

UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Summer Institute for the Study of the United States for Foreign Secondary School Educators

ACTION: Request for proposals (RFP).

SUMMARY: The Branch for the Study of the United States of the U.S. Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award program entitled "Summer Institute for the Study of the United States for Foreign Secondary School Educators." Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(C) may apply to develop and implement a six-week graduate-level American Studies program designed for a multinational group of up to 30 secondary school teacher trainers and curriculum developers.

This program is intended to provide participants with a deeper understanding of the U.S. society, institutions, culture and values—past and present—so that textbooks, curricula and teaching about the United States in foreign secondary schools and teacher training institutions will be improved. Tentative program dates are June 19 through July 30, 1999.

USIA is seeking detailed proposals from colleges, universities, consortia of colleges and universities, and other not-for-profit academic organizations that have an established reputation in the disciplines and sub-disciplines that comprise American Studies, and that can demonstrate expertise in conducting graduate-level programs for foreign educators. *Applicant institutions must have a minimum of four years' experience in conducting international exchange programs.* The project director or one of the key program staff responsible for the academic program must have a doctoral degree in American studies or a related discipline. Staff escorts traveling under the USIA cooperative agreement must have demonstrated qualifications for this service.

The program must conform with Agency requirements and guidelines as outlines in the Solicitation Package. USIA programs are subject to the availability of funds.

Program Information

Overview and Objective: The Summer Institute for the Study of the U.S. aims to provide a deeper understanding of U.S. civilization among foreign educators who are concerned professionally with teaching or writing

about the United States. It is further intended to encourage and support their efforts to improve the quality of teaching, textbooks, and curricular materials about the United States at secondary schools and teacher training institutions abroad.

The institute should be organized around a central theme or themes in American civilization, and the program as a whole should examine various aspects of U.S. society, culture, values and institutions—past and present—providing a good overview for participants. It should be designed as intensive, academically rigorous program that is organized through an integrated series of lectures, readings, seminar discussions, curricular research and independent study opportunities, faculty consultations, site visits and regional travel.

Institutions submitting proposals are encouraged to design thematically coherent programs in ways that draw upon the particular strengths and resources of their institutions as well as upon the nationally recognized expertise of scholars and other experts throughout the United States. Within the limits of the program's thematic focus and organizing framework, programs should be designed to:

A. Draw from a variety of academic disciplines in order to deepen the participants' understanding of the unity, diversity, and complexity of U.S. society, culture, and institutions. Major issues and debates in U.S. society, past and present, including their origins and the role they have played in the development of U.S. civilization, should also be examined;

B. Give participants a multi-dimensional view of U.S. society and institutions that reflects a broad range of perspectives, including the views of scholars and of experts outside the university, such as government officials, public intellectuals and cultural critics, journalists, and other professionals; and,

C. Enhance teaching about the U.S. in foreign secondary schools and teacher training institutions by making appropriate scholarly resources, pedagogical and bibliographic materials available to participants. Participants should return home with an ability to communicate a deeper and more informed view of the U.S. to students and colleagues, and to continue their research, study and curriculum development activities.

The program should be six weeks in length, and must include:

A. An academic residency segment at a U.S. college or university campus (or other appropriate location) of a minimum of four weeks in length.

B. A study tour segment of a maximum of two weeks in length that takes participants to up to three additional regions of the U.S. If appropriate, a visit to Washington, D.C. should be included at or near the end of the program.

Program Dates: Tentative program dates are June 19 through July 30, 1999. Based on these dates, participants would be booked to arrive on June 18 and depart July 31, 1999. USIA is willing to consider adjustment of these program dates, based on the needs of the host institution. However, the institute must be 42 program days in length, and should take place sometime between June 12 and August 28, 1999.

Participants: The program should be designed for a total of 30 highly-motivated foreign secondary school teacher trainers, textbook writers, curriculum developers, and education ministry officials, whose professional assignments require significant knowledge of U.S. civilization, and who have broad responsibility for curriculum design and improvement. Participants will be involved in the teaching of English language, American literature, U.S. government, history, geography, social studies, or other courses that include U.S. studies content. Participants will be drawn from all regions of the world, and will be fluent in the English language.

Participants will be nominated by U.S. Information Service (USIS) posts abroad, and selected by the staff of USIA's Branch of the Study of the United States in Washington, D.C. USIA will cover all international travel costs directly.

Program Guidelines: The conception, design, structure and content of the institute program is entirely the responsibility of the organizers. However, given the many possible approaches to a program on U.S. civilization, organizers are expected to submit proposals that articulate in concrete detail how they intend to organize and implement the institute.

Consistent with the institute's overall thematic organization, the program should engage the constituent disciplines that make up American studies (e.g., literature, history, political science, economics, geography, sociology, etc.) as vehicles for helping foreign educators understand, teach, and write about the United States.

The selected grant organization will be responsible for most arrangements associated with this program. This includes the organization and implementation of all presentations and program activities, arrangement of all domestic travel, provision of

appropriate lodging, subsistence, and ground transportation for participants, orientation and briefing of participants, preparation of any necessary support materials (including a pre-program mailing to participants), and working with program presenters to achieve maximum program coordination and effectiveness.

Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further details on program design and implementation, as well as additional information on all other requirements.

Budget Guidelines: Unless special circumstances warrant, based on a group of 30 participants, the total USIA-funded budget (program and administrative) should not exceed \$236,000, and USIA-funded administrative costs as defined in the budget details section of the solicitation package should not exceed \$56,000. Justifications for any costs above these amounts must be clearly indicated in the proposal submission. Any grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000. Applicant proposals should try to maximize cost-sharing in all facets of the program and to stimulate U.S. private sector, including foundation and corporate, support. Applicants must submit a comprehensive line item budget for the entire program, based on the specific guidance provided in the Solicitation Package. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program, and availability of U.S. government funding.

Please refer to the "POGI" in the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions for the institution program.

Announcement Name and Number: All communications with USIA concerning this announcement should refer to the above title and reference number: E/AES-99-05.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation, applicants should contact: U.S. Information Agency, Office of Academic Programs, Branch of the Study of the United States, E/AES—Room 252, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547, Attn: Richard Taylor, Telephone number: (202) 619-4557, FAX number: (202) 619-6790, E-mail address: rtaylor@usia.gov.

Please specify USIA Program Officer Richard Taylor on all inquiries and correspondence. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before addressing inquiries to the office listed above or submitting their proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, USIA staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until after the Bureau proposal review process has been completed.

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 Package Via Fax on Demand: The entire Solicitation Package may be requested from the Bureau's "Grants Information Fax on Demand System," which is accessed by calling (202) 401-7616. The "Table of Contents" listing available documents and order numbers should be the first order when entering the system.

Deadline for Proposals: All copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5:00 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Friday, January 29, 1999. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked January 29, 1999 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposal submissions arrive by the deadline.

Submissions: Applicants must follow all instructions given in the Solicitation Package. The original and 13 copies of the complete application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: E/AES-99-05, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 4th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20547.

Applicants should also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" section of the proposal on a 3.5 inch diskette formatted for DOS. This material must be provided in ACCII text (DOS) format with a maximum line length of 65 characters.

Diversity, Freedom, and Democracy 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, social-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. 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," USIA "shall take appropriate steps to provide opportunities for participation in such programs to human rights and democracy leaders of such countries." Proposals should account for advancement of this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

Year 2000 Compliance Requirement (Y2K Requirement): The Year 2000 (Y2K) issue is a broad operational and accounting problem that could potentially prohibit organizations from processing information in accordance with Federal management and program-specific requirements, including data exchange with USIA. The inability to process information in accordance with Federal requirements could result in grantees being required to return funds that have not been accounted for properly.

USIA therefore requires all organizations use Y2K compliant systems including hardware, software, and firmware. Systems must accurately process data and dates (calculating, comparing and sequencing) both before and after the beginning of the year 2000 and correctly adjust for leap years.

Additional information addressing the Y2K issue may be found at the General Services Administration's Office of Information Technology website at <http://www.itpolicy.gsa.gov>.

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. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Geographic Area Offices. Eligible proposals will then be forwarded to panels of senior USIA officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Final 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: Technical 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. *Overall quality:* Proposals should exhibit originality and substance, consonant with the highest standards of American teaching and scholarship. The various program elements should be coherently and thoughtfully integrated. Lectures, panels, field visits and readings, taken as a whole, should offer a balanced presentation of issues, reflecting both the continuity of the American experience as well as the diversity and dynamism inherent in it.

2. *Program planning:* Proposals should demonstrate careful and detailed planning. The organization and structure of the Institute should be clearly delineated and be fully responsive to all program objectives. A program syllabus (noting specific sessions and topical readings supporting each academic unit) should be included, as should a calendar of activities. The travel component should not simply be a tour, but should be an integral and substantive part of the program, reinforcing and complementing the academic segment.

3. *Institutional capacity:* Proposed personnel, including faculty and administrative staff as well as outside presenters, should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals. Library and media resources should be accessible to participants; housing, transportation and other logistical arrangements should be fully adequate to the needs of participants and should be conducive to a collegial atmosphere.

4. *Support for diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate the recipient's commitment to promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity throughout the program. This can be accomplished through documentation, such as a written statement, summarizing past and/or ongoing activities and efforts that further the principle of diversity within the organization and its activities. Program activities that address this issue should be highlighted.

5. *Experience:* The proposal should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange program activity, indicating the experience that the organization and its professional staff have had in working with foreign educators.

6. *Evaluation and follow-up:* The proposal should include a plan for evaluating activities during the Institute and at its conclusion. Proposals should detail the provisions made for follow-up with returned grantees as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages.

7. *Administration and management:* The proposals should indicate evidence of continuous on-site administrative and managerial capacity as well as the means by which program activities will be implemented.

8. *Cost effectiveness:* The proposals should maximize cost-sharing through direct institutional contributions, in-kind support, and other private sector support. Overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible.

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-Hayes 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."

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, and allocated and committed through internal USIA procedures.

Dated: November 3, 1998.

Judith Siegel,

Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

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UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

Summer Institute for Economic Policy Officials: American Institutions and the Formulation of U.S. International Economic Policy; Request for Proposals (RFP).

SUMMARY: The U.S. Information Agency's Branch for the Study of the United States announces an open competition for an assistance award program entitled: "Summer Institute for Economic Policy Officials: American Institutions and the Formulation of U.S. International Economic Policy." Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501 (C) may apply to develop and implement a three-week post-graduate level program designed for a multinational group of 15 experienced mid-level economic affairs professionals.

The program is intended to provide participants with a deeper understanding of U.S. economic policies in the international arena, with particular reference to how the political, economic, social and cultural institutions of American life affect the formulation of those policies. Tentative program dates are any three week period between June 6 and August 14, 1999.

USIA is seeking detailed proposals from colleges, universities, consortia of colleges and universities, and other not-for-profit academic organizations that have an established reputation in a scholarly discipline related to the subject of the institute and that can demonstrate expertise in conducting post-graduate programs for foreign educators. *Applicant institutions must have a minimum of four years experience in conducting international exchange programs.* The project director or one of the key program staff responsible for the academic program must have an advanced degree in a relevant discipline. Staff escorts traveling under the USIA cooperative agreement support must have demonstrated qualifications for this service.

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

Program Information:

Overview and Objectives

"The Summer Institute for Economic Policy Officials: American Institutions and the Formulation of U.S. International Economic Policy," is intended to provide mid-career