

**UNITED STATES INFORMATION
AGENCY**
**Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom
Support Act Graduate Fellowship
Programs Host Institution Competition**

ACTION: Notice announcements.

SUMMARY: Subject to the availability of funds, the Office of Academic Programs, European Branch, of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces opportunities for regionally and professionally accredited U.S. institutions offering degree programs at the master's level in business administration, education administration, economics, journalism/mass communications, law, library and information science, public administration, public health, and public policy to host graduate students from Armenia, Azerbaijan*, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakstan, Krygystan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan for one- to two-year degree programs under the auspices of the 1998 Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Programs.

Application Information

The Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom Support Act (FSA) Graduate Fellowship Programs are comprised of one- to two-year Master's-level academic programs and a three-month internship program. Pending available funding, the 1998 Muskie and FSA Graduate Fellowship Programs will be administered with USIA through cooperative agreements with the American Council of Teachers of Russian/American Council for Collaboration in Education and Language Study (ACTR/ACCELS) and the Open Society Institute (OSI). Under these agreements ACTR and Soros/OSI will be responsible for recruitment, selection, academic placement, and monitoring of Fellows. Interested institutions should contact these organizations for additional program and application information:

For programs in Business Administration, Economics, Library and Information Science, Public Administration, and Public Policy: Susan Frarie, ACTR/ACCELS, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W., Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036, *Tel:* (202) 833-7522, *Fax:* (202) 833-7523, *E-Mail:* frarie@actr.org.

For programs in Law, Education Administration, Journalism/Mass Communications, and Public Health: Sofia Skindrud, Scholarships Department, The Open Society Institute,

400 West 59th Street, New York, NY 10019, *Tel:* (212) 548-0600, *Fax:* (212) 548-4679, *Email:* sskindrud@sorosny.org.

Current host institutions should contact the above organizations for renewal applications.

All organizations must be received at the appropriate organization by 5 p.m. Washington, D.C. time on Friday, February 20, 1998. Faxed documents will not be accepted at any time. Documents postmarked by the due date but received at a later date will not be accepted.

Additional Information

Increases in program expenses with reduced overall government funding for exchange programs make cost sharing arrangements with those institutions a critical part of the Muskie and FSA Graduate Fellowship Programs. Preference will be given to institutions that can provide cost-sharing toward tuition, fees, and/or room and board expenses. Cost-sharing may also be in the form of other direct program and participant costs.

The Edmund S. Muskie and Freedom Support Act Graduate Fellowship Programs are not intended as precursors to doctoral studies in the United States. At the end of their designated academic and internship programs, Fellows are required to return to their home countries to fulfill the two-year home residency requirement as specified in the Exchange Visitor (J-Visa) regulations and the Muskie and the FSA Graduate Fellowship Programs Terms and Conditions.

ACTR/ACCELS and OSI will not approve the transfer of visa sponsorship to universities or the extensions of visas for the purpose of Ph.D. Programs, extended practical training, or other additional academic study. Universities that do not comply with the policies of the Muskie and FSA Graduate Fellowship Programs and the J-Visa regulations will be removed from the pool of host institutions.

**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 principal both in programs 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.

*** Please Note:** Programs with Azerbaijan are subject to restrictions of section 907 of the Freedom Support Act: Employees of the Government of Azerbaijan or any of its instrumentalities are excluded from participation, and no U.S. participant overseas may work for the Government of Azerbaijan or any of its instrumentalities. In addition, the Government of Azerbaijan or any of its instrumentalities will have no control in the actual selection of participants.

Dated: November 14, 1997.

Robert L. Earle,

Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.

[FR Doc. 97-30524 Filed 11-19-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8230-01-M

**UNITED STATES INFORMATION
AGENCY**
**Freedom Support Act Undergraduate
Program**

ACTION: Request for proposals.

SUMMARY: Subject to the availability of funds, the Academic Exchanges Division, European Programs Branch 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 a program to recruit in an open, multinational competition and provide 225 to 250 students from the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union with full scholarships for one year of non-degree, undergraduate study at regionally and professionally accredited two- and four-year institutions throughout the United States in the fields of agriculture, business, computer science, criminal justice studies, economics, education, environmental management, EFL/TEFL,