DATES: Submit comments to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for up to 30 days from March 10, 2011.

ADDRESSES: Direct comments to the Department of State Desk Officer in the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs at the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). You may submit comments by the following methods:

- E-mail: oira_submission@omb.eop.gov. You must include the DS form number, information collection title, and OMB control number in the subject line of your message.
- Fax: 202–395–5806. Attention: Desk Officer for Department of State.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request additional information, please contact Raymond Ciupek, Department of State, Office of Directives Management, 1800 G St., NW., Suite 2400, Washington, DC 20522–2202, who may be reached at ciupekr@state.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Generic Clearance for the Collection of Qualitative Feedback on Agency Service Delivery.

Abstract: The information collection activity will garner qualitative customer and stakeholder feedback in an efficient, timely manner, in accordance with the Administration’s commitment to improving service delivery. By qualitative feedback we mean information that provides useful insights on perceptions and opinions, but are not statistical surveys that yield quantitative results that can be generalized to the population of study. This feedback will provide insights into customer or stakeholder perceptions, experiences and expectations, provide an early warning of issues with service, or focus attention on areas where communication, training or changes in operations might improve delivery of products or services. These collections will allow for ongoing, collaborative and actionable communications between the Agency and its customers and stakeholders. It will also allow feedback to contribute directly to the improvement of program management.

Feedback collected under this generic clearance will provide useful information, but it will not yield data that can be generalized to the overall population. This type of generic clearance for qualitative information will not be used for quantitative information collections that are designed to yield reliably actionable results, such as monitoring trends over time or documenting program performance. Such data uses require more rigorous designs that address: the target population to which generalizations will be made, the sampling frame, the sample design (including stratification and clustering), the precision requirements or power calculations that justify the proposed sample size, the expected response rate, methods for assessing potential non-response bias, the protocols for data collection, and any testing procedures that were or will be undertaken prior to fielding the study. Depending on the degree of influence the results are likely to have, such collections may still be eligible for submission for other generic mechanisms that are designed to yield quantitative results.

Below we provide the Department of State projected average estimates for the next three years:


Type of Review: New Collection.

Affected Public: Individuals and Households, Businesses and Organizations, State, Local or Tribal Government.

Average Expected Annual Number of activities: 50.

Respondents: Individuals responding to Department of State customer services evaluation requests.

Average Number of Respondents per Activity: 500.

Annual responses: 25,000.

Frequency of Response: Once per request.

Average minutes per response: 15 minutes.

Burden hours: 6,250.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget control number.


T.J. Furlong,
Director, Office of Directives Management, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 2011–5372 Filed 3–9–11; 8:45 am]
BILLING CODE 4710–24–P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 7360]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: American Music Abroad

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement.

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/PE/C/CU–11–09.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 19.415.

Key Dates:
Application Deadline: April 29, 2011.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Executive Summary: The Cultural Programs Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) announces an open competition for a cooperative agreement to administer the American Music Abroad program. The program will consist of approximately ten tours for a select number of professional American artists in a wide range of uniquely American musical genres. The program is designed to broadly represent the excellence and diversity of traditional American music. Some examples of American music genres include, but are not limited to, contemporary urban music, hip hop, rock and roll, jazz and American roots music genres like country and western, bluegrass, zydeco, Cajun, and folk. The musicians selected for this program must demonstrate high artistic ability, evidence a strong commitment to education and exchange activities, and reflect the diversity of America and American music. They must be conversant with the broader aspects of contemporary American society and culture. International tours will include workshops, master classes, and outreach activities, in addition to performances. U.S. public and non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals that support the goals of the American Music Abroad program: to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and other countries, and cross-cultural awareness. The tours accomplish this by providing an opportunity for international audiences to experience American musical life, highlighting the contemporary music scene as well as our country’s cultural history, and allowing American performers to learn about life and culture in the foreign host countries.

The Bureau is particularly interested in proposals for the administration of tours by American musicians representing diverse American music genres to countries with significant underserved populations that may not otherwise have access to American art forms, and countries with significant youth populations. The Bureau is also interested in proposals for projects that reach indigenous populations. No guarantee is made or implied that a grant will be awarded for tours to any particular region or that tours will be organized to any particular region.

To be eligible for this competition, all organizations must demonstrate a minimum of five years’ experience in successfully conducting international performing arts exchange programs in
the music field. The organization must have experience administering programs in multiple musical genres.

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 by legislation.

Purpose: The Bureau seeks proposals to engage people and audiences overseas that do not normally have access to American cultural performances or American artists by presenting at least ten tours of musical groups representing a wide range of American musical genres.

Specific terms for the selection of the musical groups will be developed in collaboration with ECA, and subject to ECA approval. Significantly, proposals should describe application and selection plans that seek to represent the broadest possible diversity of American musical genres. In general, of the 10 selected American Music Abroad musical groups, no more than two groups may be repeat or alumni groups that have participated in past American Music Abroad programs and no single group may participate in the program more than twice. Performances are only one aspect of an exchange program focusing on people-to-people interactions. American Music Abroad musicians will be expected to conduct or participate in master classes, lectures, workshops with people from varied age groups and musical backgrounds, impromptu musical sessions, radio and TV appearances, and other activities with local cultural institutions, musicians, media and students.

Therefore it is important that the proposal include plans for identifying groups who can conduct exchange activities as well as perform. Participating musicians must be U.S. citizens who are at least 21 years old; demonstrate the highest artistic, performance and teaching abilities; be dedicated to interactive educational activities targeting various age-groups and musical abilities; have a strong interest in intercultural exchange; be conversant with broader aspects of contemporary American society and culture; be adaptable to rigorous touring through regions of the world where travel and performance situations may be difficult; and represent the diversity of America and American Music.

The search, adjudication and selection process of the musicians must consist of an open call to U.S. musicians with clear and transparent selection criteria and mechanism approved by ECA, geared to final competitive selection by an independent panel that includes an ECA representative and culminating in a diverse cadre of musicians.

Auditions should be held in two cities (one on the East Coast and one on the West Coast) and selected in consultation with ECA. A panel of judges should be assembled in consultation with ECA. Any pre-screening of applicant musicians prior to the auditions (such as blind musical screenings) must be agreed to in consultation with ECA.

The selected musicians (approximately 10 ensembles of varying size, possibly including trios, quartets, and quintets) must represent the diversity of America and American music and be able to use musical expression to convey to international audiences and workshop participants ideas about American culture, history and society. ECA will provide additional guidance during selection process to ensure that the diversity of American music is properly represented. For example, at least five musical genres are represented among the final 10 groups, with no more than 2 groups from each genre. Successful applicants will have a clearly developed strategy for attracting applications nationwide to encourage regional and musical diversity from musicians representing urban, rock, jazz and American roots music styles.

To ensure that the program continues to recruit new diversity and talent, American Music Abroad musicians may only participate in the program twice, and only 2 of the final 10 groups may be American Music Abroad alumni groups. Performances are only one aspect of an exchange program focusing on people-to-people interactions. American Music Abroad participants will be expected to conduct or participate in master classes, lectures, workshops with people from varied age groups and musical backgrounds, impromptu musical sessions, radio and TV appearances, and other activities with local cultural institutions, musicians, media and students.

Applicants should describe their project team’s capacity for successfully planning recruitment and selection and provide a detailed sample program to illustrate planning capacity and ability to achieve program objectives.

Proposals should reflect a practical understanding of global issues, and demonstrate sensitivity to cultural, political, economic and social differences in regions where tour groups may perform. Special attention should be given to describing the applicant organization’s experience with planning and implementing complex and unpredictable logistical undertakings overseas. Applicants should describe their project team’s capacity for successfully planning projects of this nature and provide a detailed sample program (to include itineraries) to illustrate planning capacity and ability to achieve program objectives.

Applicants must identify all U.S. partner organizations and venues with whom they are proposing to collaborate and describe previous cooperative projects in the section on "Institutional Capacity." Applicants must include in their proposal supporting materials or documentation that demonstrates a minimum of five years experience in conducting global exchanges in the music field. The organization must also demonstrate it has experience dealing with multiple musical genres.

The successful applicant will incorporate social media and innovative technologies into a well-developed public relations and outreach strategy. Proposals must include specific information regarding online educational materials to supplement the international tour activities. Proposals must include references with name and contact information for other assistance awards the applicant has received so the Bureau may contact them directly.

Requirements of the Award Recipient:

ECA intends to give one assistance award to a qualified institution or organization to administer the American Music Abroad program globally. Activities funded through this cooperative agreement support the organization and implementation of approximately ten (10) international tours, and must include, but are not limited to:

1. Designing, organizing, and implementing a transparent, open, national competition process to select approximately ten (10) U.S. musical groups. Musical groups should be representative of the diversity of U.S. society and culture and should include,
among others, American roots, hip-hop, rock and roll, and jazz.

2. Programming musical, educational, and media tour activities in consultation with U.S. embassies and ECA. For each overseas location, the award recipient will be required to coordinate closely with staff at U.S. embassies and consulates abroad to help advance their public diplomacy objectives, as well as find and secure appropriate venues for performances and workshops and manage a broad range of logistics issues.

3. Assisting musicians with passport, visa, immunizations, and other pre-tour preparations.

4. Making all international travel arrangements and coordinating with posts on all in-country overseas travel;

5. Making all financial and administrative arrangements with the musicians.

6. Organizing orientation sessions and pre-travel briefings that provide participants with media training, cultural briefings about the countries on the tour, and specific information regarding the context for their mission as cultural ambassadors.

7. Scheduling a pre-travel briefing session for each ensemble with State Department regional experts and ECA program officers in attendance. This event should be scheduled in coordination with a Washington, DC, public performance.

8. Scheduling an associated event as part of the annual American Music Abroad program.

9. Scheduling public performance dates in Washington, DC, for each ensemble. Applicants may schedule public performances in the audition city as well.

10. Developing outreach to international and U.S. media as part of a comprehensive media and public relations strategy developed by the awardee in consultation with and approved by ECA. The successful applicant will incorporate social media and innovative technologies into their outreach strategy.

11. Producing press and educational materials appropriate for foreign audiences who may not be familiar with the U.S. and/or American music (including, as needed, translation of materials). The successful applicant will include an online education component to enhance international touring activities.


13. Regularly providing ongoing and detailed information to the Program Office regarding tour schedules, venues and program activities, performance and workshop results, tour highlights, and media coverage.


15. Evaluating program activities.

16. Reporting on tour activities, including audience and participant numbers and outreach efforts, to ECA. Applicants must have experience in global exchange planning and implementation, and should address the above elements in the proposal. The grantee must be highly responsive and able to work in close consultation with ECA and the Public Affairs Sections of the participating U.S. embassies.

ECA Responsibilities: In a cooperative agreement, ECA/PE/C/CU is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA/PE/C/CU activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

1. Approval of audition cities, recruitment and selection process, and judges and judging criteria;

2. Participation in the selection of musicians, orientation and debriefing activities;

3. Identification of four to six countries for each tour. Countries will be those of importance to the Department of State’s public diplomacy mission to build mutual understanding in the following world regions: Middle East, East Asia and the Pacific, Africa, South and Central Asia, Europe and/or South/Central America;

4. Arrangement of participation by Department of State officers in pre-tour briefings and any debriefings that might take place;

5. Approval of media and public relations strategies and arrangements for a showcase event;

6. Approval of all tour arrangements, including daily program schedules.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA’s level of involvement in this program is listed under number 1 above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY—2011.
Approximate Total Funding: $1,500,000.
Approximate Number of Awards: 1.
Approximate Average Award: $1,500,000.
Ceiling of Award Range: $1,500,000.
Anticipated Award Date: June 1, 2011; Pending availability of funds.
Anticipated Project Completion Date: February 28, 2013.

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 cooperative agreement 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:
(a) 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 making one award, in an amount up to $1,500,000 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.

(b) Technical Eligibility: All proposals must comply with the following:

1. Full adherence to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package;

2. Proposal submission deadline date;

3. Non-profit organization status; and

4. For purposes of this competition, at least five years of demonstrated experience in programming globally in
the music field, or your proposal will be declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process. Please see III.3.b.4 below regarding the eligibility requirements of additional experience from prospective applicants.

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 Cultural Programs Division (ECA/PE/C/CU) in the Office of Citizen Exchanges, U.S. Department of State, SA–5, 2200 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20037, 202–632–6412, fax 202/632–9355; e-mail jarrettMA@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/CU–11–09 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 Instructions (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. Please specify Melissa Jarrett and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/CU–11–09 located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.


IV.3. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and 10 copies (11 proposals total) of 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 Dunn and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is the 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 for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. All federal award recipients and sub-recipients must maintain current registrations in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database and have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. Recipients and sub-recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in the CCR until all program and fiscal activity and reporting have been completed. All entities must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted.

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). This document is available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov Web site 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 places critically important emphases on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by recipient organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa programs.

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, Private Sector Programs Division, U.S. Department of State, ECA/EC/D/PS, SA–5, 5th Floor, 2200 C Street, NW., Washington, DC 20037.

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 recipient organization 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):

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.

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.)

Recipient organizations 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.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. The award may not exceed $1,500,000. 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.2.1. Participants applying for assistance award has been given. Approximately ten musical groups (e.g., trios, quartets, and quintets) traveling for four (4) weeks to six (6) destinations in the following regions: Africa, East Asia, Eurasia, Central Europe and the Balkans, the Near East/North Africa, Latin America, and South Asia. Final determination of participating regions and countries will be made by ECA in collaboration with U.S. embassies and the successful applicant after the assistance award has been given.

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

1. Program Expenses, including but not limited to: domestic and international travel for the selected ensembles (per The Fly America Act); visa and immunizations; airport taxes and country entrance fees; honoraria; educational materials and presentation items; excess and overweight baggage fees; trip itinerary booklets; press kits and promotional materials; follow-on activities; monitoring and evaluation; international travel for program implementation and/or evaluation purposes; and other justifiable expenses related to program activities.

The following guidelines may be helpful in developing a proposed budget:

A. Travel Costs. International and domestic airfares (per The Fly America Act), transit costs, ground transportation, and visas for the American Music Abroad participants to travel to the tour destinations. Travel costs should also include airfare for selected finalists to travel to the nearest audition city.

B. Per Diem: Domestic Per Diem should be estimated for selected finalists attending auditions in the nearest audition city. For the Washington, DC portion of the tour, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates, and estimate per diems based on a two-night stay per ensemble member. The Public Affairs Sections of the participating U.S. embassies and consulates generally are responsible for per diem abroad.

C. Sub-grantees and Consultants. Sub-grantee organizations may be used, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and sub-grantee should be included in the proposal. Sub-grants must be itemized in the budget under General Program Expenses. Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise. Daily honoraria cannot exceed $250 per day, and applicants are encouraged
to use organizational resources, and to
cost share heavily in this area.
D. Health Insurance. Each American
Music Abroad participant will be
covered under the terms of the ECA-
sponsored COINS health insurance
policy. The cost for international travel
insurance for staff travel may be
included in the proposal budget.
E. Honoraria for American Music
Abroad musicians. Daily honorarium is
$200 per day for each performer,
including rest and travel days.
F. Education and Promotional Items.
Ensemble members may use these funds
for individual purchases or they may
pool funds for joint purposes. ECA funds
for educational and promotional items (e.g. CDs, guitar strings, lapel
pins, etc.) should not exceed $500 per
ensemble.
G. Excess Baggage. Excess baggage
costs are based on the size and weight
of the instrument. Excess baggage
estimates may be subject to change once
actual tour itineraries are scheduled;
however for proposal budget purposes,
costs should be estimated at $3,500 per
ensemble.
H. Immunizations/Visas. For purposes
of a proposed budget, line items for
immunizations should be estimated at
$400 per musician, and visas/visa
photos should be estimated at $600 per
musician.
I. Press/Outreach Kits. Each relevant
U.S. embassy should receive
appropriate contents for press kits.
Items may be sent electronically with the
understanding that in some cases,
embassies may not be able to access
large files or attachments. This line item
may include funds for shooting and
duplicating black and white publicity
photos and duplicating CDs, as well as
creating banners or other backdrops for
display at performances.
J. Translation of outreach and/or
educational materials.
K. Staff Travel. Allowable costs
include domestic staff travel for one
staff member to attend recruitment/selection events in two U.S. cities and
to pre-tour briefings and performances in Washington, DC. International staff
travel will be allowable, especially if
associated with monitoring and
evaluation, as long as costs for a full
devour to six week tour for each ensemble
are completely covered. Cost-sharing for
staff travel is strongly encouraged.
L. Travel, Per Diem, and equipment
costs related to scheduling an associated
domestic event as part of the annual
American Music Abroad program.
M. Other justifiable expenses directly
related to supporting program activities.
For purposes of this competition,
please use the following program as a
model: One musical ensemble
consisting of four musicians travels to
Cyprus, Turkey, Egypt, Lebanon and
Syria over the course of four weeks.
2. Administrative Costs. Costs
necessary for the effective
administration of the program may
include salaries for grantee organization
employees, benefits, and other direct
and indirect costs per detailed
instructions in the Solicitation Package.
While there is no rigid ratio of
administrative to program costs, proposals in which the administrative
costs do not exceed 25% of the total
requested from ECA grant funds will be
more competitive on cost effectiveness.
Please refer to the Solicitation Package
for complete budget guidelines and
formatting instructions.
Please refer to the Solicitation
Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.
IV.3f. Application Deadline and
Methods of Submission:
Application Deadline Date: April 29,
2011.
Reference Number: ECA/PE/C/CU–
11–09.
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., 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.1. 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
cpackage 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 10 copies of the
application should be sent to: Program
Management Division, ECA–II/P/EX/PM,
Ref.: ECA/PE/C/CU–11–09, SA–5, Floor
4, Department of State, 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) or Microsoft Word format on
CD–ROM. As appropriate, 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 bears no
responsibility for applicant timeliness of
submission or 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 RFPG 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, 7 a.m.–9 p.m. 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.3.g. 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. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve 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. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program’s objectives and plan.

2. Multiplier Effect/Impact: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

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: Proposals should include (1) the institution’s mission and date of establishment; (2) an outline of prior awards—U.S. government and/or private support received for tours abroad; (3) descriptions of experienced staff members who will be part of the team implementing the program; and (4) all other documentation requested heretofore. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project’s goals. The proposal should reflect the institution’s expertise in the music management arena and knowledge of the conditions in the regions abroad.

5. Institution’s Record/Ability: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of at least five years of international music management planning and implementation, including 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. Follow-on Activities: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

7. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the program’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.

8. 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 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:

Special Provision for Performance in a Designated Combat Area (Currently Iraq and Afghanistan) (December 2008)

All Recipient personnel deploying to areas of combat operations, as designated by the Secretary of Defense (currently Iraq and Afghanistan), under assistance awards over $100,000 or performance over 14 days must register in the Department of Defense maintained SYMPATRACK (SPOT) system. Recipients of federal
assistance awards shall register in SPOT before deployment, or if already in the designated operational area, register upon becoming an employee under the assistance award, and maintain current data in SPOT. Information on how to register in SPOT will be available from your Grants Officer or Grants Officer Representative during the final negotiation and approval stages in the federal assistance awards process. Recipients of federal assistance awards are advised that adherence to this policy and procedure will be a requirement of all final federal assistance awards issued by ECA.

Recipient performance may require the use of armed private security personnel. To the extent that such private security contractors (PSCs) are required, grantees are required to ensure they adhere to Chief of Mission (COM) 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–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.


Please refer to 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 two copies 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.

4) Quarterly program and financial reports showing activities carried out and expenses incurred in the calendar quarter.

5) Quarterly press updates, including any articles or publicity regarding the program and an updated communications calendar.

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


All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/PE/C/CU–11–09.

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: March 2, 2011.

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

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