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Ashish Sen,

Director.

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UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Office of Citizen Exchanges; Media Internship Program for Russia

ACTION: Request for proposals.

SUMMARY: The Europe/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. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501 (c) may submit proposals to develop media internship programs. Grants are subject to the availability of funds.

Goals/Objectives

The Russian Media Internship Program has been created in response to Russia's current economic crisis that threatens the existence of its emerging free press. USIA hopes that, through participation in the Russian Media Internship Program, Russian media managers will survive the economic challenges they are facing and continue to provide non-biased and accurate reporting. The program has three objectives: (1) To help media managers address the difficult economic conditions they are currently facing by learning the techniques used by their American counterparts in overcoming similar difficulties; (2) to demonstrate that a fair and ethical media can contribute to a civil society despite economic hardships; and (3) to familiarize media managers with the unique relationship in America between the media and government.

Overview

USIA is interested in proposals that will provide hands-on internships to approximately 16 Russian mid-level managers from print media establishments with a circulation of not less than 10,000. The program should ideally be ten weeks in length and begin with a visit to Washington, DC. The Washington portion of the program should last 4-6 days and focus on the interaction and relationship between the U.S. Federal Government and the media. After completing the Washington-based component, participants will begin practical internships at medium-sized media establishments throughout the U.S. Up to three host sites for each participant may be arranged for the internship portion of the program. Proposals should list those media establishments willing to host and should describe why these media establishments have been chosen. Program format can include both individual placements as well as work in small groups (up to three at a time). If the small group format is used, the internships must have a practical program component, not just be site visits. Organizations may propose a debriefing session before participants return to Russia. The Bureau will give higher ranking to proposals that ensure lasting linkages between these participants and their American colleagues.

Organizations must demonstrate the capability to identify and recommend candidates for participation in the program. The narrative should describe how the identification process will be carried out and by whom. Recommendations for selection will be made to the Office of Public Diplomacy at the American Embassy in Moscow, which will make the final selection of participants.

Due to the interactive nature of the internship component, it is preferred that participants have a working knowledge of English, particularly a good understanding of the spoken language. If individuals with little or no English are recommended, organizations must clearly describe what provisions they would make to structure a program for those participants, including interpretation services for participants.

A strong proposal contains the following: A proven track record of conducting program activities; cost-sharing from American or in-country sources, including donations of air fares, hotel and/or housing costs, and experienced program staff with some Russian language skills.

On October 1, 1999, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will become part of the U.S. Department of State. The integration will not affect the content of this announcement or the nature of the program described.

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 the Freedom Support Act.

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

Announcement Title and Number

All correspondence with the Agency concerning this RFP should reference the above title and number: E/PN-00-7

Deadline for Proposals

All copies must be received at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (formerly USIA's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs) by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time, on Thursday, October 7, 1999. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked on October 7, 1999 but received on a later date will not be accepted. It is the responsibility of each grant applicant to ensure that proposals are received by the deadline. A grant decision announcement should be made by December 1, 1999. The grant should begin in January 2000, and U.S.-based internships commencing in Spring 2000.

Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before addressing inquiries to the Office of Citizen Exchanges or submitting their proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, the Office of Citizen Exchanges may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until after the Bureau program and project review process has been completed.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT: The Europe/Eurasia Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, (E/PN), Room 220, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, attn: Henry Scott, tel: 202-619-5327 and fax: 202-619-4350 or Internet address: <hscott@usia.gov>, to request a Solicitation Package. The Solicitation Package contains detailed award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet

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

Submissions

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and ten (10) copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/PN-00-7, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 336, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Complete proposals should not exceed twenty (20) pages in length (excluding Tab F).

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 of Diversity" section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total 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," USIA "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Proposals should reflect advancement of

this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Year 2000 Compliance Requirement (Y2K Requirement)

The Year 2000 (Y2K) issue is a broad operational and accounting problem that could potentially prohibit organizations from processing information in accordance with Federal management and program specific requirements including data exchange with USIA. The inability to process information in accordance with Federal requirements could result in grantees being required to return funds that have not been accounted for properly.

USIA therefore requires all organizations use Y2K compliant systems including hardware, software, and firmware. Systems must accurately process data and dates (calculating, comparing and sequencing) both before and after the beginning of the year 2000 and correctly adjust for leap years.

Additional information addressing the Y2K issue may be found at the General Service Administration's Office of Information Technology website at <<http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov>>.

Visa Regulations

Foreign participants on programs sponsored by the Office of Citizen Exchange Programs are granted J-1 Exchange Visitor visas by a U.S. embassy or consulate in the sending country. All programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

Project Funding

Applicants should submit proposals that do not exceed \$225,000. Applicants are invited to provide both an all-inclusive budget as well as separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location or activity in order to facilitate Bureau decisions on funding. While a comprehensive line item budget based on the model in the Solicitation Package must be submitted, separate component budgets are optional.

Since Bureau grant assistance constitutes only a portion of total project funding, proposals should list and provide evidence of other sources of financial and in-kind support. Proposals with substantial private sector support from foundations, corporations and other institutions will be considered highly competitive.

The following project costs are eligible for consideration for funding:

1. International and domestic air fares; visas; transit costs; ground transportation costs.

2. Per Diem. For the US program, organizations have the option of using a flat \$160/day for program participants or the published U.S. Federal per diem rates for individual U.S. cities.

3. Book and cultural allowance. Participants are entitled to a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a participant book allowance of \$50.

4. Consultants. Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Daily honoraria should not exceed \$250 per day. Subcontracting organizations may also be used, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and subcontractor should be included in the proposal.

5. Room rental. Room rental should not exceed \$250 per day.

6. Materials development. Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for participants.

7. One working meal per project per group. Per capita costs may not exceed \$5-\$8 for a lunch and \$14-\$20 for a dinner, excluding room rental. The number of invited guests may not exceed participants by more than a factor of two-to-one.

8. A return travel allowance of \$70 may be provided to each participant to be used for incidental expenditures during international travel.

9. Interpreters, if needed, can be provided by the State Department's Language Services Division. If interpreters translate for groups, the number of participants should be limited to four (4) per interpreter. Grant proposal budgets should contain a flat \$160/day per diem for each Department of State interpreter, as well as home-program-home air transportation of \$400 per interpreter, plus any U.S. travel expenses during the program. Salary expenses are covered centrally and should not be part of an applicant's proposed budget. Locally-arranged interpreters with adequate skills and experience may be used by the grantee in lieu of State Department interpreters, with the same 1:4 interpreter/participant ratio. Costs associated with using their services may not exceed the rate for Department of State interpreters. Bureau grants do not pay for foreign interpreters to accompany delegations from their home country.

10. All program participants will be covered under the terms of the Bureau-sponsored health insurance policy. The premium is paid by the Bureau directly to the insurance company.

11. Administrative Costs. Other costs necessary for the effective administration of the program including salaries for grant organization

employees, benefits and other direct and indirect costs as described in the detailed instructions in the application package. While this announcement does not proscribe a rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, in general, priority will be given to proposals whose administrative costs are less than twenty-five (25) percent of the total requested from USIA. Proposals should show cost-sharing, including both contributions from the applicant and from other sources.

Please refer to the Application Package for complete budget guidelines.

Review Process

The Bureau 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 established herein and in the Application Packet. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of Bureau officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will also be reviewed by the program office, as well as embassy or consular officers for advisory review, where appropriate. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Advisor or by other offices in the Department of State. Funding decisions will be made at the discretion of the Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) will reside with a contracts officer with competency for Bureau programs.

Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered.

1. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives. Program objectives should be stated clearly and precisely and should reflect the applicant's expertise in the subject area and the region. Objectives should respond to the priority topics in this announcement and should relate to the current conditions in the included countries. Objectives should be reasonable and attainable. A detailed work plan should explain step by step how objectives will be achieved, including a timetable for completion of major tasks and activities and an outline of the selection process. The substance of the seminars, presentations, workshops, consulting, internships and itineraries should be spelled out in detail. Responsibilities of any in-country partners should be clearly described. Contact information

for any in-country partners should be included in the proposal.

2. Multiplier Effect/Impact: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

3. 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 participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

4. Institutional Capability: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals. The narrative should demonstrate proven ability to handle logistics. Proposals should reflect the institution's expertise in the subject area and knowledge of the conditions in the targeted region.

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.

6. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan and methodology to evaluate the program's successes, both as activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description and/or plan for use of another measurement technique (such as a focus group) to link outcomes to original project objectives.

7. Cost-effectiveness and Cost Sharing: Overhead and administrative costs in the proposal, including salaries, subcontracts for services and honoraria, should be kept low. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

Notice

The terms and conditions published in the RFP 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 RFP 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. Organizations will be expected to cooperate with the Bureau in evaluating their programs under the principles of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, which requires federal agencies to measure and report on the results of their programs and activities.

Notification

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

Dated: August 27, 1999.

William Kiehl,

Acting Deputy Associate, Director for Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

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UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE

Announcement of the 2000 Solicited Grant Competition Grant Program

AGENCY: United States Institute of Peace.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Agency announces its 2000 Solicited Grant Competition. The themes and topics for the 2000 Solicited competition are listed below.

- Solicitation A: Great Power Relations: United States, China, and Russia
- Solicitation B: Intervention and Humanitarian Assistance
- Solicitation C: Africa
- Solicitation D: Training

Deadline for Receipt of Applications: December 30, 1999.

Notification of Awards: March 2000.

Applications Material: Available upon request.

ADDRESSES: For Application Package: United States Institute of Peace, Grant Program, Solicited Grants-FR, 1200 17th Street, NW, Suite 200, Washington, DC 20036-3011, (202) 429-3842 (phone), (202) 429-6063 (fax), E-mail: grant_program@usip.org

Application material available on-line starting September 1: www.usip.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Grant Program: Phone (202) 429-3842.

Dated: August 27, 1999.

Bernice J. Carney,

Director, Office of Administration.

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