

NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY FOR ADMINISTRATION
OF THE
2016 THOMAS R. PICKERING FOREIGN AFFAIRS FELLOWSHIP
PROGRAM

A. Program Description

The Bureau of Human Resources, Office of Recruitment, Examination and Employment (HR/REE), of the US Department of State announces an open competition for one assistance award to conduct all programmatic, financial and administrative activities for the 2016 Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Undergraduate and Graduate Fellowship Programs, i.e. students to be selected in Spring 2016 and who will begin their studies in the Fall of 2016. Applicants for this cooperative agreement should submit program proposals and budget projections for the 2016 cohort only.

Applicants will need to demonstrate the ability to begin work immediately with publicity and recruitment efforts. The Department anticipates a total of 30 fellowships will be awarded in 2016 – 20 graduate and 10 undergraduate - but funding availability will determine the final numbers. The cooperative agreement shall begin on/about October 1, 2015 and end September 30, 2018, pending availability funds. The recipient will be advised of the final number of Fellows prior to the selection cycle.

Established in 1992, the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program is one of the Department of State's premiere diversity recruitment programs and fundamental to increasing the representation of diverse groups in the U.S. Foreign Service. Women, members of minority groups historically underrepresented in the Foreign Service, and students with financial need are strongly encouraged to apply.

The Pickering program is designed to recruit and develop new talent for the Department of State's Foreign Service. The program provides undergraduate Fellows with financial assistance towards covering tuition/mandatory fees, room and board and book reimbursement during the senior year of college and first year of graduate school, agreement must be made with participating school to offer a

financial package to cover the second year of graduate school; two summer internships with the Department of State (one domestically in the Department before entering graduate school and one overseas in a US Embassy or Consulate after completion of the first year of the master's degree.) In addition, fellows will receive mentoring from a Foreign Service Officer during the graduate segment of the program, must meet Department of State entry requirements for Foreign Service Officers, and sign a contractual agreement obligating them to a minimum of five years of service in an appointment as a Foreign Service Officer. The program is funded through the Department's Basic Authorities.

For graduate Fellows the program provides financial assistance towards covering tuition/mandatory fees, room and board, and book reimbursement for both years of graduate study; two summer internships with the Department of State (one domestic upon completion of the first year of graduate school and one overseas after completion of the second year). In addition, fellows will receive mentoring from a Foreign Service Officer, must meet Department of State entry requirements for Foreign Service Officers, and sign a contractual agreement obligating them to a minimum of five years of service in an appointment as a Foreign Service Officer.

Public Law 101-246, 101st Congress, 104 STAT.42 Section 47 (February 16, 1990) states that "The Secretary of State may make grants to post-secondary educational institutions or students for the purpose of increasing the level of knowledge and awareness of and interest in employment with the Foreign Service, consistent with section 105 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980. To the extent possible, the Secretary shall give special emphasis to promoting such knowledge and awareness of, and interest in employment with the Foreign Service among students."

Effective management of the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Program is fundamental to the overall success of the program. Successful candidates will enter the Foreign Service and will be involved in carrying out the mission of the Department. The Department is fully invested in this program and seeks to maintain its integrity and high quality.

HR/REE will work cooperatively and closely with the Recipient of the cooperative agreement award, provide guidance and maintain a regular dialogue on administrative, programmatic and overall policy issues as they arise over the duration of the award. HR/REE, in coordination with the grants officer, is the sole authority and Department arbiter with regards to the administration of the program. The Recipient must adhere to the guidance provided by HR/REE in the overall administration of the program.

The program goals and objectives of the Pickering Fellowship Programs include, but are not limited to:

Program Goals:

The overarching goals of the Thomas R. Pickering Fellowship program are to:

- Identify and attract, based on financial need, outstanding students who represent ethnic, gender, social and geographic diversity and have an interest in pursuing a Foreign Service career in the U.S. Department of State;
- Provide funding to assist these students towards completing their graduate degrees in academic disciplines representing the skill needs of the Department's Foreign Service;
- Ensure candidates are exposed to information to prepare them to be successful Foreign Service Officers
- Ensure that this program continues to contribute to a Foreign Service that reflects the face of America to foreign audiences. These programs develop a source of trained men and women who are dedicated to pursuing Foreign Service careers and representing America's interests abroad.

Program Objectives

The objectives of the Thomas R. Pickering Fellowship Program are to:

- Recruit qualified candidates for the fellowship program. Recruitment efforts must stress the challenges, requirements and benefits of a Foreign Service career so that potential Fellows may realistically determine whether they are suited for the Pickering Fellowship Program and a career as a Foreign Service Officer.
- Ensure timely payment of authorized fellowship expenses.
- Ensure Fellows fully understand all contractual obligations including repayment obligation, importance of obtaining and maintaining required security, medical and suitability clearances.
- Ensure Fellows submit all information in a timely manner required for obtaining and maintaining all Foreign Service entry requirements.

- Ensure Fellows complete, successfully and in a timely manner, the rigors of graduate study in a field related to the Foreign Service and enter the Foreign Service on schedule.
- Ensure Fellows fulfill their contractual obligations in accordance with stipulated timelines, particularly with regards to taking the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) and the Foreign Service Oral Assessment (FSOA).
- Provide Fellows with proper mentoring and professional development training to ensure that they will be successful Foreign Service Officers.
- Recipient must take every measure to ensure the HR/REE that it is implementing the program in the most strategic and economic way that produces the intended results. It must demonstrate concern and sensitivity for the tight budget environment in which it operates.

Roles and Responsibilities of Grantor and Grantee

a. Grantor

The Pickering Fellowships are administered via a cooperative agreement. In a Cooperative Agreement, HR/REE, as the grantor, is substantially involved in the program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. HR/REE activities and responsibilities for this program include but are not limited to, the following:

- Provide overall program and policy design and direction to Recipient regarding the administration of the fellowship.
- Review and analyze the ability of Grantee to promote the Department's diversity and Fellowship program goals.
- Collaborate with Recipient on the design and development of the recruitment strategy and selection procedures.
- Approve all recruitment strategies, selection criteria and procedures prior to implementation.
- Monitor and evaluate Recipient's ability to deliver desired product.

- Review Recipient's budget submissions to ensure they meet HR/REE's requirements for the program.
- Review Recipient reports of program activities, evaluating the effectiveness of the Recipient and its ability to favorably impact the programs. Ensure that the Recipient complies with the stated program goals and objectives.

b. Grantee

The responsibilities of the grantee are clearly detailed in the below scope of work. The Grantee must have sufficient staff with relevant qualifications, knowledge of and experience with the Department's Foreign Service career system to manage the program. The Grantee is advised to designate sufficient staff to liaise with HR/REE on all aspects of the program. A senior level program manager with decision making authority must be readily available and responsive to HR/REE requests during the period of performance.

Scope of Work

In consultation with HR/REE, the Recipient will be responsible for the conduct of all programmatic, financial and administrative activities. The Department is fully invested in this program and seeks to maintain its integrity and high quality. The Recipient will be responsible for conducting the day-to-day activities associated with the management of the program and must consult with HR/REE, which will have final approval, on all policy matters affecting the program. HR/REE will work collaboratively with the Recipient in overseeing administration of the program.

The Grantee's responsibilities include but are not limited to:

I. General

- Adhere to all HR/REE guidance and procedures.
- The Recipient will need to be attentive and responsive to students' needs and those of the Department. The Recipient will need to demonstrate dedication and commitment in pursuing the goals of the program as well as the ability to engage and work closely with HR/REE in meeting all program requirements. The Recipient will be responsible for conducting the day-to-

day activities associated with the management of the program and must consult with HR/REE, which will have final approval, on all policy matters affecting the program.

- The Recipient will be responsible for submitting required quarterly program and budget reports on diverse aspects of the program as well as timely ad-hoc reports as requested by the Department.
- The Recipient must provide demonstrated understanding of the Department of State's Foreign Service career system and requirements in order to properly mentor and guide participating Fellows

II. Outreach and Recruitment

a. Recruiting Diverse Candidates for the Undergraduate and Graduate

Programs: The Recipient must identify and attract, based on financial need, outstanding students who represent ethnic, gender, social and geographic diversity and have an interest in pursuing a career as a Foreign Service generalist in the U.S. Department of State. The Recipient is expected to target diverse institutions, concentrating its efforts in the following categories:

- Major research universities, liberal arts colleges and major community colleges. Some examples include University of California, Princeton University, Harvard University, University of Michigan, Tufts University, Georgetown University, University of Chicago, George Washington University, the Los Angeles Community College District and the Maricopa Community College District in Phoenix, Arizona.
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). More than 100 institutions fall into this category and include schools ranging from Morehouse College, Spelman College, and Howard University to smaller institutions such as Lane College, Lincoln University, and Shaw University.

- Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs). These are institutions that serve a substantial number of Hispanic college students (20% population or higher). Some examples include Gavilan College, Our Lady of the Lake University, St. Mary's University, University of New Mexico and branches, and University of Puerto Rico.
 - American Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC) schools such as Heritage College, Salish Kootenai College and Sinte Gleska University. While many AIHEC institutions are community colleges, it is important to reach their students early in order to interest them in international affairs and Foreign Service careers when they transfer to four-year colleges.
- b. Producing Promotional/Recruitment Materials:** Recipient must prepare separate promotional and recruitment materials for both the Undergraduate and Graduate Fellowship Programs. HR/REE must review and approve all publicly distributed promotional materials (print and online) prior to final print/posting. Once produced, recipient should distribute materials to and/or direct intended audiences to online postings. Intended audiences include academic institutions, students, HR/REE and the Department's Diplomats in Residences (DIRs), who are Department of State Foreign Service Officers assigned to universities throughout the US for recruitment purposes.
- c. Designing Websites:** Recipient must submit for HR/REE's review and approval all publicly distributed promotional and recruitment materials (print and online) prior to final print/posting. In addition, the Recipient must establish an email address for the program. (For example, PickeringFAF@addressofawardee.org and PickeringGFAF@addressofawardee.org.) Additionally, the Recipient must maintain a website to include up-to-date Foreign Affairs Fellows undergraduate (FAF) and Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellows (GFAF) program descriptions, including eligibility requirements, and information about Foreign Service careers with the US Department of State.
- d. Using Social Media:** Recipient must share administrative rights to its Facebook page and other social media outlets with HR/REE. Recipient must

obtain HR/REE approval for all content to be posted on social media outlets. Recipient must provide HR/REE with sufficient time to review and comment on proposed postings.

e. Maintaining Contact with Diplomats in Residence and Fellows' Alumni

Association: Recipient is expected to provide/ship promotional materials directly to each DIR, notify them of applicant profiles and selected finalists in a timely fashion and notify them of visits to their respective areas and meet to consult with them when possible. Recipient may work with DIRs to secure meeting space during Recipient's recruitment trips. Additionally, Recipient should collaborate with the Pickering and Rangel Fellowship Alumni Association (former Fellows now serving as Foreign Service Officers) to garner support for and assistance with Pickering Fellowship activities such as selection, orientation and other related events.

f. Explaining Fellowship and Foreign Service Entry Requirements:

- Recipient must counsel interested applicants with regards to the financial limitations of the fellowship award to ensure they understand how their internship and schooling decisions, if not wisely pondered, could result in the Fellows' being out of pocket.
- Recipient must counsel interested applicants on the seriousness of the Foreign Service entry requirements and contractual obligations of the Fellowship program to ensure they understand these requirements and the consequences if they are unable to obtain and maintain required Fellowship clearances.
- Recipient must ensure that applicants clearly understand the Fellowship's repayment obligation conditions.

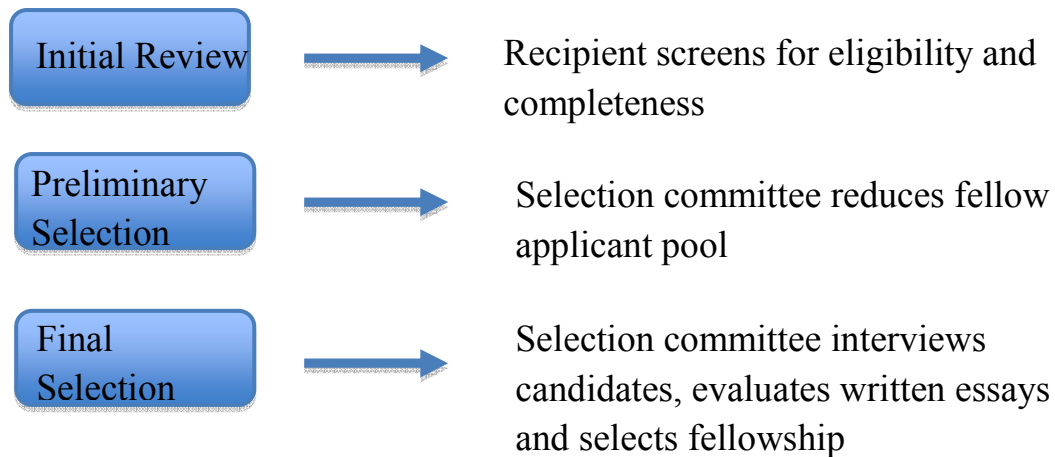
III. Screening and Selection

- a. The Candidate Selection Process:** There is one selection process. Selection panelists are designated by both HR/REE and the Recipient. (See below "Structure of Selection Committees" which explains designation of panelists.) This process is conducted once a year and in phases. Selections

for the undergraduate and graduate programs occur simultaneously. The first step is the initial application review conducted by the Recipient. The Recipient screens candidates' applications for adherence to eligibility criteria and completeness. Following the initial review, the Recipient organizes eligible applications and makes them accessible to the interview committee members. The interview panel makes a preliminary selection, narrowing the candidate applicant pool to semi-finalists. The preliminary selection process is conducted virtually, with panel members reviewing materials sent electronically and sending in their scores to the Recipient to tabulate. The preliminary selection phase may include a telephone conference arranged and facilitated by the Recipient. The interview panel then meets in Washington, D.C. for a two and a half-day meeting - a mandatory half day training and two days of interviewing candidates. The writing panel reviews, evaluates and rank orders applicants' written submissions. Written scores are provided to the interview panelists for inclusion in final selection decision. Final selection is made at the conclusion of the interviews.

- b. Structure of Selection Committees:** Recipient must establish selection committees to review applications and identify the final cohort of Fellows. Selection committees are comprised of an interview and writing panel. Each interview panel is divided into subpanels of three panelists each, one panelist is designated by HR/REE and the remaining two are designated by the Recipient, with prior approval from HR/REE. The writing panel is charged with reviewing and evaluating candidates' writing samples. The writing panel is comprised of three panelists, one is designated by HR/REE and the remaining two are designated by the Recipient. The Department designees chair the interview and writing panels. The recipient must submit to HR/REE, in a timely fashion, the names and biographies of its proposed panel members and receive final HR/REE approval of the list before the Recipient contacts panelists. HR/REE will provide the criteria for selection of panel members. Panelists serve a one year term that is renewable for up to three consecutive years. Recipient must ensure to explain to all panelists the guidelines governing service on a selection panel. Initial designations and renewals must be approved by HR/REE.

The selection process is as follows:



Recipient is responsible for the following tasks:

- Conduct initial screening of candidates' applications for adherence to eligibility criteria and completeness.
- Submit to HR/REE, in a timely fashion, the names and biographies of proposed panel members. HR/REE will provide the criteria for selection of panel members. Recipient must provide prospective names to HR/REE with sufficient time to review and evaluate list. Recipient must receive final HR/REE approval of the list of panelists before it may contact prospective panelists.
- Recipient must keep HR/REE informed of all instructions and information provided to panelists with regards to the selection process.
- After initial screening by Recipient, provide panelists with electronic access to applications and scoring sheets for selection of semi-finalists. Copy and distribute hard copies of application packets if asked.
- Recipient must contact all semi-finalists prior to selection interviews and brief them on the importance of obtaining and maintaining all required clearances, factors which may influence the clearance process and describe

the interview process so that Fellows may prepare appropriately.

- Coordinate all administrative functions associated with the selection process, to include but not limited to:
 - Recipient must make every effort to limit per diem and travel costs by identifying panelists from the DC Metropolitan area. Recipient must arrange travel and lodging for selection committee panelists and candidates for the final phase of the selection process held in the Washington, DC area. Travel and lodging costs are subject to standard US Government per diem rates. Any variance requires prior HR/REE approval.
 - Process honoraria for designated panelists. Honoraria may be provided only to: 1) those panelists who do not receive a full time US Government salary, and 2) those with an active When Actually Employed (WAE) status appointment with the Department of State but who are not receiving compensation for their work as a WAE while serving as a panelist. Daily estimated honoraria for the panelists are pegged to the base General Schedule (GS) pay scale, GS-15, step 10 levels.
 - Seek reasonable lodging for candidates and panelists during selection in venue near the BEX office space where selection interviews will take place. All rates are subject to U.S. government per diem rates.
 - Coordinate interview schedules and ensure panelists have sufficient advance access to all necessary applicant materials and other related documents.
 - Schedule other required presentations during selection for periods when Fellows are not being interviewed or undergoing writing exercise. Selection schedule must include time for fingerprinting by Diplomatic Security, presentation on the Fellows' contractual obligations, presentation on the FSOA and a presentation on security, suitability and medical clearances. Other presentations may be included, time permitting.

- Arrange for any shipping needs.
- Prepare selection questions, for interviews and writing exercise. All interview and essay questions must be submitted to HR/REE for final approval prior to use.
- Submit to HR/REE for prior approval a complete selection program schedule, listing names of candidates, times of interviews, essays and presentations.
- Prepare a user guide for each panelist that includes a list of panelists, interview schedule, interview questions, scoring sheet, contact information and other useful information for the panelists. Submit draft of selection guide to HR/REE for final approval prior to distributing to panelists.
- Distribute and explain, during the selection process, a draft of the contract Fellows will sign upon accepting the Fellowship. Review each component of the contract with them during selection. Inform candidates that those offered the Fellowship must sign, notarize and submit the original contracts during Orientation.
- Notify in writing those finalists selected for the fellowship within two working days of decision by selection panel. Secure written acceptances from finalists within 3 working days of notification. Forward final list of Fellows to HR/REE immediately upon receipt of all written acceptances.
- Notify in writing those applicants not selected of their status within two working days of decision by selection committee.

IV. Orientation and Collecting Contracts

Orientation Program: In collaboration with HR/REE, Recipient must organize the orientation program for new Fellows conducted in early June. The orientation program is conducted in Washington, DC at the Department of State. In organizing the orientation program, the Recipient is expected to:

- Provide all administrative functions for the orientation to include arranging

travel and lodging for the fellows, staff and panelists, name tags, folders and other related activities. Travel and lodging costs are subject to standard US Government per diem rates. Any variance requires prior HR/REE approval.

- Fellows will undergo required medical examinations during orientation. Recipient must ensure Fellows follow all instructions related to the medical examinations and are present for their appointments which are conducted at the Department of State, Office of Medical Services.
- In consultation with HR/REE, organize networking events during orientation for State Department officials and Pickering Fellows.
- Ensure that all Fellows have signed and notarized their Fellowship contracts with the Department of State prior to attending Orientation. Recipient should have Fellows return signed contracts within two working days of accepting the Fellowship. Recipient should retain copies of contracts for its tracking purposes. Recipient must submit all signed contracts together to HR/REE prior to Orientation.
- In collaboration with HR/REE, arrange briefing sessions for new Fellows during orientation to discuss issues related to the Fellowship and a Foreign Service career including a mandatory information session on the Foreign Service Oral Assessment.
- Perform other related orientation activities as needed by HR/REE.

V. Tracking and Monitoring

- Maintain institutional (undergraduate and graduate) databases on for recruitment purposes.
- Maintain databases of Fellows (by cohort) for purposes of tracking:
 - 1) Current contact information (i.e. email addresses, phone numbers, mailing address/current address, etc.),
 - 2) GPA and academic program status,
 - 3) Successful completion of program requirements,
 - 4) successful completion of contractual obligations,
 - 5) withdrawals/dismissals from the Fellowship program prior to completion,
 - 6) areas of study,
 - 7) languages spoken and

other relevant statistical information. Report to HR/REE on status of Fellows in these areas and others in quarterly reports and other reports as needed.

- Maintain a toll free number for easy access by Fellows and student applicants.

VI. Administrative

a. Disbursing of Funds

- Establish and maintain effective and productive relationships with Student Accounts Offices at each fellow's undergraduate and graduate institution and make timely payment of tuition and other fees up to the established cap limit.
- Prior to disbursement of any Fellowship funds, Recipient must coordinate with HR/REE to ensure the Fellow has met all necessary requirements.

b. Internships

HR/REE will work collaboratively with the Recipient on all internship placements within the Department of State domestically and at US Embassies and Consulates abroad. To enable these internship placements, Recipient will need to:

- Ensure Fellows have successfully completed their academic requirements before disbursing any funds associated with the summer internship, including travel and stipend funds. Recipient must have written confirmation from the Fellow's institution that s/he has completed successfully all academic requirements prior to disbursement of any Fellowship funds.
- Recipient must ensure that Fellow understands the reasons for any payment delays and must manage the Fellow's expectations with regards to the disbursement of internship funds.
- Counsel Fellows on internship choices, particularly, with regards to overseas

internships. Ensure that Fellows understand the breakdown of the internship budget and what the program covers with regards to travel, stipend, inoculations, and visas so that s/he may avoid out of pocket expenses. Ensure that Fellow understands that if s/he incurs internship costs, that exceed the limit, s/he may be required to personally cover the excess costs. The Recipient must notify HR/REE, in advance, of the possibility of such circumstances to coordinate responsible solutions.

- Ensure Fellows have required medical insurance coverage prior to beginning overseas internship.
- In consultation with HR/REE, ensure coverage of all required visas and inoculations for Fellows interning abroad. Total combined costs for both internships, and associated expenses, should not exceed \$20,000. Any requests for variance must have prior HR/REE approval.
- Maintain productive relationship with a reliable travel agency which can produce results as needed.
- Identify and arrange appropriate housing for Fellows during their domestic internships, generally in university dormitories; handle payments for housing and provide HR/REE with accounting information. Domestic lodging rates during domestic internships are subject to standard US government per diem rates.
- Recipient may reimburse Fellows choosing alternate housing up to the amount of the cost of lodging provided by Recipient.
- Remain current on start and end dates of Fellows' internships.
- Follow up with Fellows, in writing, to ensure that they have arrived and reported, as scheduled, at their internship location (both domestic and overseas). Notify HR/REE immediately, in writing, of any late arrivals and/or other complications.
- Review and counsel Fellows regarding their internship evaluations recommending ways to improve and strengthen their future performance. Document consultations and include in reports to HR/REE.

c. Academic Record Keeping

- Maintain transcripts for each Fellow. Fellows are required to send an official transcript each semester to Recipient per their contract. Should Recipient fail to receive a transcript from a Fellow, Recipient must notify the Fellow, in writing, requiring compliance with his/her contract. Recipient must notify HR/REE immediately of such instances.
- Monitor Fellows' academic progress ensuring adherence to academic terms of contractual agreement which are that Fellow must maintain a 3.2 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. If the Fellow's cumulative GPA falls below 3.2 in any given semester, Recipient must: 1) notify Fellow that s/he has been placed on probation, 2) require Fellow to submit a plan outlining actions to improve his/her GPA and 3) notify HR/REE immediately of such a situation. If the Fellow's cumulative GPA falls below 3.2 for a second semester (consecutive or otherwise), Recipient must: 1) notify fellow with second probation alert; 2) require fellow to submit plan outlining actions to improve GPA and 3) provide HR/REE with a report within 5 working days with recommendation for continuing/discontinuing Fellows' participation in the program. HR/REE will make final decision.
- Maintain document file for each fellow with all written correspondence, contractual agreement, payments, and other pertinent data. These files must be kept in accordance with 2 CFR 200.

d. Annual Survey

Recipient must conduct an annual survey of the cohort to elicit opinions on effectiveness of program components and program administration. Recipient must submit to HR/REE a draft of the survey questions for input and prior approval. A report of the final survey results must be submitted to HR/REE by September 30, 2017 and September 30, 2018.

e. Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT) and Foreign Service Oral Assessment (FSOA)

- Ensure each Fellow meets his/her contractual obligation with regards to taking the FSOT and the FSOA prior to completion of his/her academic

program. Fellows are contractually obligated to take the FSOA twice prior to completion of academic requirements if unsuccessful on the first attempt. The Recipient must submit reports to HR/REE on the status of each Fellow and cohort with regards to this requirement prior to their entry into A-100.

- In consultation with HR/REE, arrange Foreign Service Oral Assessment information sessions for each Fellow. The sessions must be offered by a qualified consultant approved by HR/REE.

f. Annual Grantor/Grantee Meetings

HR/REE and Recipient consent to annual meetings, with senior leadership participation from each organization, to review program status. Meeting venue should alternate between Recipient's location and Washington, D.C.

g. Directory of Fellows

- Recipient must submit to HR/REE, within two weeks after receipt of Fellowship acceptances, a directory of each cohort with individual photos and a brief biography of each cohort member.
- Provide HR/REE, in a timely manner, with additional information on Fellows as needed.

h. Program Deferral Requests

- Fellows may request up to a one year deferral. Program deferrals must be approved by HR/REE and the Recipient and will be granted only for participation in a Fulbright program or for personal/family medical emergencies. Deferral requests must be accompanied by supporting documentation and Recipient's recommendation regarding the deferral request. Recipient must counsel Fellows that deferral requests for purposes beyond those listed above will not be accepted.

- If approved, the deferral period must be completed prior to graduation from graduate school funded by the Fellowship. Recipient must ensure Fellows understand conditions under which deferrals may be accepted.

i. Mentoring

- Recipient is to assign Foreign Service mentors to all newly selected Fellows by the end of their first semester in the program. Recipient must submit for HR/REE review and approval, the list of all proposed mentors. Mentors must be tenured Foreign Service Officers.
- Recipient must develop, in collaboration with HR/REE, and conduct a series of mandatory professional development seminars for all Fellows during their domestic summer internship in Washington, D.C. Details regarding the professional development seminar must be reviewed and approved by HR/REE prior to confirming the sessions. Recipient is responsible for securing venue and other logistics regarding these sessions. The Recipient is to conduct a participant survey and submit the results and recommendations to HR/REE within one week of having received the completed surveys.
- Recipient must conduct one-on-one mentoring sessions with each Fellow to review and evaluate domestic and overseas internship applications as well as the Fellow's justification and motivation for his/her selections. During these sessions, the Recipient must review Fellows' performance evaluations from prior internship and discuss areas for improvement. Recipient must report to HR/REE, in writing, on these sessions, the issues which are discussed as well as any perceived problem areas and recommendations for improvement for each Fellow. Recipient should submit report on these sessions within two weeks upon completion of the sessions.

j. Annual Program Evaluation

- Recipient must develop an evaluation strategy to measure the impact and outcomes of the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Undergraduate and Graduate Fellowship Programs. Recipient must submit proposed evaluation strategy to HR/REE for prior approval.

- Recipient must submit an evaluation report to HR/REE annually, by September 30, 2017 and September 30, 2018, which outline the impact and outcomes of the Fellowship program.

k. Milestone Schedule

The Recipient must submit to HR/REE in draft, for review and final approval, a milestone schedule for the 2016 cohort. Key activities to be identified in the milestone schedule should include, but are not limited to:

- Opening and closing dates for fellowship applications
- Dates associated with the selection process (when applications are sent to panelists for review, date by which applications must be read and scores submitted, dates panelists meet, when selection interviews occur, when finalists are notified, etc.)
- Dates associated with Orientation program
- Completion, delivery and posting dates for promotional materials
- Tuition and stipend payment dates
- Frequency of social media postings with description of content
- Anticipated Domestic and Overseas Internship start/end dates
- Lodging move-in/move-out dates for domestic summer interns
- Budget submission dates
- A separate travel plan must be submitted as an addendum to the milestone schedule to include dates, location and purpose of staff recruitment trips.

I. Budgetary

Recipient shall develop and submit unit cost information for all aspects of the award budget. A detailed line item budget with narrative explaining the cost items, must be submitted for HR/REE's prior approval.

B. Federal Award Information

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) is for one award only. The approximate total funding available will be \$3.6 million pending availability of funds. This award will provide for the selection of 30 Fellows in 2016 (20 graduate and 10 undergraduate) and will cover approved program expenses for the two year program period. Grantee will be advised of the final number of Fellows prior to the selection cycle.

Annual per student direct costs are capped at \$47,500. The current model allocates up to \$37,500 towards tuition, room and board, mandatory fees and one roundtrip travel between school and home and \$10,000 for costs related to the summer internships. HR/REE will entertain other options within this budget provided they cover all of the same costs inclusive of tuition, room and board, mandatory fees and summer internship expenses inclusive of stipend, room and board for only domestic internship, travel, all required visas and inoculations and medical insurance coverage.

The award is anticipated to be made in Fall 2015. The anticipated period of performance is October 2015 through September 2018. Applicants for this cooperative agreement should submit program proposals and budget projects for new 2016 students, i.e. students to be selected in spring 2016 who will begin their studies in the fall of 2016. Applicants will need to demonstrate the ability to begin work immediately with publicity and recruitment efforts.

Pending successful implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, HR/REE may renew the award for a period of up to two additional fiscal years, before openly competing the program again. As each year adds new fellows to the program, applicants will need to demonstrate the ability to handle multiple years of cohorts.

Type of Award: The instrument for this award is a cooperative agreement which entails substantial involvement between the HR/REE and the Recipient. Substantial involvement will include but is not limited to: HR/REE prior approval on all program details, scheduled weekly program calls and annual in-person

program review sessions with senior leadership. The Recipient must be prepared to work closely and collaboratively with HR/REE which establishes reviews and approves all program guidelines, materials and policies. Close and continuing cooperation and communication are essential to assure the success of the program.

a. **Information**

1. Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is limited to American nonprofit organizations subject to 501(c) (3) of the U.S. tax code and to American universities. Native American tribal organizations are eligible to apply. The Recipient must be physically located in the U.S. and operate from the within the U.S. Organizations with less than three years' experience in administering a program of this size, nature and complexity are not eligible for this competition. Eligible applicants must provide proof of their 501(c) (3) eligibility status, as determined by the Internal Revenue Service, or an authorizing tribal resolution, as part of their application. Applicants must identify dedicated staff to serve as liaisons with HR/REE on all aspects of this program, including someone who is knowledgeable regarding life and challenges of State Department Foreign Service Officers as well as the rules and regulations governing Foreign Service Careers. An applicant's failure to meet an eligibility criterion by the time of the application deadline will be considered an incomplete application and will not be reviewed.

2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds

There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost sharing required for this competition nor is it a competitive requirement. When cost sharing is offered, however, it is understood and agreed that the applicant must provide the amount of cost sharing as stipulated in its proposal and later included in an approved Cooperative Agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, the applicant must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as contribution, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit. The basis for determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB 2 CFR 200, Section 200.306 - Cost Sharing and Matching.

3. Other

- **Number of Applications Permitted**

Applicants may submit *only one* application under this announcement.

Applications should be submitted **only** from the head of the eligible organization.

Applications received after the closing date will be deemed ineligible and will not be considered for review.

- **Eligibility Criteria for Undergraduate and Graduate Fellowship Participants**

Criteria for applicants to the ***undergraduate program*** include: 1) proof of US citizenship; 2) college junior status with a cumulative grade point average of 3.2 or higher on a 4.0 scale; 3) maintenance of a grade point average throughout participation in the program that is in accordance with HR/REE established policies; and 4) in addition to outstanding leadership and academic achievement, demonstration of financial need.

Criteria for applicants to the ***graduate program*** include: 1) proof of US citizenship; 2) confirmation of seeking to apply, having applied and/or been accepted to a two year full time master's degree program for the following academic year (fall entrance) in selected fields of study representing the needs of the Department including public policy, public administration, political science, foreign languages, public diplomacy, business administration and economics; 3) minimum 3.2 undergraduate grade point average or higher on a 4.0 scale; 4) maintenance of a grade point average throughout participation in the program that is in accordance with HR/REE established policies; 5) in addition to outstanding leadership and academic achievement, demonstration of financial need.

C. Application and Submission Information

Please read the complete announcement carefully. Once the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) deadline has passed, HR/REE staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed. ***Only electronic submissions via grants.gov or grantsolutions.gov will be accepted.*** HR/REE strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov and/or Grantsolutions.gov websites, well in advance of submitting a proposal through either of these systems. ***Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will not be accepted.*** Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in the applicable solicitation and these instructions.

1. Address to Request Application Package

An electronic application package may be obtained from Grants.gov or grantsolutions.gov. The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) document which consists of required

application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov> or the grantsolutions.gov website at <http://www.grantsolutions.gov>. Please read all information before downloading.

The U.S. Department of State requires proposals be submitted electronically via www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov. Both systems require registration by the applying organization. Please note: the Grants.gov registration process can take 10 business days or longer, even if all registration steps are completed in a timely manner.

GrantSolutions.gov Applications

Applicants using GrantSolutions.gov for the first time should complete their “New Organization Registration” as soon as possible. This process must be completed before an application can be submitted. Registration with GrantSolutions.gov usually occurs directly after an applicant submits their registration. To register with GrantSolutions.gov, click “Login to GrantSolutions” and follow the “First Time Users” link to the “New Organization Registration Page.” There are different ways to register your organization, click on the link that fits best.

Registering with Grantsolutions.gov is a one-time process; however, it could take as long as two weeks to have the registration validated and confirmed. Please begin the registration process immediately to ensure that the process is completed well in advance of the deadline for applications. Until that process is complete, you will not be issued a user password for Grantsolutions.gov, which is required for application submission.

There are four steps that you must complete before you are able to register: (1) Obtain a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet (if your organization does not have one already) by calling 1-866-705-5711; (2) Register with Central Contractor Registry

(CCR), now SAM at www.sam.gov; (3) Register yourself as an Authorized Organization Representative (AOR); and (4) Be authorized as an AOR by your organization. For more information, go to www.grantsolutions.gov. Please note that your SAM.gov registration must be renewed annually. Failure to renew your SAM.gov registration may prohibit submission of an award application through Grantsolutions.gov. No exceptions will be made for organizations that have not completed the necessary steps to submit applications through grantsolutions.gov.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that it has an active registration in GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov and that an application has been received by GrantSolutions.gov or Grants.gov in its entirety. HR/REE bears no responsibility for applicants not being registered before the due date or for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Several of the steps in the Grants.gov and Grantsolutions.gov registration process could take several weeks. Therefore, applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov or Grantsolutions.gov.

Once registered, the amount of time it can take to upload an application will vary depending on a variety of factors including the size of the application and the speed of your internet connection. In addition, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov and Grantsolutions.gov can take up to two business days.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov or Grantsolutions.gov.

Please refer to the Grants.gov and Grantsolutions.gov websites, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. Applicants will receive a validation e-mail from grants.gov upon the successful submission of an application. Again, validation of an electronic submission via Grants.gov can take up to two business days. **Applicants submitting via grantsolutions.gov will receive a system generated email upon HR/REE's**

receipt of the proposal. The Applicant will not receive this notification immediately upon submission, as with grants.gov, but will receive an email a few days later. Applicants submitting via grantsolutions.gov should refer to the video at the following link for additional information on tracking an application via grantsolutions.gov. It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov and grantsolutions.gov web portals to ensure that proposals have been received by these systems in their entirety. HR/REE will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

If an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Federal awarding agency is ready to make a Federal award, the Federal awarding agency may determine the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal award to another applicant.

2. Content and Form of Application Submission

The entire Solicitation Package, which includes all required application forms, may be downloaded from the grants.gov website at <http://www.grants.gov> or the grantsolutions website at <http://www.grantsolutions.gov>. Please read all information before downloading.

i. Application as a whole

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)

The proposal is limited to 30 pages in total, exclusive of table of contents, budget, resumes, and milestone chart. It should be double spaced, single sided, with a font no less than 12 point type for text.

ii. **Component Pieces of the Application**

The proposal must provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below.

- **Vision** (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
- **Recruitment Plan:** Describe plans for the development of a recruitment strategy and for scheduling the various stages of recruitment. Provide sample of Fellowship's application. Provide proposed detailed recruitment schedule indicating places targeted for recruitment, length of stays and targeted audiences and proposed recruitment activities.
- **Selection Process:** Detailed description of how Recipient will carry out the various stages of the selection process.
- **Program Management:** Provide a detailed plan for implementation of the program and how Recipient intends to achieving program goals. Include description of its plans for interacting and communicating with HR/REE, potential candidates, current Fellows, educational institutions, Diplomats in Residence, and other relevant entities during all phases of the Cooperative Agreement.
- **Organizational Capacity:** Describe staff who will be working on the program. Include staff's relevant qualifications, including experience and knowledge of the Department of State's Foreign Service careers. Provide a resume for each program staff person, identify each person's roles and responsibilities and the percentage of time they will be working each year on the program. Resumes of all key staff involved in the administering the program should be included in the submission; no resume should exceed two pages.
- **Applicant's Financial Capacity:** Applicants must provide their most recent independent audit report (A-133) as evidence confirming they are fiscally

capable of covering related Fellowship costs to ensure timely implementation of the program, in some cases even prior to access to the award.

- **Sustainability:** Describe how the applicant organization will develop and maintain a dedicated database on candidates (recruited, selected, and not-selected). The proposal must include a plan outlining alumni outreach/follow-on and engagement.
- **Program Monitoring and Evaluation:** Provide evaluation strategies/plan designed to measure the impact and outcome of the Thomas R. Pickering Fellowship Program. Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the program's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. Recipient's proposal should include a draft survey questionnaire plus a description of the proposed methodology to link project outcomes to the original project objectives. The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in the Department's Foreign Service diversity recruitment efforts as well as effectiveness of the implementation of the program plan.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. The Recipient's evaluation plan should include a description of the project's objectives, the anticipated project outcomes, and how and when the Applicant intends to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. Applicants should also show how the project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO).

The Applicant's monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program outputs and outcomes. Outputs are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. Outcomes, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of

change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

Applicants' evaluation plans should assess the following five levels of outcomes, as they relate to the listed program goals outlined in Section A (Program Description) of this Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO):

- a. **Participant satisfaction** with the Recipient's administration of the fellowship program, level and type of engagement of the Recipient with participant, fellowship's related professional development opportunities and mentoring received from Recipient and others.
- b. **Participant learning**, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and adaptability to Foreign Service culture.
- c. **Participant behavior**, such as level of judgment exhibited in past behavior. Ability to adapt to Foreign Service lifestyle, level of adherence to Fellowship requirements, explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained;
- d. **Effectiveness of Recipient** in administering the program such as its ability to successfully meet the goals of the program as established by HR/REE; level and quality of contact with potential applicants and their understanding of the fellowship program and level of continued contact between Recipient and participants.
- e. **Institutional changes**, such as overall success of the Fellowship program; its effect on increased diversity in the ranks of the Foreign Service of the Department of State and the contribution Fellows make to the Department's objectives.

- **Detailed Budget Guidelines**

HR/REE has provided summary and detailed line item budget templates, for referential, use as part of the solicitation package. These templates are designed to serve as examples of the format for complete budget submissions and are NOT exhaustive. Individual line items included in each applicant's budget should reflect specific program activities.

Applications will not be considered complete unless they include budgets that respond to the solicitation guidelines. Complete budgets will provide a detailed

line-item budget outlining specific cost requirements for proposed activities, accompanied by a budget narrative explaining each line item, as well as a summary budget. A minimum of three columns should be used to delineate the bureau funding request, cost-share by applicant, and total project funding. Complete applications will include a budget narrative to clarify and justify individual line-items (i.e., calculations of how the costs were derived per month or year, their necessity, and overall contribution to the program's cost effectiveness)

Please note: Grantees under DOS-funded projects are responsible for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state, and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for project participants.

Before grants are awarded, DOS reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the DOS's program and availability of funds.

Summary Budget

Please include the applicant organization name, title and duration of the project, and the following:

All organizations, including those not offering any cost-sharing, should submit a budget, formatted to include three columns for each line item: DOS funding request, cost-share offered, and total funding. Sources of all cost-share offered in the application should be identified and explained in the budget narrative. When organizations have made a reasonable, good-faith effort to obtain cost sharing or are pursuing avenues to cost share, DOS encourages applicants to note this in the proposal.

Summary budgets should be arranged according to the example format below to clearly delineate cost share:

DOS Request Cost Share Total

A. Personnel

B. Fringe Benefits

C. Travel

D. Equipment

E. Supplies

F. Contractual

G. Construction N/A

H. Other

I. Total Direct Charges (sum A-H)

J. Indirect Charges

K. Total (sum I-J)

Detailed Line Item Budget

I. SALARIES - In general, employees receiving benefits from the applicant organization are considered staff. Consultants hired to assist with the program who do not receive benefits should be included under Contractual. Identify staffing requirements by each position title and brief description of duties. Each staff member's salary calculation should include the annual/base salary of each position, percentage of time and number of months devoted to the project. (e.g., Administrative Director: \$30,000/year x 25% x 8.5 months; calculation: $\$30,000/12 = \$2,500 \times 25\% \times 8.5 \text{ months} = \$5,312.$). This can be in the budget narrative if the organization prefers.

Indicate each position or individual (Base salary x % of time x # of months)

II. FRINGE BENEFITS - State benefit costs separately from salary costs and explain how benefits are computed for each category of employee (specify type and rate). Base fringe % of salaries from above.

III. TRAVEL – Staff and any participant travel

- 1) International airfare
- 2) In-country travel overseas
- 3) Domestic travel in the United States, if any

4) Per diem/maintenance: includes lodging, meals and incidentals for both participant and staff travel. Rates of maximum allowances for U.S. and foreign travel are available from the following website:

<http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21287> and

http://aoprals.state.gov/content.asp?content_id=184&menu_id=78. Per diem rates may not exceed the published U.S. government allowance rates; however, institutions may use per diem rates lower than official government rates.

Please explain differences in fares among travelers on the same routes (e.g., project staff member traveling for three weeks whose fare is higher than that of staff member traveling for four months). Please note that all travel, where applicable, must be in compliance with the Fly America Act. For more information see <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/103191>.

Examples of Program Travel Costs for Staff and Participants – Not an Exhaustive List

Staff Travel to Washington, DC, and per diem (subject to U.S government rates) for meetings and consultations Selection Process – travel and lodging (subject to U.S. government per diem rates) in Washington, DC in April for approximately 4 staff, 60 candidates and panelists to conduct selections, and honoraria for panelists

Orientation – travel and lodging (subject to U.S. government per diem rates) in Washington, DC in June 2015.

Identify multiple locations and break out costs accordingly

a. Round Trip Airfare (fare x # people)

b. Per Diem (rate x # of days x # people)

2. Participant Travel Costs and Per Diem (or residency costs)

Fellows' travel and per diem

Orientation – travel and lodging (subject to U.S. government per diem rates) in Washington, DC in June 2015 for 30 candidates.

Identify multiple locations and break out costs accordingly

a. Round Trip Airfare (fare x # people)

b. Per Diem (rate x # of days x # people)

3. Ground Transportation (rate x # of people or # of buses x daily rate, etc.)

Staff or Participant airport transfers upon arrival and departure, bus or van rentals, taxis, etc.

4. Other Travel Costs (e.g. baggage allowance, visas, immunizations etc.)

IV. EQUIPMENT - Equipment is defined as having a per unit cost of \$5,000 and a service life of more than one year. If the item meets these criteria than all federal procurement policies and procedures must be followed. If an item does not meet these criteria it is considered a supply.

Please provide justification for any equipment supporting determination of purchase/rental.

V. SUPPLIES - List items separately using unit costs (and the percentage of each unit cost being charged to the grant) for photocopying, postage, telephone/fax, printing, and office supplies (for example, Telephone: \$50/month x 50% = \$25/month x 12 months). Provide line item breakdown for each supply category

VI. CONTRACTUAL

All Contractual relationships should be presented in this category – i.e. sub-contracts and sub-awards. If sub-awards are included than each subaward must be listed separately with a detailed line item budget submitted for each. If indirect is charged on a subaward please include a NICRA.

a) Sub-recipients – For each sub-recipient/contract please provide a detailed line item breakdown explaining specific services. In the sub-recipient budgets, provide the same level of detail for personnel, travel, supplies, equipment, direct costs, and fringe benefits required of the direct applicant. If indirect is charged on a sub-recipient please include a NICRA. Please note that a sub-recipient who receives equal to or more than \$25,000 is required to have a DUNS number. Please visit www.fsrs.gov for more information.

Please Note: it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that proposed sub-awardees are eligible for U.S. government funding.

b) Consultant Fees – For example lecture fees, honoraria, travel, and per diem for outside speakers or external evaluators: list number of people and rates per day (for example, 2 x \$150/day x 2 days).

VII. CONSTRUCTION - Due to the nature of this program, construction costs are generally not allowable or applicable.

VIII. OTHER DIRECT COSTS - These will vary depending on the nature of the project and may include all other costs that do not fit into the categories listed above. The inclusion of each should be justified in the budget narrative. A-133 audit costs can be included if they are not part of the indirect pool and only the portion of the cost associated with this program.

Following are examples of allowable other direct costs – it is not an exhaustive list.

1. Communication

Provide line item breakdown for each communication category such as postage, telephone calls, faxes, etc.

2. Room Rental (rate x # of days)

3. Audit Costs * - A-133 audit costs can be included if they are not part of indirect pool and only the portion of the cost associated with this program.

4. Tuition and other related academic expenses (including books, room and board, required fees and one annual roundtrip home) up to the designated amount.

5. Professional Development Seminars – includes 7-8 evening sessions during the 10 week domestic internship, venue, technical support and honorarium.

6. FSOA Information Sessions – honoraria for 30 one-on-one information sessions (one for each member of the cohort). Each session lasts 3 hours. Recipient must schedule an HR/REE approved consultant to conduct these sessions.

7. Cost of medical insurance coverage needed for 30 Fellows for their foreign internship, cost of required inoculations and visas;
8. Recruitment – printing costs, postage, website design, staff travel;
9. Housing in Washington, DC for 30 Fellows during domestic internship
10. Internship Stipends – Domestic and Foreign internships stipends are calculated at the GS 4/1 and GS-5/1 respectively.

IX. INDIRECT COSTS – An organization with a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) from a cognizant federal government agency other than the U.S. Department of State should include a copy of the cost-rate agreement. Applicants should indicate in the proposal budget how the rate is applied and if any of the rate will be cost-shared. DOS generally does not pay indirect costs against participant expenses, but each case may vary. Organizations claiming indirect costs should have an established NICRA. If sub-recipients are claiming indirect costs, they should have an established NICRA that is also submitted with the proposal package.

If your organization does not have a NICRA, the proposal budget should not have a line item for indirect cost charges. Rather, any costs that may be considered as indirect costs should be included in specific budget line items as direct costs or, per 2 CFR 200, an organization may apply choose to apply a De Minimus Rate of 10% based on MTDC. Please consult §200.68 Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) and 200.414 Indirect (F&A) costs.

X. COST SHARE - Cost-sharing is the portion of program cost not borne by the sponsor. DOS encourages but does not require cost-sharing, which may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs and offered by the applicant and/or in-country partners. Applicants should consider all types of cost-sharing, including in-kind and public-private partnerships. Examples include the use of office space owned by other entities; donated or borrowed supplies and equipment; (non-federal) sponsored travel costs; waived indirect costs; and program activities, translations, or consultations conducted by qualified volunteers. The values of offered cost-share should be reported in accordance with (the applicable cost

principles outlined in 2 CFR 200.306 Cost sharing or matching. Other federal funding does not constitute cost-sharing.

Explanation of contributions should be included, whether cash or in-kind. Assign a monetary value in U.S. dollars to each in-kind contribution. If the proposed project is a component of a larger program, identify other funding sources for the proposal and indicate the specific funding amount to be provided by those sources. In addition, it is recommended that the budget narrative address the overall cost-effectiveness of the proposal, including leveraging of institutional or other resources.

Please note: this program does not require cost share, but if it is included then the recipient must maintain written records to support all allowable costs that are claimed as its contribution to cost share, as well as costs to be paid by the Federal government. Such records are subject to audit.

In the event the recipient does not meet the minimum amount of cost-sharing as stipulated in the recipient's budget, DOS's contribution may be reduced in proportion to the recipient's contribution.

Other Budget Guidelines

DOS will consider budgeted line-items for the following:

- External evaluations to assess the project's impact (costs must be built into the overall original budget proposal and must be reasonable);
- Costs associated with an internal evaluation conducted by the grantee (costs must be built into the overall original budget proposal and must be reasonable);
- Visa fees and immunizations associated with program travel; and,
- Other justified reasonable costs necessary for achievement of program objectives as allowable by 2 CFR 200.

DOS does not pay for the following, under any circumstances:

- Incurred before or after the specified dates of the grant (unless prior approval received);

- Projects designed to advocate policy views or positions of foreign governments or views of a particular political faction; and,
- Alcoholic beverages.

3. Information To Be Submitted after Notification of Intent to Make a Federal Award but Prior to Federal Award

Recipient may be notified of the need to submit additional information before award is made. In such case, the requested information will be clearly described and accompanied by a submission deadline date. A financial management survey may be required at a later date.

Pre-Award Costs: Pre-award costs are incurred at Recipient's own risk. Recipient should submit a pre-award budget for HR/REE review. The Grants Officer may authorize pre-award costs at the recommendation of HR/REE at the time of the award.

4. Proposal Submission Dates and Time

The U.S. Department of State requires proposals be submitted electronically via www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov. Both systems require registration by the applying organization. Begin the application process early, as this will allow time to address any technical difficulties that may arise in advance of the deadline. There will be no exceptions to this application deadline.

- i. The application submission deadline is **Monday, June 22, 2015 at 11:59PM EST.**
- ii. All applications must be uploaded to grantsolutions.gov or grants.gov no later than **Monday, June 22, 2015 at 11:59PM EST**. Please refer to the Grants.gov and grantsolutions.gov websites, for definitions of various "application statuses" and the difference between a submission receipt and a submission validation. HR/REE bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

- iii. Applications received after the deadline will be automatically rejected and will be ineligible for consideration. HR/REE will determine whether an application has been submitted before the deadline based on the system generated documentation of receipt and time of application.

5. Intergovernmental Review: Not applicable

- 6. **Funding Restrictions:** Applicants must adhere to all funding limitations outlined in section B, Federal Award Information, with regards to total award amount and the per student direct cost caps. Applicants must provide their most recent NICRA. If a NICRA is not available, then applicant must provide explanation for calculating its administrative costs which must be charged as direct cost line items. Applicant may, at its discretion, elect to use the 10% diminus indirect cost guide as outlined in 2 CFR 200.

7. Other Submission Requirements

Applicants experiencing technical difficulties uploading their proposals to grants.gov or grantsolutions.gov should contact:

Grants.gov - Technical support for grants.gov is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at support@grants.gov. You may also contact them via phone at 800-518-4726. They are closed on federal holidays

Grantsolutions.gov - Technical support for grantsolutions.gov is available Monday-Friday 8AM-6PM EST at help@grantsolutions.gov or via phone at 1-866-577-0771 or 202-401-5282. It is closed on Federal holidays.

D. Application Review Information

1. Criteria: The following criteria will be used to evaluate all submissions. HR/REE, the grants officer or panel members reserve the right to request any

additional programmatic and/or financial information regarding the proposals. Each criterion identifies the full weight of its value in the deliberative process.

- **Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objective:** Applicants' understanding and appreciation for the goals and objectives of the Thomas R. Pickering Fellowship Programs and demonstrated ability to achieve the goals and objectives. **20 points**
- **Institutional Capacity:** Demonstrated knowledge of the Department of State's Foreign Service career path and ability to mentor effectively Fellows pursuing this career. Demonstrated ability to manage successfully programs of this magnitude and complexity. Applicants' fiscal health and ability to avoid program delays by covering necessary program expenses, at times, even before the award payment is processed. Applicant's past performance. Applicant must provide evidence of its past performance and budget management of programs of comparable complexity and size. **20 points**
- **Program Management and Evaluation:** Design and effectiveness of Applicants' recruitment, implementation and evaluation plans and how they will be used to achieve program goals. **20 points**
- **Budget and Cost Effectiveness:** Cost effectiveness of Applicants' proposed budget submission. **15 points**
- **Staffing:** Applicant's designation of a fully dedicated (100%) senior level program manager with decision making authority. **15 points**
- **Sustainability/Multiplier Effect:** Applicants' clear articulation of how desired outcomes will be generated and methods used to ensure sustainability of the program and competitive program participants. **10 points**

2. Review and Selection Process: The award decision will be made based on the merit criteria, ultimate authority resting with senior Bureau of Human Resources approving officials.

The panel charged with reviewing and selecting the Recipient of this award will be comprised of three to five members with one serving as the Panel Chair. All panelists will be Department of State employees familiar with the goals and objectives of the Thomas R. Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship Programs, the demands of successfully administering a program of its complexity and magnitude and skilled in reviewing proposals.

After deliberations, the panel will make a recommendation of funding, based on the rankings, to the approving official.

3. Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates:

HR/REE will notify Applicants, in writing, of their status no later than **late July/early August 2015**. It is anticipated that the award will be in place no later than October 2015. However, due to the federal budget cycle, award payment may be made in installments, during the first program year, based on interim budget submissions from the Recipient.

4. Federal Award Administration Information

i. Federal Award Notices

The Recipient may be notified of any additional recommendations or conditions to be met based on the full panel review before final selection can be made. Following the selection panel's deliberations, the successful applicant will be notified electronically, as well as via postal mail, of their selection as the intended Recipient of the award. This letter will not constitute formal approval of the proposal or a funding commitment. Confirmation of the funding commitment occurs once the Notice of Federal Award (form DS-1909), is signed by the designated grants officer, and countersigned by the Recipient. The final awards package cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by the U.S. Congress, allocated and committed through internal Department of State procedures. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified electronically, as well as, via postal mail.

ii. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

This federal award is subject to the following standard administrative policy requirements:

- All applicants must be registered in the grantsolutions.gov and/or grants.gov system
- Payments under this award will be made through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Payment Management System (PMS). The Payment Management System instructions are available under the PMS website and be accessed at the following address: <http://www.dpm.psc.gov>. Recipients should request funds based on immediate disbursement requirements and disburse funds as soon as possible to minimize the Federal cash on hand in accordance with policies established by the U.S. Treasury Department and mandated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars.
- The Department of State's *Standard Terms and Conditions* for Domestic Federal Assistance Awards are incorporated into and are part of the Notice of Funding Award. Electronic copies containing the complete text are available at: <https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/TermsandConditions.aspx>, under *Resources*. Select *Terms and Conditions* to access the terms and conditions applicable to the Recipient. The Recipient and any sub-recipient, in addition to the assurances and certifications made part of the Notice of Award, must comply with all applicable terms and conditions during the project period.
- The requirements as stipulated in 2 CFR 200.

5. Reporting

Recipient is required to submit quarterly financial and progress reports. A final certified financial report and program report must be submitted to the Grants Officer Representative in HR/REE within 90 days after the award period end date. Specific reporting requirements will be outlined in the award provisions.

6. Federal Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Applicants may contact the following individuals for questions or assistance while the funding opportunity is open. Once the application deadline has passed, HR/REE may not discuss elements of the proposal with Applicants.

i. For programmatic and administrative questions contact:

Christa George, Program Analyst, via phone at 202-261-8892 or via fax at 202-261-8842.

Michael Wolfe, Division Chief, Student Programs, via phone at 202-261-8924, via email at WolfeML@state.gov or via fax at 202-261-8842.

Questions may also be directed via email to DOSFellows@state.gov. A staff member will respond to inquiries via email.