

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 Office of East European and NIS Affairs and the USIA post overseas, where appropriate. 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. Program planning and ability to achieve objectives: Program objectives should be stated clearly and precisely and should reflect the applicant organization's experience implementing Internet projects, training programs, developing Internet courses, and administering grants competitions. A detailed work plan should explain how objectives will be achieved and include a timetable for completion of all technical and programmatic components of the project. Responsibilities of in-country partners should be clearly described.

2. Institutional capacity: Proposed personnel and organizational resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the project's goals. The narrative must demonstrate proven ability to handle the technical and programmatic requirements of the project and to effectively coordinate logistics and project components with diverse organizations.

3. Organization's track record: Relevant USIA and outside assessments of the organization's experience with exchange programs and Internet projects, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past grants as determined by USIA's Office of Contracts.

4. Multiplier effect/impact: Proposed programs must demonstrate an impact on the wider community through the sharing of information and the establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages and network building.

5. Cost-effectiveness: Overhead and program and administrative costs should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and

appropriate. Proposals should show cost-sharing from the applicant and from other sources.

6. Support of diversity and pluralism: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity throughout the program.

7. Program evaluation: USIA is results oriented. Proposals must include a plan to evaluate the project's success, both as activities unfold and at the end of the project. A draft survey questionnaire plus a description of a methodology to be used link outcomes to original project objectives is required. USIA recommends that the proposal include draft questions for focus groups for staff and end-users at the public access Internet sites. Proposals must thoroughly discuss the methodology to be used in program evaluation.

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 report and evaluation requirements.

Notification

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

Dated: October 19, 1998.

Dr. John P. Loiello,

*Associate Director for
Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0103]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Veterans Benefits Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA), Department of

Veterans Affairs (VA), is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on the information needed to determine whether a child under 18 is entitled to benefits where the surviving spouse was not or is no longer entitled to benefits or whether a child age 18 or over is entitled to benefits regardless of the surviving spouse's entitlement.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before December 28, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Nancy J. Kessinger, Veterans Benefits Administration (20S52), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0103" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nancy J. Kessinger at (202) 273-7079 or FAX (202) 275-5947.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VBA invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VBA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VBA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Title: Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation by Child, VA Form 21-4183.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0103.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: The form is used by a child under age 18 where the surviving spouse was not or is no longer entitled to benefits or by a child age 18 or over regardless of the surviving spouse's entitlement. The form is used in lieu of VA Form 21-534, Application for Dependency and Indemnity Compensation or Death Pension by Widow(er) or Child, in order to help reduce the reporting burden of a child under 18 when information about the deceased veteran's spouse is not required.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 1,975 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 15 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 7,900.

Dated: August 4, 1998.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

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