organization.[5] Specifically, the Commission believes that the proposed rule change is consistent with Section 15A(b)(5) of the Act,[6] which requires that the rules of the self-regulatory organization provide for the equitable allocation of reasonable dues, fees, and other charges among members and issuers and other persons using any facilities or system which it operates or controls.

The Commission notes that this proposal would retroactively modify pricing for non-NASD members using the Nasdaq's Brut Facility to be implemented as of November 1, 2005. This proposal would permit the schedule for non-NASD members to mirror the schedule applicable to NASD members that became effective October 26, 2005, pursuant to SR–NASD–2005–125 and that Nasdaq stated it would implement on November 1, 2005.

The Commission finds good cause for approving the proposed rule change prior to the 30th day of the date of publication of the notice thereof in the **Federal Register.** The Commission notes that the proposed fees for non-NASD members are identical to those in SR–NASD–2005–125, which implemented those fees for NASD members and which became effective as of October 26, 2005. The Commission notes that this change will promote consistency in Nasdaq's fee schedule by applying the same pricing schedule with the same date of effectiveness for both NASD members and non-NASD members. Therefore, the Commission finds that there is good cause, consistent with Section 19(b)(2) of the Act,[7] to approve the proposed change on an accelerated basis.

V. Conclusion

It is therefore ordered, pursuant to Section 19(b)(2) of the Act,[8] that the proposed rule change (File No. SR–NASD–2005–126), is approved on an accelerated basis.

For the Commission, by the Division of Market Regulation, pursuant to delegated authority.[9]

Jonathan G. Katz,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. E5–6356 Filed 11–16–05; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8010–01–P

[5] The Commission has considered the proposed rule's impact on efficiency, competition and capital formation. 15 U.S.C. 78c(f).

[6] 15 U.S.C. 78*o*–3(b)(5).

[7] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

[8] 15 U.S.C. 78s(b)(2).

[9] 17 CFR 200.30–3(a)(12).

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

[Public Notice 5230]

Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) Request for Grant Proposals: FY 2006 Eurasia/South Asia Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program

Announcement Type: New Cooperative Agreement.

Funding Opportunity Number: ECA/A/S/X–06–02.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number: 00.000.

Key Dates: Application Deadline, January 12, 2006.

Executive Summary: The Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch in the Office of Global Educational Programs of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), U.S. Department of State, announces an open competition for an assistance award in the amount of $2,750,000 to support the FY 2006 Eurasia/South Asia Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program, a series of concurrent six- to seven-week professional enrichment programs in the U.S. for outstanding secondary-level teachers from selected countries in Eurasia and South Asia, followed by subsequent programs involving U.S. teachers with the Eurasian and South Asian teachers in their countries.

Applicant organizations should be prepared to conduct recruitment and accommodate participants from the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. During the course of this two-year program, approximately 136 teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) and the social sciences in groups of 20 to 25 teachers in each cohort will take part in U.S.-based professional development institutes to learn new teaching methodologies and approaches to curriculum development through workshops, seminars and, where possible, team-teaching in secondary-level classes with U.S. mentor teachers.

Approximately 36 outstanding U.S. teachers will subsequently travel to Eurasia and South Asia to take part in shorter programs with their Eurasian/South Asian counterparts.

To build on the achievements of the exchange visits, small grants will be awarded to individual foreign and U.S. teacher alumni in support of follow-on projects.

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: Overview: The Eurasia/South Asia Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program will expand the impact of the former Teaching Excellence Awards Program by bringing outstanding secondary school teachers from Eurasia and South Asia to the United States to augment their subject area teaching skills and knowledge of the U.S. The goals of the program are: (1) To contribute to the improvement and status of teaching in the participating countries; (2) to create resident experts on the U.S. in schools across the regions; (3) to develop long-lasting partnerships and mutual understanding between American and international teachers and their students; and (4) to provide opportunities for under-served foreign populations, especially women, to develop their leadership skills.

Proposals should outline three distinct program components:

A. A total of six six- to seven-week U.S.-based institutes (each comprising a group of 20 to 25 teachers from Eurasia and South Asia), three of which should occur concurrently in summer or fall of 2006, and three of which should occur concurrently in summer or fall of 2007;

B. Visits of four cohorts of U.S. teachers (two cohorts to each region) during the 2006–07 and 2007–08 academic years to reciprocate the visits of the Eurasian and South Asian teachers to the U.S.; and

C. Follow-on grants.

Applicant organizations should propose a calendar that will include a coherent sequence of program components for each of the two program years. Although the number of participants may be greater in the second year than the first, each year's

program should include both participating regions.

A. Professional Development Institutes

The institutes should be based at competitively selected Schools of Education at U.S. universities. The assignment of teachers to U.S. host campuses will be made based on the similarity of candidates' qualifications and their English proficiency. The grantee organization should administer an open sub-grant competition among U.S. schools of education to host a cohort of international teachers. Institutions that perform well in the first year may host a cohort of teachers in the second year as well.

In the first year of program activity, the grantee organization should arrange a three-day orientation program in Washington, DC, for all three cohorts of international teachers. Then, the international participants will travel to the U.S. host universities for the six-to seven-week institute. The program will conclude with a three-day end-of-program conference and debriefing session at one of the host universities for all of the international and U.S. participant teachers in the first year's cohort. This schedule should repeat in the second year of activity. In each year of program activity, the institutes should provide:

(1) English language instruction, if necessary;

(2) Intensive training in the Teaching of English as a Foreign Language (or in the teaching of one of the social sciences, depending on the specializations of the participants) and teaching methodologies;

(3) Training in the use of computers for Internet and word processing and as tools for teaching EFL or other coursework;

(4) Consultations with leading U.S. teacher training and curriculum development specialists and practitioners and, to the extent possible, school visits and collaborations with U.S. teachers on teaching and observing a variety of teaching methods (inquiry, active classroom, group projects, etc.);

(5) Individual and group work periods for research and curriculum writing activities;

(6) Involvement with Americans at civic and volunteer organizations, at school board meetings, parent-teacher conferences or other community and cultural activities, and through short home stays.

Participants in the institutes should be younger teaching professionals with five or more years of experience and strong written and oral English skills. Teachers will be selected primarily from the discipline of English as a Foreign Language, with teachers of social sciences (including social studies, civics, and history) also eligible.

Both for Eurasia and South Asia, applicant organizations should propose creative, cost-efficient recruitment and selection strategies involving a combination of partner organizations, branch offices, or other cooperating agencies to attract qualified teachers to the program. The recruitment strategy should attract a sufficient number of applicants to ensure a pool of highly qualified candidates, while limiting the number that will not be accepted. We anticipate 200 nominations from international partner organizations for each year of the program cycle. Applicant organizations are invited to suggest, based on their experience and knowledge, appropriate grant-to-applicant ratios that should be targeted in the recruitment effort. Applicants should identify field offices or other local partner organizations and individuals with whom they propose to collaborate, and should describe in detail previous projects undertaken by the organization(s) or individual(s). Please include letters of project commitment from all partners. A sub-grant agreement and an accompanying budget are required if an applicant partners with another organization. Please include this documentation with your proposal submission.

In Eurasia and South Asia the grantee organization, together with all local partners, should collaborate with the Regional English Language Officers (RELO) for Eurasia and South Asia, who are based at the U.S. Embassies in Kiev, Tashkent, and New Delhi. The RELOs will be encouraged to participate in reviewing applications, interviewing and nominating candidates, and the approval and monitoring of follow-up activities.

In all cases, the top candidates' applications will be submitted to the grantee organization, which should organize external peer review panels to help determine the final selection of candidates in collaboration with ECA. ECA's role is to ensure that these programs help support U.S. foreign policy goals.

B. Reciprocal Visits

The program will provide two-week reciprocal visits to Eurasia and South Asia for a total of 36 U.S. teachers during the course of the program. The visits should feature the sharing of best practices, team-teaching with counterparts abroad, teacher-training, seminars on regional educational topics, and opportunities to learn from regional master teachers about teaching styles, curriculum, and educational issues in the host country. The grantee organization should invite applications from outstanding and, preferably, award-winning U.S. teachers and, in consultation with the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X), should select approximately thirty-six for participation over the course of two program cycles. These U.S. teachers will join their Eurasian and South Asian counterparts for the U.S.-based conference and debriefing session in the summer or fall preceding their reciprocal visits to Eurasia or South Asia in fall 2006/winter 2007 or fall 2007/winter 2008. The grantee organization should work with ECA/A/S/X and international counterparts to identify and arrange host placements in Eurasia and South Asia for the U.S. teachers.

C. Follow-On Programming

The third component, which will take place after the international participants return home, is follow-on programming. International teachers will be eligible to apply for small grants after the program ends, to purchase essential materials for their schools, to offer follow-on training for other teachers, and to conduct other activities that will build on the exchange visits. The development and approval of follow-on grants must be coordinated by the grantee organization with the relevant non-governmental organizations, Fulbright Commissions, U.S. Embassies in Eurasia and South Asia (including RELOs, where appropriate), and the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch. The possible range of follow-on programs across Eurasia and South Asia includes organizing teacher training workshops (in such areas as EFL or tolerance education), donating books and school supplies, and opening a teacher resource center. Applicant organizations' proposals should allot a total of $40,000 ($20,000 after each program cycle) to fund approximately 10 or 12 small grants.

The Bureau will work with the recipient of this cooperative agreement award on administrative and program issues and questions as they arise over the duration of the award.

Program Planning and Implementation

Applicant organizations are requested to submit a narrative outlining a comprehensive strategy for the administration and implementation of the Eurasia/South Asia Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program. The narrative should include a proposed design for the institutes and the reciprocal visits by U.S. teachers, a

strategy for selecting university hosts and for cooperating with them through subgrants, a plan for recruiting, selecting, and placing applicants from Eurasia and South Asia for the U.S. institutes, a plan for monitoring the teachers' academic and professional programs, a plan to identify U.S. teachers and the Eurasian/South Asian teachers who will host them, a plan to assess and improve the program based on experience with the first program cycle, and a proposal for alumni programming follow-on support. Employees of the grantee organization will be named Alternate Responsible Officers and will be responsible for issuing DS–2019 forms to participants on behalf of the Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) and performing all actions to comply with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

The comprehensive program strategy should reflect a vision for the Program as a whole, interpreting the goals of the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program with creativity and providing innovative ideas for the Program. The strategy should include a description of how the various components of the Program will be integrated to build upon and reinforce one another. Pending availability of funds, this grant should begin on March 1, 2006, and will run through June 30, 2008.

In a cooperative agreement, ECA's Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch (ECA/A/S/X) will be substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring. ECA/A/S/X activities and responsibilities for this program are as follows:

- Formulation of program policy;
- Clearing texts and program guidelines for publication;
- Establishing which countries are eligible and the number of participants from each country;
- Approval of recruitment mechanisms;
- Review and approval of university-based programs and enhancement activities for the teachers such as the Washington, DC, orientation and the end-of-program conference/debriefing;
- Oversight of selection of U.S. and international teacher participants and alumni awards.

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: 2006.

Approximate Total Funding: $2,750,000.

Approximate Number of Awards: 1.

Approximate Average Award: Pending availability of funds, $2,750,000. This would include $1,500,000 in FY 2005 ECA resources and $1,250,000 in FY 2006 ECA resources, pending a FY 2006 appropriation.

Anticipated Award Date: Pending availability of funds, March 1, 2006.

Anticipated Project Completion Date: June 30, 2008.

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, applicants must maintain written records to support all costs, which are claimed as their 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

Bureau grant guidelines require that organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges be limited to $60,000 in Bureau funding. ECA anticipates issuing one award in an amount up to $2,750,000 to support program and administrative costs required to implement this exchange program. Therefore, organizations with less than four years experience in conducting international exchanges are ineligible to apply under this competition. The Bureau encourages applicants to provide maximum levels of cost sharing and funding in support of its programs.

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 Patricia Mosley of the Fulbright Teacher Exchange Branch, ECA/A/S/X, Room 349, U.S. Department of State, SA–44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, telephone: (202)453–8897, fax (202)453–8890, e-mail: *MosleyPJ@state.gov* to request a Solicitation Package. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity Number ECA/A/S/X–06–02 when making your request.

The Solicitation Package contains the Proposal Submission Instruction (PSI) document which 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.

IV.2. To Download a Solicitation Package Via Internet

The entire Solicitation Package may be downloaded from the Bureau's website 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 seven copies of the application should be sent per the instructions under IV.3e. ''Submission Dates and Times section'' below.

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:

IV.3d.1 Adherence to All Regulations Governing the J Visa. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs is placing renewed emphasis on the secure and proper administration of Exchange Visitor (J visa) Programs and adherence by grantees and sponsors to all regulations governing the J visa. Therefore, proposals should demonstrate the applicant's capacity to meet all requirements governing the administration of the Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 62, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, screening and selection of program participants, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants, proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements.

An employee of the Bureau will be named the Responsible Officer for the program; employees of the grantee organization will be named Alternate Responsible Officers and will be responsible for issuing DS–2019 forms to participants and performing all actions to comply with the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS).

A copy of the complete regulations governing the administration of Exchange Visitor (J) programs is available at *http://exchanges.state.gov* or from: United States Department of State, Office of Exchange Coordination and Designation, ECA/EC/ECD—SA–44, Room 734, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Telephone: (202) 401–9810, FAX: (202) 401–9809.

Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

IV.3.d.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.3.d.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 and 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, how and when you intend to measure these outcomes (performance indicators), and how these outcomes relate to the above goals. 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 of teachers to apply knowledge in home schools and community; interpretation and explanation of experiences and new knowledge gained to school administrators and other colleagues; continued contacts between participants and others.
4. Institutional changes influencing policy improvement, 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.)

ECA/A/S/X and the Bureau's Office of Policy and Evaluation will work with the recipient of this cooperative agreement to develop appropriate evaluation goals and performance indicators.

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.

IV.3.d.4. Describe your plans for staffing: Please provide a staffing plan which outlines the responsibilities of each staff person and explains which staff member will be accountable for each program responsibility. Wherever possible please streamline administrative processes.

IV.3e. Please take the following information into consideration when preparing your budget:

IV.3.e.1. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the program. The budget should not exceed $2,750,000 for program and administrative costs. There must be a summary budget as well as breakdowns reflecting both administrative and program budgets for host campus and foreign teacher involvement in the program. Applicants should provide separate sub-budgets for the summer institutes, reciprocal visits by U.S. teachers, and the follow-on grant component.

The summary and detailed administrative and program budgets should be accompanied by a narrative which provides a brief rationale for each line item including a methodology for estimating appropriate average maintenance allowance levels and tuition costs for the participants, the number that can be accommodated at the levels proposed. The total administrative costs funded by the Bureau must be reasonable and appropriate.

IV.3.e.2. Allowable costs for the program and additional budget guidance are outlined in detail in the POGI document.

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

IV.3f. Submission Dates and Times.

Application Deadline Date: Thursday, January 12, 2006.

Explanation of Deadlines: Due to 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 seven 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/X–06–02, 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.

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 Diplomacy section 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 (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. *Program Development and Management:* The proposal narrative should exhibit originality, substance, precision, and relevance to the Bureau's mission as well as the objectives of the Eurasia/South Asia Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program. It should include an effective program plan and demonstrate how the distribution of administrative resources will ensure adequate attention to program administration, including host institution selection.

2. *Multiplier effect/impact:* The proposed administrative strategy should maximize the program's potential to build on the participants' training upon their return to their countries.

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, resource materials and follow-up activities).

4. *Institutional Capacity and Record:* 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. Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals.

5. *Follow-on and Alumni Activities:* Proposals should provide a plan for continued follow-on activity (both with

and without Bureau support) ensuring that the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program training is not an isolated event. Activities should include tracking and maintaining updated lists of all alumni and facilitating follow-up activities for alumni.

6. *Project Evaluation:* Proposals should include a plan and methodology to evaluate the Teaching Excellence and Achievement Program's degree of success in meeting program objectives, both as the activities unfold, at the end of the first program iteration, and at their conclusion. Draft survey questionnaires or other techniques plus description of methodologies to use to link outcomes to original project objectives are recommended. Successful applicants will be expected to submit intermediate reports after each project component is concluded, or quarterly, whichever is less frequent.

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

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 Web sites for additional information: *http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/grants.; http://exchanges.state.gov/education/grantsdiv/terms.htm#articleI.*

VI.3. Reporting Requirements

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

Quarterly financial reports; Annual program reports for the first and second year of the agreement; and 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.

VII. Agency Contacts

For questions about this announcement, contact: Michael Kuban, Office of Global Educational Programs, ECA/A/S/X, Room 349, U.S. Department of State, SA–44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, telephone: 202–453–8878, fax: 202–453–8890, *KubanMM@state.gov.*

All correspondence with the Bureau concerning this RFGP should reference the title and number ECA/A/S/X–06–02. 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.

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: November 9, 2005.

C. Miller Crouch,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF THE TREASURY

Internal Revenue Service

Publication of the Tier 2 Tax Rates

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Publication of the tier 2 tax rates for calendar year 2006 as required by section 3241(d) of the Internal Revenue Code (26 U.S.C. section 3241). Tier 2 taxes on railroad employees, employers, and employee representatives are one source of funding for benefits under the Railroad Retirement Act.

DATES: The tier 2 tax rates for calendar year 2006 apply to compensation paid in calendar year 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ligeia M. Donis, CC:TEGE:EOEG:ET1, Internal Revenue Service, 1111 Constitution Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20224, Telephone Number (202) 622–0047 (not a toll-free number).

TIER 2 TAX RATES: The tier 2 tax rate for 2006 under section 3201(b) on employees is 4.4 percent of compensation. The tier 2 tax rate for 2006 under section 3221(b) on employers is 12.6 percent of compensation. The tier 2 tax rate for 2006 under section 3211(b) on employee representatives is 12.6 percent of compensation.