

Participants

The program should be designed for a total of 18 highly-motivated and experienced foreign university faculty who are seeking ways to include aspects of American civilization in their teaching and professional work, but who will have had relatively few opportunities to pursue formal study of the United States. Many will come from countries where access to information, books or courses on the U.S. is relatively limited. In most cases, participants will not have had any significant U.S. travel or study experience. They will be drawn from all regions of the world and will be fluent in English.

Participants will be nominated by U.S. Information Service posts abroad, and selected by the staff of USIA's Branch of the Study of the United States in Washington, D.C. USIA will cover all international travel costs directly.

Guidelines

The conception, structure and content of the institute program is entirely the responsibility of the organizers. However, given the multiple possibilities for the successful design of such a program, organizers are expected to submit proposals that articulate in concrete detail how they intend to organize and implement the institute.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further details on program design and implementation, as well as additional information on all other requirements.

Proposed Budget

Unless special circumstances warrant, based on a group of 18 participants, the total USIA-funded budget (program and administrative) should not exceed \$162,000, and USIA-funded administrative costs as defined in the budget details section of the solicitation package should not exceed \$48,500. Justifications for any costs above these amounts must be clearly indicated in the proposal submission. Any grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000. Applicant proposals should try to maximize cost-sharing in all facets of the program and to stimulate U.S. private sector, including foundation and corporate, support. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program.

The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program, and availability of U.S. government funding.

Please refer to the "POGI" in the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions for the institute program.

Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Geographic Area Offices. Proposals may be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the USIA Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA 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. Overall Quality: Proposals should exhibit originality and substance, consonant with the highest standards of American teaching and scholarship. Program design should reflect the main currents as well as the debates within the subject disciplines of each institute.
2. Program Planning: Proposals should demonstrate careful planning. The organization and structure of the Institute should be clearly delineated and be fully responsive to all program objectives. The travel component should be an integral and substantive part of the program, reinforcing and complementing its academic segment.
3. Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel, including faculty and administrative staff as well as outside presenters, should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals. Library and media resources should be accessible to participants; housing, transportation and other logistical arrangements should be fully adequate to the needs of participants and should be conducive to a collegial atmosphere.
4. Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate the recipient's commitment to promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity throughout the program. This can be accomplished through documentation, such as a written statement, summarizing past and/or on-going activities and efforts that further the principle of diversity

within the organization and its activities. Program activities that address this issue should be highlighted.

5. Experience: The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange program activity, indicating the experience that the organization and its professional staff have had in working with foreign educators.

6. Evaluation and Follow-up: The proposal should include a plan for evaluating activities during the Institute and at its conclusion. Proposals should comment on provisions made for follow-up with returned grantees as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages.

7. Administration and Management: The proposals should indicate evidence of continuous on-site administrative and managerial capacity as well as the means by which program activities will be implemented.

8. Cost Effectiveness: The proposals should maximize cost-sharing through direct institutional contributions, in-kind support, and other private sector support. Overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible.

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Agency 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.

Notification

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, and allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: October 10, 1996.

John P. Loiello,

Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 96-26642 Filed 10-16-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

Summer Institute on the History of the United States: Religion in America

ACTION: Notice—Request for Proposals (RFP).

SUMMARY: The U.S. Information Agency's Branch for the Study of the United States announces an open competition for an assistance award program entitled: "Summer Institute on the History of the United States: Religion in America." Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c)(3)-1 may apply to develop and implement a six-week post-graduate level program designed for a multinational group of 18 experienced foreign university educators. The program is intended to provide participants with a deeper understanding of U.S. history with special reference to the role that religion and religious institutions have played in the development of American civilization. Tentative program dates are June 28 to August 8, 1997.

USIA is seeking detailed proposals from colleges, universities, consortia of colleges and universities, and other not-for-profit academic organizations that have an established reputation in U.S. history, comparative religion, and/or American studies and related subdisciplines, and that can demonstrate expertise in conducting post-graduate programs for foreign educators. *Applicant institutions must have a minimum of four years experience in conducting international exchange programs.* The project director or one of the key program staff responsible for the academic program must have an advanced degree in history, religion, American studies, or a related discipline. Staff escorts traveling under the USIA cooperative agreement support must be U.S. citizens with demonstrated qualifications for this service.

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."

Programs and projects must conform with Agency requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation

Package. USIA projects and programs are subject to the availability of funds.

ANNOUNCEMENT NAME AND NUMBER: All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the above title and reference number E/AAS-97-02.

DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5:00 p.m. Washington D.C. time on Friday, December 20, 1996. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked December 20, 1996 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposal submissions arrive by the deadline.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed award criteria, required application forms, and standard guidelines for preparing proposals (including specific information on budget preparation), applicants should contact: U.S. Information Agency, Office of Academic Programs, Branch of the Study of the United States, E/AAS-Room 252, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, Attention: Richard Taylor, Telephone number: (202) 619-4557, Fax number: (202) 619-6790, Internet address: rtaylor@usia.gov.

Please specify USIA Program Officer Richard Taylor on all inquiries and correspondence. Interested applicants should read the complete Federal Register announcement before addressing inquiries to the office listed above or submitting their proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, USIA staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until after the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

TO DOWNLOAD A SOLICITATION PACKAGE VIA INTERNET: The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from USIA's website at <http://www.usia.gov/> or from the Internet Gopher at <gopher://gopher.usia.gov>. Under the heading "International Exchange/Training," select "Request for Proposals (RFPs)."

Please read "About the following RFPs" before downloading.

SUBMISSIONS: Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and 13 copies of the complete application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/AAS-97-02, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

Applicants should also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal on a 3.5" diskette, formatted for DOS. This material must be provided in ASCII text

(DOS) format with a maximum line strength of 65 characters.

DIVERSITY GUIDELINES: Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character, and should be balanced and representative of the diversity and broad range of responsible views present in American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and physical challenges. Applicants are strongly encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the "Support for Diversity" section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview and Objectives

"The Summer Institute on the History of the United States: Religion in America" is intended to provide foreign university teachers with an opportunity to increase their understanding of U.S. civilization through an in-depth examination of the role that religion and religious institutions have played throughout American history. The program should focus on the impact of religious thought and practice on the development of U.S. society and institutions, and in turn the impact that those institutions—political, social, and economic—have had on the development and status of religion in the U.S. The program's ultimate purpose is to improve the quality of teaching and curricula about the United States at universities abroad.

The Institute should be designed as an intensive, academically stimulating program that presents a multi-dimensional view of the United States through an integrated series of lectures, readings, interactive discussions, research and independent study opportunities, faculty mentoring and site visits.

The program should be six weeks in length, including an academic residency segment (at least four weeks in length) at a U.S. college or university campus, and an integrated study tour segment (not to exceed two weeks in length) which complements the academic program and includes visits to one or two additional regions of the U.S.

Program Dates

Tentative program dates are June 28 to August 8, 1997. Based on these dates,

participants would be booked to arrive in the U.S. on or about June 27, and depart on August 9, 1997. USIA is willing to consider adjustment of these programs dates, based on the needs of the host institution. However, the institute must be 42 program days in length, and should take place sometime between June 21 and August 30, 1997.

Participants

The program should be designed for a total of 18 highly-motivated and experienced foreign university faculty who are interested in using U.S. history, and an examination of American religion in particular, as a means to improve teaching and increase understanding of the United States at their home institutions. Participants can be expected to come from educational institutions where the study of the U.S. is relatively well-developed. Thus, while they will not be expected to have in-depth knowledge of the American religious experience, most will have had substantial experience in teaching about the United States. Many will have had sustained professional contact with American scholars and American scholarship; some may have had substantial prior experience studying in the U.S. Participants will be drawn from all regions of the world and will be fluent in English.

Participants will be nominated by U.S. Information Service posts abroad, and selected by the staff of USIA's Branch of the Study of the United States in Washington, D.C. USIA will cover all international travel costs directly.

Guidelines

The conception, structure and content of the institute program is entirely the responsibility of the organizers. However, given the multiple possibilities for the successful design of such a program, organizers are expected to submit proposals that articulate in concrete detail how they intend to organize and implement the institute.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further details on program design and implementation, as well as additional information on all other requirements.

Proposed Budget

Unless special circumstances warrant, based on a group of 18 participants, the total USIA-funded budget (program and administrative) should not exceed \$162,000, and USIA-funded administrative costs as defined in the budget details section of the solicitation package should not exceed \$48,500. Justification for any costs above these amounts must be clearly indicated in

the proposal submission. Any grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000. Applicant proposals should try to maximize cost-sharing in all facets of the program and to stimulate U.S. private sector, including foundation and corporate, support. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program.

The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program, and availability of U.S. government funding.

Please refer to the "POGI" in the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions for the institute program.

Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Geographic Area Offices. Proposals may be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the USIA Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA 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. Overall quality: Proposals should exhibit originality and substance, consonant with the highest standards of American teaching and scholarship. Program design should reflect the main currents as well as the debates within the larger discipline of American history, with attention given to the theme of American religious history.

2. Program planning: Proposals should demonstrate careful planning. The organization and structure of the institute should be clearly delineated and be fully responsive to all program objectives. The travel component should be an integral and substantive part of the program, reinforcing and complementing its academic segment.

3. Institutional capacity: Proposed personnel, including faculty and administrative staff as well as outside presenters, should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals. Library and media resources should be accessible to participants; housing, transportation and other logistical arrangements should be fully adequate to the needs of participants and should be conducive to a collegial atmosphere.

4. Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate the recipient's commitment to promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity throughout the program. This can be accomplished through documentation, such as a written statement, summarizing past and/or on-going activities and efforts that further the principle of diversity within the organization and its activities. Program activities that address this issue should be highlighted.

5. Experience: The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange program activity, indicating the experience that the organization and its professional staff have had in working with foreign educators.

6. Evaluation and Follow-up: The proposal should include a plan for evaluating activities during the Institute and at its conclusion. Proposals should comment on provisions made for follow-up with returned grantees as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages.

7. Administration and Management: The proposals should indicate evidence of continuous on-site administrative and managerial capacity as well as the means by which program activities will be implemented.

8. Cost Effectiveness: The proposals should maximize costsharing through direct institutional contributions, in-kind support, and other private sector support. Overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible.

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Agency 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.

Notification

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, and allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: October 9, 1996.

Dell Pendergrast,

Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 96-26640 Filed 10-16-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M