

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program **ECA/A/E/NEA-10-02**

Office of Academic Exchange Programs **Near East Asia Programs Branch**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP) issued by the Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Near East Asia Programs Branch requesting a proposal for the Near East and South Asia Undergraduate Exchange Program (NESA UGRAD). Proposals must conform to the solicitation letter, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying RFGP, the RFGP is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

Subject to the availability of funds, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) expects to make one award of up to \$3,500,000 for the administration of the FY2010 NESA UGRAD program pending availability of funds.

The NESA UGRAD program provides full scholarships for outstanding students from underrepresented sectors from the Near East (countries/locales may include Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen, and the Palestinian Territories) and South Asia (countries may include Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Pakistan). The program length will be one academic year for 90 students from across the Near East and South Asia and the fall semester only for 25 Pakistani student of non-degree undergraduate study in the United States at accredited two-and four-year institutions. Additional countries may be added to meet the overall needs of the program and availability of funds. All academic fields of study are eligible, although humanities and social sciences will be preferred.

Responsibilities for this particular project include the following broad categories: program planning and management; placement; monitoring and support services for participants; special programs management; fiscal management; and program projection, reporting and evaluation services.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

For the Academic Year 2010-2011, the award recipient will be expected to place no less than 115 participants (90 from across the Near East and South Asia for the full academic year and 25 participants from Pakistan for the fall semester) at U.S. colleges and universities. Programs and administrative responsibilities for the NESAs UGRAD program must include:

A. Program Planning and Management

Placement will be approved by ECA for all participants.

Participants are expected to return to their home countries immediately upon the conclusion of the program. Transfers of academic program and visa sponsorship to another U.S. institution will not be considered under the NESAs UGRAD program.

Allowances

The proposal should present participant maintenance allowances in accordance with suggestions below or an alternative benefit package that includes the costs of campus housing, meals, books, and incidental expenses. The award recipient should monitor and directly distribute approved allowances (e.g. maintenance) and reimbursements (e.g. relevant fees); authorize special allowances as stipulated in the program terms and conditions (e.g. enrichment funds); clarify policies and procedures; and resolve problems relating to recipient benefits and payments.

Suggested amounts for allowances are:

- Monthly Maintenance Allowance: \$300/month
- One-time Settling-in Allowance: \$100 (for items needed immediately upon arrival and not provided by host institution)
- Book Allowance: \$350/semester or \$300/quarter
- Enrichment Allowance: \$500/one-year, \$250 one-semester (dispersed via an "application" process or other mechanism)

Housing & Meal Accommodations

Program participants will be placed in on-campus housing and have access to a comprehensive meal plan with provisions for religious-specific or other dietary needs.

Participants should be paired with U.S. student roommates, not other NESAs UGRAD participants or international students.

The proposal should include a description of appropriate accommodations for participants' religious observances and ensure options to meet particular needs such as single-gender and substance-free dorms/floors.

Fields of Study

All fields of study are eligible, although humanities and social sciences will receive preference, and should be drawn from the standard university/college curriculum.

Academic Components

To support the mutual understanding goal of the exchange, the Bureau is particularly interested in opportunities for academic study related to U.S. institutions, society, and culture. Thus, students must enroll in one U.S. Studies field course per semester, such as American history, literature or government.

Additionally, there must be a skills training component during each semester (may be a specific course or mandatory trainings outside of class) that aims to improve the participants' ability to succeed in the U.S. education system. Training may include, but is not limited to, time management, note taking, preparing for exams, and research and writing. The skills building training should be further emphasized for the one-semester participants, as they will only have the one semester to be exposed to this important aspect of the program.

Enrichment Activities

To further the exchange, participants will be encouraged to take part in enrichment activities. An enrichment allowance will be available to enable participants to engage in campus, community, and regional activities of a cultural nature, such as concerts, plays, museum exhibits, cultural festivals, etc. Participants may participate in activities on their own or as a group. The award recipient will be encouraged to assist participants in planning enrichment activities.

B. Supervision and Support Services

Monitoring and Support

The proposal must demonstrate that the applicant can provide support systems to the NESAs UGRAD participants that reflect cultural understanding and sensitivities as well as effective communication skills to facilitate a successful exchange experience.

The award recipient should verify participant enrollment in the approved program and resolve any initial placement and/or adjustment problems upon arrival at their host institution. The award recipient should assist program participants in finding adequate academic and counseling services where needed. The award recipient should monitor and evaluate the performance of NESAs UGRAD participants to ensure satisfactory progress in the achievement of academic goals, including periodic campus visits, consistent communication with host advisors and professors and review of academic reports.

Working closely in consultation with the Bureau, the award recipient should assist participants, as required, in resolving issues related to academics issues and personal or health emergencies; provide counseling or make appropriate referrals; perform domestic travel to resolve participant emergencies and provide other assistance as needed.

Visas

The award recipient should provide oversight and management of participants' visa status. The Bureau is placing renewed emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by participants and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, the proposal should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 6Z, including orientation of participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

Health Benefits

The grantee organization should enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Plan for Exchanges (ASPE) and assist in presenting claims. The organization should clarify health benefit coverage, procedures, and benefits as needed for NESAS UGRAD participants.

Participant Travel

The award recipient should manage program participant travel arrangements, in consultation with U.S. Embassies/Consulates and/or Fulbright Commissions, for both domestic and international travel in accordance with "Fly-America Act." (The Fly-America Act requires that all U.S. government travel be on American flag carriers where such service is available.)

Recruitment

Participants will be identified and nominated by the U.S. Embassies/Consulates, and/or Fulbright Commissions in the participating countries, with final selection made by ECA. Participants will be highly motivated undergraduate students from colleges, universities and other institutions of higher education in selected countries overseas who demonstrate leadership through academic work, community involvement, and extracurricular activities. Their fields of study will be varied, and will include the sciences, social sciences, humanities, education and business. All participants will have a good knowledge of English.

Every effort will be made to select a balanced mix of male and female participants, and to recruit participants who are from non-elite or underprivileged backgrounds, from both rural and urban areas, and have had little or no prior experience in the United States or elsewhere outside of their home country.

Placement

Students should be placed at accredited colleges and universities that will provide students a supportive environment and personalized attention. In addition, host institutions should be selected on the basis of geographic diversity, their academic rigor, cost, ability to cost-share, and ability to engage the students in the local community. These communities should be able to offer quality internships, as well as accessible housing, accommodations and transportation.

No more than 10 participants should be placed at one institution. If hosting more than

10 participants at one institution is proposed, the proposal should demonstrate how the award recipient will ensure maximum interaction with Americans and lessen the likelihood that participants will interact predominantly with each other.

The proposal should describe in detail how the placements will be made, including what measures will be taken to select appropriate institutions which participants will be placed at which type of institutions (for example, 2-year and 4-year institutions); and secure tuition waivers and/or other cost share.

C. Special Programming

U.S. Cultural Enrichment

ECA welcomes creative ideas for exposing participants to U.S. institutions, such as discussion groups on U.S. issues, visits to political campaign offices and polling places, attendance at school board or city council meetings, exposure to U.S. religious institutions, and civic-related volunteer work. Student attendance at museums, concerts, plays, and other cultural events features American content should be encouraged and facilitated whenever possible. As described above, the award recipient should provide assistance to ensure that participants take part in such activities, whether by visits set up through the host advisors, participants directly or other means.

Orientations/Re-entry Workshops in the United States

Pre-departure orientations will be arranged by the U.S. Embassies/Consulates and/or Fulbright Commissions in country. With assistance and materials provided by the award recipient and ECA, these pre-departure orientations will introduce students to U.S. undergraduate education, U.S. campus life, U.S. culture and cultural adjustment, finances, and health and safety, a review of the student award terms and conditions, and a review of the major requirements for the program. Additionally, Program Handbooks including this material should be provided by the award recipient for dissemination at pre-departure orientations.

Host universities and colleges should provide academic/program orientations for the participants upon their arrival at the university or college that will reiterate the topics mentioned above as well as introduce the participants specifically to the host school and community. The award recipient should provide materials for such orientations that will ensure participants associate themselves with the NESAS UGRAD program as well as to other host institutions.

The proposal should include administration of a re-entry workshop for all participants. If funds are not available for an in-person re-entry program for the one-semester cohort, the proposal may include a virtual version for this group. The workshop dates should be scheduled in consultation with the ECA program office. The re-entry workshop should address issues of "reverse cultural shock," academic and job search skills and other re-entry considerations as appropriate as well as further opportunities to return to the U.S. for study and research.

Academic Program and Skills Building

All participants should be enrolled full-time in undergraduate course work chosen from

the host institution's existing curriculum so that students have ample opportunity for substantive interaction with U.S. faculty and student peers, and opportunity for exposure to U.S. academic and classroom culture.

Participants will be required to take one American studies course per semester as well as at least academic skills building training, during the first semester. The skills building training should be further emphasized for the one-semester participants, as they will only have the one semester to be exposed to this important aspect of the program. If the host institution does not offer academic skill building courses, it should provide participants with tailored instruction in what is required to succeed academically in U.S. such as academic research and writing, critical thinking, time management, note-taking, and studying for and taking tests. Participants should be able to choose at least two courses each semester in their field of study (as indicated on their applications).

Community Service and Presentations

Students should participate in community service activities during their first semester of the program. Students should provide 20 hours of volunteer service to local organizations. Students may not receive salaries, stipends or wages for their volunteer service.

Participants should conduct local presentations (at area schools or community organizations) about their home countries. This may be counted toward their hours of community service.

Internships

The proposal should include an unpaid practical internship component for one-year participants during the spring semester (January through May). Internships should be part-time and must be related to the participants' field of study and/or career plans. Participants should seek out opportunities on their own, but the award recipient will be asked to guide the students in their search. ECA will approve internships. The award recipient will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the internship component of the program.

Follow-on Activities

Proposed follow-on activities for alumni must be developed in close consultation with ECA and PAS, must reflect the goals and objectives of the NESAs UGRAD Program, and must contribute to overall ECA goals to foster mutual understanding among the people of the target countries and the United States. The proposal should include an outline of, and timeline for, follow-on alumni programming, information on how it will be coordinated with existing alumni efforts and a description of how long-term linkages with alumni will be fostered and maintained. The applicant should explain how these activities will be integrated with initiatives for alumni of other ECA programs, rather than as isolated events. Alumni activities should be conducted with minimum financial support from ECA and demonstrate cost-sharing by the applicant organization. Please visit <http://exchanges.state.gov/pro-admin.html> and refer to the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

D. Fiscal Management

The proposal should demonstrate the existence of suitable financial systems to track, audit and disburse NESAs UGRAD funds. The award recipient will be expected to submit interim, residual and final reports, as directed by ECA, detailing expenditures, and to consult with ECA on the reprogramming of funds. Administration of these scholarships must be in compliance with reporting and withholding regulations for federal, state, and local taxes where applicable.

E. Program Projections, Reporting and Evaluation Services

The proposal must include a statement of goals and expected outcomes for the program, including how results would be measured, as necessitated by the Government Performance and Results Act (GRPA). Evaluations plans should include a plan for host campus representatives to evaluate the impact of the NESAs UGRAD on their campuses and local communities.

The award recipient should be able to develop and maintain a participant statistical database that records such information as bio-data, academic program, visa status, and participant accomplishments. ECA may request periodic reports related to the management of the exchange program.

III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposals should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible. Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items:

TAB A - Application for Federal Assistance Cover Sheet (SF-424)

TAB B - Executive Summary

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme

4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)
 - c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
 - d. Fields covered
 - e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

TAB C

Calendar of activities/itinerary

Narrative

In 20 double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project

addressing the areas listed below.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Evaluation
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

TAB D - Budget Submission

- 1.) Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- 2.) Detailed Budget (list allowable costs and any other program specific budget issues.)

TAB E

Letters of endorsement

Resumes

Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No resume should exceed two pages.

TAB F

- 1.) SF-424B, "Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs".
- 2.) First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

- 3.) **Please note:** Effective January 7, 2009, all applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.

Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

In addition to final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one-page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

- 4.) Include other attachments, if applicable, i.e. the SF-LLL form, etc.

Review Process

Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's Grants Officer. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and availability of funds.

The submission will be reviewed with the following review criteria in mind:

1. Quality of the program idea: Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission.
2. Ability to achieve program objectives: Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above. Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

3. 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.

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

5. Institution's Record/ Capacity: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

6. Project Evaluation and Follow-on: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended. Proposals should also provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (with minimal Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

7. Cost-effectiveness/ Cost-sharing: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

8. Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations: Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by the U.S. Department of State's geographic area desk and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner countries.

Adherence to all Regulations Governing the J Visa

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs places critically important emphases on the security and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by award recipients and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants,

proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

The award recipient will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program. A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov> or from:

Office of Designation
ECA/EC/D
SA-5, Floor C2
Department of State
Washington, DC 20522-0582

Application Submission

The RFGP indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or competition, call Laura Alami at (202) 632-3270, ECA/A/E/NEA; Fax: (202) 632-9411; email: AlamiLT@state.gov.