

DEPARTMENT OF STATE**[Public Notice 6563]****Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Global Connections and Exchange Program**

Announcement Type: New Grant.
Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-PE-C-PY-09-03.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Key Dates:

Application Deadline: June 1, 2009.

Executive Summary: The Youth Programs Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for the Global Connections and Exchange (GCE) program. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to administer the following GCE programs: Program One: GCE Kyrgyzstan; and/or Program Two: GCE in countries in the Middle East/North Africa (see <http://www.state.gov/p/nea/>), South and Central Asia (see <http://www.state.gov/p/sca/>), and Sub-Saharan Africa (see <http://www.state.gov/p/af/>). Countries of interest include: Kazakhstan, Maldives, South Africa, Tanzania, Algeria and Yemen. GCE programs are currently being funded in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Turkmenistan, and the West Bank; therefore, they are disqualified from this competition. While all other countries in the regions mentioned above qualify, proposals focusing on countries of interest will be deemed more competitive under the Quality of Program Idea review element (see V.1. REVIEW PROCESS). The Bureau will award one grant for the Kyrgyzstan program and one grant for the multi-country program. The grantee organizations and/or their partners will select overseas schools and develop collaborative school partnerships with U.S. schools. Thematic online projects will enhance learning, research and cross-border communication among participating schools. If feasible, a small number of U.S. and/or foreign participants may travel to partner schools for a minimum of three weeks in order to enhance mutual understanding and strengthen online relationships. All Global Connections and Exchange activities will be undertaken in regular and consistent consultation with the Youth Programs Division and the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Embassy in each participating country.

I. Funding Opportunity Description*Authority*

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

Purpose

The Global Connections and Exchange program is designed to introduce youth to a broad range of ideas and resources while enhancing the use of information technology in schools. Through this program, overseas secondary schools will expand computer literacy skills, improve general education, and gain a deeper understanding of U.S. society, culture, and values. They will also increase their capacity to generate change through programs that foster tolerance and mutual respect while promoting grassroots activism among youth. American students will, in turn, gain a greater understanding of foreign cultures and an interest in learning foreign languages while increasing their knowledge of international affairs. The goals of the program are:

- Generate personal and institutional ties between youth and educators in the United States and their overseas counterparts;
- Improve educational tools, resources, and learning through the application of information technology, online resource development, school partnerships, and student collaboration.
- Empower youth through online projects, Internet resources and leadership skills development to act as catalysts of change in their communities.

Information about similar programs can be found at: <http://exchanges.state.gov/youth/programs/connections.html>. Applicants should identify specific objectives and measurable outcomes based on program goals and project specifications

provided in the solicitation. Should organizations wish to apply for more than one program, they must submit a separate proposal for each. Each of the two programs will be reviewed independently. Organizations applying for the programs MUST refer to individual Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) guidelines for each of the two programs.

Guidelines

Program 1—Kyrgyzstan: Total funding: \$300,000. ECA will award one grant. The grant period will be 12 months in duration. The grant is intended to include a network of schools that have already been equipped with computers and Internet access. Grant funds may be used to provide equipment and connectivity to a small number of schools in rural areas.

Program 2—Multiple countries: Total funding: \$250,000. ECA will award one grant for the whole amount. To enhance diversity and expand opportunities, ECA strongly encourages the grant recipient to offer sub-awards to individual U.S. schools and school districts, education technology professionals and other qualified organizations that have substantive experience supporting online interaction between schools in the U.S. and schools overseas. Applicants offering sub-awards to partner organizations will be deemed more competitive under the Quality of Program Idea review element (see V.1. REVIEW PROCESS). The grant period will be 12 months in duration. Applicants should select the countries with which they plan to work and present a strong justification for their choices in their proposals.

For both programs, applicants must demonstrate their capacity for conducting programs of this nature. This includes administrative infrastructure in the geographic areas from which schools will be selected and resources to link the foreign schools with schools in the United States to facilitate substantive online programs.

Grants to be awarded under this competition will be based upon the quality and responsiveness of proposals to the review criteria presented later in this RFGP. The grants should begin on or about August 1, 2009.

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.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Grant Agreement.
Fiscal Year Funds: 2009.

Approximate Total Funding:
\$550,000.

Approximate Number of Awards:
Kyrgyzstan—One award.

Multiple countries—One award.

Approximate Average Award:
Kyrgyzstan—\$300,000.

Multiple countries—\$250,000.

Anticipated Award Date: September 1, 2009.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: September 2010.

Additional Information

Pending successful implementation of these programs and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew these awards 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 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

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 awards for each of the two programs in amounts exceeding \$60,000 to support program and administrative costs required to facilitate activities.

Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply for either of the two grants. However, organizations are strongly encouraged to offer sub-awards in order to enhance diversity and expand opportunities to organizations otherwise ineligible to apply.

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 Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA-PE-C-PY, Room 568, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, *telephone:* 202-203-7506, *fax number:* 202-203-7529, *e-mail:*

MussmanAP@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number (ECA-PE-C-PY-09-03) located at the top of this announcement when making your request. Alternatively, an electronic application package may be obtained from grants.gov. *Please see* section IV.3f. for further information.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for each of the two programs, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Anna Mussman and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number (ECA-PE-C-PY-09-03) located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package via Internet

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's Web site at <http://exchanges.state.gov/grants/open2.html>, or from the Grants.gov Web site at <http://www.grants.gov>.

Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The application should be submitted per the instructions under IV.3f.

“Application Deadline and Methods of Submission” section below.

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box of the SF-424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative and budget.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

(1) Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, “Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax,” must:

(2) Include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

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

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov 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 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 awards (either a grant or cooperative agreement) under this RFGP will be third parties "cooperating with or assisting the sponsor in the conduct of the sponsor's program." The actions of recipient 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 an award 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 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 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 their record of compliance with 22 CFR 62 *et seq.*, including the oversight of their 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 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 timeframe), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

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

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. Participant satisfaction with the program and exchange experience.
2. Participant learning, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.
3. Participant behavior, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between participants, community members, and others.
4. Institutional changes, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and

institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it: (1) Specifies intended outcomes; (2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; (3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and (4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (*i.e.*, surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

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.3d.4. Describe your plans for: Sustainability, overall program management, staffing, coordination with ECA and PAS and the development and implementation of online projects that promote mutual understanding and youth activism.

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

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit SF-424A—"Budget Information—Non-Construction Programs" along with a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

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

- (1) Support for U.S. and overseas schools;
- (2) Small grants to encourage active participation;
- (3) Exchanges for a small group of teachers and/or students to/from the United States.

Organizations are required to use free and existing Web sites for purposes of social networking and project implementation. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

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

Application Deadline Date: June 1, 2009.

Reference Number: ECA-PE-C-PY-09-03.

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>.

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

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

IV.3f.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 package is marked with a legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. Delivery of proposal packages *may not* be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered.

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

The original and eight (8) copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.:

ECA/PE/C/PY-09-03, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants submitting hard-copy applications must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal in text (.txt) or Microsoft Word 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.

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

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

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

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this RFGP to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your Internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days.

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

The Grants.gov Web site includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the "For Applicants" section of the Web site. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov Web site,

well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission to:

Grants.gov Customer Support,
Contact Center Phone: 800-518-4726.
Business Hours: Monday-Friday, 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.3g. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Review Process

The Bureau will review all proposals for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the Public Diplomacy section overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal

Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for grants resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer.

Review Criteria: Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. *Quality of the Program Idea:* Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission. The substance of online activities, including overall themes and strategies to build partnerships between American and overseas schools, should be described in detail. Reviewers will evaluate the applicant's understanding of the goals of the program, specifically as they relate to enhancing mutual understanding among participating countries and the United States. **Please note:** Proposals that involve schools in countries of interest (Kazakhstan, Maldives, South Africa, Tanzania, Algeria and Yemen) and offer sub-awards to qualified individuals and/or organizations will be deemed more competitive under this review element.

2. *Program Planning/Ability To Achieve Program Objectives:* A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should explain how objectives will be achieved and should include a timetable for completion of major tasks. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the program design will fulfill stated objectives.

3. *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Geographic, gender and socio-economic diversity should be reflected in the selection of schools and participants. The curriculum content should reinforce cultural diversity in the broadest sense of the term. Reviewers will examine the extent in which diversity issues are incorporated into the curricula. Applicants are encouraged to facilitate activities specific to women, young girls and students with disabilities.

4. *Institutional Capacity/Record/Ability:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. Proposals should exhibit significant experience in developing school-based Internet programs. Reviewers will assess the organization's institutional record of successful programs, including

responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements as determined by the Bureau's Grants Division. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

5. *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. Reviewers will examine ways in which Web sites are managed and their applicability for use when funds are no longer available.

6. *Project Evaluation:* Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended.

7. *Cost-effectiveness/Cost sharing:* The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

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 a 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:

For assistance awards involving Iran: A critical component of current U.S. government Iran policy is the support for indigenous Iranian voices. The State Department has made the awarding of grants for this purpose a key component

of its Iran policy. As a condition of licensing these activities, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) has requested the Department of State to follow certain procedures to effectuate the goals of Sections 481(b), 531(a), 571, 582, and 635(b) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (as amended); 18 U.S.C. 2339A and 2339B; Executive Order 13224; and Homeland Security Presidential Directive 6. These licensing conditions mandate that the Department conduct a vetting of potential Iran grantees and sub-grantees for counter-terrorism purposes. To conduct this vetting the Department will collect information from grantees and sub-grantees regarding the identity and background of their key employees and Boards of Directors.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of Iran complies with requirements, please contact David Benze—Country Affairs Officer at 202–776–8985; e-mail—BenzeDK@state.gov for additional information.

For assistance awards involving performance in a designated combat area:

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 Synchronized Pre-deployment and Operational Tracker (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–122, “Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations.”

Office of Management and Budget Circular A–21, “Cost Principles for Educational Institutions.”

OMB Circular A–87, “Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments”.

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

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

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

Please reference the following Web sites for additional information:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>
<http://fa.statebuy.state.gov>

VI.3. Reporting Requirements

You must provide ECA with a hard copy original of the following reports 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) One interim report, midway into the program, describing activities and progress.

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.

VI.4. Program Data Requirements

Award recipients 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 agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.

(2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

(3) Information about schools including, but not limited to, location, demography, participating teachers and classes.

Note: All travelers must have participated in online projects with a partner school.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Anna Mussman, Office of Citizen Exchanges, ECA–PE–C–PY, Room 568, ECA–PE–C–PY–09–03, U.S. Department of State, SA–44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, *telephone:* 202–203–7506, *fax number:* 202–203–7529, *E-mail:* MussmanAP@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA–PE–C–PY–09–03.

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

VIII. Other Information

Notice

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

Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFGP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the

needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements per section VI.3 above.

Dated: March 23, 2009.

C. Miller Crouch,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 6564]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Youth Leadership Program With Central America

Announcement Type: New Grant.
Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/PE/C/PY-09-40.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Application Deadline: May 28, 2009.

Executive Summary: The Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division, of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) announces an open competition for the Youth Leadership Program with Central America. 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 recruit and select youth and adult participants in the seven countries of Central America and to provide the participants with three-week, U.S.-based exchanges focused on entrepreneurship and business skills, community engagement, and leadership. The program will conclude with follow-on activities in the participants' home communities in which they apply the knowledge and skills acquired during the exchange experience. ECA plans to award a single grant for the management of the program and encourages organizations to work together as partners for effective administration in all seven countries and in the United States.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

Authority

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, as amended, Public Law 87-256, 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: This Youth Leadership Program will bring secondary school-aged youth (ages 16-18) and adult educators from seven countries in Central America to the United States for three-week exchanges focused on entrepreneurship and business skills, community engagement, and leadership. The youth participants will be recruited from underserved or disadvantaged populations in these countries.

The participating countries are Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Panama.

The goals of the programs are to (1) promote mutual understanding between the United States and the people of Central America; (2) provide young adults with transferable skills appropriate to their needs; (3) develop a sense of civic responsibility to community and business development among youth; and (4) foster relationships among youth from different ethnic, religious, and national groups.

Applicant organizations should identify their own specific objectives and measurable outcomes based on these program goals and the project specifications provided in this solicitation.

ECA plans to award a single grant for the management of the program in all seven countries. The Bureau encourages organizations with expertise in a few of the participating countries to partner with other organizations with experience in the remaining countries in order to submit a single comprehensive proposal. Consortia must designate a lead institution for the grant award.

Through this program, five exchange projects in the United States will be offered for a total of approximately 110-120 youth and educators.

One project for Belize will be conducted in English, and will be designed for approximately 14 participants.

Four other projects will be conducted in Spanish, with interpreters accompanying the students. As proposed by applicant organizations, the Spanish-language projects will be single-country or regional projects, *i.e.*, a group of students may be drawn from

multiple participating countries in order to promote regional cooperation. Each of these exchange projects should be designed for 20 to 30 participants.

Examples of possible Spanish-language projects include:

- One delegation of 24 participants from Guatemala travels to the United States in April.
- Two delegations of 27 participants each, with 9 participants each from El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua, travel to the United States in April and September.
- One delegation of 24 participants from Panama and Costa Rica, with 12 participants from each country, travels to the United States in May.

The preceding are only examples of possible projects, and should not be construed as Bureau preferences. Organizations are encouraged to be creative and flexible in their arrangements and to be responsive to Embassy preferences.

Planning will start in 2009, and after a careful recruitment and selection process, the exchanges will take place at various points throughout 2010, including during the U.S. school year.

The organization that receives the grant will recruit and select the exchange participants, provide a U.S.-based exchange experience, and lead the alumni in implementing projects in their home communities, enabling them to apply their newfound skills. A portion of the funding will be used to support in-country activities with all alumni and their peers in order to promote integration among youth in each country.

The exchange activities will focus on school-to-work transition, allowing the participants to develop practical business and job skills, such as communication, technology, marketing, and financial management skills. They will also explore the effective and sustainable use of resources, learn about civic engagement, life skills, and ethics, and identify the appropriate conditions for entrepreneurial projects. Activities will include workshops, school visits, community service/volunteer work, and site visits with community organizations and local businesses. Participants will live with American host families for a portion of the exchange period and have opportunities to interact with their American peers, including students of Spanish.

The applicant should present a program plan that allows the participants to thoroughly explore the themes in a creative, memorable, and practical way. Activities should be designed to provide practical knowledge and skills that the participants can