



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)
FY2027 Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program
Funding Opportunity Number: DFOP0018211
Application Deadline: June 29, 2026

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A. Basic Information

1. Overview.

Funding Opportunity Title	FY2027 Fulbright Teacher Exchanges
Funding Opportunity Number	DFOP0018211
Announcement Type	New Cooperative Agreement
Deadline for Applications	June 29, 2026, 11:59pm Eastern (Washington DC time)
Assistance Listing Number	19.408

Length of Performance Period	56 months; October 2026 – June 2031
Number of Awards Anticipated	1 award
Award Amount	Approximately \$10,500,000
Total Available Funding	\$10,500,000, pending availability of funds
Type of Funding	FY2027 Educational and Cultural Exchange Programs (ECE) Funds
Funding Instrument Type	Cooperative Agreement
Anticipated Award Date	October 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.

Pending satisfactory implementation of this program and the availability of funds in subsequent fiscal years, it is ECA's intent to renew this award for two additional, consecutive fiscal years, before openly competing it again.

2. Executive Summary.

The Office of Academic Exchange Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, announces an open competition for one cooperative agreement to design, implement, and oversee the Office's Fulbright Teacher Exchange Programs in Fiscal Year (FY) 2027.

Fulbright Teacher Exchanges advance American competitiveness by engaging K-12 educators in international exchanges that allow them to learn cutting-edge educational practices and develop innovative programs that prepare their students for careers that support U.S. economic and security interests at home and abroad.

For more than 80 years, Fulbright Teacher Exchanges have offered opportunities for American K-12 educators to demonstrate U.S. prominence and expertise to peers abroad in areas including the arts, humanities, STEM and technology. Furthermore, U.S. Fulbright Teacher Exchanges advance American interests by providing upskilling to American teachers to increase K-12 expertise in technology, especially AI and the critical minerals industry, and to prepare their students for careers in fields critical

to U.S. security and prosperity. Programming supports American teachers to expand STEM coursework in fields such as earth science, data analysis, and geology to meet the need for student specialization in critical minerals and rare earths in the U.S. market. The program also integrates a wide range of fields that advance the Administration's America First priorities and related Executive Orders, including expanding career readiness programs, promoting digital freedom, and increasing K-12 expertise in technology education, especially the use of American-designed AI.

Through Foreign Fulbright Teacher Exchanges, U.S. university schools of education showcase American leadership in education and educational technology to visiting teachers who return home with enhanced pedagogy, leadership skills, and technology training. Foreign teachers expand the use of American-designed AI and other U.S. technology in the global market, promoting digital freedoms and developing leaders who value America as their partner of choice. Fulbright Teachers' participation in these programs has a powerful multiplier effect, influencing millions of students around the world over the course of their careers.

Fulbright Teacher Exchanges comprise a suite of shorter and longer-term program models to accommodate the schedules of U.S. and international educators. The Presidentially appointed J. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board (FFSB) is responsible for the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program and establishes policies and procedures that govern the Fulbright program, including overall policy guidelines and selection criteria. The FFSB is responsible for the final selection of all Fulbright candidates. Organizations must ensure compliance with all FFSB policies and procedures and fully and properly identify this program as both a Fulbright Program and a U.S. Department of State Program in all communications.

ECA reserves the right to fully fund, partially fund, or not to fund a given program component, and to adjust or request new program models if foreign policy priorities change. The amounts listed for each component are provided below to enable applicant organizations to prepare budgets for planning purposes only and are subject to change, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

The Bureau estimates total funding for costs of this program to be approximately \$10,500,000, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds. The applicant must demonstrate flexibility and be prepared to engage with countries from all world regions, depending on Administration priorities and the availability of funds.

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

Applicant organizations must be based in the United States.

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 \$10,500,000. 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. Applicants should submit one budget that clearly details the costs per program component.

- 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 awards 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.

The Fulbright Teacher Exchanges advance American competitiveness by providing world class professional development to K-12 educators through international exchanges that allow them to learn cutting-edge educational practices and develop innovative educational programs to improve the outcomes of their students. Through Fulbright programs, teachers prepare their students for success in fields essential to U.S. national security and economic prosperity.

U.S. Fulbright Teachers travel abroad to help maintain American prominence in critical fields such as math, science, history, engineering, and AI technology. Fulbright programs help teachers prepare thousands of U.S. students with career skills in an increasingly competitive global environment.

International Fulbright Teachers travel to the United States for professional development exchanges, which develop influential leaders who value America as their preferred partner over malign influencers; pave the way for the opening of new markets for American businesses abroad; strengthen positive relations between our peoples; and foster economic development and regional stability, all while improving education outcomes for their students.

3. Program Specific Guidelines.

This Notice of Funding Opportunity reinforces the Bureau's engagement with domestic and international primary and secondary school educators and seeks interested applicant organizations to administer exchange programming for these audiences. Detailed descriptions of the program components are provided in the Recipient Responsibilities and Program Models sections below.

Programs are open to teachers and administrators in public, charter, religious, and private schools.

4. Recipient Responsibilities.

Under the terms of the Cooperative Agreement, the recipient's responsibilities for administering the FY 2027 Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program include the following components:

For U.S. Educators:

- Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms Program
- Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program
- Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program

For International Educators:

- Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program
- Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for International Teachers

Alumni, Outreach, and Multiplier Activities for U.S. and International Educators:

- Resource sharing among fellows, alumni, and the broader teacher community worldwide
- In-person and virtual outreach, seminars, and workshops, including collaboration on ECA-initiated events such as the Global Teaching Dialogue (<https://www.fulbrightteacherexchanges.org/global-teaching-dialogue/>)
- Online courses, webinars, resource libraries, and toolkits
- Virtual exchanges among teachers and/or their classrooms
- Alumni programming including small grants
- Additional related enhancement activities
- Alumni and award recipient participation in education conferences to recruit for the program and showcase American prominence in education

Under the FY 2027 cooperative agreement, the award recipient will manage:

- a. the recruitment, selection, placement, and program implementation for academic year 2027-2028; (Recruitment should commence in winter 2026).
- b. the recruitment and selection process for academic year 2028-2029. (Recruitment should commence in fall 2027).

Aside from the program models listed above and described in more detail below, applicant organizations may propose other creative program models for consideration. Such models may include opportunities for U.S. educators to pursue projects at post abroad that support mission priorities, demonstrate U.S. innovation and expertise, and exchange pedagogical best practices.

The program components are described in greater detail below. For each program component, the responsibilities of the recipient organization are outlined below. This is not an exhaustive list.

- a. Outreach, recruitment, and screening of applicants using virtual and in-person engagement;
- b. Administration of, in close consultation with ECA, a distinct website for the Fulbright Teacher Exchange programs;
- c. SEVIS duties and preparation of DS-2019 forms with a G Program Number under the Bureau's responsibility on behalf of the Teacher Exchange Branch's program models for international teachers: Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement and Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching, and any other international participants;

- d. Leading of orientation programs, professional in-service meetings, debriefings, and events;
- e. Training and orientation of U.S. educators and institutions that will work with the international teachers and providing resources for host institutions and advisors working with U.S. teachers and educators abroad;
- f. Placement, monitoring, supervision, and support of participants;
- g. Enrollment of participants in ECA's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) healthcare coverage plan, or other plans meeting J-1 visa regulations as approved by ECA, and assist participants with accessing necessary health care and filing claims, as necessary;
- h. Administering sub-award competitions as necessary;
- i. Fiscal management and program reporting;
- j. Compliance with FFSB and other relevant State Department guidelines;
- k. Alumni initiatives and follow-on activities;
- l. Program monitoring and evaluation; and
- m. Foreign policy familiarity, as described below.

Foreign Policy Priorities:

- Have a general awareness of U.S. foreign policy priorities throughout the award period by consulting authoritative resources—including Executive Orders, the current National Security Strategy, Department of State policy statements, and other official U.S. government guidance—in addition to direction provided by ECA
- In consultation with ECA, incorporate content supporting U.S. foreign policy priorities across all Fellowship components, including alumni programming
- Highlight programmatic, participant, and alumni impacts that show how Fulbright Teachers promote American excellence, advance U.S. strategic interests, and build a stronger, more prosperous world, and
- Incorporate policy highlights and reporting into programmatic outreach content and overall reporting and programming communications.

Proposals should include schedules and timelines for notifying ECA, overseas partners, potential applicants, and participants about recruitment cycles, placements, travel arrangements, and cross-cultural and program information in a timely manner. Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations and FFSB regulations. Fulbright Teacher exchange participants in the United States and abroad should be identified through open, merit-based competitions.

Proposals should reflect a vision for the overall suite of programs and individual components, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act and Fulbright Teacher Exchange Programs with creativity and providing innovative ideas and recommendations.

A.4.i Program Models

The Bureau offers different program models for Fulbright Teacher Exchanges, as described below, in an effort to meet the professional development needs of a variety of educators.

U.S. Participants, Total Estimated Budget \$4,250,000

- Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms Program, approximately 120 participants, budget approximately \$2,800,000
- Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program for U.S. school administrators, approximately 20 participants, budget approximately \$350,000
- Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program, approximately 15 participants, budget approximately \$1,100,000

International Participants, Total Estimated Budget \$6,000,000

- Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program, approximately 120 participants, budget approximately \$4,400,000
- Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for International Teachers, approximately 35 teachers, budget approximately \$1,600,000

Alumni, Outreach, and Multiplier Activities for U.S. and International Educators, Total Estimated Budget \$250,000

Applicant organizations' proposals should also include creative, cost-effective ways to engage teacher and administrator prospects, participants, alumni, and other interested educators and to amplify the reach and impact of Fulbright Teacher Exchanges.

In addition to the duties described above, the award recipient should be prepared to administer the program-specific elements listed below for each program component. Please note that the exact timing of program activity may shift from that anticipated in this solicitation and will depend on the ability of host institutions to receive participants, the capacity of international partners to recruit and

nominate candidates, the staffing at the implementing partner organization, the availability of funding, and potential disruptions in scheduled programming.

For all program models, ECA reserves the right to add or remove countries and regions, depending on Bureau and Mission priorities.

For U.S. Educators

For planning purposes, the combined budget of the four programs under this component is approximately \$4,250,000, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

a) Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms Program

The Fulbright Teachers for Global Classrooms program is a yearlong Fulbright Teacher Exchange for U.S. participants. It begins with a rigorous online course, during which participants explore key topics such as developing globally competitive skills, teaching about American diplomacy, and using technology and AI in the classroom. Then participants travel abroad in groups for two weeks in the spring and summer. While abroad, they are hosted in local communities and schools by teachers who are alumni of Fulbright Teacher Exchanges.

The program should support approximately 120 U.S. teachers traveling in groups of around 12 – 20 participants to approximately eight participating countries in spring or summer for a study visit of approximately 15 days. The timing of the groups' international travel is subject to change. Participating countries will be selected in consultation with the program office and appropriate U.S. Department of State offices. Recent host countries and jurisdictions have included India, Morocco, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, Senegal, Taiwan, and Uruguay. Please budget approximately \$2,800,000 for this program, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

In addition to the items noted in Section I above, proposal narratives should describe how the recipient organization plans to:

1. Facilitate an instructor-led semester-long online course, which includes synchronous and asynchronous content.

2. Host pre-departure webinars for U.S. teachers to prepare them for travel to their assigned destination.
3. Collaborate with the Fulbright Commission and/or identify and hire a local consultant in each host country to help develop, coordinate, and monitor the program in that country on behalf of the award recipient in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy as appropriate.
4. Work with the Teacher Exchange branch to develop a pre-departure orientation and an in-person symposium in Washington D.C. for the teachers and an administrator from their school or district. Teachers will reflect on their online coursework and upcoming international travel, and administrators will learn more about supporting teacher leaders and spearheading whole-of-school efforts to share global learning opportunities with their schools and districts. The symposium should not exceed 2.5 days of programming. If in-person gatherings are not advisable, the cooperating agency may propose a virtual pre-departure symposium.
5. Work with posts, commissions, and a host-country consultant to design a 15-day professional development program for U.S. teachers in the participating countries. The program should include meeting with representatives of the Fulbright Commission or U.S. embassy, briefings with the host government and educational organizations, as appropriate, visits to schools, interactions with educators and students, and local cultural enhancement activities.

b) Fulbright Leaders for Global Schools Program

This program will send approximately 20 U.S. school and/or district administrators to showcase U.S. prominence and expertise to peers abroad in areas such as school leadership, AI learning, apprenticeship programs, and career readiness. Education leaders will visit countries with exemplary schools or education systems. The program leverages the significant impact education leaders have in internationalizing their schools and implementing innovations from high-performing schools and systems. Please budget approximately \$350,000 for this program, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

The proposal narrative should describe how the recipient organization will recruit outstanding leaders from around the country and work with ECA and the U.S. embassy or Fulbright Commission to plan two ten-day seminars for education leaders in two different countries. Programs should include opportunities to shadow peers in the host location, briefings from local and national education

ministries, and visits to teacher training institutions and a variety of schools, including career and technical education institutions. The visits may be scheduled to coincide with conferences and other education-specific events to maximize the interactions with colleagues in the host location. Participants may be invited to present at conferences or at other events to share their expertise.

In addition, the proposal narrative should describe a reciprocal portion of this program component that would allow international administrator counterparts to engage with U.S. alumni and administrators at sponsored conferences, for short exchanges or other activities to build on the exchanges of U.S. administrators. Please budget approximately \$50,000 (of the \$350,000 total) for this element, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

c) Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for U.S. Teachers

Approximately 20 U.S. Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program participants will take part in a three- to six-month program to explore a pedagogical topic relevant to their instructional context such as humanities, the arts, STEM, or technology. ECA will select participating countries, and the program will be coordinated with Fulbright Commissions, Public Affairs Sections of U.S. embassies, and/or ministries of education in the participating countries. In most cases, participants will travel between September and the following July, although specific dates will be determined in consultation with the U.S. embassy or Fulbright Commission in the host country and the participant's ability to secure leave. Please budget approximately \$1,100,000 for this program, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

In addition to the items noted in the Recipient Responsibilities section above, proposal narratives should describe how the award recipient plans to:

1. Provide, in coordination with ECA, dossiers of U.S. finalists to partner organizations overseas for placement in appropriate universities, colleges of education, research centers, or educational non-profit organizations to facilitate individual study;
2. Support teachers before and during their experience abroad through online webinars or discussions;
3. Conduct a two-to-three-day substantive orientation meeting before the participants' departure either virtually or in person in Washington, D.C., to help

the teachers to prepare for their programs, to refine their individual program objectives, and to discuss living and working in the host country;

4. Identify a consultant, a professor at a U.S. school of education, or another educator to support the participants in preparing and implementing their individual study program;
5. Work with international partners to support U.S. teachers to ensure that their program includes the following components:
 - Auditing graduate-level courses, language courses, workshops, or seminars relevant to their professional goals;
 - A faculty advisor in the host institution for each participant to guide participants through the completion of their study program (advisors should be paid an honorarium according to appropriate customs/processes in the host country);
 - Access to local schools to support the teachers' professional goals;
 - Training, if necessary, in areas such as technology, methodology, and cross-cultural adaptation;
 - Opportunities to share their own professional expertise and information about the U.S. education system with local teachers and students;
 - Appropriate housing, meal, and transportation arrangements;
 - Additional activities to support and enhance the program, including attendance at conferences or other professional development activities in the host country or region;
 - Please note that participants may bring dependents on this program. A modest dependent allowance should be budgeted for. In-country partners may be asked to provide information about housing and, where appropriate, schooling or childcare, but participants will be expected to make these arrangements for their families. If recommended by the Fulbright Commission or U.S. Embassy, dependent tuition allowances should also be budgeted for in some countries.

For International Educators

Please budget approximately \$6,000,000 for these programs, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

a) Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program

Under the six-week Fulbright Teaching Excellence and Achievement (TEA) Program, approximately 120 educators will travel in cohorts of approximately 22 teachers each to approximately six U.S. universities. The Bureau intends for approximately three cohorts to travel in spring 2028 and three cohorts to arrive in fall 2028, though the number of host universities and program timing is subject to change. The Bureau anticipates the inclusion of approximately 80 countries in all world regions. Please budget approximately \$4,400,000 for this program, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

In addition to the items noted in the Recipient Responsibilities section above, the proposal narrative should describe how the recipient organization plans to:

1. Consult with international partner organizations to distribute applications, recruit candidates, and interview and select participants for the program. Partner organizations include Fulbright Commissions, Regional English Language Officers (RELOs) and Public Diplomacy Sections of U.S. embassies abroad. Posts and commissions should review and rank the applicants, interview the top candidates, and forward the highest rated applications to the award recipient for additional review by a panel of independent educational professionals.
2. Administer a sub-award competition in which U.S. university schools of education submit proposals to serve as host universities for the international educators in appropriate fields of study or continue to work with incumbent host institutions with outstanding track records. At the direction of ECA, host institutions may be selected based on their ability to provide programming with a focus on specific topics or themes.
 - Coordinate the placement of the participants for six weeks at universities based on their subject expertise and level of English proficiency;
 - Ensure that the program engages the participants as adult learners;
 - Provide an on-campus orientation for participants;
 - Develop highly tailored group seminars at the university focusing on student-centered teaching strategies and educational leadership for participants' home environments; include exposure to different teaching methodologies and approaches to curriculum development;

- Include seminars as requested on English as a Foreign Language (EFL), STEM and AI, career readiness, and/or other topics;
- Where feasible, offer school field experiences of 40 hours in length;
- Provide tailored instructional technology training if needed based on pre-program needs assessments;
- Arrange appropriate housing in single rooms, meal and transportation options, and allowances;
- Offer ongoing English language training for participants with lower English proficiency scores throughout the program, as needed;
- Provide opportunities for participants to share their own professional expertise and information about their home education system with each other and with local teachers, students, and members of the university community;
- Organize an on-campus end of program event to highlight participants' achievements during the program before a closing workshop in Washington, D.C.

Note that the Fulbright TEA model should be programmatically flexible and able to accommodate various program modifications in timing and type of international educators. The award recipient should continue to cooperate closely with the program office in the event of any program modifications.

b) Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for International Teachers

The Bureau will bring international educators to the United States and place them in two cohorts of approximately 20 at U.S. universities for a semester, most likely during the 2028 academic year, although the program's timing is subject to change. Cohorts may include teachers from a mix of subject fields (English, STEM and AI, humanities, etc.) or may be specialized to focus on a topic such as English language or another foreign policy priority.

The Bureau anticipates supporting approximately 35 participants in the program from all world regions (with two additional participants likely to be cost-shared by foreign governments), subject to change. Please budget approximately \$1,600,000 for this program, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

In addition to the items noted above, the proposal narrative should describe how the recipient organization plans to:

1. Consult with international partner organizations to distribute applications, recruit candidates, and interview and select participants for the program. Partner organizations include Fulbright Commissions, and Public Diplomacy Sections of U.S. embassies abroad. Posts and commissions should review and rank the applicants, interview the top candidates, and forward the highest rated applications to the grantee organization for additional review.
2. Administer a sub-award competition in which U.S. university schools of education submit proposals to serve as host universities for the international educators in appropriate fields of study or continue to work with incumbent host institutions with outstanding track records.
3. Coordinate the placement of approximately 35 international participants at these institutions to ensure that the program engages them as adult learners and includes the following components:
 - An online orientation at least four weeks prior to the start of the program for international teachers to help them prepare for their time in the United States;
 - A substantive orientation meeting to help participants prepare for their programs, discuss living and working in the United States, and introduce the participants to the host campus, community, and its resources;
 - A plan for participants to audit up to two graduate-level courses, reflecting their individual goals and interests;
 - A specially tailored Fulbright seminar on American prominence and innovation in education, covering topics such as federalism, the U.S. constitution, and the history of education and best practices in the K-12 education system;
 - Placements in local schools for approximately 90 hours that support the teachers' professional goals;
 - A seminar for participants to build the skills to use technology in education. The seminar should be differentiated for educators with diverse levels of expertise;
 - A technology allowance (for purchasing a laptop, tablet, or other device);

- Opportunities to share their own professional expertise and information about their home education system with local teachers, students, and members of the university community;
- A professional development allowance for each participant and guidance regarding conferences, other professional development activities, and opportunities to visit schools outside the local area that represent a variety of types of U.S. schools including traditional public schools, charter schools, and private schools;
- Opportunities to get to know the local community through cultural activities, friendship families, and similar activities;
- Ongoing English language training for participants with lower English proficiency scores throughout the program, as needed;
- Appropriate housing in single rooms, meal and transportation options, and allowances;
- In exceptional circumstances, participants may be able to bring dependents on this program. A modest dependent allowance should be provided to participants to cover these costs;
- An in-person end-of-program event in Washington, D.C., at which participants can share their experiences with each other, develop action plans to implement on their return, and plan potential future collaboration.

For Both U.S. and International Educators

Alumni, Outreach, and Multiplier Activities should be considered as a separate program component for planning and budgeting purposes. Additional details about what this component includes are provided in the Recipient Responsibilities section above. Please budget approximately \$250,000 for this program component, pending the availability of FY 2027 funds.

Additional Guidelines

For the FY 2027 cycle, applicant organizations must submit one proposal that includes a maximum 20-page narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and implementation of all program models. In addition to the 20-page narrative, applicant organizations should submit **one overall budget that clearly delineates costs for each program component separately**, including the alumni and outreach component. One Excel spreadsheet with distinct tabs for each

component is recommended. Proposals may utilize appendices as needed for the budget and budget notes and to illustrate elements of the narrative.

Where possible, proposals should reflect economies of scale and should demonstrate administrative efficiencies. For example, applicant organizations' proposals would be strengthened if they were able to support more participants than the numbers suggested above. Proposals should reflect an overarching vision for the program, interpreting the goals of the Fulbright-Hays Act and Fulbright Teacher Exchanges with creativity to achieve long-term objectives. Proposals should provide ideas for collaboration among participants and more than 30,000 alumni worldwide across the entire suite of current Fulbright Teacher Exchanges as well as past ECA teacher exchanges, for the benefit of participants, alumni, and their schools and communities. Applicant organizations should outline a plan to work with the media and other organizations, in close consultation with the Bureau, to ensure that the program and its awards and achievements receive appropriate publicity.

5. 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
 - o **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)
 - E1.1.11: Percent of American participants indicating a change in their understanding of their host country's culture and values
 - 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)

- **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)
 - E4.1.07: Number of instruction methodology trainings implemented
- **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 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 NOFO. 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.

6. Allowable Costs.

Please submit a comprehensive overall budget that includes a separate budget for **each of the six program components identified above** (on different tabs/worksheets), including one for the alumni, outreach, and multiplier activities, using line-items, the details and format of which are contained in the PSI.

In addition, you must submit a comprehensive budget narrative for each program component, demonstrating how costs were derived. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with funding availability and the needs of the program.

As with other exchange programs, the Bureau is committed to containment of costs consistent with overall program objectives and sound management. The overhead costs funded by the Bureau must be reasonable and appropriate.

Cooperative Agreement-funded expenditures may include, but are not limited to, the categories below. The award recipient is encouraged to note in their program budgets/narratives areas in which economies beyond the Bureau's allowable costs can be achieved.

EXPENSES

- Administration of tax withholding and reporting as required by federal, state and local authorities and in accordance with relevant tax treaties
- Communication costs
- Costs for review/selection/interview committees
- Furniture and equipment
- Health Care Insurance fees and medical costs (Bureau must approve in advance)
- Medical review of health forms
- Meetings and conferences
- Network charges
- Orientation, and related expenses
- Per diem or maintenance allowances for participants as needed for all programs.
- Pre-departure orientation

- Publicity, orientation materials
- SEVIS compliance
- Single Audit costs under Subpart F of the OMB Guidance 2 CFR Parts 200 and 600
- Standardized test fees for international teacher candidates (TOEFL or IELTS or equivalent); please give estimates by test
- Travel for participants (from home to host location) conforming to the Fly America Act, including domestic travel abroad for international participants as part of the interview and selection process
- Virtual events and online courses
- Visa fees (only required for U.S. participants going overseas)
- Website/on-line applications/database management

In consultation with ECA, the award recipient should determine rates for participant allowances for housing and maintenance and request ECA approval of any changes to established stipend levels, as needed. Allowances should be sufficient to enable participants to meet the costs of lodging, food, clothing, and incidental purchases throughout the period of the cooperative agreement in the location where the participants will be residing. For budgeting purposes, please plan for monthly allowance of approximately \$4,500 for 4.5 months for the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for U.S. Teachers (includes food, local transportation, incidentals, and housing). The actual amounts may vary based on host location and length of program.

Other allowances:

- A one-time professional development allowance of approximately \$1,500 per participant for Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program Participants (Semester U.S and international);
- Dependent allowances of approximately \$3,000 per dependent for the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for U.S. Teachers. Please budget for approximately 15 dependents;
- A technology allowance of approximately \$1,000 per participant on the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for International Teachers;
- A pool of approximately \$30,000 to cover Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program participants' dependent tuition in locations where this is recommended by the Fulbright Commission or U.S. Embassy;

- Approximately \$200 per month for faculty advisors for the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program participants (both U.S. and international);
- Up to \$25,000 to reimburse Fulbright Commissions for the costs of Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program participants in events;
- Consulting fees, including for a U.S. consultant for the Fulbright Distinguished Awards in Teaching Program for U.S. teachers;
- Professional meeting costs: program, per diem and travel for participants;
- Funds to support reasonable accommodation for participants with disabilities;
- Educational materials, including books; access to technology;
- Teacher support costs: may include required fingerprinting, certification (such as continuing education units or CEUs for online courses), medical expenses for emergencies, salary and benefit support, and substitute costs as appropriate;
- Alumni programming such as professional development opportunities, small grants, technology platforms, workshops, webinars, and virtual exchanges;
- Activities designed in conjunction with the Bureau to allow alumni to collaborate with other educators through workshops or professional development, convenings, on-line workshops, Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), open educational resources (OERs), mobile technology or social media, and other media.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. Virtual Exchange Component.

When changing political, health, environmental, or other similar circumstances require a suspension or halt of in-person activities and where ECA determines that a virtual alternative is appropriate and viable, award recipients should demonstrate the ability and capacity to transition from in-person to virtual exchanges.

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.

10. 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.

11. 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.

12. Substantial Involvement.

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

1. Approval and oversight of program policies related to fellowship benefits, professional development activities, workshops, alumni and follow-on activities;
2. Approval of participating teachers and administrators, in cooperation with Fulbright commissions, U.S. embassies, and other partner organizations and subject to final selection by the FFSB;
3. Approval of decisions related to special circumstances, broader foreign policy priorities, or deviations from previous programmatic precedents throughout the duration of the program;
4. Approval of co-funding and public private partnership initiatives;
5. Direct and oversee communications with relevant U.S. embassies, Fulbright commissions, regional public diplomacy and country desk officers at the State Department, and other State Department bureaus and offices.

The Teacher Exchange Branch and the award recipient will meet regularly and maintain regular telephone and email communications during the period of performance as part of routine award monitoring. Routine monitoring includes, but is not limited to, participation in the design and direction of program activities; guidance on program timelines, agendas, and administrative procedures; guidance in execution of program activities, reporting, and budgetary processes.

Programs must conform with Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the

Solicitation Package, which includes the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

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. See the PSI section III for more information on the budget requirements.

As noted above, applicants should provide separate sub-budgets for each program component to provide clarification.

2. Content of Application.

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

E. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

1. 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: Michael Kuban, U.S. Department of State, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, ECA/A/E, (202) 733-8234, KubanMM@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](#) 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, June 29, 2026, 11:59 pm 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. Palestinian Authority, West Bank, and Gaza Programming.

All awards made under this competition must be executed according to all relevant U.S. laws and policies regarding assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and to the West Bank and Gaza. Organizations must consult with relevant Public Affairs Offices before entering into any formal arrangements or agreements with Palestinian organizations or institutions.

Note: To assure that planning for the inclusion of the Palestinian Authority complies with requirements, please contact Michael Kuban, (202) 733-8234 and KubanMM@state.gov for additional information.

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. Certification of Trafficking in Persons Compliance and Compliance Plan

For grants and cooperative agreements under which the estimated value of services to be performed outside the United States exceeds \$500,000 include the following

Applicants are advised that they will be required to certify the following at the time of award for awards where the estimated value of services to be performed outside the United States exceeds \$500,000:

- To the best of the recipient's knowledge, neither the recipient, nor any subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor of the recipient or any agent of the recipient or of such a subrecipient, contractor, or subcontractor, is engaged in any of the activities described in 2 CFR 175(a);

The recipient has implemented a Trafficking in Persons compliance plan to prevent activities described in 2 CFR 175(a) and is compliant with it; and compliance plan must be consistent with the requirements of 2 CFR 175(b)(4) and (5).

- That the recipient has procedures to prevent activities described in 2 CFR 175(a) and to monitor, detect, and terminate any subrecipient, contractor, subcontractor, or employee of the recipient engaging in them.

Recipients do not need to submit a copy of the plan. However, they must provide it to the Grants Officer upon request, and as appropriate, must post the useful and relevant contents of the plan or related materials on their website and at the workplace. Recipients must re-certify on an annual basis for the entire award period of performance.

f. 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.
- d. 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. **Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Program Aims:** Proposals should have a detailed work plan that demonstrates your institution's ability to carry out the program. The plan should follow the program guidelines described in this solicitation and should be likely to provide maximum impact in achieving the proposed results.
- b. **Institutional Capacity and Record:** Proposals should include the necessary personnel and institutional resources to achieve the program results. Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange programs and responsible fiscal management. ECA will consider the past performance of prior ECA recipients, including the timely submission of reports, and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.
- c. **Follow-on Activities/Multiplier Effect/Impact:** Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity after the ECA supported program ends, ensuring that programs are not isolated events. Proposals should strengthen long-term mutual understanding between countries, including sharing of information and creating long-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/Cost Sharing:** Proposals should keep the overhead components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, as low as possible. All costs should be necessary and appropriate. Proposals 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 reports shall be due 90 days after the reporting period; 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 (formerly MELI) 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 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