

DEPARTMENT OF STATE**[Public Notice 4164]****Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs****Fulbright American Studies Institutes for Foreign University Faculty****NOTICE:** Request for Grant Proposals (RFGP).

SUMMARY: The Study of the U.S. Branch, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, announces an open competition for two (2) assistance awards. Public and private non-profit organizations meeting the provisions described in Internal Revenue Code section 26 U.S.C. 501(C)(3) may apply to develop and implement one of the following two post-graduate level Fulbright American Studies Institute programs designed for multinational groups of 18 experienced foreign university faculty and educators:

A. Managing Diversity: The American Experience

B. American Political Development: Ideas and Institutions.

These programs are intended to provide participants with a deeper understanding of American life and institutions, past and present, in order to strengthen curricula and to improve the quality of teaching about the United States at universities abroad. Programs should therefore be designed to elucidate the topic or theme of the Institute as well as American civilization as a whole.

Programs are six weeks in length and will be conducted during the Summer of 2003.

The Bureau is seeking detailed proposals from colleges, universities, consortia of colleges and universities, and other not-for-profit academic organizations that have an established reputation in one or more of the following fields: political science, international relations, law, history, sociology, literature, American studies, and/or other disciplines or sub-disciplines related to the program themes.

It is the Bureau's intention to fund one institute in each of the above two thematic areas, subject to the number and quality of proposals received and the availability of funding.

Applicant institutions must demonstrate expertise in conducting post-graduate programs for foreign educators, and *must have a minimum of four years experience in conducting international exchange programs.* Bureau guidelines stipulate that grants to organizations with less than four years experience in conducting

international exchanges are limited to \$60,000. As it is expected that the budget for these programs will exceed \$60,000, organizations that can not demonstrate at least four years experience will not be eligible to apply under this competition.

The project director or one of the key program staff responsible for the academic program must have an advanced degree in one of the fields listed above. Staff escorts traveling under the cooperative agreement must have demonstrated qualifications for this service. Programs must conform with Bureau requirements and guidelines outlined in the Solicitation Package. Bureau programs are subject to the availability of funds.

Program Information

Overview and Objectives: Fulbright American Studies Institutes are intended to offer foreign scholars and teachers whose professional work focuses on the United States the opportunity to deepen their understanding of American society, culture and institutions. Their ultimate goal is to strengthen curricula and to improve the quality of teaching about the U.S. in universities abroad.

Programs should be six weeks in length and must include an academic residency segment of at least four weeks duration at a U.S. college or university campus (or other appropriate location). A study tour segment of not more than two weeks should also be planned and should directly complement the academic residency segment; the study tour should include visits to one or two additional regions of the United States.

All institutes should be designed as intensive, academically rigorous seminars intended for an experienced group of fellow scholars from outside the United States. The institutes should be organized through an integrated series of lectures, readings, seminar discussions, regional travel and site visits, and they should also include some opportunity for limited but well-directed independent research.

Applicants are encouraged to design thematically coherent programs in ways that draw upon the particular strengths, faculty and resources of their institutions as well as upon the nationally recognized expertise of scholars and other experts throughout the United States. All Fulbright American Studies Institute programs, regardless of their particular thematic focus, should seek to:

1. Provide participants with a survey of contemporary scholarship within the institute's governing academic discipline, delineating the current

scholarly debates within the field. In this regard, the seminar should indicate how prevailing academic practice in the discipline represents both a continuation of and a departure from past scholarly trends and practices. It is therefore critical that a variety of scholarly viewpoints be represented, including bringing in presenters from other institutions, as appropriate. Please note that the ways these alternative schools of thought will be presented should be clearly described in the proposal;

2. Bring an interdisciplinary or multi-disciplinary focus to bear on the program content if appropriate;

3. Give participants a multi-dimensional view of U.S. society and institutions that reflects a broad and balanced range of perspectives and responsible views. Programs should include the views not only of scholars, cultural critics and public intellectuals, but also those of other professionals outside the university such as government officials, journalists and others who can substantively contribute to the topics at issue; and,

4. Insure access to library and material resources that will enable grantees to continue their research, study and curriculum development upon returning to their home institutions.

Program Descriptions

A. Managing Diversity: The American Experience

The "Fulbright American Studies Institute on Managing Diversity: The American Experience" should provide 18 experienced foreign university faculty and scholars with a deeper understanding of the American experience with immigration and race and ethnic relations. The institute should impart an appreciation for how the U.S. has responded to both the challenges and opportunities presented by the increasing national-origin, ethnic and religious diversity of its population. While program might focus on the experience of selected immigrant/ethnic groups, it should include attention to the development of laws and policies governing immigration and citizenship and the impact of immigration on American society, politics and culture more broadly. Other topics/issues that might be addressed include: identity formation in immigrant/ethnic communities; the politics of bilingualism; social, economic, and cultural adaptation and political incorporation of immigrants; coalitions and conflicts among ethnic/racial groups; the role of ethnic lobbies in

foreign and domestic policies; and contemporary debates surrounding issues of citizenship and membership in the U.S.

B. American Political Development: Ideas and Institutions

The "Fulbright American Studies Institute on American Political Development: Ideas and Institutions" should provide 18 experienced foreign university faculty and scholars with a deeper understanding of how the interplay between ideas and developments in the spheres of polity, society and economy together have shaped the evolution of American political institutions. Political institutions whose evolution might be examined include (but are not necessarily limited to) the presidency, Congress, the two-party system, the civil service system, interest groups, or the welfare/regulatory state. The institute curriculum might include a focus on the role of labor and/or race and/or gender in American political development. It might involve attention to the evolution of a particular idea, value or principle (e.g., representation, equality, democracy) and its interpretation by institutional and other actors over time. Regardless of the particular perspective adopted or approach taken, the program should aim to provide the institute participants with a clearer understanding of how policy is formulated and the character of public policy debates in the contemporary United States.

Program Dates

Ideally, the programs should be 44 days in length (including participant arrival and departure days) and should begin in late June or early July, 2003.

Participants

As specified in the guidelines in the solicitation package, programs should be designed for multinational groups of 18 highly-motivated and experienced foreign university faculty and scholars who are interested in participating in an intensive seminar on aspects of U.S. civilization as a means to develop or improve courses and teaching about the United States at their home institutions. Most participants can be expected to come from educational institutions where the study of the U.S. is relatively well developed. Thus, while they may not have in-depth knowledge of the particular institute program theme, most will have had some experience in teaching about the United States. Many will have had sustained professional contact with American scholars and American scholarship, and some may

have had substantial prior experience studying in the United States. Participants will be drawn from all regions of the world and will be fluent in the English language.

Participants will be nominated by Fulbright Commissions and by U.S. Embassies abroad. Nominations will be reviewed by the Study of the U.S. Branch at the Department of State. Final selection of grantees will be made by the Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board.

Program Guidelines

While the conception and structure of the institute program is the responsibility of the organizers, it is critically important that proposals provide a full, detailed and comprehensive narrative describing the objectives of the institute; the title, scope and content of each session; and, how each session relates to the overall institute theme. The syllabus must therefore indicate the subject matter for each lecture or panel discussion, confirm or provisionally identify proposed lecturers and discussants, and clearly show how assigned readings will support each session. A calendar of all activities for the program must also be included. Overall, proposals will be reviewed on the basis of their fullness, coherence, clarity, and attention to detail.

Programs must comply with J-1 visa regulations. Please refer to the Solicitation Package for further details on program design and implementation, as well as additional information on all other requirements.

Budget Guidelines

Based on groups of 18 participants, the total Bureau-funded budget (program and administrative) for either program should be approximately \$200,000, and Bureau-funded administrative costs as defined in the budget details section of the solicitation package should be approximately \$60,000. Justifications for any costs above these amounts must be clearly indicated in the proposal submission. Proposals should try to maximize cost-sharing in all facets of the program and to stimulate U.S. private sector, including foundation and corporate, support. Applicants must submit a comprehensive budget for the entire program. The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program, and availability of U.S. government funding.

Please refer to the "POGI" in the Solicitation Package for complete institute budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

Announcement Name and Number

All communications with the Bureau concerning this announcement should refer to the following titles and reference numbers:

Fulbright American Studies Institute on Managing Diversity: The American Experience—(ECA/A/E/USS-03-01A-Benda).

Fulbright American Studies Institute on American Political Development: Ideas and Institutions —(ECA/A/E/USS-03-01B-Benda).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: To request a Solicitation Package containing more detailed program information, award criteria, required application forms, specific budget instructions, and standard guidelines for proposal preparation, applicants should contact:

U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of Academic Exchange Programs, Study of the U.S. Branch, State Annex 44, ECA/A/E/USS—Room 252, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547, Attention: Peter Benda. Telephone number: (202) 619-5893. Fax number: (202) 619-6790.

Internet address: pbenda@pd.state.gov.

Please specify Program Officer Peter Benda on all inquiries and correspondence. Interested applicants should read the complete **Federal Register** announcement before addressing inquiries to the office listed above or submitting their proposals. Once the RFGP deadline has passed, Bureau staff may not discuss this competition in any way with applicants until after the proposal review process has been completed.

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/>. Please read all information before downloading.

Deadline for Proposals: All proposal copies must be received at the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs by 5 p.m. Washington, DC time on Monday, January 13, 2003. Faxed documents will NOT be accepted, nor will documents postmarked January 13, 2003 but received at a later date. It is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure that proposal submissions arrive by the deadline.

Submissions: Applicants must follow all instructions in the Solicitation Package. The original and 13 copies of the complete application should be sent to: U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Reference: (insert appropriate reference number from above, e.g. ECA/A/E/USS-

03-01x-Benda), Program Management Staff, ECA/EX/PM, Room 534, State Annex 44, 301 4th Street, SW., Washington, DC 20547.

Applicants should also submit the "Executive Summary" and "Proposal Narrative" sections of the proposal on a 3.5" diskette, formatted for DOS. This material must be provided in ASCII text (DOS) format with a maximum line length of 65 characters.

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 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," 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.

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 Exchange Visitor Programs as set forth in 22 CFR 6Z, including the oversight of Responsible Officers and Alternate Responsible Officers, provision of pre-arrival information and orientation to participants, monitoring of participants,

proper maintenance and security of forms, record-keeping, reporting and other requirements. ECA will be responsible for issuing DS-2019 forms to participants in this program.

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.

Review Process: The Bureau 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. Eligible proposals will then be forwarded to panels of senior Bureau officers for advisory review. Proposals may also be reviewed by the Office of the Legal Advisor or by other Bureau 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. More weight will be given to items one and two, and all remaining criteria will be evaluated equally.

1. **Overall Quality:** Proposals should exhibit originality and substance, consonant with the highest standards of American teaching and scholarship. Program design should reflect the main currents as well as the debates within the subject discipline of each institute. Program elements should be coherently and thoughtfully integrated. Lectures, panels, field visits and readings, taken as a whole, should offer a balanced presentation of issues, reflecting both the continuity of the American experience as well as the diversity and dynamism inherent in it.

2. **Program Planning and Administration:** Proposals should demonstrate careful planning. The organization and structure of the institute should be clearly delineated and be fully responsive to all program objectives. A program syllabus (noting specific sessions and topical readings supporting each academic unit) should be included, as should a calendar of activities. The travel component should not simply be a tour, but should be an

integral and substantive part of the program, reinforcing and complementing the academic segment. Proposals should provide evidence of continuous administrative and managerial capacity as well as the means by which program activities and logistical matters will be implemented.

3. **Institutional Capacity:** Proposed personnel, including faculty and administrative staff as well as outside presenters, should be fully qualified to achieve the project's goals. Library and meeting facilities, housing, meals, transportation and other logistical arrangements should fully meet the needs of the participants.

4. **Support for Diversity:** Substantive support of the bureau's policy on diversity should be demonstrated. This can be accomplished through documentation, such as a written statement, summarizing past and/or ongoing activities and efforts that further the principle of diversity within the organization and its activities. Program activities that address this issue should be highlighted.

5. **Experience:** Proposals should demonstrate an institutional record of successful exchange program activity, indicating the experience that the organization and its professional staff have had in working with foreign educators.

6. **Evaluation and Follow-up:** A plan for evaluating activities during the Institute and at its conclusion should be included. Proposals should discuss provisions made for follow-up with returned grantees as a means of establishing longer-term individual and institutional linkages.

7. **Cost Effectiveness:** Proposals should maximize cost-sharing through direct institutional contributions, in-kind support, and other private sector support. Overhead and administrative components, including salaries and honoraria, should be kept as low as possible.

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.”

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 this 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.

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

Dated: October 7, 2002.

Patricia S. Harrison,

Assistant Secretary for Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State.

[FR Doc. 02-26426 Filed 10-16-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710-11-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Surface Transportation Board

[STB Finance Docket No. 34253]

TransitAmerica, LLC—Operation Exemption—Line In Buchanan County, MO

TransitAmerica, LLC (TRAM), a noncarrier, has filed a verified notice of exemption under 49 CFR 1150.31 to operate approximately 2.6 miles of rail line, previously owned by the Herzog Contracting Corporation (HCC),¹ between approximately milepost 201.0 and approximately milepost 198.4 east of St. Joseph, MO. TRAM certifies that its projected revenues as a result of this transaction will not exceed those that would qualify it as a Class III rail carrier, and that such revenues will not exceed \$5 million.

The transaction was scheduled to be consummated on or after September 24, 2002, the effective date of the exemption (7 days after the exemption was filed).

If the verified notice contains false or misleading information, the exemption is void *ab initio*. Petitions to revoke the exemption under 49 U.S.C. 10502(d) may be filed at any time. The filing of a petition to revoke will not automatically stay the transaction.

¹HCC is a limited liability member of TRAM. TRAM recently acquired the right, title and interest in this abandoned railroad right-of-way from HCC.

An original and 10 copies of all pleadings, referring to STB Finance Docket No. 34253, must be filed with the Surface Transportation Board, 1925 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20423-0001. In addition, a copy of each pleading must be served on Kevin M. Sheys, Kirkpatrick & Lockhart LLP, 1800 Massachusetts Ave., 2nd Floor, NW., Washington, DC 20036.

Board decisions and notices are available on our website at “www.stb.dot.gov.”

Decided: October 10, 2002.

By the Board, David M. Konschnik, Director, Office of Proceedings.

Vernon A. Williams,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 02-26422 Filed 10-16-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4915-00-P

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Research and Development Office; Government Owned Invention Available for Licensing

AGENCY: Research and Development Office.

ACTION: Notice of Government Owned Invention Available for Licensing.

SUMMARY: The invention listed below is owned by the U.S. Government as represented by the Department of Veterans Affairs, and is available for licensing in accordance with 35 U.S.C. 207 and 37 CFR part 404 to achieve expeditious commercialization of results of federally funded research and development. Foreign patents are filed on selected inventions to extend market coverage for U.S. companies and may also be available for licensing.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Technical and licensing information on the invention may be obtained by writing to: Mindy Aisen, MD, Department of Veterans Affairs, Director Technology Transfer Program, Research and Development Office, 810 Vermont Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20420; fax: (202) 275-7228; e-mail at mindy.aisen@mail.va.gov. Any request for information should include the Number and Title for the relevant invention as indicated below. Issued patents may be obtained from the Commissioner of Patents, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, Washington, DC 20231.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The invention available for licensing is: 10/199,078 “Firm Contact Apparel Prosthesis for Tremor Suppression and Method of Use Thereof”.

Dated: October 10, 2002.

Anthony J. Principi,

Secretary, Department of Veterans Affairs.

[FR Doc. 02-26486 Filed 10-16-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 8320-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Veterans' Employment and Training Service

Proposed Information Collection Request Submitted for Public Comment and Recommendations Eligibility Data Form: Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act and Veteran's Preference (USERRA/VP)

AGENCY: Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS), Labor.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Labor, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, conducts a preclearance consultation program to provide the general public and Federal agencies with an opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing collections of information in accordance with The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (PRA95) [44 U.S.C. 3506 C (2)(A)]. This program helps to ensure that requested data can be provided in the desired format, reporting burden (time and financial resources) is minimized, collection instruments are clearly understood, and the impact of collection requirements on respondents can be properly assessed. Currently the Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS) is soliciting comments concerning the proposed information collection request for the VETS USERRA/VP Form 1010.

DATE: Comments are to be submitted by December 16, 2002.

ADDRESSES: Comments are to be submitted to the Veterans' Employment and Training Service, U.S. Department of Labor, Room S-1316, 200 Constitution Ave., NW., Washington, DC 20210, telephone (202) 693-4711. Written comments limited to 10 pages or fewer may also be transmitted by facsimile to (202) 693-4755. Receipt of submissions, whether by U.S. mail, e-mail or FAX transmittal, will not be acknowledged; however, the sender may request confirmation that a submission has been received, by telephoning VETS at (202) 693-4728.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Contact Patrick D. Harvey, Division of Investigation and Compliance, Veterans'