

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Near East, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa Undergraduate Exchange Program **ECA/A/E/NEA-13-03**

Office of Academic Exchange Programs **Near East Asia and Africa Programs Branches**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Office of Academic Exchange Programs for the FY2013 Near East, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa Undergraduate Exchange Program (NESA UGRAD). Proposals must conform to the RFGP, the guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are in addition to the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

Subject to the availability of funds, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) expects to make one award of up to \$3,485,000 to administer the FY 2013 Near East, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa Undergraduate Exchange Program.

In FY2013 the NESA UGRAD program will provide approximately 95 scholarships (approximately 80 students from the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia and approximately 15 students from Sub-Saharan Africa with approximately 88 students being awarded full academic year and seven students one-semester scholarships) for outstanding students from underrepresented sectors. Participants may come from but are not limited to countries in the Near East (Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, the Palestinian Territories, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen), South Asia (Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan), and Sub-Saharan Africa (Angola, Ghana, Mauritania, Mozambique, Niger, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe). Countries may be added or removed to meet the overall needs of the program and availability of funds.

Participants from the Near East and South Asia must participate for one full academic year. Participants from Sub-Saharan Africa will have the option of participating for a full academic year or one semester. Those participants placed for one semester will participate in the second semester of the academic year.

Participants will pursue non-degree undergraduate study in the United States at accredited two-

and four-year institutions from across the country. All academic fields of study are eligible, including fields in the humanities, arts, social sciences, mathematical sciences, natural and physical sciences, and applied sciences. Final participant numbers and country/locale participation will be based on the availability of funds.

Responsibilities for this particular project include the following broad categories:

1. Program planning and management;
2. Recruitment and selection of host institutions in the U.S.;
3. Participant placement at U.S. host institutions;
4. Monitoring and support services for participants, including participant orientation upon arrival in the U.S.;
5. Special programs management including assistance with community service and internships arrangements;
6. Fiscal management;
7. Program reporting and evaluation services;
8. Visa management and monitoring including processing of DS-2019s; and
9. Support of alumni tracking and coordination of alumni follow-on activities.

ECA is substantially involved in a Cooperative Agreement. In this Agreement, ECA will be responsible for the following:

1. Participating in the design and direction of program activities;
2. Approving or finalizing the selection of program participants nominated by participating U.S. Embassies/Consulates or Fulbright Commissions abroad;
3. Approving and providing input for all program agendas and timelines;
4. Approving final host institution selections after thorough consultations with the award recipient;
5. Providing final approval, after thorough consultation with the cooperating agency, of all student placements;
6. Providing guidance in the execution of all project components;
7. Arranging for State Department speakers during workshops;
8. Advising and consulting on participant emergencies and overall program participation;
9. Providing background information related to participants' home country and cultures;
10. Providing liaison with Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy and country desk officer at the U.S. Department of State.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

For the Academic Year 2013-2014, the award recipient will be expected to place approximately 95 participants (approximately 80 students from the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia and approximately 15 students from Sub-Saharan Africa with approximately 88 students being awarded full academic year and seven students one-semester scholarships) at the \$3,485,000 funding level at U.S. colleges and universities. Programs and administrative responsibilities for the NESAs UGRAD program must include:

A. Program Planning and Management

Placement

Students must be placed at accredited U.S. colleges and universities that will provide students with a supportive environment and personalized attention. In addition, host institutions should be selected on the basis of geographic diversity, their academic rigor, cost, ability to cost-share, and ability to engage the students in the local community. These communities must be able to offer quality internships, as well as accessible housing, meals and transportation.

No more than eight participants and no fewer than three participants should be placed at one institution. If hosting more than eight participants at one institution is proposed, the proposal must demonstrate how the award recipient will ensure maximum interaction with Americans and lessen the likelihood that participants will interact predominantly with each other.

The proposal must describe in detail how the placements will be made. Specifically, the proposal must address what measures will be taken to select appropriate institutions, which participants will be placed at specific types of institutions (for example, two-year and four-year institutions), and how tuition waivers and/or other cost share is to be secured.

Participants are expected to return to their home countries immediately upon the conclusion of the program. Transfers of academic program and visa sponsorship to another U.S. institution will not be considered under the NESAs UGRAD program.

Allowances

The proposal must present participant maintenance allowances in accordance with suggestions below or an alternative benefit package that includes the costs of campus housing, meals, books, and incidental expenses. The award recipient must monitor and directly distribute approved allowances (e.g. maintenance) and reimbursements (e.g. relevant fees); authorize special allowances as stipulated in the program terms and conditions (e.g. enrichment funds); clarify policies and procedures; and resolve problems relating to recipient benefits and payments.

Suggested amounts for allowances are:

- Monthly Maintenance Allowance: \$400/month
- One-time Settling-in Allowance: \$150 (for items needed upon arrival and not provided by host institution)
- Book Allowance: \$500/semester or \$250/quarter
- Enrichment Allowance: \$500/one-year or \$250/one-semester (dispersed via an “application” process or other mechanism)

Housing & Meal Accommodations

Program participants will be placed in on-campus housing and have access to a comprehensive meal plan with provisions for religious-specific or other dietary needs.

Participants must be paired with U.S. student roommates, not other NESAs UGRAD participants or international students.

The proposal must include a description of appropriate accommodations for participants' religious observances and ensure options to meet particular needs such as single-gender and substance-free dorms/floors.

The proposal should also account for how participants will be housed and how meals will be provided for during periods when campus housing and cafeterias are closed (e.g. winter break).

Fields of Study

All fields of study are eligible including fields in the humanities, arts, social sciences, mathematical sciences, natural and physical sciences, and applied sciences and should be drawn from the standard university/college curriculum.

Academic Components

To support the mutual understanding goal of the exchange, the Bureau is particularly interested in opportunities for academic study related to U.S. institutions, society, and culture. Thus, students must enroll in one American Studies field course per semester, such as American history, literature or government.

Additionally, there must be a skills training component during each semester (may be a specific course or mandatory trainings outside of class) that aims to improve the participants' ability to succeed in the U.S. education system. Training may include, but is not limited to, time management, note taking, preparing for exams, research, and writing.

Enrichment Activities

To further the exchange, participants will be encouraged to take part in enrichment activities. An enrichment allowance will be available to enable participants to engage in campus, community, and regional activities of a cultural nature, such as concerts, plays, museum exhibits, cultural festivals, etc. Participants may participate in activities on their own or as a group. The award recipient will be encouraged to assist participants in planning enrichment activities.

B. Supervision and Support Services

Monitoring and Support

The proposal must demonstrate that the award recipient can provide support systems to the NESAs UGRAD participants that reflect cultural understanding and sensitivities as well as effective communication skills to facilitate a successful exchange experience.

The award recipient must verify participant enrollment in the approved program and resolve any initial placement and/or adjustment problems upon arrival at their host institution. They must assist program participants in finding adequate academic and counseling services where needed. The Bureau must be notified regarding any academic or adjustment issues that arise. The award recipient must monitor and evaluate the performance of NESAs UGRAD participants to ensure satisfactory progress in the achievement of academic goals, including periodic campus visits, consistent communication with host advisors and professors, and review of academic reports.

Working closely in consultation with the Bureau, the award recipient should assist participants,

as required, in resolving issues related to academic issues and personal or health emergencies; provide counseling or make appropriate referrals; perform domestic travel to resolve participant emergencies; and provide other assistance as needed. The Bureau must be informed of any medical emergencies, unlawful acts, or violations of the NESAs UGRAD terms and conditions as soon as possible.

Visas

The award recipient must provide oversight and management of participants' visa status. The Bureau is placing renewed emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by participants and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, the proposal must demonstrate the award recipient's capacity to meet requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 6Z, including orientation of participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, 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, Private Sector Programs Division
U.S. Department of State
ECA/EC/D/PS, SA-5, 5th Floor
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20037

Health Benefits

Participants must submit a medical health form prior to arrival in the U.S. and enroll in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Plan for Exchanges (ASPE). The award recipient should have all medical forms screened by a medical professional for approval.

The award recipient must enroll participants in (ASPE) and assist in presenting claims. The organization must clarify health benefit coverage, procedures, and benefits as needed for NESAs UGRAD participants.

Participant Travel

The award recipient must manage program participant travel arrangements, in consultation with U.S. Embassies/Consulates and/or Fulbright Commissions, for both U.S. domestic and international travel in accordance with the Fly-America Act.

Recruitment

Participants will be identified and nominated by the U.S. Embassies/Consulates, and/or Fulbright Commissions in the participating countries, with final selection made by ECA. Participants will be highly motivated undergraduate students from colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education in selected countries overseas who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied,

and will include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education and business. All participants will have a good knowledge of English.

Every effort will be made to select a balanced mix of male and female participants, and to recruit participants who are from non-elite or underrepresented backgrounds, from both rural and urban areas, and have had little or no prior experience in the United States or elsewhere outside of their home country.

C. Special Programming

U.S. Cultural Enrichment

ECA welcomes creative ideas for exposing participants to U.S. institutions, such as discussion groups on U.S. issues, visits to political campaign offices and polling places, attendance at school board or city council meetings, exposure to U.S. religious institutions, and civic-related volunteer work. Student attendance at museums, concerts, plays, and other cultural events that feature American content should be encouraged and facilitated whenever possible. As described above, the award recipient must provide assistance to ensure that participants take part in such activities, whether by visits set up through the host advisors, participants directly, or other means.

Orientations/Re-entry Workshops in the United States

Pre-departure orientations will be arranged by the U.S. Embassies/Consulates and/or Fulbright Commissions in country. With assistance and materials provided by the award recipient and ECA, these pre-departure orientations will introduce students to U.S. undergraduate education, U.S. campus life, U.S. culture and cultural adjustment, finances, health and safety, a review of the student award terms and conditions, and a review of the major requirements for the program.

Additionally, Program Handbooks including this material must be provided by the award recipient for dissemination at pre-departure orientations. The proposal must include plans for both pre-departure and arrival orientations as well as post-program briefing sessions at U.S. Embassies/Consulates and/or Fulbright Commissions in country.

Host universities and colleges must provide academic/program orientations for the participants upon their arrival at the university or college that will reiterate the topics mentioned above as well as introduce the participants specifically to the host school and community. The award recipient must provide materials for such orientations that will ensure participants associate themselves with the NESAS UGRAD program as well as to other host institutions.

The proposal must include administration of a re-entry workshop for all participants. The workshop dates must be scheduled in consultation with the ECA program office. The re-entry workshop should address issues of “reverse cultural shock,” academic and job search skills and other re-entry considerations as appropriate as well as further opportunities to return to the U.S. for study and research.

Academic Program and Skills Building

All participants must be enrolled full-time in undergraduate course work chosen from the host

institution's existing curriculum so that students have ample opportunity for substantive interaction with U.S. faculty and student peers, and opportunity for exposure to U.S. academic and classroom culture.

Participants will be required to take one American Studies course per semester as well as at least academic skills building training during the first semester. If the host institution does not offer academic skill building courses, it must provide participants with tailored instruction in areas required to succeed academically in the U.S., such as academic research and writing, critical thinking, time management, note-taking, and study and test-taking skills. Participants should be able to choose at least two courses each semester in their field of study (as indicated on their applications).

Community Service and Presentations

To ensure that students will be integrated as much as possible into the U.S. communities in which they will be living, students will be required to take part in community service activities. Students must participate in community service activities during the first semester of their program. Students must provide 20 hours of volunteer service to local organizations. Students may not receive salaries, stipends or wages for their volunteer service.

Participants must also conduct at least two local presentations (at area schools or community organizations) about their home county over the course of the full academic year. Participants on a one-semester program must complete one local presentation during their program.

Internships

The proposal must include a practical internship component during the spring semester (January through May). The internship may be paid or unpaid. Internships must be part-time and must be related to the participants' field of study and/or career plans. Participants should seek out opportunities on their own or in coordination with the designated host advisor on campus, but the award recipient will be asked to provide substantive guidance throughout the search process.

The award recipient will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the internship component of the program. Internships must adhere to the J-1 visa policies regarding academic training and internships in the U.S. while on the program. ECA must approve all internships prior to their commencement. Participants on a one-semester program will not be required to complete an internship as part of their program.

Follow-on Activities

Proposed follow-on activities for alumni must be developed in close consultation with ECA and PAS, must reflect the goals and objectives of the NESAs UGRAD Program, and must contribute to overall ECA goals to foster mutual understanding among the people of the target countries and the United States. The proposal must include an outline of, and timeline for, follow-on alumni programming, information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained. The award recipient must explain how these activities will be integrated with initiatives for alumni of other ECA programs, rather than as isolated events. Alumni activities should be conducted with minimum financial support from ECA and demonstrate cost-sharing by The award recipient.

Please visit <http://exchanges.state.gov/pro-admin.html> and refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

D. Fiscal Management

The proposal must demonstrate the existence of suitable financial systems to track, audit and disburse NESAs UGRAD funds. The award recipient will be expected to submit interim, residual and final reports, as directed by ECA, detailing expenditures, and to consult with ECA on the reprogramming of funds. Administration of these scholarships must be in compliance with reporting and withholding regulations for federal, state, and local taxes where applicable.

E. Program Projections, Reporting and Evaluation Services

The proposal must include a statement of goals and expected outcomes for the program, including how results would be measured, as necessitated by the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA). Evaluations plans must include a plan for host campus representatives to evaluate the impact of the NESAs UGRAD on their campuses and local communities.

The award recipient must be able to develop and maintain a participant statistical database that records such information as bio-data, academic program, visa status, and participant accomplishments. ECA may request periodic reports related to the management of the exchange program.

III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

The award recipient should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposals must respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals must include the following items:

TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)

TAB B - Executive Summary

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Nature of activity
4. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
5. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

TAB C

Calendar of activities/itinerary

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project Addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

TAB D - Budget Submission

1. Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
2. Detailed Budget

TAB E

Letters of Endorsement

Resumes

Resumes of all program staff must be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages.

TAB F

- 1.) SF-424B, “Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs”.
- 2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau

retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

3.) **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:

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.

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

As part of 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.

4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

REVIEW PROCESS

Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

The submission will be reviewed with the following review criteria in mind:

1. **Quality of the program idea and program planning:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. 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.
2. **Ability to achieve program objectives:** Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's

objectives and plan.

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 (program venues and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).
5. **Institutional Record and Capacity:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau awards (grants or cooperative agreements) 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 and Evaluation:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events. Proposals also 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.
7. **Cost-sharing and cost-effectiveness:** The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. 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.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program call Program Officer, Jamie K. Sharp, at (202) 632-9446, ECA/A/E/NEA; Fax: (202) 632-9464; email: SharpJ2@state.gov.