

bilateral partnerships; in addition, trilateral configurations between a college or university in the United States and counterpart institutions in two countries within any one of the following three subregions are eligible, but not required. (Not every country in every subregion is eligible. Cross-subregional trilateral affiliations are ineligible.) For all countries listed, eligible themes are limited to Business and the Rule of Law, with special interest in Public Administration and Public Policy.

Baltics: Estonia, Lithuania;
Balkans: Albania, Bosnia and
Hercegovina, Macedonia, Serbia/
Montenegro;

Central Europe: Czech Republic,
Slovakia.

[**Note:** In addition, institutions interested in partnerships with institutions of tertiary education in countries of the Newly Independent States should consult a separate request for proposals that will be announced by the Office of Academic Programs for the N.I.S. College and University Partnerships Program. For information about this program, contact the Office of Academic Programs; Advising, Teaching, and Specialized Programs Division (NISCUPP), (E/ASU), Room 349, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547, phone: (202) 619-5289, fax: (202) 401-1433.]

(5) *North Africa, Near East, and South Asia:* The following countries are eligible for bilateral affiliations; in addition; trilateral proposals by U.S. colleges or universities for collaboration with counterpart institutions in two countries *within* any one of the following three *subregions* are eligible but not required. (Not every country in every subregion is eligible. *Cross-subregional* trilateral affiliations are ineligible.) Any eligible theme for discipline may be proposed for any country. Applicants are invited to contact USIS posts in the early stages of proposal development, especially in cases where the U.S. institution lacks recent experience in the region.

Gulf: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen;

Near East/North Africa: Israel, Gaza, West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon (proposals for linkages with Lebanese institutions that include distance education and/or Internet to facilitate two-way communication are encouraged), Syria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt;

South Asia: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka.

(6) *Western Europe and Canada:*

Turkey is eligible only for projects in the Rule of Law or Civic Education that hold potential for developing and strengthening democratic institutions;

United Kingdom (only Northern Ireland is eligible).

In addition, projects are solicited for the following trilateral configurations:

U.S./Northern Ireland/Republic of Ireland Partnerships: United Kingdom (only Northern Ireland) is eligible for trilateral affiliations with the United States and the Republic of Ireland for projects in Cross-Cultural Communications or Conflict Resolution only.

North American Trilateral Exchanges. Projects linking U.S., Canadian, and Mexican institutions are eligible for trilateral affiliations in Teaching Methodology, Business, Public Administration, Trade, Economics, and Environmental Studies.

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: August 13, 1998.

James D. Whitten,

Acting Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 98-22300 Filed 8-19-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Program Title: Multi-Regional and Regional Projects for International Visitors; Request for Proposals

SUMMARY: The Office of International Visitors (IV) of the United States Information Agency's (USIA) Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for assistance awards. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c)(3)-1 may submit proposals to develop one or more groups (three projects per group) of thematically linked projects for Multi-

Regional and Regional Groups of International Visitors traveling in the United States for period of 21 to 30 days. Groups will be comprised of from 12 to 30 American Embassy contacts in the fields of economics, trade, the judiciary, and journalism.

Deadline for Proposals: All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on the due date indicated for submission of proposals for each project series described below. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked on the proposal due date but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposals are received by the due date which has been established for each available project series.

Program Information: USIA seeks proposals from non-profit organizations for development and implementation of four sets of three professional programs for USIA-sponsored International Visitor participants. A separate proposal is required for each project. Each series will be focussed on a broad substantive theme. Interested organizations should submit one proposal for each set of linked projects, but within the "Narrative" and "Detailed Budget" sections (Tabs C and D on the Proposal Submission Checklist found at the end of the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)) applicant should treat each of the three projects individually with a separate detailed project proposal and budget.

More detailed descriptions of the MRPs and RPs will be included in the Solicitation Package under "Preliminary Project Summaries." Participants in the projects will be foreign leaders or potential leaders selected by U.S. embassy committees abroad. Each group will typically consist of from 12 to 30 foreign visitors in addition to the two to three American English language escort officers (ELEOs) or foreign language Escort Interpreters (E/T's) selected by USIA, who accompany them. 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. Project itineraries will ideally include urban and rural small communities and 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.

Projects may provide opportunities for the visitors to share a meal of similar experience (home hospitality) in the home of Americans of diverse occupational, age, gender and ethnic groups. Some projects might include an opportunity for an overnight stay (home stay) in an American home. The participants may 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. As appropriate, opportunities for site visits and hands-on experiences that are relevant to project themes may be included. All projects should include demonstrations of the Internet and discussions on how it can be productively used in the context of each project theme. Projects should also allow time for participants to reflect on their experiences, and to share observations with project colleagues. Participants should have opportunities to visit cultural and tourist sites which complement the program theme. 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 arranges local programs for international visitors.) In cities where there is no such council, the applicant will arrange the local programs.

The applicant should demonstrate the potential to develop projects, as described, 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.

Series One: Economics and Trade.

Deadline for Submission: October 6, 1998.

Project One

Title: U.S. Trade and World Markets (I).

Type: Multi-Regional.

Dates: January 14–February 4, 1999.

Officer: E/VP—Janet Beard.

Telephone: (202) 205–3058.

Fax: (202) 205–0792.

E-Mail Address: jbeard@usia.gov.

This project will concentrate on the institutions, industries, and federal and local offices concerned with trade development and investment.

Participants will hear perspectives of U.S. trade policy from federal executive and congressional speakers, lobbying organizations, unions, media, and state officials. The project will include site visits to representative sectors of the U.S. economy, such as industry, agriculture, and high-technology firms.

Project Two

Title: U.S. Financial System.

Type: Multi-Regional.

Dates: July 22–August 12, 1999.

Officer: E/VP—Janet Beard.

Telephone: (202) 205–3058.

Fax: (202) 205–0792.

E-Mail Address: jbeard@usia.gov.

This project will review the U.S. banking and financial system, including industry regulation, trends in domestic and foreign investment, and the roles and differences between different players in the financial marketplace. Domestic and international finance issues studied will include changing global finance flows, small community banking, project finance, stock exchanges, and economic trends' analysis.

Project Three

Title: U.S. Trade and World Markets (II).

Type: Multi-Regional.

Dates: September 9–30, 1999.

Officer: E/VP—Janet Beard.

Telephone: (202) 205–3058.

Fax: (202) 205–0792.

E-Mail Address: jbeard@usia.gov.

See description under Project One.

Series Two: Journalism.

Deadline for Submission: November 10, 1998.

Project One

Title: Radio Broadcasting.

Type: Multi-Regional.

Dates: February 25–March 8, 1999.

Officer: E/VP—Jay Taylor.

Telephone: (202) 205–3058.

Fax: (202) 205–0792.

E-Mail Address: jtaylor@usia.gov.

This project will address responsible and independent journalism while providing an opportunity to upgrade technological knowledge and journalistic skills. It will consist of visits to a wide variety of radio stations in the U.S., including commercial, public, religious, national, and local stations. Participants will hear discussions of broadcasting regulations and journalist ethics, observe programming, news gathering, interviewing and production techniques, and learn about the impact

of technology on radio broadcasting in the U.S.

Project Two

Title: Print Journalism.

Type: Multi-Regional.

Dates: May 13–June 3, 1999.

Officer: E/VP—Jay Taylor.

Telephone: (202) 205–3058.

Fax: (202) 205–0792.

E-Mail Address: jtaylor@usia.gov

This project will provide participants an overview of print media practices, traditions, and institutions in the U.S. It will acquaint participants with how independent media, with access and freedom to convey information and opinions, form an integral part of America's open and democratic society. The group will study journalism in its American operational context. Featured topics will be: reporting skills; ethical considerations and accountability; editorial decision-making; newspaper administration and management; journalism education and training; and research, distribution, and production technology.

Project Three

Title: Television Broadcasting.

Type: Multi-Regional.

Dates: August 12–September 2, 1999.

Officer: E/VP—Jay Taylor.

Telephone: (202) 205–3058.

Fax: (202) 205–0792.

E-Mail Address: jtaylor@usia.gov

This project will provide an overview of the impact of television on American society, including education, marketing and commerce, news coverage, jurisprudence, technological innovations, social and ethical issues, as well as entertainment. Its role in the socialization of American youth will also be examined. Interactive educational and public service television will be highlighted as well as the use of television in the distance learning process.

Series Three: Africa and Economic Development.

Deadline for Submission: December 4, 1998.

Project One

Title: Economic Reform and Private Sector Expansion.

Type: Africa Regional (French-Speaking).

Dates: February 22–March 13, 1999.

Officer: E/VGA—Miriam Guichard.

Telephone: (202) 205–9596.

Fax: (202) 205–7974.

E-Mail Address: mguichar@usia.gov or sknott@usia.gov

The American experience has been that a strong private sector is the engine of economic growth and development,

while government plays an essential role in regulating, rather than controlling or owning, the production of goods and provision of services. Meanwhile, many African nations are taking increasingly dramatic steps, some voluntarily and some under great pressure from multi-national donor organizations, towards structural adjustment and privatization. In this process, many African government officials, journalists, academics, and businesses people are themselves dedicated to a vision of economic prosperity through private sector expansion, while others lack confidence in the private sector to provide for society's needs.

This project is designed to show the participants the size and scope of the private sector, government's role in both promoting and regulating business, and the effects on society, both positive and negative, of a competitive free-market economic system operating in conjunction with government supports for population sectors in need. Specific focus will be placed on how communities and regions in the U.S. promote economic diversification and expansion, and how the rule of law protects both business and citizens, including labor. Other segments will focus on how essential services (e.g. utilities) as well as basic commodities are provided through the private sector in the U.S. Finally, while this program will shift away from a previous focus on "privatization", it will touch on efforts by federal, state, and local governments to privatize some work, as well as to borrow traditional private-sector competitive approaches.

Project Two

Title: Women as Economic Partners in Nation-Building.

Type: Africa Regional (English- and French-Speaking).

Dates: April 27–May 16, 1999.

Officer: E/VGA—Audrey Ford.

Telephone: (202) 205–9596.

Fax: (202) 205–7974.

E-Mail Address: aford@usia.gov.

Over the years, Africans as well as donor nations have come to realize that little or no economic development is possible without the full participation of women, and African women have increasingly begun to organize to promote their own economic development and independence. Given the historical context of American women's increased economic involvement and activism, as well as current debates focused on issues related to women's economic position in the U.S., it is likely that International Visitors on this topic and their

American interlocutors will have much to share, and perhaps new initiatives to undertake together. This program will focus on how women network and organize in the U.S. to promote economic opportunity and private enterprise, as well as to strengthen the community, the society, and the nation. Emphasis will be placed on private sector as well as national, state and local government support for efforts to increase women's economic strength and their voice in policy-making.

Project Three

Title: Global Business and Trade.

Type: Africa Regional (English-Speaking)

Dates: July 12–31, 1999.

Officer: E/VGA—Mary Ann Ignatius.

Telephone: (202) 205–9596.

Fax: (202) 205–7974.

E-Mail Address: mai@usia.gov.

This project is intended for economic and trade specialists from both public and private sectors, policy planners, academics, and economic journalists, and the focus is specific: The formation and objectives of U.S. trade policy within the context of a highly decentralized, liberal and competitive economic system. Visitors will examine the domestic political, economic and social concerns that affect U.S. trade policy, including the overriding U.S. commitment to maintaining a globally competitive position. Particular emphasis will be placed on the implication of these factors for U.S.-Africa trade relations, and strategies that African countries can pursue to increase their competitive position and foster more effective trade relations. In addition to addressing global and U.S.-Africa trade issues, visitors will also take a look at how federal, state, and local government in the U.S. all work to promote international trade and investment, as well as strategies employed by the private sector.

Series Four: The Rule of Law.

Deadline for Submission: January 15, 1999.

Project One

Title: Independent Judiciary and the Rule of Law.

Type: Near East-South Asian Regional (Arabic-Speaking).

Dates: April 19–May 8, 1999.

Officer: E/VGN—Alice Shifflett.

Telephone: (202) 205–9596.

Fax: (202) 205–7974.

E-Mail Address: ashiffle@usia.gov.

Judicial reform is an issue of great interest to many throughout the Arab world, whether as part of a process of moving towards democratization and greater government accountability, or as

part of an effort to combine or reconcile civil and religious law, or simply as part of an effort to improve the economic and investment climate. This project will seek to provide visitors with a thorough overview of the U.S. legal system, emphasizing the principles of judicial independence, as well as the structure of the federal, state, and municipal court systems. Key judicial issues such as environmental law, anti-drug laws, civil rights, and legal aid will be examined, as well as other topics to be determined by the particular interests of the visitors. Through meetings at a wide range of U.S. government institutions, as well as site visits to court sessions and law school classes, participants in this project will also examine the administration of the U.S. legal system, including funding, legal education and training, and administrative innovations such as computerized case management and alternative dispute resolution.

Project Two

Title: Administration of Justice.

Type: American Republics Regional (Spanish-Speaking).

Dates: June 7–25, 1999.

Officer: E/VGR—Colleen Fowler.

Telephone: (202) 205–9596.

Fax: (202) 205–7974.

E-Mail Address: cfowler@usia.gov.

Judicial systems in Latin America are seeking to modernize their court procedures and introduce new approaches to legal problems, while at the same time dealing with the ongoing challenge to ensure the fundamental rule of law and an open and transparent legal process. This project will examine the role the rule of law plays in the United States, with a focus on topics relating to civil justice modernization. Topics will include a range of issues such as case management, alternative dispute resolution, arbitration mechanisms, and mediation techniques. Issues of legal reform and judicial training will be addressed, and the visitors (to include lawyers, judges, academicians and court officials, as well as community leaders, and journalists) will have opportunities throughout to compare their legal systems and to exchange perspectives on the management of these systems. Topics for meetings at the federal, state, and municipal levels will include how a bill becomes law, the jurisdiction of federal and state courts, the role of U.S. and state's attorneys, juvenile justice, the impact and objectives of new anti-crime and sentencing guidelines legislation, nominations of federal judges, and judicial ethics. The program will include discussion of white-collar and

high-tech crime, including corruption, embezzlement, and just-workplace issues, and visitors will also look at current trends in legal education.

Project Three

Title: The Rule of Law and an Independent Judiciary.

Type: Africa Regional (French-Speaking).

Dates: August 9–28, 1999.

Officer: E/VGA—Nancy Falne.

Telephone: (202) 205–9596.

Fax: (202) 205–7974.

E-Mail Address: nfalne@usia.gov.

The rule of law is an essential foundation stone in political and economic development, and while African justice officials, lawyers, judges, magistrates, law professors, and legal journalists may recognize this fact, they often face severe obstacles in both creating an independent judiciary and in managing an effective legal system with scarce resources. This program will endeavor to give visitors an overview of the rule of law and its complexity within the U.S. federal system, as well as the role of the Constitution as a framework for lawmakers. Emphasis will be placed on the independence of the U.S. judicial system, and the means of guaranteeing protection of the rights of the minority in a democracy, including civil and human rights. The visitors will also look at alternatives to traditional court proceedings, such as arbitration and mediation. In addition, the program will explore the nuts and bolts of how the U.S. judicial system operates, including legal training, case management, and the working relationship between the judiciary and the police.

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. The "Table of Contents" listing available documents and order numbers should be the first order when entering the system.

To Receive a Solicitation Package by Mail, Contact

For Multi-Regional Projects (MRPs): U.S. Information Agency, Group Projects Division, E/VP, Room 255, 301

4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

For Regional Projects (RPs): U.S. Information Agency, Grants Division, E/VG, Room 255, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

On all inquiries and correspondence, please specify the name(s) of the USIA Program Officer(s) as they appear on the "Officer(s)" line for each of the above projects. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, Agency staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

Submissions: Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and 12 copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/V–99–1, Series Title: Office of Grants Management, E/XE, 301 4th Street, S.W., Room 336, Washington, D.C. 20547.

Applicants must 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 length of 65 characters. USIA will transmit these files electronically to USIS posts overseas for their review.

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. 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 account for advancement of this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Visa Requirements

Program participants 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.

Budget

Organizations are required to submit a comprehensive line-item budget in accordance with the instructions in the Solicitation Package. Cost items must be clearly categorized as administrative costs, group project costs, or program costs. Applicants must use the budget format presented in the "1999 Guidelines for Proposals Submitted to the USIA Office of International Visitors" for all budget submissions. There must be a summary budget as well as a detailed breakdown showing the administrative budget, group project budget and program budget. Proposed staffing and costs associated with staffing must be appropriate to fulfillment of all project requirements, which will include close consultation with the responsible E/V Program Officer throughout development and implementation of the program. Proposed costs may not exceed the guideline amounts.

Combined administrative and indirect costs proposed should be controlled and are subject to negotiation. Cost sharing is encouraged and, if applicable, must be shown in the budget presentation. The Agency anticipates that awards to cover administrative and indirect costs (where applicable) will be less than \$20,400.

Organizations that have received a renewal assistance award from the Agency for the Office of International Visitors must submit a budget showing all administrative costs associated with the projects for which application is made. Any award to such an organization pursuant to this announcement may be adjusted to reflect the status of the renewal award. Renewal award recipients must identify individuals or organizations to whom they have already paid honoraria in FY 1999 if they propose to pay an additional honorarium for any projects included in this announcement.

The Agency welcomes proposals from organizations that have not received USIA grants or assistance awards in the past. Agency requirements stipulate that "Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years

of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000." It is not expected that any of the projects in this announcement will cost \$60,000 or less. It is, therefore, incumbent on organizations to demonstrate four years of successful experience in conducting international exchange programs to be eligible for an assistance award.

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. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as USIA Geographic Area Offices and the USIA post(s) overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of USIA's Associate Director for Education 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:

1. Quality of the program idea: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to Agency mission, and be responsive to all goals and requirements stated in the RFP, Preliminary Project Summaries and the "1999 Guidelines for Proposals Submitted to the United States Information Agency Office of International Visitors."

2. Program planning: The proposed program and work plan should include a planning and implementation timeline, describe any preliminary planning undertaken, and demonstrate logistical capability to implement the program as described.

3. Ability to achieve project objectives: Objectives should be well designed, reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the project's objectives.

4. Multiplier effect/impact: Proposed projects should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

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

6. Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve effective implementation and fulfillment of the project's goals.

7. 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 past Federal assistance awards, if any. The Agency will consider the past performance of prior USIA award recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. All applicants must demonstrate a minimum of four years of successful experience in conducting international exchange programs.

8. Cost-effectiveness: The administrative and indirect cost components of the proposals, including salaries, should be kept as low as possible and should not exceed the amount stated above.

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

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 to 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. The U.S. Information Agency projects, programs and assistance awards are subject to the availability of

funds and sufficient number of participant nominations.

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 budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

Government Reporting Requirements

Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.

In order to account better for the spending of public funds, the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) requires federal agencies and departments to establish standards for measuring their performance and effectiveness. Each Executive Branch Agency and Department must develop a strategic plan describing its overall goals and objectives, annual performance plans containing *quantifiable* measures of its progress, and performance reports describing its success in meeting those goals and measures. USIA will be looking to our partner organizations to measure and report in three areas: (1) program efficiency (resource costs versus outputs); (2) program effectiveness (degree to which program goals are achieved; and (3) program impact (outcomes).

For general administrative assistance awards, such as this, specific program results will be worked out on an individual project basis. USIA will work closely with its partner organizations to define specific project results, coordinate the gathering of information, and evaluate the projects according to the three areas listed above. Please note that USIA advances six strategic goals (National Security, Economic Prosperity, Democracy, Law Enforcement, Foundation of Trust, and Free Exchange of Information) and you may be asked to administer projects and measure outcomes for each. Project outcomes will be based on country or region goals as well as the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' goals to expose foreign leaders (participants) to American ideas, values and society, increase American's understanding of foreign cultures and society, foster linkages between U.S. and foreign individuals and institutions, and to

generate cost sharing and other forms of financial leveraging for programs.

Notification

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

Dated: August 13, 1998.

James D. Whitten,

Acting Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 98-22299 Filed 8-19-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

US Based Training Program (USBT); Request for Proposals

SUMMARY: The Advising and Student Services Branch of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. Public and private nonprofit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c)(3)-1 may apply to develop one training program for USIA-affiliated overseas educational advisers to take place in spring 1999. The basic function of an overseas educational adviser is to provide accurate, objective information to foreign audiences on U.S. study opportunities at accredited academic institutions, and to guide students and professionals in selecting a program appropriate to their needs. Participants will be drawn from educational advisers working at USIA-affiliated overseas educational advising centers. The training program is intended for approximately fifteen to eighteen participants. The program must be at least two and one half weeks in duration and must include workshops on advising issues of concern, an internship or other form of substantive professional stayover at a U.S. academic institution(s), and attendance at the national NAFSA: Association of International Educators Conference. USIA anticipates awarding up to \$150,000 to one organization to administer this program.

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/ASA-99-05.

Deadline for Proposals: All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Thursday, October 1, 1998. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked by the due date but received at a later date will not be accepted.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: The Office of Academic Programs, Advising and Student Services Branch, E/ASA, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, telephone: (202) 619-5434, fax: (202) 401-1433, E-mail: dmora@usia.gov, to request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed criteria. Please request required application forms and standard guidelines for preparing proposals, including specific criteria for preparation of the proposal budget.

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.

Please specify USIA Program Officer Dorothy Mora on all inquiries and correspondences. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, Agency staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

Submissions: Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation

Package. The original and eight copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/ASA-99-05, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

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. 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 account for advancement of this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Overview

The training program's objectives are twofold: to strengthen and develop the skills of overseas educational advisers; and to build a corps of knowledgeable advisers who are skilled as trainers and can advance the field of educational advising in their home countries with new and current expertise, techniques and knowledge of applicable technology. Each component of the training program should be designed to provide detailed, hands-on learning in areas such as facilitating access to U.S. higher education, communicating cross-culturally, and managing an advising center. Special attention should be given to the use of technology, both as a necessary advising skill, and as a potential tool to develop new and creative advising approaches. Similarly, a significant emphasis should be placed on outreach, partnership and cost-sharing strategies and skills development.