Southern Railway Company, and Meridian Speedway LLC—Exemption for Transactions Within a Corporate Family

Kansas City Southern (KCS), The Kansas City Southern Railway Company (KCSR), and the newly formed Meridian Speedway LLC (MSLLC) have filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(3) for a transaction within a corporate family. The transaction involves the transfer to MSLLC of KCSR's rail line between Meridian, MS, and Shreveport, LA, KCS's continuance in control of MSLLC when it becomes a rail carrier, and the subsequent grant back of operating rights by MSLLC to KCSR to allow KCSR to operate as MSLLC's contract operator in fulfilling MSLLC's contractual and common carrier obligations.¹ This notice is related to two concurrently filed notices, STB Finance Docket Nos. 34821 and 34823, where Norfolk Southern Railway Company (NSR) and KCSR, respectively, have sought authority to acquire trackage rights over the line.

The parties had intended to consummate the transaction on the later of two dates, January 24, 2006, or upon

¹ KCSR currently operates via trackage rights over approximately four-tenths of a mile section of track in Jackson, MS, that is controlled by Canadian National Railway Company (CN) as successor to Illinois Central Gulf Railroad Company (IC) pursuant to a trackage rights agreement dated March 26, 1986, between MidSouth Rail Corporation and IC (Jackson Trackage Rights Agreement). KCSR also currently operates over a railroad bridge over the Mississippi River at Vicksburg, MS, pursuant to a lease agreement between the Vicksburg Bridge and Terminal Company and The Yazoo and Mississippi Valley Railroad Company dated February 11, 1928, as amended and/or replaced from time to time (Vicksburg Bridge Lease). The transaction contemplates having both the Jackson Trackage Rights Agreement and the Vicksburg Bridge Lease assigned to MSLLC.

completion of the environmental or historical documentation process as required under 49 CFR 1105.² However, by decision served on January 23, 2006, the effective date of the three exemptions was stayed, at the joint request of CN, NSR, KCS, KCSR, and MSLLC, until February 23, 2006. Accordingly, consummation of the transaction cannot occur until February 23, at the earliest.

This transaction and the transactions described in the two related notices of exemption are part of a joint-venture between KCS and NSR to share and upgrade this portion of the Meridian Speedway, a line running between Meridian, MS, and Dallas, TX.

This is a transaction within a corporate family of the type exempted from prior review and approval under 49 CFR 1180.2(d)(3). Based on the parties' description of the intracorporate transaction, it should not result in adverse changes in service levels, significant operational changes, or a change in the competitive balance with carriers outside the corporate family.

As a condition to the use of this exemption, any employees adversely affected by this transaction will be protected by the conditions set forth in *New York Dock Ry.—Control—Brooklyn Eastern Dist.*, 360 I.C.C. 60 (1979).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34822 must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Robert B. Terry, Kansas City Southern, 427 West 12th Street, Kansas City, MO 64105; and William A. Mullins, Baker & Miller PLLC, 2401 Pennsylvania Ave., NW., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20037.

Board decisions and notices are available on our web site at <http://www.stb.dot.gov>.

Decided: February 10, 2006.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

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² KCSR and NSR, believing that the transaction will help increase traffic on the line, have contacted the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis concerning any necessary environmental review.