

persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the grant or who benefit from the grant funding but do not travel.

(2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Dorothy Mora, Educational Information and Resources Branch, ECA/A/S/A, Room 349, Reference number ECA/A/S/A-05-05, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, telephone: 202-260-6936 and fax number: 202-401-1433, Internet address: MoraDD@state.gov.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/S/A-05-05. Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

VIII. Other Information

Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFGP 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 RFGP 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 per section VI.3 above.

Dated: September 27, 2004.

C. Miller Crouch,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, , Department of State.

[FR Doc. 04-22583 Filed 10-6-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-05-P

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 4855]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: Educational Advising and Regional Educational Advising Coordinator Services in Eurasia

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement.

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/S/A-05-07.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Key Dates: January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005.

Application Deadline: Friday, November 12, 2004.

Executive Summary: The Office of Global Educational Programs, Educational Information and Resources Branch of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for Educational Advising and Regional Educational Advising Coordinator (REAC) Services in Eurasia (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan). Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3) may submit proposals to operate centers in Bureau-specified locations in Eurasia and provide REAC services for the region out of Moscow, Russia. The educational advising centers would be a part of the network of approximately 450 Department of State-affiliated centers worldwide. These centers provide comprehensive and unbiased information to interested students, scholars, and other individuals about study opportunities in the U.S.

The REAC provides training and information to new and experienced advisers, conducts needs assessments, site visits, manages the regional advising listserv, and oversees production of the regional newsletter.

I. Funding Opportunity Description

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.

Purpose: The educational advising centers in Eurasia must provide access to comprehensive and unbiased information about study opportunities in the U.S. Services provided by the centers must include group informational sessions as well as individual advising. The centers should provide accurate, impartial information and advising on the following topics: all accredited U.S. colleges, universities, and other higher education institutions; accreditation issues; 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; visa requirements, and pre-departure orientation. Centers should also provide information on grant opportunities sponsored by the USG and other institutions and organizations. The Bureau will provide a selection of reference books and materials to each center. Educational advisers at the centers will be eligible to apply for Bureau-sponsored professional development opportunities and training events.

The REAC coordinates a network of educational advising centers throughout the region. Advising centers first opened in Eurasia in 1992, and the network has expanded each year. These centers provide accurate and unbiased information and advising about higher education in the U.S. and U.S. Government-sponsored exchange programs to all interested students and scholars. The REAC's mission is to continue to develop and strengthen this network of educational information and advising centers and to provide leadership and expertise on educational advising issues to centers and Public Affairs Sections. The REAC is responsible for providing onsite technical assistance and training to all centers in the U.S. Department of State-affiliated network. The REAC lends support to any affiliated center in the twelve countries comprising the Eurasia region and works impartially with all organizations involved in educational advising to help enable centers to provide accurate and timely information on U.S. higher educational opportunities. The REAC also works closely with the Bureau and Public Affairs Sections to help establish

priorities for educational advising in the region. The REAC must be a U.S. citizen located in Moscow.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA/A/S/A is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA/A/S/A activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows: all Eurasia centers must facilitate international exchange through overseas educational advising, orientation, and information services for foreign students and scholars seeking information on opportunities in U.S. higher education. ECA/A/S/A will provide reference materials, training opportunities, and occasional equipment (on a priority needs basis) to all educational advising centers in the State Department-affiliated EducationUSA advising network. All centers in the network, including those centers receiving grants from ECA/A/S/A, must operate according to the following basic principles:

(a) Advising centers should provide impartial information about all accredited institutions of higher learning in the United States;

(b) Services provided at no charge should include, at minimum, access to educational reference materials as appropriate and to an introductory group advising session;

(c) Advising centers must be open to the public and must serve the diversity of the population without bias against age, gender, socio-economic level, race, religion, physical disabilities, or any other factor.

In addition, ECA/A/S/A support is contingent upon the following standards of operation:

Outreach: Proposals should include any proposed outreach programs from each center and a detailed description of activities, along with a proposed schedule of visits. Examples of outreach may include collaboration with American Corners and the Internet Access Training Program (IATP), organization of education fairs, presentations at local high schools, and cooperation with Peace Corps volunteers. The Bureau's priority of diversity should be considered when making plans for outreach activities to ensure that less represented non-elite populations, including the physically challenged, have access to the centers' services.

Statistics: Centers should submit monthly usage statistics to the Eurasia REAC and be responsive to special requests for information from the Eurasia REAC and ECA/A/S/A. The proposal should also explain how the centers are working with public affairs and consular sections of the U.S.

Embassies in the region to assist the Embassies and students in the visa application process.

Fund-Raising/Cost Defrayment: The proposal should explain any measures the advising centers are taking to generate income or defray operating costs and include projected savings/income from activities during 2005.

Coordination and Communication: ECA/A/S/A requests that Eurasia educational advising centers continue to coordinate major events such as workshops, advising fairs, etc. with the REAC and other centers in the region or in Europe to prevent similar events from occurring at the same time. In accordance with the principles of better customer service, such coordination will provide visiting representatives of U.S. institutions the opportunity to participate in multiple advising fairs on the same trip.

Advisers at the centers should participate in the Eurasia advising listserv and maintain contact with other educational advisers in Eurasia and other regions. This listserv is administered by the Educational Information and Resources Branch and is open to educational advisers working at Department of State-affiliated advising centers.

Professional Standards, Guidelines and Development: Educational advisers should adhere to the OSEAS Standards of Ethical Conduct adopted by NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

ECA/A/S/A requests that your organization consider providing cost sharing for educational advisers to attend/participate in professional development conferences.

Unless an educational advising center is removed from the list of State Department-approved EducationUSA advising centers, each center should prominently display in the center and on its website, if one exists, the EducationUSA name and logo, as part of the State Department's effort to build recognition of the EducationUSA brand.

II. Award Information

Type of Award: Cooperative Agreement. ECA's level of involvement in this program is listed under number I above.

Fiscal Year Funds: FY2005.

Approximate Total Funding: \$435,000.

Approximate Number of Awards: One—Three.

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds, January 1, 2005.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2005.

Additional Information: Pending successful implementation of this

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

III. Eligibility Information

III.1. Eligible Applicants

Applications may be submitted by public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3).

III.2. Cost Sharing or Matching Funds

There is no minimum or maximum percentage required for this competition. However, the Bureau 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 grant 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 OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23—Cost Sharing and Matching. In the event you do not provide the minimum amount of cost sharing as stipulated in the approved budget, ECA's contribution will be reduced in like proportion.

III.3 Other Eligibility Requirements

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

IV. Application and Submission Information

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

IV.1 Contact Information To Request an Application Package

Please contact the Educational Information and Resources Branch, ECA/A/S/A, Room 349, U.S. Department of State, SA-44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547,

telephone: 202-260-6936, fax: 202-401-1433, e-mail: MoraDD@state.gov to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/S/A-05-07 located at the top of this announcement when making your request.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document that consists of required application forms, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation.

It also contains the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document, which provides specific information, award criteria and budget instructions tailored to this competition.

Please specify Bureau Program Officer Dorothy Mora and refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/S/A-05-07 located at the top of this announcement on all other inquiries and correspondence.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's Web site at <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/rfgps/menu.htm>. Please read all information before downloading.

IV.3. Content and Form of Submission

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and eight copies of the application should be sent per the instructions under IV.3e. "Submission Dates and Times section" below. Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal in text (.txt) format on a PC-formatted disk. The Bureau will provide these files electronically to the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. embassies and consulates in Eurasia for review.

IV.3a. You are required to have a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number to apply for a grant or cooperative agreement from the U.S. Government. This number is a nine-digit identification number, which uniquely identifies business entities. Obtaining a DUNS number is easy and there is no charge. To obtain a DUNS number, access <http://www.dunandbradstreet.com> or call 1-866-705-5711. Please ensure that your DUNS number is included in the appropriate box of the SF-424 which is part of the formal application package.

IV.3b. All proposals must contain an executive summary, proposal narrative and budget.

Please Refer to the Solicitation Package. It contains the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI)

document and the Project Objectives, Goals and Implementation (POGI) document for additional formatting and technical requirements.

IV.3c. You must have nonprofit status with the IRS at the time of application. If your organization is a private nonprofit which has not received a grant or cooperative agreement from ECA in the past three years, or if your organization received nonprofit status from the IRS within the past four years, you must submit the necessary documentation to verify nonprofit status as directed in the PSI document. Failure to do so will cause your proposal to be declared technically ineligible.

IV.3d. Please take into consideration the following information when preparing your proposal narrative: Proposals should include a plan to work with the American Corner network in Eurasia. Proposals should also address cooperation with the IATP network and alumni groups where practical.

IV.3d.2 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 disabilities. 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 your 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." 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.

IV.3d.3. Program Monitoring and Evaluation. Proposals must include a plan to monitor and evaluate the project's success, both as the activities unfold and at the end of the program. The Bureau recommends that your proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus a

description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original project objectives. The Bureau expects that the grantee will track participants or partners and be able to respond to key evaluation questions, including satisfaction with the program, learning as a result of the program, changes in behavior as a result of the program, and effects of the program on institutions (institutions in which participants work or partner institutions). The evaluation plan should include indicators that measure gains in mutual understanding as well as substantive knowledge.

Successful monitoring and evaluation depend heavily on setting clear goals and outcomes at the outset of a program. Your evaluation plan should include a description of your project's objectives, your anticipated project outcomes, and how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators). The more that outcomes are "smart" (specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and placed in a reasonable time frame), the easier it will be to conduct the evaluation. You should also show how your project objectives link to the goals of the program described in this RFGP.

Your monitoring and evaluation plan should clearly distinguish between program *outputs* and *outcomes*. *Outputs* are products and services delivered, often stated as an amount. Output information is important to show the scope or size of project activities, but it cannot substitute for information about progress towards outcomes or the results achieved. Examples of outputs include the number of people trained or the number of seminars conducted. *Outcomes*, in contrast, represent specific results a project is intended to achieve and is usually measured as an extent of change. Findings on outputs and outcomes should both be reported, but the focus should be on outcomes.

We encourage you to assess the following four levels of outcomes, as they relate to the program goals set out in the RFGP (listed here in increasing order of importance):

1. *Participant satisfaction* with the program and exchange experience.

2. *Participant learning*, such as increased knowledge, aptitude, skills, and changed understanding and attitude. Learning includes both substantive (subject-specific) learning and mutual understanding.

3. *Participant behavior*, concrete actions to apply knowledge in work or community; greater participation and responsibility in civic organizations; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained; continued contacts between

participants, community members, and others.

4. *Institutional changes*, such as increased collaboration and partnerships, policy reforms, new programming, and organizational improvements.

Please note: Consideration should be given to the appropriate timing of data collection for each level of outcome. For example, satisfaction is usually captured as a short-term outcome, whereas behavior and institutional changes are normally considered longer-term outcomes.

Overall, the quality of your monitoring and evaluation plan will be judged on how well it: (1) Specifies intended outcomes; (2) gives clear descriptions of how each outcome will be measured; (3) identifies when particular outcomes will be measured; and (4) provides a clear description of the data collection strategies for each outcome (*i.e.*, surveys, interviews, or focus groups). (Please note that evaluation plans that deal only with the first level of outcomes [satisfaction] will be deemed less competitive under the present evaluation criteria.)

Grantees will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings 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.

Describe your plans for: sustainability, overall program management, staffing, coordination with ECA and PAS.

IV.3e.1. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets. Applicants may provide separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location, or activity to provide clarification.

IV.3.e.2. Allowable costs for the educational advising program include the following:

(1) Educational advising staff salaries and benefits;

(2) Office supplies and expenses, including rent, communications, postage and shipping;

(3) Outreach and publicity costs;

(4) Indirect costs; Allowable costs for the REAC include the following:

(1) REAC salary and benefits;

(2) Travel and per diem costs for site visits and training within the Eurasia region;

(3) Travel for REAC to attend NAFSA National Conference in Seattle, Washington for one week, and an

additional week of REAC meetings in Washington, DC in May/June 2005;

(4) Program costs for internship training programs and other training workshops. This may include participant travel and per diem, supplies, venue costs, and honoraria for speakers;

(5) Office and administrative costs, including communication and equipment.

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

IV.3f. Submission Dates and Times:
Application Deadline Date: Friday, November 12, 2004.

Explanation of Deadlines: In light of recent events and heightened security measures, proposal submissions must be sent via a nationally recognized overnight delivery service (*i.e.*, DHL, Federal Express, UPS, Airborne Express, or U.S. Postal Service Express Overnight Mail, etc.) and be shipped no later than the above deadline. The delivery services used by applicants must have in-place, centralized shipping identification and tracking systems that may be accessed via the Internet and delivery people who are identifiable by commonly recognized uniforms and delivery vehicles. Proposals shipped on or before the above deadline but received at ECA more than seven days after the deadline will be ineligible for further consideration under this competition. Proposals shipped after the established deadlines are ineligible for consideration under this competition. It is each applicant's responsibility to ensure that each package is marked with a legible tracking number and to monitor/confirm delivery to ECA via the Internet. ECA will *not* notify you upon receipt of application. Delivery of proposal packages *may not* be made via local courier service or in person for this competition. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Only proposals submitted as stated above will be considered. Applications may not be submitted electronically at this time.

Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package.

Important note: When preparing your submission please make sure to include one extra copy of the completed SF-424 form and place it in an envelope addressed to "ECA/EX/PM".

The original and eight copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, SA-44, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Ref.: ECA/A/S/A-05-07, Program Management, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Along with the Project Title, all applicants must enter the above Reference Number in Box 11 on the SF-424 contained in the mandatory Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI) of the solicitation document.

IV.3g. Intergovernmental Review of Applications: Executive Order 12372 does not apply to this program.

Applicants must also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal in text (.txt) format on a PC-formatted disk. The Bureau will provide these files electronically to the appropriate Public Affairs Section(s) at the U.S. embassy(ies) for its(their) review.

V. Application Review Information

V.1. Review Process

The Bureau will review all proposals 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 Public Affairs Sections overseas, where appropriate. Eligible proposals will be subject to compliance with Federal and Bureau regulations and guidelines and forwarded to Bureau grant panels for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Adviser or by other Department elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of the Department of State's Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards and 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 Bureau'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.

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 (selection of participants, program venue and program evaluation) and program content (orientation and wrap-up sessions, program meetings, resource materials and follow-up activities).

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 exchange programs, including responsible fiscal management and full compliance with all reporting requirements for past Bureau grants as determined by Bureau Grants Staff. The Bureau will consider the past performance of prior recipients and the demonstrated potential of new applicants.

8. *Follow-on Activities*: Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (without Bureau support) ensuring that Bureau supported programs are not isolated events.

9. *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.

10. *Cost-effectiveness*: The overhead and administrative components of the proposal, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible. All other items should be necessary and appropriate.

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

12. *Value to U.S.-Partner Country Relations*: Proposed projects should receive positive assessments by the U.S. Department of State's geographic area desk and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner country(ies).

VI. Award Administration Information

VI.1a. Award Notices

Final awards cannot be made until funds have been appropriated by Congress, allocated and committed through internal Bureau procedures. Successful applicants will receive an Assistance Award Document (AAD)

from the Bureau's Grants Office. The AAD and the original grant proposal with subsequent modifications (if applicable) shall be the only binding authorizing document between the recipient and the U.S. Government. The AAD will be signed by an authorized Grants Officer, and mailed to the recipient's responsible officer identified in the application.

Unsuccessful applicants will receive notification of the results of the application review from the ECA program office coordinating this competition.

VI.2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

Terms and Conditions for the Administration of ECA agreements include the following:

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-122, "Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations."

Office of Management and Budget Circular A-21, "Cost Principles for Educational Institutions."

OMB Circular A-87, "Cost Principles for State, Local and Indian Governments".

OMB Circular No. A-110 (Revised), Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and other Nonprofit Organizations.

OMB Circular No. A-102, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants-in-Aid to State and Local Governments.

OMB Circular No. A-133, Audits of States, Local Government, and Non-profit Organizations

Please reference the following websites for additional information: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants>. <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/grantsdiv/terms.htm#article1>.

VI.3. Reporting Requirements

You must provide ECA with a hard copy original plus two copies of the following reports:

A final program and financial report no more than 90 days after the expiration of the award;

Grantees will be required to provide reports analyzing their evaluation findings to the Bureau in their regular program reports. (Please refer to IV. Application and Submission Instructions (IV.3.d.3) above for Program Monitoring and Evaluation information.

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.

All reports must be sent to the ECA Grants Officer and ECA Program Officer listed in the final assistance award document.

Program Data Requirements: Organizations awarded grants will be required to maintain specific data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible database format that can be shared with the Bureau as required. As a minimum, the data must include the following:

(1) Name, address, contact information and biographic sketch of all persons who travel internationally on funds provided by the grant or who benefit from the grant funding but do not travel.

(2) Itineraries of international and domestic travel, providing dates of travel and cities in which any exchange experiences take place. Final schedules for in-country and U.S. activities must be received by the ECA Program Officer at least three work days prior to the official opening of the activity.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: The Educational Information and Resources Branch, ECA/A/S/A, room 349, U.S. Department of State, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, telephone: 202-260-6936, fax: 202-401-1433, <http://exchanges.state.gov/education/educationusa>.

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the above title and number ECA/A/S/A-05-07.

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

VIII. Other Information

Notice

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Dated: September 30, 2004.

C. Miller Crouch,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 04-22582 Filed 10-6-04; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-05-P

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Trade Policy Staff Committee; Public Comments for Market Access Negotiations Under the WTO Agreement on Government Procurement

AGENCY: Office of the United States Trade Representative.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) is requesting written public comments with respect to the expansion of market access opportunities in government procurement under the World Trade Organization Agreement on Government Procurement. The specific information being sought is described in the background section below.

DATES: Public Comments are due by noon, November 1, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Offices of the U.S. Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508. Submissions by electronic mail: FR0446@ustr.gov. Submissions by facsimile: Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, at (202) 395-6143.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For procedural questions concerning public comments, contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, TPSC, Office of the USTR, 1725 F. Street, NW, Washington, DC 20508, telephone (202) 395-3475. Questions concerning the expansion of market access opportunities in government procurement should be addressed to Jean Heilman Grier, Senior Procurement Negotiator, Office of the USTR, (202) 395-5097, or Scott Pietan, Department of Commerce, (202) 482-4337.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Chairman of the TPSC invites written comments from the public on the expansion of market access opportunities in government procurement under the World Trade Organization (WTO) Agreement on Government Procurement (GPA). Comments should identify specific improvements that are needed in the current coverage of the Parties to the GPA. Such requests could include the

addition of specific government entities, state-owned enterprises or other government-related entities, the addition of services covered by the Agreement, and the removal of existing discriminatory measures or exclusions.

The Appendices with the current market access commitments or coverage of each Party can be found on the WTO Web site at <http://www.wto.org> under the trade topic "government procurement," with the details of Parties' market access obligations at http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/gproc_e/loose_e.htm.

1. Background Information

The GPA is a plurilateral agreement that currently applies to 38 Members of the WTO. In addition to the United States, they are: Canada, European Communities (including its 25 member States: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxemburg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom), Hong Kong China, Iceland, Israel, Japan, Korea, Liechtenstein, Netherlands with respect to Aruba, Norway, Singapore, and Switzerland. The GPA includes both procedures that all the Parties are required to follow when they undertake procurements covered by the GPA and market access obligations in the Appendices to the Agreement.

The Appendices include for each Party a positive list of the government entities that are required to comply with the Agreement when they undertake procurement above specified thresholds, subject to exclusions of certain goods. The government entities covered by the GPA include central government entities and government-related enterprises (such as state-owned enterprises), as well as, for most Parties, sub-central government entities. The Appendices also include a list of the services covered by the Party. In addition, the Parties set out exclusions and discriminatory measures in the Appendices.

The GPA calls for negotiations aimed at increasing market access opportunities under the Agreement through the greatest possible extension of coverage of government procurement by the Parties, on the basis of reciprocity, and the elimination of discriminatory measures and practices that distort open procurement. The GPA Parties have agreed to commence bilateral negotiations with the submission of initial requests to the other Parties for improvements in their coverage under the GPA by the end of

November 2004. Based on the requests, the Parties will exchange offers in the spring of 2005.

The comments will be considered in developing U.S. positions in the negotiations, including requests for improvements in the market access provided by other Parties under the GPA.

2. Requirements for Submissions

In order to facilitate prompt processing of submissions, USTR strongly urges and prefers electronic (e-mail) submissions in response to this notice.

Persons making submissions by e-mail should use the following subject line: "Expansion of Market Access under the WTO/GPA" followed by "Written Comments." Documents should be submitted as WordPerfect, MSWord, or text (.txt) files. Supporting documentation submitted as spreadsheets are acceptable in Quattro Pro or Excel.

For any document containing business confidential information submitted electronically, the file name of the business confidential version should begin with the characters "BC-", and the file name of the public version should begin with the characters "P-". The "P-" or "BC-" should be followed by the name of the submitter. Persons who make submissions by e-mail should not provide separate cover letters; information that might appear in a cover letter should be included in the submission itself. To the extent possible, any attachments to the submission should be included in the same file as the submission itself, and not as separate files.

Written comments submitted in response to this request will be placed in a file open to public inspection pursuant to 15 CFR 2003.5, except business confidential information exempt from public inspection in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6. Business confidential information submitted in accordance with 15 CFR 2003.6 must be clearly marked "Business Confidential" at the top of each page, including any cover letter or cover page, and must be accompanied by a nonconfidential summary of the confidential information. All public documents and nonconfidential summaries shall be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room. The USTR Reading Room is open to the public, by appointment only, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon and 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday. An appointment to review the file must be scheduled at least 48 hours in advance