

## UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

### Training Programs for Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, and Bulgaria

**ACTION:** Notice; Request for proposals.

**SUMMARY:** The Office of Citizen Exchanges of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c) may apply to develop training programs for the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, and Bulgaria.

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 cited above is provided through the Fulbright-Hays Act.

Programs and projects must conform with Agency requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package. USIA projects and programs are subject to the availability of funds.

**ANNOUNCEMENT TITLE AND NUMBER:** All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the above title and reference number E/P-97-27.

**DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS:** All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Friday, April 11, 1997. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked April 11, 1997 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposals are received by the above deadline.

Program activities should begin after June 15, 1997.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Office of Citizen Exchange, E/PE, Room 216, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, telephone: 202-619-5319, fax: 202-

619-4350, e-mail address:

{cminer@usia.gov} to request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed award criteria, required application forms, and standard guidelines for preparing proposals, including specific criteria for preparation of the proposal budget.

#### TO DOWNLOAD A SOLICITATION PACKAGE

**VIA INTERNET:** The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from USIA's website at <http://www.usia.gov/education/rfps>. Please read all information before downloading.

#### TO RECEIVE A SOLICITATION BY FAX ON DEMAND:

The entire Solicitation Package may be received via the Bureau's "Grants Information Fax on Demand System", which is accessed by calling 202/401-7616. Please request a "Catalog" of available documents and order numbers when first entering the system.

Please specify USIA Program Officer Christina Miner on all inquiries and correspondences. Interested applicants should read the complete Federal Register announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, Agency staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

**SUBMISSIONS:** Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and eight copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/P-97-27, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal on a 3.5" diskette, formatted for DOS. This material must be provided in ASCII text (DOS) format with a maximum line length of 65 characters. USIA will transmit these files electronically to USIS posts overseas for their review, with the goal of reducing the time it takes to get posts' comments for the Agency's grants review process.

#### Diversity Guidelines

Pursuant to the Bureau's authorizing legislation, programs must maintain a non-political character and should be balanced and representative of the diversity of American political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, religion, geographic location, socio-economic status, and physical challenges. Applicants are strongly

encouraged to adhere to the advancement of this principle both in program administration and in program content. Please refer to the review criteria under the 'Support for Diversity' section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal.

#### SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Diminished resources have forced USIA to limit the scope of this announcement; regrettably, proposals for countries and themes other than the ones described below will not be eligible for consideration. USIA is interested in proposals in the following areas and countries:

*Czech Republic:* Projects that will strengthen civic culture by focusing on the training of NGOs to work with national and local governments as well as with local communities to propose and implement solutions to environmental problems.

*Romania:* Projects should focus on court management procedures which need to be modernized and rationalized in order to meet modern democratic standards and the complex array of market economy-related issues. The activities should focus on information dissemination, training court personnel and upgrading court procedures.

*Slovakia:* Projects should focus on the free-flow of information for Slovak libraries. Objectives of the project would be to introduce practical use of new technologies and new library services for citizens. There is particular interest in assisting the parliamentary library to become a source of information about the parliament and lawmaking for the whole country and not just a research service for its members. In addition, Slovak partners should include the librarian's association and leading university and public libraries, particularly Bratislava's University Library.

*Bulgaria:* Proposals should focus on the management of media as a business: station management, newsroom management, advertising, marketing, personnel, and public relations.

Exchange and training programs supported by institutional grants should operate at two levels: they should enhance institutional relationships; and they should offer practical and comparative information to individuals to assist them with their professional responsibilities. Strong proposals usually have the following characteristics: an existing partner relationship between an American organizations and a host-country institution; a proven track record of conducting program activity; cost sharing from American or in-country

sources, including donations of air fares, hotel and housing costs; experienced staff with language facility; and a clear, convincing plan showing how permanent results will be accomplished as a result of the activity funded by the grant. USIA wants to see tangible forms of time and money contributed to the project by the prospective grantee institution, as well as funding from third party sources.

Note: Research projects or projects limited to technical issues are not eligible for support nor are film festivals or exhibits. Exchange programs for students or faculty or proposals that request support for the development of university curricula or for degree-based programs are also ineligible under this RFP. Proposals to link university departments or to exchange faculty and/or students are funded by USIA's Office of Academic Programs (E/A) under the University Affiliation Program and should not be submitted in response to this RFP.

#### Guidelines

1. All grant proposals must clearly describe the type of persons who will participate in the program as well as the process by which participants will be selected. Note that participants should be professionals and not members of university faculties. In the selection of all foreign participants, USIA and USIS post retain the right to nominate participants and to approve or reject participants recommended by the program institution. Programs must also comply with J-1 visa regulations.

2. Programs that include internships in the U.S. should provide letters tentatively committing host institutions to support the internships. Letters of commitment from the hosts of study tour site visits should also be included, if applicable.

3. Applicants are encouraged to consult with USIS offices regarding program content and partner institutions before submitting proposals. Award-receiving applicants will be expected to maintain contact with the USIS post throughout the grant period.

#### Proposal Budget

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget instructions.

Applicants must submit a detailed line item budget based on specific instructions in the Program and Budget Guidelines of the Proposal Submission Instructions. Proposals for less than \$117,000 will receive preference. Proposals with strong cost-sharing will be given priority.

Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting

international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000.

The following project costs are eligible for consideration for funding:

1. International and domestic air fares; visas; transit costs; ground transportation costs.

2. Per Diem. For the U.S. program, organizations have the option of using a flat \$140/day for program participants or the published U.S. Federal per diem rates for individual American cities. For activities outside the U.S., the published Federal per diem rates must be used. NOTE: U.S. escorting staff must use the published Federal per diem rates, not flat rate.

3. Interpreters. If needed, interpreters for the U.S. program are provided by the U.S. State Department Language Services Division. Typically, a pair of simultaneous interpreters is provided for every four visitors. USIA grants do not pay for foreign interpreters to accompany delegations from their home country. Grant proposal budgets should contain a flat \$140/day per diem for each Department of State interpreter, as well as home-program-home air transportation of \$400 per interpreter plus any U.S. travel expenses during the program. Salary expenses are covered centrally and should not be part of an applicant's proposed budget.

4. Book and cultural allowance. Participants are entitled to and escorts are reimbursed a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a participant book allowance of \$50. U.S. staff do not get these benefits.

5. Consultants. May be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Daily honoraria generally do not exceed \$250 per day. Subcontracting organizations may also be used, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and subcontractor should be included in the proposal.

6. Room rental, which generally should not exceed \$250 per day.

7. Materials development. Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop, and translate materials for participants.

8. One working meal per project. Per capita costs may not exceed \$5-8 for a lunch and \$14-20 for a dinner, excluding room rental. The number of invited guests may not exceed participants by more than a factor of two-to-one.

9. A return travel allowance of \$70 for each participant which is to be used for incidental expenditures incurred during international travel.

10. All USIA-funded delegates will be covered under the terms of a USIA-sponsored health insurance policy. The

premium is paid by USIA directly to the insurance company.

11. Other costs necessary for the effective administration of the program, including salaries for grant organization employees, benefits, and other direct and indirect costs per detailed instructions in the application package.

#### Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels for USIA officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Office of East European and NIS Affairs and the USIA posts overseas, where appropriate. Proposals may be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the USIA Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA grants officer.

#### Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered and all carry equal weight in the proposal evaluation:

1. *Quality of the program idea:*

Proposals should respond to the program requirements of the RFP.

2. *Program planning and ability to achieve objectives:* Program objectives should be stated clearly and precisely and should reflect the applicant's expertise in the subject area and the region. Goals should be reasonable and attainable. A detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate how objectives will be achieved. A timetable indicating when major program tasks will be undertaken should be provided. The substance of seminars, presentations, consulting, internships, and itineraries should be spelled out in detail. Responsibilities of in-country partners should be clearly described.

3. *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate substantive support of the Bureau's policy on diversity. Achievable and relevant features should be cited in both program administration (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

4. *Multiplier effect/impact*: Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages.

5. *Institutional Capacity*: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals. The narrative should demonstrate proven ability to handle logistics. Proposal should reflect the institution's expertise in the subject area and knowledge of the country.

6. *Follow-on Activities*: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-up activity (without USIA support) which ensures that USIA supported programs are not isolated events.

7. *Project Evaluation*: Proposals should include a plan and methodology to evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. USIA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire and/or plan for use of another measurement technique (such as a focus group) to link outcomes to original project objectives. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

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

#### Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.

#### Notification

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by

Congress, allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: February 24, 1997.

Dell Pendergrast,

*Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 97-4845 Filed 2-26-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

### Summer Institute for EFL Educators From Francophone and Lusophone Sub-Saharan Africa

**ACTION:** Notice; Request for Proposals.

**SUMMARY:** The Office of Academic Programs, Academic Exchanges Division, Africa Branch of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. Accredited, post-secondary educational institutions meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c)(3)-1 may apply to develop a Summer Institute for English-as-a-Foreign-Language (EFL) Educators from Francophone and Lusophone Sub-Saharan Africa. The Summer Institute will provide a six-week academic training/development program in English-as-a-Foreign-Language for 16 teacher trainers/educators and supervisors/inspectors of secondary schools selected from sixteen French and Portuguese-speaking countries of Sub-Saharan Africa.

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 cited above is provided through the Fulbright-Hays Act.

Programs and projects must conform with Agency requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package. USIA projects and programs are subject to the availability of funds.

**ANNOUNCEMENT TITLE AND NUMBER:** All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the

above title and reference number E/AEA-97-02.

**DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS:** All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on Thursday, April 3, 1997. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked April 3, 1997, but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposals are received by the above deadline.

The Summer Institute for EFL Educators should be programmed to encompass about 45 days and should begin between June 15, 1997, and July 13, 1997, depending on the host institution's academic calendar. No funds may be expended until a grant agreement is signed with USIA's Office of Contracts.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Office of Academic Programs, Academic Exchanges Division, Africa Branch (E/AEA), Ann J. Martin, Program Officer, Room 232, U.S. Information Agency, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, phone: 202-619-5371, fax: 202-619-6137, or e-mail: amartin@usia.gov to request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed award criteria, required application forms, and standard guidelines for preparing proposals, including specific criteria for preparation of the proposal budget.

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Please specify USIA Program Officer Ann J. Martin on all inquiries and correspondence. Interested applicants should read the complete Federal Register announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, Agency staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

**SUBMISSIONS:** Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and 7 copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/AEA-97-02, Office of Grants Management, E/XE,