

Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

VIII. Other Information

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

Dated: December 7, 2005.

Dina Habib Powell,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 5245]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Religion and Society: A Dialogue

Announcement Type: New Grant.
Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF-06-26.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Application Deadline: February 16, 2006.

Executive Summary

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, U.S. Department of State, announces a special competition for two to three grants to support international exchange projects under the rubric "Religion and Society: A Dialogue." Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to develop and implement a multi-phased exchange to engage influential clerics, religious scholars and community leaders from countries with significant Muslim populations in dialogue designed to educate

participants about the scholarship and practice of Islam in the United States and the world and the compatibility of religious practice and democratic social and political values and structures.

Authority

Overall grant-making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries * * *; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations * * * and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

Overview

The Office of Citizen Exchanges consults with and supports American public and private nonprofit organizations in developing and implementing multi-phased, often multi-year, exchanges of professionals, community leaders, scholars and academics, public policy advocates, non-governmental organization activists, etc. These exchanges address issues of vital importance to the United States and to other countries; they promote focused, substantive, and cooperative interaction among counterparts; and they entail both theoretical and experiential learning for all participants. A primary goal is the development of sustained, international, institutional and individual linkages. In addition to providing a context for professional development and collaborative problem-solving, these projects are intended to introduce foreign participants and their American counterparts to one another's political, social, and economic structures, facilitating improved communication and enhancing mutual understanding. Desirable components of an exchange may be local citizen involvement and activities that orient foreign participants to American society and culture.

The initiative "Religion and Society: A Dialogue" will support two to three grants facilitating the international exchange of American and non-American clerics, religious scholars, and community leaders—influential opinion

leaders recognized for their ability to communicate in scholarly writing, through sermons, or by virtue of a position of community leadership. The objectives of the exchange are (1) to enhance the non-American participants' understanding of the place of religion and serious religious study, particularly Islam, in American life; (2) to provide a forum for examination and discussion of the compatibility of religious practice and democratic social and political values and structures, the benefits produced by coexistence among religious communities, and the practice of Islam in a multi-cultural, multi-religious context; and (3) to broaden the understanding of American scholars, clerics, and laypersons of the place of Islam in non-American societies.

Competitive program models would outline activities for a two-year exchange, including: Consultations and participant selection in participating countries by American professionals (selection coordinated with U.S. Embassies); study trips of up to 28 non-American scholars, clerics, and community leaders to the United States for several weeks (approximately 14 participants in two separate tours, one each year); and final consultations and workshops in the countries of origin of non-American participants by up to 14 American scholars, etc., Muslim and non-Muslim (approximately 7 American participants in each of two separate tours). Study tours in the United States would include: Meetings at Islamic centers, discussions with American Muslim and non-Muslim counterparts, familiarization with major religious libraries and archives, particularly those holding significant Islamic collections, discussions with leaders and members of religious and secular institutions that represent America's guarantee of human dignity and freedom of worship, and participation in scholarly (and possibly public) workshops and seminars. Abroad, Americans would participate in workshops and seminars, consult with local clerics, scholars, and community leaders, etc.

Participants may be drawn from any relevant country, worldwide. Proposals should provide a persuasive rationale for the country or countries included in the exchange. The Office of Citizen Exchanges encourages applicants to be creative in planning project implementation. Activities may include both theoretical orientation and experiential, community-based initiatives designed to achieve objectives. Applicants should, in their proposals, identify any partner organizations and/or individuals inside or outside the U.S. with which/whom

they are proposing to collaborate and justify the collaboration on the basis of experience, accomplishments, etc.

Selection of Participants

Applications should include a description of a merit-based, focused participant selection process. Applicants should anticipate consulting with the Public Affairs Sections of U.S. Embassies in selecting participants, with the Embassy retaining the right to nominate participants, to advise the grantee regarding participants recommended by other entities, and to have final approval of the list of participants identified.

Public Affairs Section Involvement

The Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. Embassies often play an important role in project implementation. PAS will initially evaluate project proposals and may, in consultation with the grantee organization, coordinate planning with the grantee organization and in-country partners, facilitate in-country activities, nominate participants and vet grantee nominations, observe in-country activities, and debrief participants. PAS will also evaluate project impact.

Though project administration and implementation are the responsibility of the grantee, the grantee is expected to inform the PAS in participating countries of its operations and procedures and to coordinate with PAS officers in the development of project activities. The PAS should be consulted regarding country priorities, political and cultural sensitivities, security issues, and logistic and programmatic issues.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Grant Agreement.

Fiscal Year Funds: 2006.

Approximate Total Funding: \$1,000,000, to be allocated among two to three grant awards.

Approximate Number of Awards: Two to three.

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds, August 31, 2006.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: July 31, 2008 to May 31, 2009.

Projects under this competition may range in length from two to three years, depending on the number of project components, the country/region targeted, and the extent of the evaluation plan proposed by the applicant. The Office of Citizen Exchanges strongly encourages applicant organizations to plan enough time after project activities to measure project outcomes. Please refer to the Program Monitoring and Evaluation

section, item IV.3d.3 below, for further guidance on evaluation.

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. Required 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. Cost sharing is an important element of the ECA-grantee institution relationship, and it demonstrates the implementing organization's commitment to the program. Cost sharing is included as one criterion for grant proposal evaluation. Applicants are strongly encouraged to cost share a portion of overhead and administrative expenses. Cost-sharing, including contributions from the applicant, proposed in-country partner(s), and other sources should be included in the budget request. Proposal budgets that do not reflect cost sharing will be deemed not competitive under the Cost Effectiveness and Cost Sharing criterion (item V.1, below).

When cost sharing is offered, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved grant agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs that are claimed as your contribution as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), subpart C.23—Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing 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 awarding two to three grants, in an amount up to \$500,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are

ineligible to apply under this competition.

(b.) Technical Eligibility: Proposals must comply with the requirements outlined in this Request for Grant Proposals and accompanying Proposal Submission Instructions in order to be considered technically eligible for consideration in the review process.

IV. Application and Submission Information

Note: Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

IV.1 Contact Information to Request an Application Package: The Application Package comprises the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document, consisting of required application forms and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. The Solicitation Package may be downloaded from: <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/rfgps/menu.htm>. Please read all information before downloading.

IV.2 To receive a hard copy of the Application Package via U.S. Postal Service, contact Thomas Johnston, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF, Room 216, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone (202) 453-8162; Fax (202) 453-8168; E-mail JohnstonTJ@state.gov. Please refer to Funding Opportunity Number ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF-06-26 on all inquiries and correspondence.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and ten copies of the application should be sent per the instructions under IV.3f. "Submission Dates and Times section," below.

IV.3a. Applicants 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 the 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 Application Package, containing the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document, for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. Applicants must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

IV.3d.1 *Adherence To All Regulations Governing The J Visa*. The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is the official program sponsor of the exchange program covered by this RFGP, and an employee of the Bureau will be the "Responsible Officer" for the program under the terms of 22 CFR 62, which covers the administration of the Exchange Visitor Program (J visa program). Under the terms of 22 CFR 62, organizations receiving grants under this RFGP will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of grantee program organizations shall be "imputed to the sponsor in evaluating the sponsor's compliance with" 22 CFR 62. Therefore, the Bureau expects that any organization receiving a grant under this competition will render all assistance necessary to enable the Bureau to fully comply with 22 CFR 62 et seq.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places great emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by grantee program organizations and program participants to all regulations governing the J visa program status. Therefore, proposals should *explicitly state in writing* that the applicant is prepared to assist the Bureau in meeting all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62. If your organization has experience as a designated Exchange Visitor Program Sponsor, the applicant should discuss its record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 et. seq., including the oversight of its Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers,

screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The Office of Citizen Exchanges of ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from: United States Department of State, Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, ECA/EC/ECD-SA-44, Room 734, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547. Telephone: (202) 203-5029. FAX: (202) 453-8640.

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 fullest extent feasible.

IV.3d.3. *Program Monitoring and Evaluation*. Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the grantee will track participants or

partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and are 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 criterion.)

Grantees will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

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

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire project. 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. Budgets that limit administrative costs to approximately 25% of the funding sought from ECA will be given priority consideration.

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

1. *Travel.* International and domestic airfare; visas; transit costs; ground transportation costs. Please note that all air travel must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. There is no charge for J-1 visas for participants in Bureau sponsored programs.

2. *Per Diem.* For U.S.-based programming, organizations should use the published Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities. Domestic per diem rates may be accessed at: <http://policyworks.gov/org/main/mt/homepage/mtt/perdiem/perd03d.html>. ECA requests applicants to budget realistic costs that reflect the local economy and do not exceed Federal per

diem rates. Foreign per diem rates can be accessed at: <http://www.state.gov/m/a/als/prdm/html>.

3. *Interpreters.* For U.S.-based activities, ECA strongly encourages applicants to hire their own locally based interpreters. However, applicants may ask ECA to assign State Department interpreters. One interpreter is typically needed for every four participants who require interpretation. When an applicant proposes to use State Department interpreters, the following expenses should be included in the budget: Published Federal per diem rates (both "lodging" and "M&IE") and "home-program-home" transportation in the amount of \$400 per interpreter. Salary expenses for State Department interpreters will be covered by the Bureau and should not be part of an applicant's proposed budget. Bureau funds cannot support interpreters who accompany delegations from their home country or travel internationally.

4. *Book and Cultural Allowances.* Foreign participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a book allowance of \$50. Interpreters should be reimbursed up to \$150 for expenses when they escort participants to cultural events. U.S. program staff, trainers or participants are not eligible to receive these benefits.

5. *Consultants.* Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Honoraria rates should not exceed \$250 per day. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share rates that would exceed that figure. Subcontracting organizations may also be employed, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and sub-grantee should be included in the proposal. Such sub-grants should detail the division of responsibilities and proposed costs, and subcontracts should be itemized in the budget.

6. *Room rental.* The rental of meeting space should not exceed \$250 per day. Any rates that exceed this amount should be cost shared.

7. *Materials.* Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for participants. Costs for high quality translation of materials should be anticipated and included in the budget. Grantee organizations should expect to submit a copy of all program materials to ECA, and ECA support should be acknowledged on all materials developed with its funding.

8. *Equipment.* Applicants may propose to use grant funds to purchase equipment, such as computers and printers; these costs should be justified in the budget narrative. Costs for furniture are not allowed.

9. *Working meal.* Normally, no more than one working meal may be provided during the program. Per capita costs may not exceed \$15–\$25 for lunch and \$20–\$35 for dinner, excluding room rental. The number of invited guests may not exceed participants by more than a factor of two-to-one. When setting up a budget, interpreters should be considered "participants."

10. *Return travel allowance.* A return travel allowance of \$70 for each foreign participant may be included in the budget. This allowance would cover incidental expenses incurred during international travel.

11. *Health insurance.* Foreign participants will be covered during their participation in the program by the ECA-sponsored Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE), for which the grantee must enroll them. Details of that policy can be provided by the contact officers identified in this solicitation. The premium is paid by ECA and should not be included in the grant proposal budget. However, applicants are permitted to include costs for travel insurance for U.S. participants in the budget.

12. *Wire transfer fees.* When necessary, applicants may include costs to transfer funds to partner organizations overseas. Grantees are urged to research applicable taxes that may be imposed on these transfers by host governments.

13. *In-country travel costs for visa processing purposes.* Given the requirements associated with obtaining J-1 visas for ECA-supported participants, applicants should include costs for any travel associated with visa interviews or DS-2019 pick-up.

14. *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 Application 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 ECA grant funds will be more competitive under the cost effectiveness and cost sharing criterion, per item V.1 below. Proposals should show strong administrative cost sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner and other sources.

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

IV.3f. Submission Dates and Times:
Application Deadline Date: Thursday, February 16, 2006.

Explanation of Deadlines: Due to heightened security measures, proposal submissions must be sent via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (i.e., DHL, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.) and be shipped no later than the above deadline. The delivery services used by applicants must have, in-place, centralized shipping identification and tracking systems that may be accessed via the Internet and delivery people who are identifiable by commonly recognized uniforms and delivery vehicles. Proposals shipped on or before the above deadline but received at ECA more than seven days after the deadline will be ineligible for further consideration under this competition. Proposals shipped after the established deadlines are ineligible for consideration under this competition. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure that each package is marked with a legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. ECA will *not* notify you upon receipt of application. Delivery of proposal packages *may not* be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered. Applications may not be submitted electronically at this time.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package.

Important note: When preparing your submission please make sure to include one extra copy of the completed SF-424 form and place it in an envelope addressed to "ECA/EX/PM".

The original and ten copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF-06-26, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Along with the Project Title, all applicants must enter the above Reference Number in Box 11 on the SF-424 contained in the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the solicitation document.

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

IV.3h. Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal in text (.txt) format on a PC-formatted disk. The Bureau will provide these files electronically to the appropriate Public Affairs Section(s) at

the U.S. embassy(ies) for its(their) review.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. *Review Process:* The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for grant awards resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. All criteria carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. *Quality of the Program Idea:* Proposals should be substantive, well thought out, focused on issues of demonstrable relevance to all proposed participants, and responsive to the exchange suggestions and guidelines provided above.

2. *Implementation Plan and Ability to Achieve Objectives:* A detailed project implementation plan should establish a clear and logical connection between the interest, the expertise, and the logistic capacity of the applicant and the objectives to be achieved. The plan should discuss in concrete terms how the institution proposes to achieve the objectives. Institutional resources—including personnel—assigned to the project should be adequate and appropriate to achieve project objectives. The substance of workshops and site visits should be included as an attachment, and the responsibilities of U.S. participants and in-country partners should be clearly delineated.

3. *Institutional Capacity:* Proposals should include an institutional record of successful exchange programs, with reference to responsible fiscal management and full compliance with reporting requirements. The Bureau will consider the demonstrated potential of new applicants and will evaluate the performance record of prior recipients of Bureau grants as reported by the Bureau grant staff.

4. *Post-Grant Activities:* Applicants should provide a plan for sustained follow-on activity (building on the linkages developed under the grant and the activities initially funded by the grant) after grant funds have been expended. This will ensure that Bureau-supported projects are not isolated events. Funds for all post-grant activities must be in the form of contributions from the applicant or sources outside the Bureau. Costs for these activities must not appear in the proposal budget but should be outlined in the narrative.

5. *Project Evaluation/Monitoring:* Proposals should include a detailed plan to monitor and evaluate the project. Competitive evaluation plans will describe how the applicant organization will measure results, defined in both qualitative and quantitative terms and will include draft data collection instruments (surveys, questionnaires, etc.) in Tab E. See the "Program Management/Evaluation" section, item IV.3d.3 above for more information on the components of a competitive evaluation plan. Successful applicants (grantee institutions) will be expected to submit a report after each program component concludes or on a quarterly basis, whichever is less frequent. The Bureau also requires that grantee institutions submit a final narrative and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of a grant. Please refer to the "Program Management/Evaluation" section, item IV.3d.3 above for more guidance.

6. *Cost Effectiveness and Cost Sharing:* Overhead and administrative costs in the proposal budget, including salaries, honoraria and subcontracts for services, should be kept to a minimum. *Proposals whose administrative costs are less than twenty-five (25) per cent of the total funds requested from the Bureau will be deemed more competitive under this criterion.* Applicants are strongly encouraged to cost share a portion of overhead and administrative expenses. Cost-sharing, including contributions from the applicant, proposed in-country partner(s), and other sources should be included in the budget request. Proposal budgets that do not reflect cost sharing will be deemed not competitive in this category.

7. *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate support for the Bureau's policy on diversity. Features relevant to this policy should be cited in program implementation (selection of participants, program venue, and program evaluation), program content, (orientation and wrap-up session, program meetings, resource materials

and follow-up activities), and program administration. Applicants should refer to the Bureau's Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines in the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) and the Diversity, Freedom and Democracy Guidelines section, Item IV.3d.2, above for additional guidance.

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1a. *Award Notices*: Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated, and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive an Assistance Award Document (AAD) from the Bureau's Grants Office. The AAD and the original grant proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The AAD will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer and mailed to the recipient's responsible officer, identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

VI.2. *Administrative and National Policy Requirements*: Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments."

OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations.

Please reference the following Web sites for additional information:
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>.
<http://exchanges.state.gov/education/grantsdiv/terms.htm#article1>.

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

1. Semi-annual program and financial reports, which include a description of

program activities implemented in the course of the six-month period and an accounting of expenditures.

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

3. Grantees will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission Instructions (IV.3d.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.

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.

(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: Thomas Johnston, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF, Room 216, ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF-06-26, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone: (202) 453-8162; Fax: (202) 453-8168; E-mail: JohnstonTJ@state.gov. Correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/PE/C/NEA-AF-06-26.

Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

VIII. Other Information

Notice: The terms and conditions published in this RFGP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau

representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

Dated: December 7, 2005.

Dina Habib Powell,

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

[FR Doc. E5-7391 Filed 12-14-05; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Transit Administration

[Docket Number FTA-2005-23227]

Notice of Revision of Title VI Circular and EEO Circular

AGENCY: Federal Transit Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice and request for comment.

SUMMARY: The Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is revising and updating its Circulars 4702.1, "Title VI Program Guidelines for Urban Mass Transit Administration Recipients" and 4704.1 "Equal Employment Opportunity Program Guidelines for Grant Recipients." FTA is seeking input from interested parties on this document, including examples of problems with compliance, best practices for compliance, and proposals for changes to these circulars. Upon consideration of the comments, FTA will issue revised circulars and will seek additional comments on the revised documents.

DATES: Comments must be received by January 17, 2006. Late filed comments will be considered to the extent practicable. FTA will publish a second notice in the **Federal Register** summarizing all comments received regarding this notice.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments [identified by DOT DMS Docket Number FTA-2005-23227] by any of the following methods:

Web site: <http://dms.dot.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments on the DOT electronic docket site.

Fax: 202-493-2251.

Mail: Docket Management Facility; U.S. Department of Transportation, 400