



Educational and Cultural Affairs

U.S. DEPARTMENT *of* STATE

**U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)
Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
FY 2026 U.S. Leadership in Education, Advanced Manufacturing,
and Digital Skills (U.S. LEADS) Program
Funding Opportunity Number: DFOP0017930
Application Deadline: May 18, 2026**

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A. Basic Information

1. Overview.

Funding Opportunity Title	FY 2026 U.S. Leadership in Education, Advanced Manufacturing, and Digital Skills (U.S. LEADS) Program
Funding Opportunity Number	DFOP0017930
Announcement Type	New Cooperative Agreement
Deadline for Applications	May 18, 2026, 11:59pm Eastern (Washington DC time)
Assistance Listing Number	19.408

Length of Performance Period	18 to 36 months
Number of Awards Anticipated	One award
Award Amount	approximately \$2,500,000
Total Available Funding	\$2,500,000
Type of Funding	FY 2026 Educational and Cultural Exchange (ECE) Program Funds
Funding Instrument Type	Cooperative Agreement
Anticipated Award Date	July 1, 2026

This notice is subject to availability of funding. Issuance of the NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government.

ECA reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

2. Executive Summary.

The United States Leadership in Education, Advanced Manufacturing, and Digital Skills (U.S. LEADS) Program celebrates America's 250th anniversary by showcasing U.S. leadership from the Industrial Revolution to the Digital Revolution, focusing on revitalizing manufacturing, advancing AI, and strengthening supply chains. This Freedom 250 initiative will spark collaboration between U.S. community colleges, international vocational leaders, and U.S. industry partners to address emerging labor market demands that advance U.S. interests and drive economic development. The program will launch with a summit in Washington, D.C. to highlight America's industrial heritage, current leadership in manufacturing and AI, and the role of U.S. community colleges in preparing the workforce of tomorrow.

The program will also include a U.S. exchange for approximately 100 higher education officials, commerce leaders, and policymakers from countries strategically important to U.S. industry. The group should be divided into four cohorts comprised of approximately 25 representatives from approximately 3-4 countries, determined based on U.S. foreign policy priorities in consultation with ECA, U.S. embassies, and regional bureau input. These two-week regional programs will take place in approximately four U.S. cities with strong higher education-industry partnerships. Through site visits, hands-on learning, and industry engagement, international participants will gain knowledge of U.S. best practices in manufacturing and technology training, enabling them to adopt similar approaches and establish partnerships that advantage U.S. companies. The summit should occur between

December 2026 and March 2027 and be followed immediately by the in-person regional exchanges. The successful applicant will provide responsive and flexible programming with activities tailored to U.S. priorities for vocational-technical education and commercial diplomacy that will lead to measurable positive policy change.

B. Eligibility

1. Eligible Applicants.

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- U.S. Not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- U.S. Not-for-profit public and private educational institutions

Please see the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

2. Cost Sharing.

There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost sharing required for this program.

3. Other Eligibility Requirements.

- a. All organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) issued via SAM.gov as well as a valid registration in SAM.gov. Please see *Section E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines* for more information.
- b. ECA's Grant Guidelines require that organizations demonstrate at least four years of experience in conducting international exchanges to be eligible for awards exceeding \$130,000 in ECA funding. As noted in *Section A. Basic Information*, ECA anticipates issuing one award, for approximately \$2,500,000. Therefore, organizations must demonstrate four years of experience in conducting international exchanges in your proposal to be eligible to apply under this competition.
- c. All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO, and the PSI; not doing so may result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

- d. All proposals must contain a SF-424, executive summary, proposal narrative, budget (SF-424A), detailed line-item budget, and budget narrative.
- e. Only *one* proposal will be considered by ECA from each applicant organization. In cases where more than one submission from an applicant appears in grants.gov, ECA will *only* consider the submission made closest in time to the NOFO deadline; that submission would constitute the one and only proposal ECA would review from that applicant.

Please note: Applicant organizations are defined by their legal name, and EIN number as stated on their completed SF-424 and additional supporting documentation outlined in the PSI document.

- f. Applicants who are current recipients of awards directly from ECA should make sure the application discusses one or more award that will be open with ECA at the start of the anticipated period of performance for this NOFO. Applicants who do not have current awards directly with ECA, please review the information in the PSI, section D, with additional information that must be provided in your application for it to be eligible.

C. Program Description

1. Authority.

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Public Law 87-256, as amended, also known as the Fulbright-Hays Act. The purpose of the Act is "to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries...; to strengthen the ties which unite us with other nations by demonstrating the educational and cultural interests, developments, and achievements of the people of the United States and other nations...and thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic and peaceful relations between the United States and the other countries of the world." The funding authority for the program above is provided through legislation.

2. Purpose.

U.S. LEADS advances U.S. foreign policy and national interests by strengthening international partnerships with countries strategically important to U.S. industry and supply chains. This Freedom 250 initiative will showcase U.S. innovation and the unique role of community colleges in preparing the 21st-century workforce. The

program will share U.S. best practices with key international policymakers focused on vocational-technical education, paving the way for future U.S. trade and investment. The program will also facilitate partnerships that advantage U.S. companies and enhance global competitiveness while building networks between U.S. community colleges, international educational institutions, and industry partners.

3. Program Specific Guidelines.

U.S. LEADS is a comprehensive international exchange program that will engage approximately 100 participants from countries strategically important to U.S. industry and supply chains. The program consists of two integrated components: (1) a Washington, D.C. summit highlighting America's industrial heritage and current leadership in workforce innovation, and (2) regional exchange programs in four U.S. cities showcasing exemplary community college-industry partnerships in advanced manufacturing, AI, and digital skills training. Cohorts will be comprised of approximately 25 participants each. The program should also include capacity-building opportunities for U.S. community colleges designed to further strengthen industry connections and opportunities for global partnership that strengthen U.S. competitiveness.

The program provides participants with practical skills to address emerging labor market demands through immersive experiences in U.S. regions with strong industry-education partnerships. Participants gain direct access to U.S. industry leaders and higher education institutions, creating partnership opportunities with U.S. companies and community colleges that can facilitate U.S. job creation and competitiveness in a global economy. The program expands market access for U.S. companies by aligning emerging economies to U.S. industry and educational standards.

A. Pre-Program Planning and Preparation:

- The proposal should include a plan describing how the applicant will identify participating U.S. cities and community colleges for the exchange, demonstrating existing partnerships between U.S. higher education institutions and industry, prioritizing vocational-technical skill building. The applicant should identify host cities that have capacity for continued growth in advanced manufacturing, AI, and other priority fields and where increased global engagement could lead to U.S. job creation and competitiveness.

- The applicant should consult the Freedom250.org website, America's AI Action Plan, the U.S. National Security Strategy, State Department Agency Strategic Plan, and other public documents that highlight current administration priorities.
- The applicant should also outline a plan to successfully acquire the necessary expertise in the participating countries' labor market demands and opportunities for partnership with U.S. industry. During this phase of the program, ECA will communicate with Public Affairs Sections of U.S. embassies and/or with Fulbright commissions to determine the institutions and regions in the selected countries that will be targeted by the program recruitment and provide all necessary information to the applicant.
- The applicant should develop standardized recruitment/nomination forms to be utilized by U.S. embassies and/or commissions and outline a clear selection process. International participants should be senior foreign officials who have policy-level responsibility related to vocational-technical education, curriculum development and credentialing, workforce readiness, and/or trade and commerce.

B. In-Person Programming:

- The in-person programming, including alumni engagement, should take place between December 2026 and August 2028.

Washington, D.C. Summit

In collaboration with ECA, the award recipient will develop a robust schedule for the D.C. summit that will serve as both the foundation of the participants' experience and the launch pad for the cohort regional travel. The summit should take place over the course of approximately two days and serve as the official program welcome. The overarching theme should focus on Freedom 250 and an overview of America's industrial evolution from the Industrial Revolution to the Digital Revolution. The summit will include the approximately 100 international participants, and 50 senior officials from participating U.S. community colleges, and U.S. industry and government representatives. Activities for the summit will include policy briefings, panel discussions, and networking events that reinforce key themes including U.S. leadership in advanced manufacturing and AI, the U.S. community college model and America's unique approach to emerging labor market demands and building effective education-industry partnerships. Additional workshop and seminar sessions may include topics such as grants,

partnerships, and multi-stakeholder project planning. The applicant should allocate no more than 20 percent of the proposal's total budget for the summit.

Regional Site Visits

The award recipient must design and implement two-week regional exchange programs following the D.C. Summit, consisting of four cohorts of approximately 25 participants. Programs will take place in U.S. cities with strong historic and strategic importance to American industry and innovation. Selected U.S. cities must demonstrate:

- Exemplary community college workforce training programs in advanced manufacturing, AI, or digital skills
- Existing partnerships between educational institutions and industry
- Strong industry presence (manufacturing facilities, technology companies, innovation centers)
- Facilities willing to host international visitors

Each two-week regional program must include the following components:

Community College Immersion: Tours of training facilities, labs, and classrooms in advanced manufacturing, AI, and digital skills programs; meetings with college presidents, deans, and department chairs; discussions with faculty on curriculum development and industry alignment; meetings with student services staff on recruitment, retention, and job placement; review of assessment and credentialing processes; and discussion of funding models and partnership strategies.

Market Analysis and Partnership Workshops: Sessions with experts in labor market demands and international partnership building that includes relevant content for both U.S. host institutions (community colleges, industry partners) as well as the international participants.

Industry Site Visits: Visits to technology companies utilizing AI and automation; meetings with corporate executives and human resources leaders; observation of on-the-job training and apprenticeship programs; discussion of industry workforce needs and skills gaps.

Policy and Economic Development Engagement: Meetings with state or local workforce development officials; discussions with chambers of commerce or industry associations.

Action Planning and Reflection: Facilitated sessions for participants to synthesize learning; development of individual action plans for implementing U.S. best practices; identification of potential partnership opportunities with visited institutions.

C. Follow-on Activities

- Proposals should describe how long-term links with alumni will be fostered and maintained among the cohorts. The applicant should describe how it will prepare and/ or support alumni to implement concrete project plans that advance vocational-technical education and industry engagement strategies that align with U.S. interests.
- Activities should include opportunities for alumni to present on these projects and continue engagement with U.S. institutions, industry partners, and each other.
- The follow-on activities should also include virtual or in-person opportunities for U.S. community college leaders and/or workforce experts to further strengthen industry connections and opportunities for global partnership that strengthen U.S. competitiveness.
- If funding allows, the applicant may include reciprocal exchange opportunities for American representatives to travel to participating regions to solidify partnerships and advance opportunities for U.S. industry and educational engagement.
- Successful applicants will describe activities that also leverage active involvement of Posts in cultivating ongoing relationships with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, industry representatives, and other key stakeholders that promote U.S. trade and business.
- Applicants should allocate no more than 25 percent of the proposal's total budget for these activities and should plan to complete all follow-on programming within 18 months of the program's in-person component.

4. Recipient Responsibilities.

A. Program Planning and Logistics

- Design a plan to finalize participating regions, including community colleges and industry partners.
- Research the post-secondary vocational-technical education system, employability needs, and higher education priorities in participants' countries, including how these factors relate to American interests in trade and education.
- Customize the design and contents of the D.C. summit and regional exchange programs based on the country research.
- Design and facilitate a two week in-person seminar for four cohorts of approximately 25 participants that includes at least 30 hours of programming per week and addresses different topics related to workforce innovation and partnership with the U.S.
- Include program components that directly benefit U.S. communities, higher education institutions, and industry.
- Propose a program structure that allows participants to design projects informed by their U.S. exchange that are responsive to U.S. commercial diplomacy interests and in-country policy or institutional needs that will be presented at the end of the program.
- Issue DS-2019 forms at least 60 days before departure to the U.S. and manage and monitor the J-1 visa status and SEVIS status of the participants.
- Arrange round-trip travel for the participants from their home cities to Washington, D.C. and their U.S. host city and arrange for housing in the United States.
- Enroll participants in ECA's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits plan or other health insurance that meets or exceeds the J-1 visa requirements and assists participants with accessing necessary health care and assist with claims as necessary.
- Manage financial aspects of the program including participant maintenance allowances, housing expenses, accident and sickness benefits, any sub-recipient agreements, and other activity costs.
- Develop a plan for sustained professional mentoring opportunities prior, during, and post-program to support participants in implementing their plans for institutional change (may include virtual platforms).
- Be responsible for the ongoing management and administrative oversight of participating U.S. colleges/partners, and the coordination with U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions, and ECA.
- Develop pre-departure orientation materials and ensure that the U.S. embassy and/or Fulbright commission receives them for distribution to the participants, approximately two months prior to the start of the program.

- Coordinate with ECA regarding alumni management tracking and reporting. Adhere to U.S. Department of State and ECA branding and communication guidelines.

B. Participant Recruitment and Selection

- Create comprehensive recruitment materials (program description, application/nomination forms, eligibility criteria).
- Provide resources to U.S. embassies and Fulbright commissions to conduct outreach to relevant ministries, educational institutions, and industry associations.
- Establish clear application requirements and selection criteria.
- Maintain communication with participants throughout recruitment and preparation phases.

C. Washington, D.C. Summit

- Develop comprehensive summit agenda aligned with program objectives and Freedom 250 themes.
- Recruit and coordinate high-level speakers from U.S. government, industry, and education sectors.
- Organize plenary sessions on U.S. leadership in manufacturing, AI, and workforce development.
- Facilitate panel discussions featuring community college leaders and industry representatives.
- Coordinate structured networking sessions connecting international participants with U.S. stakeholders.
- Secure appropriate venue and meeting spaces for approximately 150 participants.
- Develop and distribute summit materials (programs, briefing books, participant directories).

D. Regional Exchange Program

- Identify four U.S. cities/regions with exemplary community college-industry partnerships in priority sectors.
- Conduct site assessments and feasibility analysis for each region.
- Secure commitments from host community colleges and industry partners.
- Develop detailed two-week itineraries for each region that include community college engagement, industry collaboration and site visits, and policy/economic development meetings.

- Organize participation in training modules or workshops in priority sectors, including interactive sessions on curriculum design, competency-based education, and industry partnerships.
- Create networking opportunities with U.S. counterparts.
- Facilitate sessions for participants to synthesize learning and develop action plans.
- Provide templates and guidance for action plan development
- Support identification of potential partnership opportunities with visited institutions.

E. Participant and Program Monitoring and Reporting

- Prepare a pre-program survey instrument to identify participants' interests related to workforce innovation and U.S. industry and education partnerships. Provide survey results to ECA program officer. Use this feedback to shape the proposed programming for the cohort.
- Explain how technologies and/or other flexibilities may be used to pivot the in-person program into a virtual format, if needed.
- Assess participants' learning during the program and adjust as needed to maximize participants' understanding.
- Monitor participants' adjustment and engagement with the program; consult with ECA's program officer regarding any participant-related issues and emergencies.
- Assess the participants' institution-specific projects presented at the end of the program and provide updates to ECA about changes alumni have implemented as a result of their participation in the program.
- Report any physical or mental health emergencies to the ECA's program officer and ASPE Coordinator within 24 hours.
- Report programmatic, financial, and statistical information to ECA's program and grants officers.
- Assume overall responsibility for complying with all applicable tax treaties and federal, state, and local laws on tax withholding and reporting for participants.

F. Communications, Outreach, and Branding

- Propose a detailed communications plan that outlines outreach strategies to convey the program's domestic and international impact and contribution to key foreign policy priorities.
- The plan should address how websites, social media platforms, and print and digital materials will be consolidated and prioritized to support the

communications plan. The plan should also specify what resources will be utilized for its full implementation.

- Ensure that all print and electronic materials (online application, websites, digital resources, brochures, press releases, announcements, etc.) developed for and related to the program comply with ECA's Communications Guidance. See section C.11.

5. Goals and Objectives.

- Showcase U.S. Leadership and Commemorate Freedom 250: Demonstrate American excellence in workforce innovation by highlighting the unique role of community colleges and their industry partnerships while celebrating America's 250th anniversary and 250 years of leadership in industrial and technological innovation.
- Build U.S. Driven Strategic Partnerships: Establish relationships between U.S. community colleges, international educational institutions, and industry partners while equipping approximately 100 international higher education officials, commerce leaders, and policymakers with knowledge, tools, and action plans to implement U.S. workforce innovation models in their home countries.
- Advance U.S. Economic Interests and Supply Chain Resilience: Facilitate public-private partnerships and vocational-technical education policies that advantage U.S. companies and enhance global competitiveness while supporting development of skilled workforces in countries strategically important to U.S. industry, manufacturing, and supply chain security.

6. Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E).

Distinct from grants or cooperative agreement monitoring and participant monitoring, performance monitoring is designed to assess progress against a program's goals and objectives. A performance monitoring framework is vital to tracking the direction, pace, and magnitude of change that result from ECA programs.

ECA created the Monitoring Data for ECA (MODE) Framework to measure the performance of ECA programs. **The MODE Framework provides standard indicators and corresponding survey questions to ensure consistent measures across all ECA programs.** More resources and guidance documents on the MODE Framework are available online at: <https://www.state.gov/eca-monitoring-evaluation-learning-and-innovation-meli-unit/>.

The proposal must include the MODE Framework objectives and indicators listed below (note that, because not all MODE objectives and indicators are relevant for a program, the numbering below will not be sequential). In addition to the ECA-required objectives and indicators, applicants may also select additional MODE Framework indicators (see the **Indicator Book** on the MODE Framework website), or design custom objectives and indicators that are specific to the proposed program and this proposal.

- Demographic Questions as outlined in the **Indicator Book** on page v and **Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP)** (See the MODE Resource Guide - <https://app.box.com/s/qjo8icwj46tc8h1i1qtg80zl7ibwgtua> – found on our website <https://www.state.gov/eca-monitoring-evaluation-learning-and-innovation-meli-unit/>)
- Objective 1: Advance participant and beneficiary cross-cultural competence and global perspective
 - Sub-Objective 1.1: Promote cultural exchanges and enhance understanding between participants and their host communities
 - E1.1.01: Percent of participants reporting that their program experience offered opportunities to engage with other cultures
 - E1.1.04: Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the United States Government (core indicator)
 - E1.1.09: Percent of participants who traveled abroad for the first time because of their program (core indicator)
 - E1.1.10: Percent of foreign participants who traveled to the United States for the first time during their program (core indicator)
 - E1.1.13: Percent of foreign participants who are more likely to recommend the United States as a good place to study
 - E1.1.17: Percent of foreign participants with more favorable opinions of the American people (core indicator)
 - E1.1.18: Percent of foreign participants indicating an increase in understanding of United States culture and values (core indicator)
 - E1.1.19: Percent of foreign participants agreeing with statements in support of democratic values (core indicator)
- Objective 2: Increase the impact that participants and alumni have on their communities / countries

- o Sub-Objective 2.2: Foster participants' belief that civic engagement benefits communities/countries
 - E2.2.01: Percent of participants who have more confidence in their ability to have an impact in their home country (core indicator)
- Objective 3: Strengthen engagement among participants, alumni, beneficiaries, and institutions
 - E3.0.02: Percent of foreign participants who report increasing their network of Americans (core indicator)
 - E3.0.07: Percent of participants who identify as a Department of State program participant (core indicator)
- o Objective 4: Strengthen personal, professional, and technical abilities and aptitudes of participants and beneficiaries
 - E4.0.01: Percent of participants reporting increases in their job skills as a result of their program participation
 - E4.0.03: Percent of participants reporting an increase in soft skills as a result of their program participation
 - E4.0.05: Percent of participants who report an increase in technical skills as a result of their program participation
- o Sub-Objective 4.1: Participants engage in language, academic, professional, and cultural exchange programs
 - E4.1.01: Total number of participants (core indicator)
 - E4.1.02: Total number of program cohorts (core indicator)
- Objective 8: Enhance the quality and effectiveness of ECA programs by leveraging the Bureau's resources, policy, and stakeholder relationships
 - E8.0.03: Response rate for participant surveys (core indicator)

Performance Monitoring Plans (PMPs)

ECA recommends the use of a PMP to serve as the primary reference document for performance monitoring for this award. If used, the PMP is an important part of any proposal, as it outlines how the applicant plans to track progress towards the proposed program's goals and objectives through indicators and corresponding data collection questions. A PMP document that includes all MODE Framework indicators is a part of this solicitation's attachments. Specific instructions on how to modify the PMP to be responsive to this solicitation are included in that document; there is also a support video available for more information on how to fill out the PMP: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBHC1oLNZvl>. While ECA recommends the applicant use the PMP format provided, this is not a requirement. If a PMP is

not included in the proposal, applicants should provide similar information to that found in the suggested PMP format, in a presentation of your choice. Successful PMPs (or similar documentation) should include the following:

- Objectives. Programmatic objectives are statements of the condition(s) that state what the program is designed to achieve. Objectives are therefore bound by the resources and timeframe of the program and must be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and time-bound (SMART). In addition to those outlined above, the applicant may propose other program objectives from the MODE Framework or other applicant-designed program-specific objectives.
- Indicators. Performance indicators are measures used to gauge progress toward programmatic objectives and sub-objectives. Indicators should be as specific as possible (following the SMART principles) and include any proposed disaggregations (meaning, breakdowns of the data by subgroups; the PMP lists the demographic questions required to obtain the information necessary to report the disaggregations). Each indicator should also include a target number to be achieved. A target is a planned level of result to be achieved within an explicit timeframe.
 - If you do not use the PMP format provided, note that any performance monitoring reference document the applicant submits should include the information in the column headers (Indicator Name, Definition, Target, Survey Question, etc.) in the PMP attachment at a minimum.
 - In addition to those indicators outlined in above, the applicant may propose additional custom, program-specific indicators in the PMP (ECA recommends the proposed PMPs include a minimum of one indicator for each custom programmatic objective).
 - During the period of performance of the award, the ECA program office may further revise, add, or remove indicators. Therefore, the applicant's PMP and data collection instruments should be flexible enough to incorporate those once established.

Award recipients are responsible for collecting indicator data only on participant outcomes during the period of performance of the award itself (see the PMP for guidelines as to when these data collection efforts should occur). ECA will measure outcomes of ECA participants at one, three, five, and 10 years after the exchange has ended to capture the long-term outcomes of ECA programming unless otherwise specified in the solicitation. In this instance, the recipient will be responsible for coordinating with ECA on any alumni surveys to de-duplicate questions and minimize potential survey fatigue.

Regardless of the survey platform used, **all** MODE Framework survey questions outlined above are **required** (i.e., should be forced response); please see the Consent Language in the MODE Framework **Indicator Book** for more information on how to convey this to participants/survey respondents.

Program Performance M&E Narrative

Proposals should include information within the program narrative section(s) that outlines how the applicant intends to measure the indicators listed above. This will be separate from the PMP and should include but not be limited to:

- An overview of resources available to the applicant that outline the team structure and responsibilities surrounding performance monitoring.
- The mechanism(s) through which surveys and other data collection tools (if applicable) will be administered, including which platform will be used, and when and how surveys will be advertised to participants – detailing strategies to ensure adequate survey response rates (<https://app.box.com/s/pn6tavyg7sh064i502fzap49ox63y38a>), and to reduce selection and non-response bias.
- A brief explanation of data analysis and reporting procedures.
- An overview of a proposed learning plan and feedback loops to ensure that the Grant Officer (GO)/Grant Officer Representative (GOR) are informed on performance monitoring issues at regular intervals.

Nonmandatory Use of the Qualtrics MODE Survey Builder Data Collection System

ECA has created a guided tool (the MODE Survey Builder) within the Qualtrics survey platform for ECA implementing partners to generate surveys to facilitate the seamless collection and reporting of MODE Framework data. The MODE Survey Builder offers implementing partners a guided workflow that will generate a ready-to-send MODE survey, allows the addition of custom survey questions, and offers a standard report template for a quick overview of survey results that can be submitted in MyGrants (see section below) to fulfill RPM Reporting Requirements. Use of the Qualtrics survey platform can be utilized at no cost to implementing partners. Additional information about the MODE Survey Builder can be found here: <https://app.box.com/s/jjr98hmx6deorxj3lwgaxjrwdfec2r91> and here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jus4fRqOTcM>. You can propose use of an alternate survey tool or use the MODE Survey Builder, but if you are utilizing the MODE Survey Builder, you must indicate such in your proposal.

MyGrants RPM Reporting Requirements

MyGrants is a database solution that serves as the official system of record for all U.S. Department of State and ECA awards. The Results Performance Monitoring (RPM) module within MyGrants is an extension module that enables users to report performance monitoring data in the same system where they currently manage federal assistance actions. As part of ECA's efforts to streamline data collection and management, the recipient(s) of this award will be required to input performance reporting data outlined in this solicitation into the MyGrants RPM. The data stored in the MyGrants RPM will provide ECA with a bureau-wide, uniform M&E reporting tool that is already linked with other elements of the awards familiar to existing awardees.

7. Allowable Costs.

Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- Round-trip travel domestic and international travel for all participants from home city to the United States, coach class via American carrier and following "Fly America" regulations.
- Tuition or instructional fees, if necessary.
- Maintenance allowances (estimate and explain an appropriate stipend level). Maintenance allowances should be sufficient to enable participants to meet the costs of lodging, food, and incidental purchases throughout the period of the Cooperative Agreement in the locations where the participants will be residing.
- Educational materials including books, laptop rental, and other professional equipment necessary to facilitate full participation (estimate and explain an appropriate stipend level).
- Expenses for orientation and closing events.
- Honoraria for outside speakers, if necessary.
- Ground transportation.
- Advising and monitoring of participants.
- Interpretation and/or translation services.
- Costs of academic and cultural support and enrichment activities.
- Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation.
- Withholding of taxes, as necessary.
- Institutional costs associated with registering participants in SEVIS, as applicable. Individual participants will not be charged SEVIS application fees because they will be issued DS-2019s on a government-sponsored program number.

- Staff salaries and benefits (each staff member and his/her position must be listed separately). Please also note the percentage of his/her total time spent on the program.
- Communication costs (e.g., fax, telephone, postage, communication equipment, etc.).
- Office supplies.
- Printing and duplication costs.
- Administration of tax withholding and reporting as required by Federal, State, and local authorities and in accordance with relevant tax treaties.
- OMB Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 Subpart F Single Audit.
- Other direct costs.
- Indirect costs.

8. Cost Share.

ECA encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs. When cost sharing is offered, 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 agreement. Cost sharing may be in the form of allowable direct or indirect costs. For accountability, you must maintain written records to support all costs which are claimed as your 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 the Office of Management and Budget's Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600, entitled the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution may be reduced in like proportion.

9. Freedom and Democracy Guidelines.

Public Law 104-319 provides that "in carrying out programs of educational and cultural exchange in countries whose people do not fully enjoy freedom and democracy," the Bureau "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Public Law 106 - 113 requires that the governments of the countries described above do not have inappropriate influence in the selection process. Proposals should reflect advancement of these goals in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

10. Virtual Exchange Component.

Proposals should demonstrate the organization's capacity to provide innovative options for virtual activities to substitute for in-person engagement for program participants. Organizations should consider how they will implement virtual exchange activities, given the potential limits to internet access from participants in some locations and while continuing to advance foreign policy objectives and achieve lasting benefits for U.S. citizens and international participants.

In addition to planning for virtual exchange activities if in-person programming is prohibited, ECA welcomes innovative ideas on how organizations can leverage virtual programming technologies during or in addition to in-person programming. ECA encourages organizations submitting proposals in response to this solicitation to suggest one or more virtual exchange components to complement the in-person exchange. The virtual exchange components could come before, during and/or after the physical exchange. The objective for the virtual exchange components is to augment the impact of the in-person exchange described in this solicitation. ECA encourages organizations to propose virtual exchange ideas that take advantage of ECA's existing web and social networking platforms. Virtual exchange components would be coordinated with and approved by the ECA program office and U.S. missions abroad on a project-by-project basis.

11. Communications Guidance for ECA Recipients.

All ECA Recipients must adhere to the requirements in [ECA's Communications Guidance](#) on the creation of program branding and attribution, websites, social media, and press.

12. Celebration of America's Semiquincentennial.

ECA is excited to play a key role in making the Semiquincentennial – commonly known as "Freedom 250" – a truly global celebration. As the period of performance for this award is scheduled to cover part or all of calendar year (CY) 2026, the applicant may wish to consider ways the program can celebrate Freedom 250. Any Freedom 250 focused activities or plans will be subject to ECA approval and direction, and changes may be requested by ECA. Use of any ECA-provided Freedom 250 brand elements will be subject to advance ECA approval and require adherence to Department of State and ECA guidelines for such branding.

13. Substantial Involvement.

In a cooperative agreement, the Department is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring, as follows:

- Liaison with U.S. embassies to develop program and participant recruitment
- Recruitment, selection, and notification of program participants as approved by ECA.
- Oversight and approval of final program design and components to ensure alignment with current U.S. foreign policy priorities.
- Engagement with key interagency partners, including U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Department of Labor, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Approval of program print and online materials and highlight stories prior to publication or completion.
 - Approval of social media platforms and content.
 - Approval of overall program timeline and implementation plan.

D. Application Contents and Format

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package, including the PSI, which contains guidelines for proposal preparation.

1. Budget Format.

Applicants must submit a budget (SF-424A), detailed line-item budget, and a budget narrative. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification. See the PSI section III for more information on the budget requirements.

2. Content of Application.

Please see the PSI for information about the application and formatting guidelines.

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

3. Address to Request Application Package.

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Grants.gov website at <https://www.grants.gov> or from the ECA website at <https://www.state.gov/eca-grant-opportunities/>.

2. Department of State Contacts.

For questions about this announcement, contact: Matt Sacco, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E, 202-975-3074, SaccoMJ@state.gov.

All correspondence with ECA concerning this solicitation should reference the title and funding opportunity number listed at the top of this solicitation. Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the deadline has passed, ECA staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

The terms and conditions published in this solicitation are binding and may not be modified by any ECA representative. Explanatory information provided by ECA that contradicts published language will not be binding.

3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM.gov).

Required Registrations

All organizations, whether based in the United States or in another country, must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and an active registration in SAM.gov. A UEI is one of the data elements mandated by Public Law 109-282, the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), for all Federal awards. An applicant must maintain an active registration while it has a proposal under review by the Department and must continue to keep the registration active for the entire duration of the period of performance of any Federal award that results from this NOFO.

The 2 CFR 200 requires subrecipients to obtain a UEI. Please note the UEI for subrecipients is not required at the time of application but will be required before an award is processed and/or directed to a subrecipient.

Note: The process of obtaining or renewing a SAM.gov registration may take anywhere from 4-8 weeks. Please begin your registration as early as possible.

Organizations based in the United States or that pay employees within the United States will need an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and a UEI prior to registering in SAM.gov.

All federal award recipients must maintain a current registration in the SAM database. Recipients must maintain accurate and up-to-date information in www.SAM.gov until all program and financial activity and reporting are completed on any issued award. Recipients must review and update the information at least annually after the initial registration and more frequently if required information changes or another award is granted. There is no cost associated with registering or updating SAM.gov accounts.

For more detailed instructions for registering with SAM, refer to:
<https://sam.gov/content/entity-registration>

Exemptions

An exemption from the UEI and sam.gov registration requirements may be permitted on a case-by-case basis. See [2 CFR 25.110](https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/chapter-I/subchapter-A/part-25/subpart-1/section-25.110) for a full list of exemptions.

Organizations requesting exemption from UEI or SAM.gov requirements must email the point of contact listed in the NOFO at least two weeks prior to the deadline in the NOFO providing justification of their request. Approval for a SAM.gov exemption must come from the warranted Grants Officer before the application can be deemed eligible for review.

4. Required Registration with MyGrants.

All ECA award recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories must be registered with the U.S. Department of State's MyGrants system by accessing <https://mygrants.servicenowservices.com> and clicking the "create an account" link. MyGrants is the U.S. Department of State's grants management system and is supported by the Department's Integrated Logistics Management System (ILMS). Recipient organizations and recipient contacts and signatories that have previously used MyGrants as a U.S. Department of State award recipient do not need to register again. If the organization is not able to access the system, please contact the ILMS Help Desk for help in gaining access.

Support for Recipient Organizations and recipient contacts and signatories is available 24 hours, 7 days a week (except federal holidays), and can be reached at 1-888-313-ILMS (4567) or through the ILMS Self Service Portal at <https://afsitsm.servicenowservices.com/ilms/>.

5. Submission Instructions.

Method of Submission

Applications may only be submitted electronically through Grants.gov (<https://www.grants.gov>). Complete solicitation packages are available at Grants.gov in the "Search Grants" portion of the system.

Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures

Eligible organizations should follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/grant-applications/how-to-apply-for-grants>).

How to Register to Apply through Grants.gov

Applicants should read instructions carefully and prepare the information requested before beginning the registration process. Reviewing and assembling the required information before beginning the registration process will alleviate last-minute searches for required information.

The registration process can take up to four weeks to complete. Therefore, registration should be done in sufficient time to ensure it does not impact your ability to meet required application submission deadlines. Applicants should check with appropriate staff within their organizations immediately after reviewing this NOFO to confirm or determine their registration status with Grants.gov.

Organization applicants can find complete instructions here:

<https://www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant-registration>

How to Submit an Application to ECA via Grants.gov

For access to complete instruction on how to apply for Notice of Funding Opportunities on Grants.gov, refer to: <https://www.grants.gov/applicants/grant-applications/how-to-apply-for-grants>

Grants.gov Support and Submission Issues

Direct all questions regarding Grants.gov registration and submission issues to:

Grants.gov Customer Support

Contact Center Phone: 800 -518-4726

Business Hours: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; closed on federal holidays.

Email: support@grants.gov

6. Submission Dates and Times.

Application Deadline Date.

Monday, May 18, 2026, 11:59 p.m. Eastern (Washington DC time)

Applicants have until 11:59 p.m., Washington, DC time of the closing date to ensure that their entire application has been uploaded to the Grants.gov site. There are no exceptions to the above deadline. Applications uploaded to the site after the application deadline date and time will be automatically rejected by the Grants.gov system and will be found technically ineligible.

Therefore, we strongly recommend that you begin the submission process through Grants.gov well in advance of the application deadline.

Proof of timely submission is automatically recorded by Grants.gov. An electronic date/time stamp is generated within the system when the application is successfully received by Grants.gov. The applicant Grants.gov Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will receive an acknowledgement of receipt and a tracking number (GRANTXXXXXXXX) from Grants.gov with the successful transmission of their application. Applicant AORs will also receive the official date/time stamp and Grants.gov Tracking number in an email serving as proof of their timely submission.

When ECA successfully retrieves the application from Grants.gov, Grants.gov will provide an electronic acknowledgement of receipt of the application to the email address of the applicant with the AOR role. Again, proof of timely submission shall be the official date and time that Grants.gov receives your application. Please also be mindful of any Grants.gov generated error messages that may appear during the application process as they may result in some documents not transmitting correctly.

Applicants using slow internet should be aware that transmission can take some time before Grants.gov receives your application. Grants.gov will provide either an error or a successfully received transmission in the form of an email sent to the applicant with the AOR role. The Grants.gov Support Center reports that some applicants end the transmission because they think that nothing is occurring during the transmission process. Please be patient and give the system time to process the application.

The Grants.gov website includes extensive information on all phases/aspects of the Grants.gov process, including an extensive section on frequently asked questions, located under the “Applicant FAQs” section of the website. ECA strongly recommends that all potential applicants review thoroughly the Grants.gov website, well in advance of submitting a proposal through the Grants.gov system. ECA will not notify you upon receipt of electronic applications.

PLEASE NOTE: ECA bears no responsibility for applicant timeliness of submission or data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes for proposals submitted via Grants.gov. Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of the Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting <https://grants.gov/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility>

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal (<https://www.grants.gov>) to ensure that proposals have been received by Grants.gov in their entirety, and ECA bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

7. Funding Restrictions for this Announcement.

a. Funding Restrictions for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA)

None of the funds awarded resulting from this Notice of Funding Opportunity may be made available for subawards, direct financial support, or otherwise used to provide any payment or transfer to United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

b. Prohibition on Funding Activities that Encourage Mass-Migration Caravans towards the United States Southwest Border.

None of the funds awarded under this grant may be made available to encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass-migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. Funds may not be made available for legal counseling on the United States asylum process; and/or for referrals to legal or representation in the United States.

Funds may only be used for cash cards for use in the country in which they are provided or to facilitate assisted voluntary returns and other purposes that do

not encourage, mobilize, publicize, or manage mass migration caravans towards the United States southwest border. The provision of humanitarian assistance is permitted.

c. Certification Regarding Compliance with Applicable Federal Anti-Discrimination Laws

If the place of performance or delivery of any award made under this NOFO will be within the United States, applicants are advised that they will be required to certify the following at the time of award:

- i. Its compliance in all respects with all applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws is material to the government's payment decisions for purposes of section 3729(b)(4) of title 31, United States Code and;
- ii. It does not operate any programs promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion that violate any applicable Federal anti-discrimination laws. A program promoting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion means a program whose purpose is to promote preferences based on race, color religion, sex, or national origins, such as in training or hiring.

d. Certification Regarding Compliance with 20 U.S.C. 1011f and Any Other Applicable Foreign Funding Disclosure Requirements for Institutions of Higher Education (IHE).

Applicants are advised that IHEs must certify the following at the time of award, and that this certification requirement must be included in any subaward agreements to IHEs:

- Its compliance in all respects with section 1011f of title 20, United States Code, and any other applicable foreign funding disclosure requirements is material for purposes of section 3729 of title 31, United States Code, and for receipt of appropriate Federal grant funds.

e. Prohibition on Unmanned Aircraft Systems Manufactured or Assembled by American Security Drone Act-Covered Foreign Entities

(a) Definitions.

American Security Drone Act-covered foreign entity means an entity included on a list developed and maintained by the Federal Acquisition Security Council

(FASC) and published in the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov>

FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system means an unmanned aircraft system manufactured or assembled by an American Security Drone Act-covered foreign entity.

Unmanned aircraft means an aircraft that is operated without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the aircraft.

Unmanned aircraft system means an unmanned aircraft and associated elements (including communication links and the components that control the unmanned aircraft) that are required for the operator to operate safely and efficiently in the national airspace system.

(b) Prohibition.

Recipients of funding under this Notice of Funding Opportunity (including subawards and subcontracts issued by the recipient) will be prohibited from:

- (1) delivering any FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system, which includes unmanned aircraft (i.e., drones) and associated elements;
- (2) Operating a FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system in the performance of the award; and
- (3) Using Federal funds for the purchase or operation of a FASC-prohibited unmanned aircraft system.

c) Exemptions, exceptions, and waivers.

The prohibitions described above will not apply if the agency determines that an exemption, exception, or waiver applies, and the award indicates that such a determination has been made. [See sections 1823 through 1825 and 1832 of Public Law 118-31 ([41 U.S.C. 3901](#) note prec.) for statutory requirements pertaining to exemptions, exceptions, and waivers.].

8. Other Submission Requirements.

- a. Applications must be submitted electronically through Grants.gov.

- b. All proposals must contain a SF-424, executive summary, proposal narrative, budget (SF-424A), detailed line-item budget, and budget narrative.
- c. Key Personnel
ECA recommends that the applicant identify intended key personnel positions via an asterisk (*) or other marking in the proposal budget, budget narrative, or a separate appendix. If not provided in the application, recipients must submit the names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program to the Grants Officer and GOR within 30 days of an award being issued. Applicants should also identify what proportion of their time will be used in support of the program. Additional information regarding key personnel requirements can be found in the State Department's Standard Terms and Conditions.
- a. Intergovernmental Review of Applications
Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

F. Application Review Information

1. Review Process.

ECA will check that all proposals meet the technical requirements in this solicitation. Proposals that do not meet the guidelines, including those under the eligibility section above or in the PSI, will be ineligible for further review.

All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office before being reviewed by an ECA grant panel. Applications may also be reviewed by Public Diplomacy sections overseas, State Department regional bureaus, or other State Department offices, as appropriate. All reviewers, including the ECA grant panels, will review any eligible proposals based on the criteria below.

Proposals recommended by an ECA grant panel will be reviewed for compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and assessed for risk. Final funding decisions are made by the ECA's Assistant Secretary. Only an ECA Grant Officer has the final authority to issue assistance awards.

2. Review Criteria.

An ECA grants panel will competitively evaluate all technically eligible applications according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered, and all carry equal weight in the proposal review.

- a. **Quality of the program idea, program management and planning:** Proposals should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to ECA's mission as well as the program goals. A detailed agenda and work plan that demonstrate the applicant's ability to carry out the program should follow the program guidelines and overview described in this solicitation. The plan should be likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results, including direct alignment with current U.S. foreign policy goals.
- b. **Institutional Capacity and Track Record:** Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate to efficiently achieve the program's goals. The proposal should describe the applicant's knowledge of, or prior experience with, exchange programs and demonstrates the applicant has internal controls in place to responsibly manage federal funds and compliance with all reporting requirements for a federal (or comparable) award, cooperative agreements and sub-awardees.
- c. **Multiplier effect:** The proposal should provide a plan to strengthen long-term partnership between the United States and participating countries, including maximum sharing of information and creating individual linkages. The proposal should also discuss plans for follow-up with participants after their return home as a means of establishing longer-term institutional and individual linkages.
- d. **Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Proposals should have a fully developed M&E plan that includes goals, objectives, and indicators. The plan should be feasible and aligned with the M&E section of this solicitation. Proposals should include a realistic learning plan that outlines how your organization plans to review, understand, and incorporate M&E data into programmatic decisions and practices. All submitted M&E plans will be reviewed to ensure the applicant has provided at least the required information outlined in the M&E section of this solicitation and demonstrated the applicant's capacity to carry out the M&E plan.
- e. **Cost-effectiveness and Cost-sharing:** Your proposal should keep the overhead and administrative costs, including salaries and honoraria, as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate. Your proposal should maximize cost share through other private sector support and institutional direct funding contributions.

3. Indirect Costs

If two or more applications receive equivalent scores based on the evaluation criteria outlined in this NOFO, preference will be given to the applicant with the

lower indirect cost rate, as consistent with Executive Order 14332, Section 4(b)(iii). This preference will only be applied as a tie-breaking mechanism and does not supersede the primary evaluation criteria.

4. Risk Review

Under the merit review as required by 2 CFR 200.206, prior to making a Federal Award, the Department will review and consider the following risk factors:

- a. Financial stability
- b. Management systems and standards
- c. History of performance
- d. Audit reports and findings
- e. Ability to effectively implement requirements

5. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov.

The Federal awarding agency, prior to making a Federal award with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, is required to review and consider any information about the applicant that is in the U.S. government designated integrity and performance system accessible through SAM.gov (see 41 U.S.C. 2313) (see 41 U.S.C. 2313)

An applicant can review and comment on any information in the responsibility/qualification records available at SAM.gov.

Before making decisions in the risk review required by 2 CFR 200.206, the Department will consider any comments by the applicant, along with information available in the responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov.

G. Award Notices.

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal ECA procedures. The award or cooperative agreement will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer in ECA's Grants Division and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer (as identified in the application) for review and countersignature. The recipient may only start incurring project expenses beginning on the start date shown on the fully signed award document.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred

in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received. If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding.

Unsuccessful applicants:

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition following the completion of the review process.

Payment Method:

Payments under this award will be made through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Payment Management System (PMS).

H. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

1. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.

Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply.

In accordance with the Office of Management and Budget’s guidance located at 2 CFR part 200, all applicable Federal laws, and relevant Executive guidance, the Department of State will review and consider proposals for funding, as applicable to specific programs, pursuant to this NOFO in accordance with the following:

- [Guidance for Grants and Agreements in Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations](#) (2 CFR), as updated in the Federal Register’s 89 FR 30046 on April 22, 2024, particularly on:
 - Selecting recipients most likely to be successful in delivering results based on the program objectives through an impartial process of evaluating Federal award applications (2 CFR part 200.205),
 - Promoting the freedom of speech and religious liberty in alignment with *Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty* (E.O. 13798) and *Improving Free Inquiry, Transparency, and Accountability at Colleges and Universities* (E.O. 13864) (§§ 200.300, 200.303, 200.339, and 200.341),
 - Providing a preference, to the extent permitted by law, to maximize use of goods, products, and materials produced in the United States (2 CFR part 200.322), and

- Terminating agreements pursuant to the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, including, to the greatest extent authorized by law, if an award no longer effectuates the program goals or agency priorities (2 CFR part 200.340). For the avoidance of doubt, the Department has sole discretion over the determination that an award no longer effectuates program goals or agency priorities, and this provision permits awards to be terminated at the Department's convenience, including when it determines that the award no longer advances the national interest.
- [2 CFR 25 - UNIVERSAL IDENTIFIER AND SYSTEM FOR AWARD MANAGEMENT](#)
- [2 CFR 170 - REPORTING SUBAWARD AND EXECUTIVE COMPENSATION INFORMATION](#)
- [2 CFR 175 - AWARD TERM FOR TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS](#)
- [2 CFR 182 - GOVERNMENTWIDE REQUIREMENTS FOR DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE \(FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE\)](#)
- [2 CFR 183 - NEVER CONTRACT WITH THE ENEMY](#)
- [2 CFR 600 - DEPARTMENT OF STATE REQUIREMENTS](#)
- [U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE STANDARD TERMS AND CONDITIONS](#)
- Recipients must comply with all applicable Executive Orders A searchable list can be found in the Federal Register: <https://www.federalregister.gov/>

2. Reporting.

Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify what reports are required and how often these reports must be submitted. All reports must be submitted in a timely manner.

For planning purposes, applicants can expect to provide ECA with an electronic copy of the following required reports:

- a. Performance Progress Reports (PPRs)** shall be required at a minimum annually and no more frequently than quarterly. Annual, quarterly, or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. All reports and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this award in MyGrants.

- b. The Federal Financial Reports** (FFR SF-425/SF-425a) must be submitted through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Payment Management System (PMS). The electronic version of the FFR can be accessed at: <https://www.grants.gov/forms/forms-repository/post-award-reporting-forms>. Once a financial report has been approved by the Department, the recipient must upload the approved report to MyGrants, in the same manner specified for the programmatic reports. Failure to comply with these reporting requirements may jeopardize the recipient's eligibility for future awards.
- c. Required MODE data** (see Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation section) shall be required at a minimum annually and no more frequently than quarterly. MODE data reporting shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. The frequency of these reports will be determined by R/PPR/DOME and the Program Officer. Either a standard report template (if using the MODE Survey Builder) or aggregate data and the raw data file (if Recipient uses their own survey platform) must be uploaded by the Recipient as an RPM Performance Report under the corresponding record for this award in MyGrants.
- d. A final program and financial report** no more than 120 days after the period of performance of the award ends or termination of the award.
- e. Program Data Requirements:** Award recipients will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with ECA as required. At a minimum, the data must include the following:
- Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the agreement or who benefit from the award funding but do not travel.
 - Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three workdays prior to the official opening of the activity.

Applicants should be aware of the post award reporting requirements reflected in [2 CFR 200 Appendix XII—Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters](#).

3. Branding and Marking

The Department of State, its programs, and U.S. Government funding and assistance should be easily identifiable to the Department's global audiences.

Recipients of federal assistance awards must follow the branding guidance published at [Guidance for Contracts and Grants - U.S. Department of State Brand System](#). Branding policy exceptions are outlined in the U.S. Department of State Foreign Affairs Manual [10 FAM 416, Policy Exceptions](#).

For more information, visit: <https://brand.america.gov/>

I. Other Information

Adherence To All Regulations Governing the J Visa

ECA places critically important emphasis on the security and proper administration of the 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 the 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 program office 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://j1visa.state.gov> or from:

Office of Private Sector Exchange Designation
U.S. Department of State
SA-5, Floor C2, Room C2L13
2200 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20522