applicant should especially target exchanges with Africa, the Near East, South and East Asia.

Exchange students should be drawn from the broadest possible range of universities and colleges. These institutions should be diverse representing both public and private institutions, offering the greatest possible choice of location, academic discipline, size, and cost; and allowing the use of financial aid for study abroad when at all possible. Recruitment of student populations not usually involved in international exchanges should be stressed. A funding level of up to \$350,000 is available for this program.

#### Guidelines

The proposal should describe how colleges and universities in the U.S. and abroad will be recruited to participate, the standards established for participation, and the means to evaluate compliance with those standards. The proposal should describe the criteria for student participation, the obligations of the student (including financial), and the services which the applicant will provide to the student and why this assistance is not available from other sources. The proposal should describe methods of evaluating the effectiveness of the exchange mechanism (See Review Criteria for further information). Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations.

## **Proposed Budget**

The applicant is required to submit a comprehensive administrative line item budget, based on the specific guidance in the Solicitation Package. There must be a summary budget as well as a breakdown of the administrative budget. USIA's grant assistance, up to \$350,000 in total, is expected to constitute only a portion of the total project funding. Cost sharing is required and the proposal should list other anticipated sources of support. Grant applications should demonstrate financial and in-kind support.

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

Allowable costs for the program include the following:

- Salaries and fringe benefits; travel, although the Agency reserves the right not to fund travel to Western Europe;
- (2) Other direct costs, inclusive of rent, utilities, etc.;
- (3) Indirect expenses, auditing costs.

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

### **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. Eligible proposals will be forwarded to panels of USIA officers for advisory review. All eligible proposals will be reviewed by the Agency contracts office, as well as the USIA Area Offices and the USIS posts overseas, where appropriate. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the General Counsel or by other Agency elements. Funding decisions are at the discretion of the USIA Associate Director for Educational and Cultural Affairs. Final technical authority for grant awards resides with the USIA 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 Agency mission.

2. Program planning: Detailed agenda and relevant work plan should demonstrate substantive undertakings and logistical capacity, specifically the ability to increase exchanges with nontraditional regions. Agenda and plan should adhere to the program overview and guidelines described above.

3. Ability to achieve program objectives: Proposal should clearly demonstrate how the institution will meet the program's objectives and plan.

4. *Multiplier effect/impact:* Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term institutional and individual linkages with the maximum number of exchanges and number of countries.

5, *Support of Diversity:* Proposals should demonstrate the recipient's commitment of promoting the awareness and understanding of diversity and should target diverse locations for exchanges as well as creating access to international exchange for students from all backgrounds and ethnic groups.

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 of past Agency grants as determined by USIA's Office of Contracts. The Agency 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 USIA support) which ensures the USIA 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. USIA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique plus description of a methodology to use to link outcomes to original projects objectives. USIA requires an evaluation survey return rate of at least 70 percent. Award-receiving organizations/institutions will be expected to submit biannual reports.

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 USIA's geographic area desks and overseas officers of program need, potential impact, and significance in the partner country(ies).

# Notice

The terms and conditions published in the RFP are binding and may not be modified by the USIA representative. Explanatory information provided by the Agency that contradicts published language will not be binding.

## Notification

All applicants will be notified of the results of the review process on or about July 1, 1995. Awards made will be subject to periodic reporting and evaluation requirements.