

Department of State
Public Notice

Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Request for Proposals: Promoting Freedom of Expression in the Arabian Peninsula

SUMMARY

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) announces a Request for Proposals from organizations interested in submitting proposals for projects that promote freedom of expression in the Arabian Peninsula.

PLEASE NOTE: DRL strongly urges applicants to access www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov as soon as possible in order to obtain a username and password to submit your application. For more information, please see DRL's Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI), updated in November 2012, available at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm>.

REQUESTED PROPOSAL PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

DRL invites organizations to submit proposals outlining program concepts and capacity to manage projects targeting the following issues:

Promoting Freedom of Expression in the Arabian Peninsula (approximately \$500,000 available)

DRL seeks proposals that protect and expand the space for freedom of expression in the Arabian Peninsula. Proposals should work in at least three countries. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Building the capacity of lawyers to understand and use current freedom of expression laws;
- Training on current laws and issues regarding freedom of expression for journalists, editors, and other media professionals, including new media actors;
- Advocacy for improved legal and regulatory frameworks, including government and justice sector engagement, where appropriate;
- Building the capacity of civil society organizations to document or report on possible violations of freedom of expression laws.

Applicants are encouraged to look beyond traditional print and broadcast media and include emerging issues of freedom of expression online.

Competitive proposals should engage a wide variety of stakeholders. Partnerships with local organizations are strongly encouraged. Where appropriate, the program should provide capacity building, coaching, networking, and other support to any partner CSOs.

Applicants are requested to submit a security plan along with each proposal in order to demonstrate situational awareness and preparedness. Security plans should address any issues

involving in-person events and recruitment for said events and safety for any online communications, and are encouraged to include contingency plans for in-person activities.

DEADLINE AND TECHNICAL ELIGIBILITY

Please refer directly to DRL's posted Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI), updated in November 2012, available at <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c12302.htm>. Faxed, couriered, or emailed documents will not be accepted at any time. Applicants must follow all formatting instructions in this document and the Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI).

To ensure all applications receive a balanced evaluation, the DRL Review Committee will review the first page of the requested section up to the page limit and no further. DRL encourages organizations to use the given space effectively.

An organization may submit **no more than two [2] proposals**.

Technically eligible submissions are those which: 1) arrive electronically via www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov by **Tuesday, February 18, 2014** before 11:30 p.m. Eastern Standard Time (EST); 2) heed all instructions contained in the solicitation document and Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI), including length and completeness of submission; and 3) do not violate any of the guidelines stated in the solicitation and this document.

It is the responsibility of all applicants to ensure that proposals have been received by www.grantsolutions.gov or www.grants.gov in their entirety. DRL bears no responsibility for data errors resulting from transmission or conversion processes.

Once the Request for Proposals deadline has passed, U.S. Department of State staff in Washington and overseas may not discuss competing proposals with applicants until the review process has been completed.

NOTE: In order to process final awards, approved applicants will need to register with www.grantsolutions.gov.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Bureau anticipates awarding grants in the third quarter of FY 2014 (according to the USG fiscal year calendar). Programs that leverage resources from funds internal to the organization or other sources, such as public-private partnerships, will be highly considered. Projects that have a strong academic, research, conference, or dialogue focus will not be deemed competitive. DRL strongly discourages health, technology, or science-related projects unless they have an explicit component related to the requested program objectives listed above. Projects that focus on commercial law or economic development will be rated as non-competitive. Cost sharing is strongly encouraged, and cost sharing contributions should be outlined in the proposal budget and budget narrative.

DRL will not consider proposals that reflect any type of support, for any member, affiliate, or representative of a designated terrorist organization, whether or not elected members of government.

The information in this solicitation is binding and may not be modified by any Bureau representative. Explanatory information provided by the Bureau that contradicts this language will not be binding. Issuance of the solicitation 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 evaluation requirements.

This request for proposals will appear on www.grantosolutions.gov or www.grants.gov and DRL's website, www.state.gov/j/drl.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Should you have any questions regarding the solicitation, please feel free to contact Andrea Shinbach at ShinbachA@State.gov OR DRLProgramInfo@state.gov . Once the deadline has passed, State Department officials and staff - both in the Bureau and at embassies overseas - may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.