

policies and procedures regarding the operation, oversight, and accountability of PSCs.

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://fa.statebuy.state.gov>.

VI.3. Reporting Requirements: You must provide ECA with a hard copy original plus one copy of the following reports:

1. Interim reports, as required in the Bureau grant agreement.

2. A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award.

3. A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's *USAspending.gov* Web site—as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

4. A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet with all program reports.

Award recipients 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.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Carolyn Lantz, Program Officer, Youth Programs Division (ECA/PE/C/PY), U.S. Department of State, SA-5, 3rd Floor, Washington, DC 20522-0503, Telephone (202) 632-6421, Fax (202) 632-9355, E-mail: LantzCS@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the title, Benjamin Franklin Institute, and number, ECA/PE/C/PY-10-03.

Please read the complete 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: October 26, 2009.

Maura M. Pally,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

[FR Doc. E9-26425 Filed 11-4-09; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 6801]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement.

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/E/NEA-10-02.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.009.

Key Dates

Application Deadline: January 15, 2010.

Executive Summary: The Office of Academic Exchange Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition to administer the FY2010 Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) in the United States may submit proposals to organize and carry out academic exchange activities for students from underrepresented sectors in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia (eligible countries and locales are listed below in the Purpose section). The recipient organization will be responsible for the following aspects of the program: Placement of no less than 115 foreign students at accredited U.S. institutions (90 for one academic year, 25 for one semester), student travel to the U.S., orientation, enrichment programming, advising, monitoring and support, pre-return activities, evaluation, and follow-up with program alumni. It is anticipated that the total amount of funding for FY2010 administrative and program costs will be \$3,500,000 pending availability of funds.

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 principal objective of the Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program (herein referred to as the "NESA UGRAD") is to provide a substantive exchange experience at a U.S. college or university to a diverse

group of emerging student leaders from underrepresented sectors in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia. In this context, the recipient organization should ensure that participants are able to enroll full-time in courses at U.S. institutions alongside U.S. peers, and provide the participants with opportunities to understand the U.S. and U.S. citizens inside and outside the classroom.

Participants will return to their home countries at the conclusion of the exchange program to re-enter colleges and universities there, and re-integrate with their home societies.

An objective of the program is to provide participants with tailored instruction in the academic skills and study habits required to be successful at the undergraduate level as well as be better prepared for higher level studies in the U.S. in the future.

The NESA UGRAD will provide no less than 115 scholarships—90 for one academic year and 25 for one semester (Pakistan only)—at U.S. institutions of higher education to outstanding students from non-elite sectors from the Near East (countries/locales may include Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, the Palestinian Territories) and South Asia (India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Bangladesh). Additional countries may be added to meet the overall needs of the program and availability of funds. Scholarships will be granted primarily to students who are currently enrolled in an undergraduate degree program in their home country, although students just completing their final year of high school will also be eligible. The recipient organization will place participants in non-degree programs at both two- and four-year U.S. colleges and universities.

The recipient organization should develop enrichment activities to enhance the participants' academic education, including having students make local presentations about their countries, community service, and internships (for one year students only). All participants are required to return to their home countries immediately upon the conclusion of the program. Transfers of academic program or visa sponsorship of participants to another U.S. institution will not be considered.

ECA will award one cooperative agreement for this program. Programs and projects must conform to Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package. ECA programs are subject to the availability of funds.

Programs must comply with J-1 Visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information.

In a cooperative agreement, the Near East Asia Programs Branch of the Office of Academic Exchange Programs in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA/A/E/NEA) is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA/A/E/NEA activities and responsibilities for this program are, but not limited to, the following:

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

Note: All materials, publicity, and correspondence related to the program must acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

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: FY2010.

Approximate Total Funding: \$3,500,000.

Approximate Number of Awards: 1.

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds, the anticipated program start date will be March 1, 2010.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2011.

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 USC 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

(a.) Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000. ECA anticipates awarding one grant, in the amount of up to \$3,000,000 to support the program and administrative costs required to implement the program. Therefore, applicant organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchange programs are ineligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau encourages applications to provide the maximum levels of cost sharing and funding to in support of its program.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Note: Please read the complete 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 Near East Asia Programs Branch, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E/NEA, SA-5 Floor 4, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-0504, 202-632-3270, Fax: 202-632-9411 or AlamiLT@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E/NEA-10-02 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, Laura Alami, and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/E/NEA-10-02 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/grants/open2.html>, 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 application should be submitted 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.

Please note: Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

(1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

(2) Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

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 award recipient 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: Office of Designation, ECA/EC/D, SA-5, Floor C2, Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-0582.

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 award recipient 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.)

The recipient organization 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: *i.e.* Sustainability, overall program management, staffing, coordination with ECA and PAS or any other requirements.

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

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A—"Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. 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.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. Application Deadline and Methods of Submission

Application Deadline Date: January 15, 2010.

Reference Number: ECA/A/E/NEA-10-02.

Methods of Submission:

Applications may be submitted in one of two ways:

(1.) In hard-copy, via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (*i.e.*, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.), or

(2.) Electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please Note: ECA strongly encourages organizations interested in applying for this competition to submit printed, hard copy applications as outlined in section IV.3f.1., below rather than submitting electronically through Grants.gov. This recommendation is being made as a result of the anticipated high volume of grant proposals that will be submitted via the Grants.gov webportal as part of the Recovery Act stimulus package. As stated in this RFGP, ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via 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. 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 (8) copies of the application should be sent to: Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E/NEA, SA-5, 4th Floor, 2200 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20037.

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 Section(s) 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 Note: ECA strongly encourages organizations interested in applying for this competition to submit printed, hard copy applications as outlined in section IV.3f.1. above, rather than submitting electronically through *Grants.gov*. This recommendation is being made as a result of the anticipated high volume of grant proposals that will be submitted via the *Grants.gov* webportal as part of the Recovery Act stimulus package. As stated in this RFGP, ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via *Grants.gov*.

Please follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>).

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov. Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

The Grants.gov Web site includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process,

including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the Web site. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov Web site, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to: Grants.gov Customer Support, Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726. Business Hours: Monday-Friday, 7AM-9PM Eastern Time, *E-mail: support@grants.gov.*

Applicants have until midnight (12 a.m.), Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. *There are no exceptions to the above deadline. 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.*

Please refer to the Grants.gov Web site, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation.

Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. *Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.* ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

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

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. *Ability to achieve program objectives:* 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. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

3. *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.

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

5. *Institution's Record/Capacity:* 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.

6. *Project Evaluation and Follow-on:* 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. Proposals should also provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (with minimal Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

7. *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. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

8. *Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations:* Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by the U.S. Department of State's geographic area desk and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner countries.

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 Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA 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.1b. The following additional requirements apply to this project: All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S. laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Laura Alami, Tel: 202-632-3270, e-mail: AlamiLT@state.gov for additional information.

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://fa.statebuy.state.gov>.

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.) A concise, one-page final program report summarizing program outcomes no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award. This one-page report will be transmitted to OMB, and be made available to the public via OMB's USAspending.gov Web site—as part of ECA's Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA) reporting requirements.

(3.) A SF-PPR, "Performance Progress Report" Cover Sheet with all program reports.

Award recipients 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.

Optional 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: Laura Alami, Near East Asia Programs Branch, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E/NEA, SA-5 Floor 4, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC 20522-0504, 202-632-3270 and Fax: 202-632-9411, <http://www.exchanges.state.gov>.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/E/NEA-10-02. Please read the complete 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: October 30, 2009.

Maura M. Pally

Acting Assistant, Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs U.S. Department of State.

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Dated: October 30, 2009.

Maura M. Pally,

Acting Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State.

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

[Docket No. NHTSA-2009-0171]

2010-2015 Strategic Planning

AGENCY: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is currently seeking public comment on emerging or potential traffic safety problems. Public feedback will assist the agency in preparing to meet the challenges it faces in the next 5 years on improving motor vehicle and traffic safety in the United States. This foundational work will assist the agency in shaping its 2010-2015 strategic plan.

This notice invites comments, suggestions and recommendations from all individuals and organizations that have an interest in motor vehicle and highway safety, consumer programs (e.g., fuel economy, vehicle theft, odometer fraud, tire performance) administered by the agency, and/or other NHTSA activities. Respondents can choose to answer any number of questions proposed in this notice. The agency values any comments received and would also like input on the strategic planning process in general. Please include any elements believed important for NHTSA to consider in shaping its vision and building its 2010-2015 strategic plan.

DATES: Comments must be received no later than January 4, 2010.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Long Range Strategic

Planning DOT DMS Docket Number [XXX] by any of the following methods:

- *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the online instructions for submitting comments.
- *Fax:* 1-202-493-2251.
- *Mail:* Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590.
- *Hand Delivery or Courier:* West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC, between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, except Federal Holidays. *Telephone:* 1-800-647-5527.

Instructions: All submissions must include the agency name and docket number. It is suggested that comment submissions be limited to ten (10) pages with unlimited attachments. Note that all comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov>, including any personal information provided. Please see the Privacy Act heading below.

Privacy Act: Anyone is able to search the electronic form of all comments received into any of our dockets by the name of the individual submitting the comment (or signing the comment, if submitted on behalf of an association, business, labor union, etc.). You may review DOT's complete Privacy Act Statement in the **Federal Register** published on April 11, 2000 (Volume 65, Number 70, pp. 19477-78) or you may visit <http://www.dot.gov/privacy.html>.

Docket: For access to the docket to read background documents or comments received, go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and follow the online instructions, or visit the Docket Management Facility at the street address listed above.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dee Williams, Acting Director, Office of Strategic Planning, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, Room W40-311, 1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE., Washington, DC 20590. *Telephone:* 202-366-3503. E-mail: dee.williams@dot.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NHTSA was established as the successor to the National Highway Safety Bureau in 1970, to carry out safety programs under the National Traffic and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 (Chapter 301 of Title 49, United States Code) and the Highway Safety Act of 1966 (Chapter 4 of Title 23, United States Code). The agency also administers consumer programs established by the Motor

Vehicle Information and Cost Saving Act of 1972 (Part C of Subtitle VI (Chapters 321, 323, 325, 327, 329 and 331) of Title 49, United States Code).

NHTSA's mission is to save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce traffic-related health care and other economic costs due to road traffic crashes through education, research, safety standards, and enforcement activity. Motor vehicle crashes are responsible for 95 percent of all transportation-related fatalities and are the leading cause of death for people in the United States of every age from age 3 through 34 (based on 2006 data).

The economic costs associated with these crashes also seriously impact the Nation's fiscal health. The cost to our economy of all motor vehicle crashes was approximately \$230 billion in 2000, or 2.3 percent of the U.S. gross domestic product. Alcohol-involved crashes cost over \$50 billion, accounting for 22 percent of all crash costs. In 2003, failure to wear safety belts cost \$18 billion. Twenty-six percent of overall crash costs are paid by those individuals directly involved in these crashes. The remaining 74 percent of overall crash costs is paid by the public through insurance premiums, taxes, and higher health care costs.

In order to address these public health issues and economic costs of highway crashes, the agency seeks to improve public health by helping to make highway travel safer. The agency develops, promotes and implements educational, regulatory, enforcement and emergency medical service programs aimed at ending preventable tragedies and reducing the economic costs associated with motor vehicle use and highway travel. A multi-disciplinary approach that draws upon diverse fields such as epidemiology, engineering, biomechanics, emergency medicine, the social sciences, human factors, economics, education, law enforcement, and communication science to address one of the most complex and challenging public health problems facing our society.

NHTSA is a leader in collecting and analyzing motor vehicle crash data, in conducting research, and in developing countermeasures designed to prevent and mitigate vehicle crashes, thereby reducing associated fatalities and traumatic injury. The agency improves traffic safety through its regulation and enforcement of motor vehicle and motor vehicle equipment; develops evidence-based education and enforcement programs and promotes their use by States, localities, and other safety partners; sponsors critical research; conducts innovative projects to improve traffic and motor vehicle safety;