

Government. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of Funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.

#### Notification

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

Dated: March 18, 1999.

**Judith S. Siegel,**

*Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

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#### UNITED STATES INFORMATION AGENCY

#### Legislature Development Program for Nigeria

**ACTION:** Request for proposals.

**SUMMARY:** The Africa/Near East/South Asia Division of the Office of Citizen Exchanges of the United States Information Agency's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs announces an open competition for an assistance award. U.S. public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in IRS regulation 26 CFR 1.501(c) may submit proposals to develop training programs. Grants are subject to the availability of funds.

Overall grant making authority for this program is contained in the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, Pub. L. 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 Fulbright-Hays Act.

Programs and projects must conform with Agency requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package.

**Announcement Title and Number:** All correspondence with USIA concerning this RFP should reference the above title and number *E/P-99-42*.

**Deadline for Proposals:** All proposal copies must be received at the U.S. Information Agency by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on April 26, 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.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** The Africa/Near East/South Asia Division, Office of Citizen Exchanges, (E/PS), Room 216, U.S. Information Agency, 301 Fourth Street, SW, Washington, DC 20547, attn: Carol Jean Locke, tel: 202-205-0535; fax 202-619-4350 or Internet address: [clocke@usia.gov](mailto:clocke@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.

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

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

Please specify USIA Program Officer Carol Jean Locke on all inquiries and correspondence. Please read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the RFP deadline has passed, Agency staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

**Submissions:** Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and ten (10) copies of the application should be sent to: U.S. Information Agency, Ref.: T3E/P-99-42, Office of Grants Management, E/XE, Room 326, 301 Fourth Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

#### 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 of Diversity" section for specific suggestions on incorporating diversity into the total proposal. Pub. L. 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 reflect advancement of this goal in their program contents, to the full extent deemed feasible.

#### Program Information

**Overview:** USIA is interested in proposals which will assist in the development of staff and their services in the National Legislature of Nigeria. Exchanges and training programs supported by Office of Citizen Exchanges institutional grants should operate at two levels: they should promote institutional relationships; and they should offer practical information to individuals to assist them with their professional responsibilities. Strong proposals usually have the following characteristics: an existing or likely partner relationship between an American organization and a counterpart institution overseas; a proven track record of conducting program activity; cost-sharing from American and/or in-country sources, including donations of air fares, hotel and/or housing costs, experienced staff with language facility, or other resources valuable to the program; and a clear, convincing plan showing how permanent results and continuing activity will be implemented as a result of the activity funded by the grant. USIA wants to see tangible forms of time and money contributed to the project by the prospective American and grantee institutions, as well as funding from third-party sources.

Unless otherwise specified below, project activity may include: Study tours; short-term training; consultations; and extended, intensive workshops taking place as elements in a two-way exchange in the United States and in Nigeria. Proposals should reflect the applicant's understanding of the political, economic, and social

environment in which the program activity will take place.

Applicants should design programs for English speakers. Programs can take place in the United States and in Nigeria. USIA is interested in proposals whose designs take into account the need for ongoing sharing of information, training and concrete plans for self-sustainability. Examples include: Support for course syllabi and training venues in Nigeria; plans to create professional networks or professional associations to share information; establishing ongoing Internet communication; and/or train-the-trainers models.

USIA will consider proposals that respond to the following specific objectives.

#### **Nigerian Legislature Staff Development**

Nigeria's recent open national elections have signaled a change in the political climate. The time has come to assist democratic institutions in the development of their capabilities and with attention to the following influences on transparent and effective government: checks and balances through the separation of powers; development of effective executive-legislative relations as well as a clear and fair legislative process; respect for cultural and ethnic diversity; ethics; the role of staff; constituent services; and media relations.

USIA is looking for proposals for a progressive set of activities in legislative staff development that will follow a separate USIA-sponsored International Visitor program, scheduled for June 1999, for elected leaders in the new Nigerian national legislature. The proposal should lay out a multi-phase program that would establish links between U.S. and Nigerian legislative staffs and that would build expertise and momentum in a network that would take on a life of its own. USIA recommends that major program phases include Americans travelling to Nigeria in July–August 1999 and Nigerians travelling to the U.S. in the fall of 1999.

After initial get-acquainted activities, each follow-on phase would focus on one or more distinct elements of staff responsibility, such as fiscal analysis, legislative drafting, staff administration, constituent relations, research methods, and information resources and technology. These purposes would be achieved through exposure to and work with U.S. Congressional and state legislative staffers to see how their offices are organized, how staff supports the member, how staff keeps members informed of constituent views, and how all this facilitates the work of Congress or

state legislatures. It is important that the cooperation of staffers, who work together in a spirit of compromise to create meaningful legislation, be demonstrated. The U.S. phase might include 2–3 weeks in Congress and 1–2 weeks in State Legislatures, for a maximum total of 4 weeks, made up of briefings, shadowing and collaborative activities which stimulate learning and sharing.

Participants are envisioned to be ten or twelve newly appointed staff who will be responsible for the establishment and administration of the new National Assembly of Nigeria. The participants must be emerging leaders in staff development, be influential, have assignment authority, and be able to hire and fire subordinate staff. It is anticipated that relationships would be established that would lead to continued contact. Selection of Nigerian participants in the program should be made in consultation with USIS-Lagos, which retains the right to accept or deny nominations from other sources. First phase implementation should begin in the summer of 1999.

#### **Visa Regulations**

Foreign participants on programs sponsored by the Office of Citizen Exchanges are granted J–1 Exchange Visitor visas by the U.S. Embassy in the sending country. All programs must comply with J–1 visa regulations. Please refer to Solicitation Package for further information.

#### **Project Funding**

Since USIA grant assistance constitutes only a portion of total project funding, proposals should list and provide evidence of other sources of financial and in-kind support. Proposals with substantial private sector support from foundations, corporations and other institutions will be considered highly competitive.

#### ***Applicants Are Requested To Submit Proposals Not To Exceed \$130,000 in Funding From USIA***

Applicants are invited to provide both an all-inclusive budget as well as separate sub-budgets for each program component, phase, location or activity in order to facilitate USIA decisions on funding. While a comprehensive line item budget based on the model in the Solicitation Package must be submitted, separate component budgets are optional.

The following project costs are eligible for consideration for funding:

1. International and domestic air fares; visas; transit costs; ground transportation costs.

2. Per Diem. For the US program, organizations have the option of using a flat \$160/day for program participants or the published US Federal per diem rates for individual US cities. For activities outside of the US, the published Federal per diem rates must be used. NOTE: US escorting staff must use the published Federal per diem rates, not the flat rate. Per diem rates may be accessed at <http://www.policyworks.gov/>.

3. Book and cultural allowance. Participants are entitled to and escorts are reimbursed a one-time cultural allowance of \$150 per person, plus a participant book allowance of \$50. U.S. staff do not receive these benefits.

4. Consultants. Consultants may be used to provide specialized expertise or to make presentations. Daily honoraria generally do not exceed \$250 per day. Subcontracting organizations may also be used, in which case the written agreement between the prospective grantee and subcontractor should be included in the proposal.

6. Room rental. Room rental should not exceed \$250 per day.

7. Materials development. Proposals may contain costs to purchase, develop and translate materials for participants.

8. One working meal per project. Per capita costs may not exceed \$5–\$8 for a lunch and \$14–\$20 for a dinner, excluding room rental. The number of invited guests may not exceed participants by more than a factor of two-to-one.

9. A return travel allowance of \$70 may be provided to each participant to be used for incidental expenditures during international travel.

10. All USIA-funded delegates will be covered under the terms of USIA-sponsored health insurance policy. The premium is paid by USIA directly to the insurance company.

11. Administrative Costs. Other costs necessary for the effective administration of the program including salaries for grant organization employees, benefits and other direct and indirect costs are described in the detailed instructions in application package. While this announcement does not prescribe a rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, in general priority will be given to proposals whose administrative costs are less than twenty-five (25) percent of the total requested from USIA. Proposals should show cost-sharing, including both contributions from the applicant and from other sources.

Please refer to the Application Package for complete budget guidelines.

## Review Process

USIA will acknowledge receipt of all proposals and will review them for technical eligibility. Proposals will be deemed ineligible if they do not fully adhere to the guidelines stated herein and in the Solicitation Package. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the program office, as well as the USIA Office of African Affairs and the USIA/USIS posts in Nigeria. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Final funding decisions are at the discretion of USIA's Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for assistance awards (grants or cooperative agreements) resides with the USIA Grants Officer.

## Year 2000 Compliance Requirement (Y2K Requirement)

The Year 2000 (Y2K) issue is a broad operational and accounting problem that could potentially prohibit organizations from processing information in accordance with Federal management and program specific requirements including data exchange with USIA. The inability to process information in accordance with Federal requirements could result in grantees' being required to return funds that have not been accounted for properly. USIA therefore requires all organizations use Y2K compliant systems including hardware, software, and firmware. Systems must accurately process data and dates (calculating, comparing and sequencing) both before and after the beginning of the year 2000 and correctly adjust for leap years.

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

## Review Criteria

Technically eligible applications will be competitively reviewed according to

the criteria stated below. These criteria are not rank ordered.

1. Program Planning and Ability to Achieve Objectives. Program objectives should be stated clearly and precisely and should reflect the applicant's expertise in the subject area and the region. Objectives should respond to the priority topics in this announcement and should relate to the current conditions in the included countries. Objectives should be reasonable and attainable. A detailed work plan should explain step by step how objectives will be achieved, including a timetable for completion of major tasks and activities and an outline of the selection process. The substance of the seminars, presentations, workshops, consulting, internships and itineraries should be spelled out in detail. Responsibilities of in-country partners should be clearly described.

2. 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.

3. Support of Diversity: Proposals should demonstrate substantive support for 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).

4. Institutional Capability: Proposed personnel and institutional resources should be adequate and appropriate to achieve the program's goals. The narrative should demonstrate proven ability to handle logistics. Proposals should reflect the institution's expertise in the subject area and knowledge of the conditions in the targeted region(s).

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

6. Project Evaluation: Proposals should include a plan and methodology

to evaluate the program's successes, both as activities unfold and at the end of the program. USIA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description and/or plan for use of another measurement technique (such as a focus group) to link outcomes to original project objectives.

7. Cost-effectiveness and Cost Sharing: Overhead and administrative costs in the proposal, including salaries, subcontracts for services and honoraria, should be kept low. Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through other private sector support as well as institutional direct funding contributions.

## Notice

The terms and conditions published in this RFP are binding and may not be modified by any USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding. Issuance of the RFP does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the Government. The Agency reserves the right to reduce, revise or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements. Organizations will be expected to cooperate with USIA in evaluating their programs under the principles of the Government Performance and Results Act of 1993, which requires federal agencies to measure and report on the results of their programs and activities.

## Notification

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Dated: March 16, 1999.

**Judith S. Siegel,**

*Deputy Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs.*

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