

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, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: September 19, 1977.

**John P. Loiello,**

*Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

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### UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

#### International Visitor Program

**ACTION:** Notice—Request for Proposals.

**SUMMARY:** The Office of International Visitors (E/V) of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces a competition for an assistance award. Public and Private nonprofit organizations *not* currently receiving Office of International Visitors assistance awards and meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c) may apply to develop programming for projects of one to twenty-five International Visitors nominated by U.S. Embassies abroad.

The intent of this announcement is to attract new organizations to the International Visitor (IV) programming process. USIA is seeking new organizations to provide diversity and an infusion of program experience to the IV program. The winning applicant will function as a national programming agency and will work closely with USIA staff members who will guide and mentor the applicant through procedural, budgetary or programmatic issues as they arise in a variety of International Visitor projects. This experience is expected to build the selected organization's capacity to compete for a continuing grant in IV project administration.

USIA is seeking a qualified applicant to develop over the course of fiscal year 1998 (October 1, 1997–September 30, 1998) the following series of projects: 25 Individual Visitor projects, 6 Single Country Projects (SCPs), 2 Regional Projects (RPs) and 1 Multi-Regional Project (MRP).

The objective of the International Visitor Program is to increase mutual understanding through communication and collaboration with professional counterparts in the U.S. Participants are

current or potential foreign leaders in government, politics, media, education, science, labor relations, and other key fields. They are selected by American embassies abroad and approved by USIA in Washington, DC. Since the program's earliest inception in 1941, more than 120,000 distinguished visitors have participated in the program, and over 155 program alumni have subsequently become heads of state or government in their home countries.

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 Title and Number

All communications with USIA concerning this RFP should refer to the announcement's title and reference number *E/V-98-01*.

#### To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from USIA's website at <http://www.usia.gov/education/rfps>. Please read all information before downloading.

#### To Receive a Solicitation Package Via Fax on Demand

The entire Solicitation Package may be received via the Bureau's "Grants Information Fax on Demand System", which is accessed by calling (202) 401-7616. Please request a "Catalog" of available documents and order numbers when first entering the system. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals.

#### Bidders Conference

USIA will host a Bidder's Conference for this assistance award on November 5, 1997 at a USIA location in Washington, DC. Substantive questions about this RFP will be addressed at the conference. Interested applicants are asked to submit questions by mail, fax, or e-mail to the E/VC address given above. Questions must be received by COB Friday, October 31, 1997. Details of the Bidders Conference will be sent to responding applicants at a later date.

#### Submissions

Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and 10 copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: *E/V-98-01*, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants must also submit the proposal on a 3.5" diskette, formatted for WordPerfect.

#### Deadline for Proposals

All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on *Monday, December 1, 1997*. Faxed or e-mailed documents will not be accepted at any time.

Documents postmarked by the due date but received at a later date will not be accepted.

Grants should begin *by mid-January 1998*.

#### To Request a Solicitation Package, Contact

The Office of International Visitors, Community relations Division, E/VC, Room 266, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, Tel: (202) 619-5234, 1-800-827-0804; Fax: (202) 619-4655, E-Mail address: [rfp@usia.gov](mailto:rfp@usia.gov) (available October 14, 1997).

Please request required application forms, and standard guidelines for preparing proposals, including specific criteria for preparation of the proposal budget.

#### 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 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. Pub. L. 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," USIA "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Proposals should account for advancement of this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**Overview:** Programs must maintain a non-partisan character. Programs and awards must conform to all Agency requirements and guidelines.

**Guidelines:** USIA seeks proposals from non-profit organizations for development and implementation of professional projects for approximately 100 USIA-sponsored International Visitors to the U.S. Once the award is made, separate proposals will be required for each group project [MRP, RP, and SCP], as well as less-formal proposals for Individual Visitor projects. Each project will be focussed on a substantive theme. Further information giving examples of some of these program themes is included below and in the Solicitation Package.

Goals and objectives for all projects will be shared with the winning applicant organization following the announcement of the assistance award. Most projects will be 21 to 30 days in length. Most projects will begin in Washington, DC, with an orientation and overview of the issues and a central examination of Federal policies regarding these issues. Well-paced project itineraries include programs in four or five communities. Group and individual project itineraries will ideally include urban and rural small communities in diverse geographical and cultural regions of the U.S., as appropriate to the project theme. Projects should provide opportunities for participants to experience the diversity of American society and culture. Depending on the size and theme of the project, the participants in Multi-Regional or Regional group projects can be divided into smaller sub-groups for simultaneous visits to different communities, with subsequent opportunities to share their experiences

with the full group once it is reunited. Project may provide opportunities for the visitors to share a meal or similar experience (home hospitality) in the home of Americans of diverse occupational, age, gender and ethnic groups. Some individual and group projects might include an opportunity for an overnight stay (home stay) in an American home. The visitors should be provided opportunities to address student, civic and professional groups in relaxed and informal settings. For some projects, "shadowing" experiences with American professional colleagues may be proposed. Visitors should have appropriate opportunities for site visits and hands-on experiences that are relevant to project themes. Projects should also allow time for participants to reflect on their experiences, and in group projects, share observations with project colleagues. Visitors should have opportunities to visit cultural and tourist sites. Arrangements for community visits must be made through affiliates of the National Council for International Visitors [NCIV]. [The NCIV is a national network of private citizen organizations located in more than one hundred U.S. communities, which arrange local programs for international visitors.] In cities where there is no such council, the applicant organization will arrange for coordination of local programs.

The applicant should demonstrate the potential to develop projects, as described above, on a variety of program themes. The applicant is expected to have e-mail capability to consult with USIA program officers, and access to internet resources. USIA will provide close coordination and guidance throughout the duration of the award.

For informational purposes only, the following outlines are examples of project themes for multi-regional and regional projects. Do *not* prepare proposals to administer these sample project themes as part of your submission package.

#### **1. Multi-Regional Project** (World-wide participants; English-speaking):

Globalization of Business and Markets. Project design would examine the impact of "globalization" in business, markets, and communities. The project will examine costs and benefits of the interconnected global market, and its effect on international and domestic policies.

#### **2. Regional Projects** (from one continent or region; may include interpretation):

#### *Grassroots Democracy [American Republics]*

Project design would provide participants with a greater understanding of the U.S. political system and American social culture in a democratic society. It would demonstrate how grassroots organizations interact and communicate with federal, state and local governments and explore the role and influence of grassroots organizations on public policy decision-making at the local and national levels.

#### *Civic Education: Fostering Informed and Responsible Citizen Participation in a Democracy [Africa]*

Project would demonstrate how a public that is well-educated about its civic rights and responsibilities, and which plays an active role in public life, is the best guarantor of its own self-government. Participants would encounter some of the key organizations involved in educating U.S. citizens and in mobilizing effective citizen participation in various aspects of the social and political process.

#### **Visa Requirements**

Participants in individuals or group projects will travel on J-1 visas arranged by USIA. Projects must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to program specific guidelines in the Solicitation Package for further details.

#### **Tax Requirements**

Administration of the projects must be in compliance with reporting and withholding regulations for federal, state, and local taxes as applicable. Applicant organizations should demonstrate tax regulation adherence in the proposal narrative and budget.

#### **Budget**

Applicant organizations are required to submit a comprehensive line-item administrative budget in accordance with the instructions in the Solicitation Package. A summary budget as well as a detailed budget showing all administrative costs is required. Proposed staffing and costs associated with staffing must be appropriate to the requirements outline in the RFP and the remaining portion of the Solicitation Package. The selected applicant will enter into close consultation on budgetary matters with the responsible USIA program officer throughout the implementation of projects, each one of which will have separate budgets. Combined administrative and indirect costs proposed should be reasonable. Cost sharing is encouraged.

The Agency is seeking proposals from organizations that are not currently receiving administrative E/V project grants. Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000. Since this RFP is for an award greater than \$60,000 all applicants must have four years of experience as stated. It is therefore incumbent on organizations to demonstrate: a capacity for programming visitors from all geographical regions of the world; proven fiscal management integrity; and an ability to have close consultation with USIA staff throughout project administration.

#### 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 also be reviewed by the E/V program officer, as well as one or more of USIA's 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. *Quality of program design:* Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and be responsive to requirements stated in the RFP and the 1998 Solicitation Package.

2. *Program planning:* A detailed and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive intent and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines.

3. *Ability to achieve program objectives:* Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the goals of the International Visitor Program.

4. *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration

(selection of resources, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

5. *Institutional Capacity:* Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals.

6. *Institution's Record/Ability:* Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for any past Agency grants as determined by USIA's Office of Contracts. The Agency will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the potential of new applicants for effective program administration. All applicants must demonstrate: a minimum of four years in existence, with proven project management ability and demonstrated fiscal soundness and accountability; a potential for programming visitors from all geographic regions of the world; a Washington, DC presence or ability to have consultations with USIA staff on a regular basis (including face-to-face) throughout the development of each group or Individual project.

7. *Cost-effectiveness:* The administrative and indirect cost components of the proposal, including salaries, should be kept as low as possible.

8. *Cost-sharing:* Consideration will be given to proposed cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

#### 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, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: September 27, 1997.

**John P. Lioello,**

*Associate Director for Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

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#### UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

**Program Title NIS Training Program: Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova**

**ACTION:** Request for proposals.

**SUMMARY:** The Russia/Eurasia Division of the Office of Citizen Exchanges of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c) may apply to develop training programs. Grants are subject to the availability of funds.

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 cited above is provided through the Fulbright-Hays Act and the Freedom Support Act.

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

*Announcement Title and Number:* All communications with USIA concerning this RFP should refer to the announcement's title and reference number E/PN-98-5.

*Deadline for Proposals:* All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on Friday, December 12, 1997. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked by December 12, 1997, but received at a later date, will not be accepted.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT:** The Russia/Eurasia Division, Office of