

meaning of section 999(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

On the basis of the best information currently available to the Department of the Treasury, the following countries may require participation in, or cooperation with, an international boycott (within the meaning of section 999(b)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986).

Bahrain  
Iraq  
Kuwait  
Lebanon  
Libya  
Oman  
Qatar  
Saudi Arabia  
Syria  
United Arab Emirates  
Yemen, Republic of

Dated: September 24, 1999.

**Philip West,**

*International Tax Counsel, (Tax Policy).*

[FR Doc. 99-25396 Filed 9-29-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4810-25-M

## UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

### NIS Educational Advising Centers; Notice; Request for Proposals

**SUMMARY:** The Office of Academic Programs/Advising, Teaching, and Specialized Programs Division of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the United States Information Agency announces an open competition to operate educational advising centers in the NIS, including: Erevan, Armenia; Baku, Azerbaijan; Minsk, Belarus; Tbilisi, Georgia; Almaty, Kazakhstan; Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; Chisinau, Moldova; Moscow, Novosibirsk, St. Petersburg, and Vladivostok, Russia; Dushanbe, Tajikistan; Ashgabat, Turkmenistan; Kyiv, Ukraine; and Tashkent, Uzbekistan. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501C may submit proposals for administering advising centers in the NIS. The educational advising centers would be part of USIA's worldwide network of over 450 affiliated centers. These centers provide comprehensive and unbiased information to interested students, scholars, and other individuals about study opportunities in the U.S.

For applicants' information, on October 1, 1999, the Bureau will become part of the United States Department of State without affecting the content of this announcement or the nature of the program described. At that time, the Advising, Teaching, and Specialized

Programs Division will be renamed the Office of Global Educational Programs.

### Program Information

#### Overview

The advising centers in the NIS should provide access to comprehensive and unbiased information about study opportunities in the U.S. Services provided by the centers must include group and/or individual advising informational sessions. The advising centers should provide accurate information and advising on the following topics: all U.S. colleges, universities, and other higher education institutions; accreditation; the application process to a U.S. university; majors and fields of study; testing requirements; life in the U.S.; scholarship programs and financial aid; and pre-departure orientation. Advising centers should also provide information on grant opportunities sponsored by the USG and other institutions and organizations. Advisers will be eligible for training opportunities sponsored by the Bureau, which will also provide a limited selection of reference books and materials to the center.

#### Guidelines

The period of this grant is January 1, 2000 to December 31, 2000.

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures.

Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

#### Budget Guidelines

Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than four years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for each advising center in their proposal. Applicants may submit a proposal for one, several, or all of the advising centers listed. Awards may not exceed the following amounts for each educational advising center:

Erevan, Armenia—\$21,000  
Baku, Azerbaijan—\$12,000  
Minsk, Belarus—\$15,000  
Tbilisi, Georgia—\$11,000  
Almaty, Kazakhstan—\$12,000  
Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan—\$12,000  
Chisinau, Moldova—\$6,000  
Moscow, Russia—\$169,000  
Novosibirsk, Russia—\$17,000  
St. Petersburg, Russia—\$21,000  
Vladivostok, Russia—\$18,000  
Dushanbe, Tajikistan—\$7,000  
Ashgabat, Turkmenistan—\$8,000

Kyiv, Ukraine—\$33,000

Tashkent, Uzbekistan—\$18,000.

All administrative and indirect costs must be included in the maximum award amount for each center. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets.

Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- (1) Salaries and benefits.
- (2) Office supplies and expenses, including rent, communications, postage and shipping.
- (3) Outreach and publicity costs.
- (4) Indirect costs.

Please refer to the Solicitation Package for complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

**Announcement Title and Number:** All correspondence with USIA concerning this RFP should reference the above title and number *E/ASA-00-07*.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Education Information and Services Branch—ECA/ASA, (formerly known as the Advising and Student Services Branch—E/ASA), Room 349, U.S. Department of State, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, phone: (202) 619-4731, email:

ssheehan@usia.gov to request a Solicitation Package. The Solicitation Package contains detailed award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation. Please specify Bureau Program Officer Sharen Sheehan on all other inquiries and correspondence.

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

**To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet:** The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website at <http://e.usia.gov/education/rfps>. Please read all information before downloading.

**Deadline for Proposals:** All proposal copies must be received at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on *Monday, November 8, 1999*. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked the due date but received on a later date will not be accepted. Each applicant must ensure that the proposals are received by the above deadline.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and 6 copies of the application should be sent to: U.S.

Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: E/ASA-00-07, Program Management Staff, ECA/EX/PM, Room 336, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal on a 3.5" diskette, formatted for DOS. These documents must be provided in ASCII text (DOS) format with a maximum line length of 65 characters. The Bureau will transmit these files electronically to public diplomacy sections at U.S. Embassies overseas for their review, with the goal of reducing the time it takes to get Embassy comments for the Bureau's grants review process.

### **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, 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. 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. Proposals should reflect 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 the Bureau. 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.

The Bureau therefore requires all organizations use Y2K complaint 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**

The Bureau 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 U.S. Department of State's Office of the Senior Coordinator for the Newly Independent States and the public affairs sections overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of Bureau officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by other Bureau elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the Bureau's 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 exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Agency's mission.
2. Program planning: Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.
3. Ability to achieve program objectives: Objectives should be reasonable, feasible, and flexible. Proposals should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.
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. 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 and program content.

6. Institutional Capacity: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program or project's goals.

7. Institution's Record/Ability: Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful programs in international education, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past USIA grants as determined by the Bureau's Office of Contracts. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

8. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan to evaluate the activity's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. A draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives is recommended. Successful applicants will be expected to submit intermediate reports quarterly.

9. Cost-effectiveness: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate.

10. Cost-sharing: Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

11. Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations: Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by Bureau's geographic area officers and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner countries.

### **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 the Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act of 1993 (Freedom Support Act).

#### Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau 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 Bureau 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 Department of State procedures.

Dated: September 21, 1999.

**William P. Kiehl,**

*Acting Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

[FR Doc. 99-25333 Filed 9-29-99; 8:45 am]

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### UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

#### Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs; Performing Arts Presenters Exchange Program With China

**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 a Performing Arts Presenters Exchange Program with China. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c) may submit proposals to facilitate international cultural and educational exchange through a program that will bring performing arts presenters in China and the United States together to exchange strategies for presenting artists, discuss arts management techniques and recruit performing artists from each other's countries for presentation through this exchange. Interested applicants are invited to read the complete solicitation package before submitting their proposals. The solicitation package

consists of the RFP; and Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) statement; and Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). On October 1, 1999, the U.S. Information Agency, including the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, will become part of the United States Department of State without affecting the content of this announcement or the nature of the program described.

**Application Deadline and Reference Number:** All proposal materials must be received at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Grants Office by 5 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Wednesday, October 27, 1999. Faxed documents will not be accepted, nor will documents postmarked on October 27, 1999, but received at a later date. All communications concerning this announcement should refer to the title and reference number—E/P-00-08. Please see section entitled "Guidelines".

#### Program Information

##### Overview

Differences in arts management between the U.S. and China may contribute to impediments in artistic exchange between the two countries. Cultural perceptions, contractual misunderstandings and incompatible management styles have, at times, created barriers to the exchange of performing artists between the two countries. The purpose of this program is to assist arts presenters in both countries understand how the other side operates, with the objective of achieving fruitful artistic exchanges. An ideal program should include the following three components:

1. Consultation/assessment visit by American arts presenters to China: A team of arts presenters from the U.S. will visit China to meet with leading arts presenters, increase their knowledge of performing arts presentation in China and assess performance venues.
2. Workshops in the U.S.: To be conducted for Chinese participants, by American experts in performing arts presentation in this country, focusing on legal, contractual, marketing, commercial and logistical issues involved with presenting American performing artists. Workshops should also cover similarities and differences between performing arts organizations in the U.S. and China, and an overview of the difficulties that American performing artists tend to encounter when conducting overseas tours.
3. An opportunity for leading arts presenters in China to attend one of the regional or national conferences for arts

presenters in the U.S., where participants would have an opportunity to increase their understanding of trends in the arts presentation field and to view a wide range of American performing artists. At the conclusion of this component, the American and Chinese arts presenters will develop proposals and time lines to present specific artists in each other's country.

#### Guidelines

##### Eligible Applicants

The Office of Citizen Exchanges works with U.S. non-profit organizations to develop cooperative international group projects that introduce American and foreign participants to each other's cultural and artistic life and traditions. For this project, we look forward to working with an arts organization that has demonstrated expertise in presenting performing artists in the United States, extensive knowledge of presenting performing artists abroad, and interest and expertise in the performing arts of China.

##### Project Participants

The grantee organization will recruit American arts presenters for the initial assessment visit and the final phase of the project, which will result in a work plan for presenting performing artists from China in the U.S. The grantee organization must work with our colleagues at the American Embassy in Beijing to recruit appropriate performing arts presenters in China to participate this project. The U.S. Embassy in Beijing will also review the Chinese participants' final work plans to present American artists in China.

Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further information regarding visas.

##### Grant Dates

We anticipate that the grant will begin on or about February 1, 2000, and end on March 1, 2001. However, a final award cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, and allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures.

#### Budget Guidelines

Grants awarded to eligible organizations with less than 4 years of experience in conducting international exchange programs will be limited to \$60,000.

Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. The Award may not exceed \$100,000, and the Bureau expects to award one grant under the terms of this