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)
Funding Opportunity Title: FY 2025 International Visitor Leadership Program International Airport Arrivals and Departures Program
Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement
Funding Opportunity Number: DFOP0016648
Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA) Number: 19.402
Deadline for Applications: August 5, 2024

Executive Summary: The United States Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Office of International Visitors (ECA/PE/V) announces an open competition for the FY 2025 International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) International Airport Arrivals and Departures Program, pending the availability of FY 2025 funds. Launched in 1940, the IVLP is a professional exchange program that seeks to build mutual understanding between the United States and other nations through carefully designed short-term visits to the U.S. for current and emerging leaders. These visits support U.S. foreign policy goals and reflect the participants' professional interests.

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.

It is ECA's intent to award a cooperative agreement of one base year plus two non-competitive continuations (NCCs). Please see sections B and D below for additional details.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

A.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.

A.2. Purpose

As the U.S. Department of State's premier professional exchange program, the IVLP supports U.S. foreign policy goals and helps strengthen U.S. engagement with countries around the world. Through carefully designed projects, the IVLP provides current and emerging foreign leaders with firsthand knowledge of U.S. society, culture, and politics. A project is defined as a short-term visit of emerging leaders to the United States on varied themes based on U.S. foreign policy goals. In turn, Americans in communities across the United States have valuable opportunities to engage directly with these leaders and foster lasting relationships. IVLP participants are current or potential leaders in government, politics, media, education, science, non-government organizations, the arts, and other disciplines. They are nominated by Public Affairs Sections (PAS) at U.S. embassies overseas, approved by ECA/PE/V staff in Washington, DC, and generally have little or no significant prior exposure to the United States. Since the IVLP's inception in 1940, more than 225,000 emerging leaders have participated in the program.

IVLP projects can be as small as one person on an individual project but can also include a number of large multi-regional projects that typically include 20-30 participants from around the world. Projects are typically two to 21-days in length. Each project itinerary highlights the geographic and demographic diversity of the United States. The majority of projects will commence in Washington, DC. Not-for-profit IVLP implementing partners based in the Washington, DC area, called National Program Agencies, plan and implement the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area portion of most projects. These organizations also develop project plans and itineraries which include visits to three to five regionally diverse communities including a combination of urban and rural areas. Local programming in cities throughout the U.S. is developed by the more-than eighty Global Ties U.S. affiliates in communities where they exist.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' ECA/PE/V invites proposal submissions for the design and implementation of the FY 2025 IVLP International Airport Arrivals and Departures Program for approximately 1,000 service requests per year for $512,500 per year, pending successful performance and the availability of funds, for support at a limited number of domestic airports. Support to be provided will assist participants of the IVLP.

A.3. Program Specific Guidelines

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is seeking detailed proposals for the IVLP Airport Arrivals and Departures Program from U.S. public and private not-for-profit organizations that meet the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 USC 501(c)(3) and that have an established reputation and experience with:

1. International airport arrivals and departures for participants in international exchange programs;
2. Liaising with U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), Department of Homeland Security (DHS);
3. An established working relationship with the Transportation Security Administration (TSA);
4. A functional understanding of U.S. international airport facilities and services;
5. Knowledge of U.S. airport security regulations to facilitate passage for foreign travelers;
6. An established relationship with airport officials to secure background checks and badges;
7. Recruiting, interviewing, selecting, hiring, training, and monitoring of staff who work within an international airport setting; and
8. Accessing the Federal Inspections areas, as permitted by relevant authorities.

A.4. Recipient Responsibilities

The IVLP International Airport Arrival and Departure Program cooperative agreement recipient shall meet IVLP participants at designated international airports throughout the United States to provide assistance with transfers to project opening cities via connecting flights to other domestic airports. The recipient shall also support transfers to project hotels. In addition, when requested in writing by the Community Relations Branch (ECA/PE/V/C/R), the award recipient must provide assistance inside the Customs and Border Protection Hall to assist specified program participants with immigration entry procedures, as permitted by relevant authorities. In some cases, the award recipient will be asked to provide assistance to outgoing IVLP participants as they navigate TSA security checkpoints and transfer to their international flights.

Key designated airports are:

- Atlanta-Hartsfield International Airport
- Chicago O'Hare International Airport
- John F. Kennedy International Airport
- Miami International Airport
- Newark Liberty International Airport
- San Francisco International Airport
- Washington Dulles International Airport

ECA reserves the right to request that the award recipient provide support to participants at other airports to meet the needs of the IVLP.

Additional responsibilities of the recipient organization are as follows:

1. Liaising with U.S. CBP officials, Transportation Security Administration (TSA) officials, and Port Authority officials at ports of entry (POE) to carry out the scope of work under the cooperative agreement.

2. Recruiting, selecting, training, assigning, compensating, monitoring, and evaluating personnel to carry out designated functions at the selected airports.
3. Recruiting, selecting, training, assigning, compensating, monitoring, and evaluating a lead staff member who will be the central point of contact for ECA/PE/V/C/R.
4. Managing the administrative preparation of participant arrival information for all personnel to ensure all airport services are conducted in a professional manner and that proper access has been approved by CBP and TSA, as necessary.
5. Liaising with the designated ECA/PE/V/C/R Program Specialist to determine weekly workload and requested airport meets.
6. Coordinating with U.S. Department of State (DOS)-assigned interpreters and liaison officers to ensure appropriate arrival logistics.
7. Communicating effectively with ECA/PE/V/C/R on weekends and off-business hours on matters related to participant arrivals and, as needed, departures.
8. Fostering, maintaining, and strengthening relationships at the designated airports through meetings and site visits.
9. Liaising closely with airport services for visitors with disabilities.
10. Remaining flexible and adaptive in various immigration and customs situations that may occur and providing support for ECA/PE/V.

A.5. Substantial Involvement:

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

1.) Approving and assigning all flights to be met by the award recipient.
2.) Providing flight data to the award recipient to arrange airport arrival and departure support.
3.) Communicating any known changes in flight itineraries or requested additional meets.
4.) Consulting closely with award recipient during weekend and non-business hours regarding issues with or changes to participant arrivals at the designated airports.
5.) Monitoring current events globally and determining prioritization of strategic airport meets.

A.6. Non-Competitive Continuations (NCCs)

Proposal narratives should include a commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional NCCs, pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two NCCs are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a NCC will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all NCCs.

B. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under Substantial Involvement in section A.5.
Fiscal Year Funds: FY 2025 – $512,500, pending the availability of FY 2025 funds; FY 2026 – $512,500, pending successful performance and the availability of funds; FY 2027 – $512,500, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.
Approximate Total Funding: $1,537,500. This figure represents base year plus two NCC years, pending successful performance and the availability of funds.
Approximate Number of Awards: One (1).
Approximate Average Award: $512,500.
Minimum "Floor" of Award: $512,500.
Maximum "Ceiling" of Award: $512,500.
Anticipated Award Date: January 1, 2025.
Anticipated Award Completion Date: December 31, 2027. This date reflects the anticipated duration of the award – one base year plus two NCC years.
Additional Information: A Cooperative Agreement will be awarded for a period of 12 months (base year) with NCCs for two additional 12 month periods (NCC years one and two). ECA will notify the recipient of its intention to exercise or not to exercise a NCC at least 90 days in advance of expiration of the current year after an internal evaluation of the recipient's performance. The decision to exercise a NCC will depend both on the satisfactory performance of the recipient and the availability of funds.

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

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

C.1. Eligible Applicants

U.S. public and private academic and cultural institutions, exchange-of-persons, and other not-for-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 USC 501(c)(3) may submit applications for this competition. Applicants must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. Please see the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) for additional information.

C.2. Other Eligibility Requirements

The following additional eligibility requirements apply to this NOFO announcement:

1.) 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 B above, ECA anticipates issuing one cooperative agreement, for approximately $512,500. Therefore, organizations that do

not demonstrate four years of experience in conducting international exchanges in your proposal are ineligible to apply under this competition.

2.) All proposals must comply with the requirements stated in the NOFO and the PSI; non-compliance will result in your proposal being declared technically ineligible and given no further consideration in the review process.

3.) In order to be eligible to receive an award, all organizations must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number issued via www.SAM.gov as well as a valid registration on www.SAM.gov. Please see Section D.3 & D.5. for more information.

4.) 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.

5.) All award recipients must have a Washington, DC area presence with a physical office and staff members located within the Washington DC area. Applicants who do not currently have a Washington, DC metropolitan area presence must include a detailed plan in their proposal for establishing such a presence by January 1, 2025. The costs related to establishing such a presence must be borne by the award recipient and no such costs may be included in the budget submission in this proposal.

C.3. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds

There is no minimum or maximum percentage of cost sharing required for this competition. However, 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.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, ECA staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

D.1. Solicitation Package Location

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

D.2. Content and Form of Submission

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package, including the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document, which consists of required application forms and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. The application should be submitted per the instructions under D.16. "Application Deadline and Method of Submission" section below.

D.3. Unique Entity Identifier Number

All organizations are required to have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. 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. ***Note: As of April 2022, a DUNS number is no longer required for federal assistance applications. A UEI is issued as part of the required SAM.gov registration below in section D.5.***

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

D.4. Required Proposal Elements

All proposals must contain a SF-424, executive summary, proposal narrative, budget (SF-424A), detailed budget, and budget narrative.

D.5. Required Registration with the System for Award Management (SAM)

All organizations must be registered in the System for Award Management (SAM) database in order to submit a proposal in response to an open competition on Grants.gov. ***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.*** Failure to register in SAM.gov will render applicants ineligible to receive funding.

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 is 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://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration/step-2-register-with-sam.html

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 number prior to registering in SAM.gov.

D.6. Responsibility/Qualification Information in SAM.gov (formerly, FAPIIS)

1.) 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);

2.) An applicant, at its option, may review and comment on any information about itself that a Federal awarding agency previously entered. Currently, federal agencies create integrity records in the integrity module of the Contractor Performance Assessment and Reporting System (CPARS) and these records are visible as responsibility/qualification records in SAM.gov;

3.) The Federal awarding agency will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in making a judgment about the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under Federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants as described in §200.206 Federal awarding agency review of risk posed by applicants.

D.7. 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 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/.

Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative:

D.8. For Informational Purposes Only - 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. 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

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

D.9. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (DEIA) and Freedom and Democracy Guidelines
Pursuant to ECA's authorizing legislation, “diversity” should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including race, ethnicity, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, religion, geographic location, education, income, socio-economic status, and other diversity dimensions, that may hinder inclusion. Proposals should demonstrate how diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility will enhance the program’s goals and objectives and the participants’ exchange experience. Proposals should demonstrate how the program will further engage diverse and underserved communities. Programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of political, social and cultural life in the United States and abroad. Please refer to the “Support of DEIA” review criterion of this document for more information on how this will be reviewed as a part of any application. Please also refer to the “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility” section in the PSI for specific suggestions on incorporating DEIA into the proposal.

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," ECA "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.

D.10. Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

In establishing strong performance management practices, ECA is concerned with collecting indicator data on exchange participant outcomes. Because the IVLP is managed by a number of different implementers, a determination has been made that the primary responsibility for collecting indicator data on International Visitor participant outcomes will lie with the Office of International Visitors (ECA/PE/V). ECA will implement the Exchanges IMPACT tool, enabling IVLP participants to provide feedback about their exchange experience via project-specific surveys which include questions from ECA's Monitoring Data for ECA (MODE) Framework. Information provided by the surveys helps ECA/PE/V continually review and improve the IVLP.

While primary responsibility for collecting indicator data on participant outcomes will lie with ECA/PE/V, your proposal must include a plan to monitor the IVLP IAAD program's success. Successful monitoring depends heavily on setting clear goals at the outset of a program. Your monitoring plan should include a description of your program's objectives, your anticipated program outputs, and how and when you intend to measure these outputs. The more that outputs are "SMART" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame; for more information you can view this resource: https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/a_good_start_with_smart.pdf), the easier it will be to monitor the program.

Your monitoring plan should clearly list the program outputs. Output information is important to show the scope or size of program activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of Airport Service Officers trained, the number of IVLP participants met at the airport, or the number of issues with participant entry to be reported.

We encourage you to assess the programmatic outputs as they relate to the program goals set out in the NOFO.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring plan will be judged on how well it 1) specifies intended outputs; 2) gives clear descriptions of how each output will be measured; 3) identifies when particular outputs will be measured; and 4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each output (i.e., administrative data, surveys, interviews, or focus groups).

Recipient organizations will be required to provide information and/or data with findings from the data analysis to the Bureau in their regular program reports. All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to the Bureau upon request.

D.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.

D. 12. Celebration of America's Semiquincentennial

ECA is excited to play a key role in making the Semiquincentennial – commonly known as "America250" – 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 America250. Any America250 focused activities or plans will be subject to ECA approval and direction, and changes may be requested by ECA. Use of any ECA-provided America250 brand elements will be subject to advance ECA approval and require adherence to Department of State and ECA guidelines for such branding.

D.13. Budget Format

Applicants must submit SF-424A (Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs) along with a detailed, line item budget for the entire program and a budget narrative. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

D.14. 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, and brief biographical sketches of key personnel to the Grants Officer and GOR within 30 days of an award being issued. Additional information regarding key personnel requirements can be found in the State Department's Standard Terms and Conditions, VI. Recipient Responsibility and Compliance with Federal Requirements (link to: https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/).

D.15. NCCs

Pending successful performance and the availability of funds this award will utilize NCCs as discussed in section A above.

D.15.a. For competitions that will exercise a NCC applicants must submit:

1.) The SF-424A which must include the budget request amount for the base-year of the program.
2.) A detailed proposal narrative and budget for the base year of funding (Please refer to the PSI for general budget guidance.). The narrative should also include a brief commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional NCC years, pending successful program performance and the availability of funds.
3.) An abbreviated/estimated summary budget presenting the total projected costs for the anticipated total duration of programming (base year, plus two NCC years).

D.15.b. To exercise the NCC mechanism the recipient will be required to submit:

1.) Performance and financial reports on time.
2.) A request in writing to ECA at least 30 days in receipt of the NCC invitation.
3.) A summary budget that projects expenses through the end of the current year.
4.) A detailed budget outlining expenses for the requested NCC year.
5.) A brief narrative to support the continuation of the award.

D.15.c. For awards using NCCs, in addition to the Substantial Involvement for the Cooperative Agreement, the ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will:

1.) Closely monitor the recipient's performance through site visits, desk audits, mandatory performance and financial reports, consultations, and other forms of communication and dialogue before exercising additional NCCs. (Additional details regarding monitoring and oversight of the program by ECA representatives will be provided at the time the base-year award is made.)

2.) Review and evaluate all quarterly or semi-annual program and financial reports.
   a. All program and financial reporting requirements must be current and up to date before ECA will exercise additional NCCs.
   b. Any/all concerns, issues, or modifications requested by the Grants Officer or Program Officer to the original program design or method of implementation must be responded to in writing.
   c. The ECA Grants Officer and Program Officer will review and advise of ECA's approval or disapproval of the response before issuing subsequent NCCs.

3.) Prior Grants Officer approval is required to utilize the remainder from an unobligated balance from a prior funding period to the subsequent funding period. If the Grants Officer determines that some or all of the unobligated funds are not necessary to perform the program activity, the Grants Officer may decline the Recipient's request to utilize the remainder from the unobligated balance.

   The Grants Officer may, at their discretion, use the unobligated balance to reduce or offset future funding for a subsequent funding period. An unobligated balance at the end of a funding period is not sufficient justification to utilize the remainder of funds. A final determination and approval to utilize the remainder of any funds will be communicated via a cost amendment with adjustment, if any, to new obligation amounts.

The request to utilize the remainder from an unobligated balance must include:

1.) A brief narrative why funds remain unobligated and how the unobligated funds will be used to complete the previously approved goals and objectives of the program.

2.) A detailed budget that reflects the amount of unobligated funds to date, and anticipated expenditures in the subsequent period of performance for all cost categories under the authorized budget.

D.16. Application Deadline and Method of Submission
Application Deadline Date: Monday, August 5, 2024
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.

D.17. Grants.gov Registration, Application Submission, and Receipt Procedures
Eligible organizations should follow the instructions available in the 'Get Started' portion of the site (http://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html).

D.17.a. 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/web/grants/applicants/organization-registration.html

D.17.b. 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/web/grants/applicants/apply-for-grants.html

D.17.c. 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

D.17.d. Timely Receipt Requirements and Proof of Timely Submission
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 not wait until the application deadline to begin the submission process through Grants.gov.

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 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 Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html.

It is the responsibility of all applicants submitting proposals via the Grants.gov web portal 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.

D.18. Intergovernmental Review of Applications
Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

E.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 and may 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. Recommended proposals 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.

E.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 evaluation.

1.) **Institution's Record:** ECA will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants. Proposals should clearly demonstrate the applicant's capability of performing the type of work required by the IVLP International Airport Arrival and Departure Program.
2.) **Institutional Capacity/Ability to achieve program objectives:** Proposals should convey that the applicant has a solid understanding of the overall goals and objectives of the IVLP. Key staff should have expert knowledge of international airport arrivals and departure activities and qualifications to perform these activities. Applicants must demonstrate how their organizations will effectively consult with the ECA point of contact on a regular basis to ensure that the services are professional in nature and meet overall program objectives. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals. Proposal objectives must be reasonable, feasible, and flexible.
3.) **Support of DEIA:** Proposals should show how the program and your institution supports ECA's policy on diversity. Proposals should have a clear DEIA plan that is integrated into

all aspects of program administration, design, content, and implementation. Proposals should demonstrate how DEIA will enhance the program's goals, objectives, and the participants' exchange experience. Proposals should demonstrate how the program will further engage diverse and underserved communities. It is important that proposals have a clearly articulated DEIA plan and not simply express general support for the concept of DEIA.

4.) **Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):** Proposals should have a fully developed Monitoring 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 Monitoring 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.

5.) **Cost-effectiveness and Cost share:** 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.

F. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

F.1. Award Notices

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal ECA procedures. Successful applicants will receive a Federal Assistance Award (FAA) from the ECA's Grants Division. The FAA and the original proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The FAA will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer and transmitted to the recipient's responsible officer as identified in the application.

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.

F.2 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.

Terms and Conditions applicable to all ECA agreements include:

- 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.

- U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions.

For a copy of the OMB Guidance cited, please download from the www.ecfr.gov website.

For a copy of the U.S. Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions, or to review other Department of State assistance information, please download from: https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/

F.3. Reporting Requirements

Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify 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:

1.) Performance Progress Reports (PPRs) shall be required at a minimum annually and no more frequently than quarterly. Annual reports shall be due 120 calendar days after the period of performance of the award ends; quarterly or semi-annual reports shall be due 30 days after the reporting period. Frequency of these reports will be determined by the Grants Officer and Program Officer. The complete report and supporting documentation must be uploaded by the recipient as a *Post Award Activity* under the corresponding record for this Cooperative Agreement/Grant in the U.S. Department of State's MyGrants.

2.) The Federal Financial Report (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: http://www.dpm.psc.gov/. 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 Cooperative Agreements/Grants.

3.) Because the competition will allow for the exercise of NCCs, applicants must submit program and financial reports on time. The due dates for these reports will be included in the cooperative agreement. The program and financial reports must demonstrate substantial progress by addressing progress towards the original approved goals and objectives, relative activities and events, and supporting fiscal data. The reports will be reviewed by both the assigned Grant Officer and Program Officer.

4.) Weekly weekend arrival updates for each airport are due to the ECA/PE/V/C/R Grants Officer Representative by COB on the first workday of the following week. The reports should include any visitors who did not arrive and relevant information regarding secondary screenings or miscellaneous arrival issues, including the ECA program

officer's name associated with the visitor/project. Airport reception program reports are due within 15 days after the close of the previous month's activities. These reports must list separately the number of visitors/flights met at each airport. They must include date; visitor name; flight number; name of assigned officer; differentiate between visitors who "did not arrive" vs. a "no show meet"; whether or not ECA/PE/V is charged for the reception service, i.e., if more than one visitor is on a flight, only one charge is made for airport reception; and itemize any expenses incurred, such as miscellaneous parking and mileage or other incurred expense covered under the agreement. The reports must be submitted via the electronic medium designated by ECA/PE/V/C/R.

Award recipients will be required to provide reports analyzing their monitoring data to ECA in their regular program reports. (Please refer to D.10. Program Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) information.)

All data collected, including survey responses and contact information, must be maintained for a minimum of three years and provided to ECA upon request.

G. AGENCY CONTACTS

For questions about this announcement, contact: Benjamin Olsen, U.S. Department of State, Office of International Visitors, ECA/PE/V**,** 202-256-3024, OlsenBC@state.gov.

All correspondence with ECA concerning this NOFO 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 NOFO deadline has passed, ECA staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

H. Other Information

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this NOFO are binding and may not be modified by any ECA representative. Explanatory information provided by ECA that contradicts published language will not be binding. 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. Awards will be subject to periodic programmatic and financial reporting and evaluation requirements as outlined in the NOFO.

Lee Satterfield June 4, 2024
Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs
U.S. Department of State