

PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)

FY 2024 Academic Year 2025-2026 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX) and the Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Staff Exchange (CBBSX)

Funding Opportunity Number: SFOP0010046

**Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)
Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the ECA Youth Programs Division for the FY 2024 academic year 2025-2026 Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange. Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

I. STATEMENT OF WORK

A. Organization Responsibilities and Oversight

The Office of Citizen Exchanges (Office) of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) of the U.S. Department of State (Department) is the designated Exchange Visitor Program sponsor with ultimate responsibility for the CBYX Program. All award recipients (including their employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of the CBYX Program) receiving CBYX Program assistance awards to administer the Program will be considered under the terms of such awards to be “third parties” as explained in 22 CFR § 62.2 of the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) Program regulations.

Because the actions of such third parties are imputed to the designated sponsor, the Bureau expects that all award recipients (including their employees, officers, agents and third parties involved in the administration of the CBYX Program) will both comply with the regulations and requirements of the Exchange Visitor Program and render all necessary assistance to enable the Office of Citizen Exchanges to be in full compliance with the same. Accordingly, award

recipients must ensure their “employees, officers, agents, and third parties involved in the administration of the [students placed under CBYX Program awards]...are adequately qualified, appropriately trained, and comply with the Exchange Visitor Program regulations and immigration laws pertaining to the administration of their exchange visitor program(s)” (22 CFR 62.9 (f) (2)).

Relevant portions of the regulations governing the administration of an exchange visitor program are set forth in the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) Program regulations, 22 CFR 62.25 (for secondary school students) and 22 CFR 62.28 (for international visitors).

B. Responsibilities of the Organization under each CBYX Component

To plan and implement academic year exchange programs for American and German youth as outlined below in the program specific guidelines. There is no limit to the number of Components that eligible organizations may apply for, but applicants must submit a separate proposal for each Component. The four CBYX Program Components are: 1) Administrative, 2) Secondary School, 3) Vocational, or 4) Young Professional.

C. ECA Activities and Responsibilities

In a cooperative agreement, ECA is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. ECA activities and responsibilities for the CBYX program include:

- Approving U.S. finalists before award recipients notify applicants of their selection.
- Holding annual discussions with the German government to determine the final participant numbers for each academic year.
- Selecting participants according to procedures and criteria established by each government.

II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Detailed Guidance Related to the Responsibilities of Award Recipients

The following detailed guidance is provided specific to each CBYX Component. There is no limit to the number of Components that eligible organizations may apply for, but applicants must submit a separate proposal for each Component.

Administrative Component (open to all eligible organizations whether or not applying to implement an additional CBYX Component)

ECA anticipates awarding approximately \$244,000 for this Component (with an additional \$90,000 funded only in the FY 2024 base year of the award for the 2026 bilateral partner meeting)

The Administrative Component will provide funds to one Organization (in this section called the Administrative Component Partner) to:

1. Produce and distribute CBYX secondary school scholarship and program-wide promotional materials.
2. Maintain a CBYX program-wide scholarship application website.
3. Coordinate program-wide promotional activities.
4. Work with ECA and other CBYX award recipients to coordinate the logistics and pay for the summer program-wide American re-entry workshop.
5. Manage the logistics for the 2026 bilateral partner meeting with American and German CBYX partners (described below).

Applicants may also propose other related services that benefit the CBYX program overall.

Applicants interested in applying to implement the Administrative Component should submit a proposal of up to 10 pages narrating proposed activities and the organization's experience with similar activities. Administrative Component applicants should submit a budget to support the first four activities of the list above, which will be conducted annually. Administrative Component applicants should budget approximately \$90,000 for the bilateral partner meeting, which will be funded only in the FY 2024 base year of the award.

The Administrative Component Partner will coordinate with all CBYX award recipients on the collection of data and input for production of promotional materials. Once the input collection has been completed, the Administrative Component Partner will produce and distribute the materials to the award recipients. This will include design, printing, and bulk distribution of both digital and print materials such as brochures and posters for recruiting U.S. secondary school students to Secondary School Partner Organizations as well as CBYX program-wide materials including approximately 3,000 copies of an annual impact brochure to be shared with key stakeholders including Congress, Host Families, Local Coordinators, and Schools. The Administrative Component Partner will also coordinate the participation of all American CBYX award recipients in the program-wide social media efforts.

The Administrative Component Partner will also collaborate with award recipients on the CBYX recruitment and application website. This includes but is not limited to setting up and maintaining an online CBYX recruitment and application website that meets Federal accessibility requirements as outlined on www.section508.gov. The website should allow interested Americans to submit applications electronically to the appropriate Program Organization. This application should also collect demographic data from applicants to help ECA and award recipients better target recruitment and outreach efforts. While currently the application website is only used by the Secondary School program partners, for program-wide coherence ECA would like all partners to be able to use the application website should they wish to do so.

In the summer of 2026, there will be a convening of all American participants as they return home from their year-long program. This will be a minimum of two nights, including half a day of activities with U.S. Department of State and substantive programming on Capitol Hill to encourage Congressional engagement with CBYX alumni. The Administrative Component Partner will provide coordination and logistical support including, but not limited to:

1. Convening partner meetings with ECA and CBYX award recipients to discuss planning of the American welcome home event.
2. Making logistical arrangements and paying for collective event housing, local transportation, and meal arrangements for all returning American CBYX participants (anticipated to be approximately 350) and Program Organization representatives (approximately 25 people).
3. Printing of any required materials for the event.

Agendas of past program-wide re-entry events are available from the ECA point of contact listed at the end of this document upon request.

The Administrative Component proposal should include a budget of approximately \$90,000 for the program-wide bilateral partner meeting to be hosted in Washington, DC in 2026. This will be a two and a half day, three-night workshop to include American and German award recipients, representatives from ECA, the Bundestag, the U.S. Embassy in Berlin, and the German Embassy in D.C. Proposals for the Administrative Component should describe an organization's capacity to provide logistical support to this meeting, including a budget to provide lodging, breakfast, and local transportation for up to 30 individuals as well as one Capitol Hill lunch reception for 100 people, and 2 working lunches and 3 dinners for 45 individuals. For the purposes of this budget, travel to Washington, DC will be arranged and paid for by the travelers and their respective organizations (applicants for other CBYX Components should include this in their proposed budgets). The Administrative Component Partner should

plan for and budget for up to two staff to travel to Washington, DC to manage logistics for this meeting. All expenses (including overhead costs) for the bilateral partner meeting should be clearly identified in the budget separately from the other costs for the Administrative Component. This event will only take place in the base year of the award.

Secondary School Component

In the 2025-26 academic year, this Component will provide approximately 250 scholarships for an academic year educational and cultural homestay experience in Germany for American secondary school students ages 15 to 18 years and 6 months as of August 1, 2025, and approximately 275 German secondary students hosted in the United States. ECA anticipates awarding approximately \$584,400 per region for this Component. The full cohort of participants will be divided into five groups of approximately 50 U.S. and 55 German students per group. Organizations may apply to implement the program for one or more groups of participants. To ensure equitable coverage of the United States, each group of U.S. participants will come from a specific recruitment region. To further develop relationships between partners and schools in their recruiting regions, selected organizations should strive to place at least fifty percent of the German students in host homes and schools throughout the region from which the partner is responsible for recruiting American participants.

While ECA reserves the right to change these American secondary school student recruitment regions after partner strengths have been identified, the anticipated regions are:

Region 1: Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont

Region 2: District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, North Carolina, Ohio, Puerto Rico, South Carolina, U.S. Virgin Islands, Virginia, West Virginia

Region 3: Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, Wisconsin

Region 4: Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, Wyoming

Region 5: Alaska, California, Guam, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Washington

American secondary school exchange organizations may bid on more than one region, indicating the most preferred region(s) in priority order. Organizations bidding on more than

one region should include an addendum with a maximum of two pages which describes their unique capabilities in the regions they are interested in beyond the first ranked. It is anticipated that unique regional capabilities for the region ranked first will be included in the body of the proposal. ECA anticipates that up to five organizations will be selected to conduct all aspects of the recruitment and selection of American, and placement of German, secondary school participants.

Organizations that are awarded a cooperative agreement to recruit American secondary school participants in their assigned U.S. regions will conduct advertising, recruitment, processing of applications (using a CBYX specific application, either the one maintained by the Administrative Component Partner as detailed above OR a similar application approved in advance by ECA), screening, selection, management of administrative and travel logistics, and pre-departure orientations. Organizations should include in their proposal information about measures they will undertake to ensure diversity in their applicant pool and to minimize unconscious bias that may disadvantage applicants from diverse backgrounds.

Organizations will work with a German partner to ensure that arrival and re-entry orientations are conducted for American secondary school participants. Organizations will also provide arrival and re-entry orientations for German secondary school students and place them in host families and schools.

The U.S. recipient organizations will screen (including conducting criminal background checks), select, and orient host families, and provide participant monitoring, supervision and counseling to students and host families per the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) regulations at 22 CFR Part 62. The U.S. organization will arrange program enrichment activities throughout the year for the German secondary school students and will manage all administrative and logistical matters related to their program. U.S. recipient organizations' partners in Germany will be responsible for recruiting, orienting, and arranging international travel for German secondary school students and will provide logistics and program arrangements, including host family screening, school placement, participant monitoring, and support to students and host families for U.S. students paralleling to the extent possible the arrangements that the U.S. partners provide for German students. The German partner organization will also arrange enrichment activities for the U.S. students throughout the year and will manage all administrative and logistical matters including in-country travel and the provision of health and accident insurance.

Below is a specific list of all the requirements for the program. Applicant organizations should closely review these bullets and submit a 20-page narrative proposal that reflects an ability to achieve the program requirements (plus a 2-page per region addendum for any organization

applying for more than one participant group). It is not necessary to repeat this list word for word in the proposal. Instead, proposals should ensure that they demonstrate the ability to achieve the goals of the program, comply with the requirements of the program, and address all six of the review criteria outlined in the NOFO document.

U.S. Secondary School Participants:

Selection and Preparation

- Provide appropriate support throughout all phases of the program for any applicants and selected participants with identified disabilities, in support of the Bureau's emphases on diversity and inclusion.
- Publicize the program in targeted states/regions, using a variety of methods including distribution of hard copy and digital promotional materials provided by the Administrative Component Partner; engage alumni and field staff, the media, and key professional organizations/networks wherever possible in order to maximize student recruitment.
 - Develop and implement plans to recruit a greater diversity of applicants, representative of American society. These plans should take into account the five areas of diversity that CBYX is currently focused on: gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status, disability, population density in home community (urban/rural/etc.). The plan should endeavor to ensure that each state in a region is represented generally in proportion to its population within the region. Develop a merit-based selection process for U.S. secondary school participants in assigned region(s) to ensure all proposed selectees meet eligibility criteria for U.S. participants provided by the ECA program office and represent the diversity of the United States.
- Develop measures to ensure diversity in the applicant pool and to minimize unconscious bias that may disadvantage applicants.
- Provide proposed selections and detailed applicant data to ECA for final selection prior to notification of applicants (please build in two weeks for this approval process).
- Ensure that the review of applications and selection of finalists occurs before and separate from review of health forms.
- Require U.S. finalists, as well as their parents or legal guardians, as applicable, to sign the CBYX Terms and Conditions provided by the ECA program office.
- Collect medical history and health records to facilitate participant safety during travel and while on program. Keep all records secure and share them only as required for ensuring the safety, health, and welfare of the participant.
- Make participant international travel arrangements and facilitate the visa process, if necessary.
- Conduct a pre-departure orientation for U.S. participants that includes appropriate information on recognizing and preventing sexual harassment/abuse and how to report

sexual harassment/abuse, as well as information on how to report and resolve problems during the exchange year. The pre-departure orientation should also include information on the purpose of the program, the foreign policy context for the program, goals and expectations, program rules, and personal and cultural adjustment issues.

- Ensure that the German partner organization(s) conducts an appropriate arrival orientation for participants that provides them with key emergency contact numbers as well as the U.S. Department of State American Citizen Services Office at 0 30 8305 1023 or acsberlin@state.gov.
- Coordinate with ECA to inform and encourage members of Congress announce the scholarship winners in their states/districts (i.e., post on members' website or in newsletters).
- In accordance with instructions provided by the ECA program office, within 30 days of selection, provide the names of all U.S. participants, dates of birth, U.S. home addresses, email address, phone number, names of natural parents, name of most recent U.S. school, and confirmed information on the participant's Congressional representative district.
- Enroll all U.S. participants in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program and explain the services provided by American Citizen Services (ACS) at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate.

Placement

- Coordinate information and logistics with the German partner organization(s) regarding U.S. students' arrival orientation, language training, German host family and school placement, and program administration, including health and accident insurance.
- Ensure that the German partner organization vets host families, mirroring, to the extent possible, the vetting that is required for host families of German inbound secondary school students per the Secondary School regulations at 22 CFR 62.25.
- Facilitate negotiation of academic programs appropriate to the needs and abilities of the students and the transfer of students' academic credit as possible and appropriate.
- In accordance with instructions provided by the program office, a minimum of one week prior to the U.S. students' departure from the United States, submit information regarding their initial lodging arrangements in Germany. Update placement information as permanent placements and subsequent changes occur per instructions provided by the program office.
- Follow instructions provided by the ECA program office on uploading U.S. participant finalist information (including applications, signed terms and conditions, and other key documents) and maintaining accurate records in the CBYX online database.

Participant Monitoring

- Ensure that monitoring of U.S. students mirrors to the extent possible the secondary school student provisions of the Exchange Visitor Program regulations with regard to

monitoring, including regular contact with the student and the host family, with the understanding that German exchange regulations and policies also must be followed.

- Monitor students' progress in academics, social adjustment, and program activities.
- Identify students who may need additional support and arrange for that support. For minority participants, having support team members who are able to understand and relate to their unique experiences is key. Please be sure to describe plans for ensuring that support team members are prepared to appropriately and compassionately address participant experiences with potential discrimination while overseas.
- Develop methods to ensure that staff who work to support participants are trained to address issues of race, sexual orientation, gender, and other common challenges that a diverse group of participants may encounter during an exchange year.
- Following the reporting rubric included in the CBYX Outbound Operational Guidelines, notify ECA's Youth Programs Division of serious On-Program Support (OPS) cases, including, but not limited to hospitalizations or serious health issues, serious adjustment and/or behavior issues that may lead to an early return, or other situations which involve the health, safety or well-being of the participant. Such reports should be documented in an Incident Report Form (see the CBYX Operational Guidelines for more information, including the Incident Report Form).
- Prepare documentation necessary for ECA to make decisions on terminating a participant's program (known as an early return). If an award recipient wishes to request that ECA approve an early return request of a U.S. secondary school participant, the award recipient should provide ECA with consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved students, host families, and natural families are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. The award recipient will prepare a clear and concise Incident Report of the circumstances, detailing communication between parties. A written statement should be obtained from the student with their perspective, and the perspective of the natural families should also be documented. Additionally, in the case of an involuntary return, at minimum the program organization must provide documentation that the student and the natural parents have been informed of the reason for the return and the return travel plans. The report and documentation must be submitted before the student begins travel back to the United States and ECA and the Bundestag must concur on the early return. The ECA program office may share this report within the U.S. Department of State as appropriate. ECA and the Bundestag, not the Program Organization(s), retain the final decision on a participant early return. No participant is to be dismissed from the program without concurrence from ECA and the Bundestag.

Programming

- Work with the German partner organization(s) to provide an appropriate program of enhancement activities for the students that promote the goals of the program.

- Ensure that language training, which is funded with German government funds, is provided appropriately to U.S. participants.
- Ensure that a re-entry orientation is conducted for U.S. participants by the German partner organization prior to student departure. The re-entry orientation should bring closure to the students' exchange experience and prepare them for the return home.
- Report highlights of U.S. students' on-program activities, including any press coverage, to the CBYX Program Office. Partner Organizations are encouraged to consider providing an informal Wednesday weekly roundup of key program activities and participant highlights. These can be compiled and included as an appendix to the mandatory semiannual reports. This will allow timely transfer of information to the program office as well as documentation for the official record of the program.
- Work with ECA and the Administrative Component Partner to plan and implement the American program-wide re-entry event. Each organization should plan for their participants and approximately 3 staff to join this event in Washington, DC in June 2026. More information on the event can be found in the description of the Administrative Component of the POGI.

German Secondary School Participants:

Preparation

- Work with the German partner(s) to facilitate the visa process, if necessary, and ensure that appropriate travel arrangements are made by the German partner. ECA does not require award recipients to route participants via Washington, DC.
- Collect medical history and health records to facilitate participant safety during travel and while on program. Keep all records secure and share them only as required for ensuring the safety, health, and welfare of the participant.
- Ensure that German secondary school participants (selected by German partner organizations) receive a pre-departure orientation that fulfills the requirements of the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) regulations at 22 CFR Part 62 and that they receive an appropriate arrival orientation. Pre-departure and arrival orientations should include information on the purpose of and the foreign policy context for the program, goals and expectations, program rules and practical logistical information, personal and cultural adjustment issues, and information on recognizing and preventing sexual abuse and how to report sexual harassment/abuse.
- Collaborate with ECA and other award recipients to inform and encourage members of Congress to welcome the German scholarship participants in their states/districts (e.g., a welcome letter, or post on the members' website/social media or in newsletters).

Placement

- Provide appropriate support throughout all phases of the program for participants with identified disabilities, in support of the Bureau's emphases on diversity and inclusion.

- Recruit and screen host families in accordance with the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) regulations (22 CFR 62.25), sufficiently in advance of the students' arrival to ensure adequate time for preparation. Host families should reflect the diversity of the United States. ECA is interested in a range of diversity markers (as outlined above in the American recruitment section) and in ensuring that overall, the selection of CBYX host families reflects nationwide ethnic/racial census data. Applicants should describe their plan to meet this goal. Additionally, in an attempt to ensure equitable placement of exchange participants across the United States applicant organizations should outline plans to place at least fifty percent of their German participants in their recruitment region.
- Secure school placements in accredited secondary schools prior to departure from home country in accordance with the Secondary School Exchange Visitor (J-1) Visa regulations (22 CFR 62.25).
- Inform participants of their host family and school placements well in advance of arrival, a minimum of two weeks in advance. Following the CBYX Inbound Operational Guidelines, ensure that placement information is maintained accurately in the online CBYX database.
- Provide orientation for American host families that meets the requirements of the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) regulations (22 CFR 62.25), including cross-cultural and adjustment issues, and provide them with information and reference materials necessary to host and support a CBYX program student, including a copy of the J-1 visa regulations. The orientation should also include information specific to the CBYX program, including its history and goals.
- Encourage American host families to participate in ECA program office activities designed for them, if applicable.
- Facilitate negotiation of academic programs appropriate to the needs and abilities of the students and the transfer of students' academic credit as possible and appropriate.
- Encourage school administrators to utilize students as resources in the classroom and the community.
- Ensure that all placement information, including host family contact emails/phone numbers, for each student is recorded in the CBYX online database in advance of the sponsor's annual reporting deadline (August 31) or as directed by the program office in order to meet program and legal requirements.
- Ensure that all change of placement data is recorded in the CBYX online database within 48 hours of a student's placement change, so that the sponsor can submit the annual change of placement report by the July 31st deadline each year.

Participant Monitoring

- Conduct site visits to 20% of CBYX students. In accordance with the secondary student provisions of the Exchange Visitor (J-1 visa) regulations (22 CFR Part 62), monitor students, host families, and local coordinators to ensure the health, safety and well-

being of participants. The purpose of these visits is to see CBYX students in their host family/community environments. These site visits should be conducted in close coordination with ECA in order to complement ECA site visits and ensure maximum coverage. These site visits must be done by full-time permanent employees or an official designate of the award recipient's headquarters staff.

- Submit site visit plans to ECA through the on-program support email address provided to award recipients. Site visit plans for October-December should be submitted by September 15th of the academic year and Site visit plans for January-June should be submitted by December 15th of the academic year.
- Develop reporting systems to distribute and collect monthly updates, reports, and other communications that students will fill out and submit themselves. Your proposal should provide details on the system. Plans that describe ways to attain 100% student participation will be deemed more competitive under the "Participant Monitoring" review criterion. The purpose of these monthly updates is to allow CBYX students to self-report issues and to allow the award recipients to track these issues effectively. Award recipients must promptly notify ECA about problems, inconsistencies, or concerns that are identified from these updates.
- Monitor students' progress in academics, social adjustment, and program activities and track their progress in monthly contact reports.
- Develop methods to ensure that staff who work to support participants are trained to address issues of race, sexual orientation, gender, and other common challenges that a diverse group of participants may encounter during an exchange year.
- Ensure that Partner Organization staff is trained and proficient at developing strong relationships with participants and follow best practices of eliciting substantive responses from teenagers to ensure that participants are comfortable confiding significant issues with Program Organization representatives.
- Identify situations where students may need additional support from their natural parents, peers, or other award recipient staff; arrange counseling for participants if needed; document the circumstances; and notify German partner organization as appropriate to gain natural parent perspective or concurrence.
- Report such situations to the ECA program office in accordance with ECA guidelines, including all situations that affect the health, safety or well-being of CBYX participants.
- Report to the ECA program office (by sending an incident report to the CBYX-OPS email address) within 24 hours any matters that are required to be reported by a sponsor pursuant to the regulations at 22 CFR Part 62. The Program Office, as the CBYX sponsor, will be responsible for reporting to the Office of Designation. Information on this process is outlined in the CBYX Inbound Operational Guidelines.
- Prepare documentation necessary for ECA to make decisions on terminating a participant's program (known as an early return). If an award recipient wishes to request that ECA approve an early return request, the award recipient should provide ECA with consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved

student, host family, and natural family are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. Award recipients will submit a clear and concise Incident Report of the circumstances detailing communication between parties. Only the ECA program office and the Bundestag can make the decision to terminate a program and repatriate a student; under no circumstances will award recipients, or anyone acting on their behalf, inform CBYX participants or imply to them that their programs will terminate or that they will be repatriated without specific direction from the ECA program office. Similarly, probation or warning letters that explicitly inform a participant that they are not being sent home should not be issued without express ECA approval.

Programming

- Encourage/facilitate participants' interaction with their Congressional representatives during the program in the local congressional offices and, when possible, the Washington, DC offices.
- Provide cultural enhancements to German participants such as activities designed to develop leadership skills, learn about U.S. society and government, and facilitate their participation in a minimum of 25 hours of volunteer community service efforts per ECA program office community service guidelines.
- Distribute to all CBYX participants all information that the ECA program office provides regarding Department-initiated activities, including International Education Week, Global Youth Service Day, and program-related activities that may arise during the year.
- Facilitate the attendance of all CBYX secondary school participants in special CBYX enhancement programming. In past years this has taken the form of Civic Education Workshops implemented by a third party programming partner. Award recipients will be required to collaborate with ECA and its partners to facilitate CBYX student participation in such activities.
- Facilitate the distribution of information provided by the ECA program office regarding alumni networks and activities.
- Provide to the program office highlights and images of significant participant activities, including any press coverage, to help promote the benefits of the CBYX program. Partner Organizations are encouraged to consider providing an informal Wednesday weekly round-up of key program activities and participant highlights. These can be compiled and included as an appendix to the mandatory semiannual reports. This will allow timely transfer of information to the program office as well as documentation for the official record of the program.
- Conduct a debriefing/re-entry orientation for German students to bring closure to the students' exchange experience and prepare them for the return home. Planning for these orientations must include advance consultation with the ECA program office regarding proposed dates and locations. ECA does not require these activities to take

place in Washington, DC, but should be invited to these events to allow for end of program participant monitoring whenever possible.

Vocational Component

This Component provides scholarships to graduating American secondary school seniors (ages 18-19 as of August 1 of the program start year) with a vocational interest and/or specialization for an academic-year professional study and training experience in their fields of interest in Germany. ECA anticipates awarding approximately \$130,000 for this Component.

One U.S. organization will be selected to conduct all aspects of the nationwide selection competition in the United States for up to 25 U.S. participants, including advertising, recruitment, processing of applications (using a CBYX specific application, either the one maintained by the Administrative Component Partner as detailed above OR a similar application approved in advance by ECA), screening, selection and pre-departure orientations, and management of all administrative and logistical matters including domestic and international travel. During the selection process, the program organization is encouraged to work with vocational and career technical education offices at the state level, as well as administrators of secondary schools with vocational and career technical education curriculum. Organizations should include in their proposal information about measures they will undertake to ensure diversity in their applicant pool and to minimize unconscious bias that may disadvantage applicants with diverse backgrounds.

The German partner organization chosen by the Bundestag Administrative Office will coordinate arrival and re-entry orientation for the U.S. participants and will place them in host families and schools. The German partner organization will screen, select, and orient host families as well as provide participant monitoring, supervision and support to participants and host families. The German partner organization will also arrange enrichment activities for the participants throughout the year and an internship or hands-on work experience in the participants' field of study and will manage all administrative and logistical matters including in-country travel and the provision of health and accident insurance.

Below is a specific list of all the requirements for the program. Applicant organizations should closely review these bullets and submit a 20-page narrative proposal that reflects an ability to achieve the program requirements. It is not necessary to repeat this list word for word in the proposal. Instead, proposals should ensure that they demonstrate the ability to achieve the goals of the program, comply with the requirements of the program, and address all six of the review criteria outlined in the NOFO document.

U.S. Vocational Participants: Selection and Preparation

- Publicize the program nationwide, using a variety of methods including distribution of physical and digital promotional materials, engaging alumni and field staff, the media, government agencies (such as state-level vocational offices), and key professional organizations/networks wherever possible in efforts to maximize recruitment.
- Provide appropriate support throughout all phases of the program for any applicants and selected participants with identified disabilities, in support of the Bureau's emphases on diversity and inclusion.
- Develop a merit-based selection process for U.S. citizens who have completed secondary level studies prior to the start of the program and who have an interest and some experience in vocational studies prior to selection. This process should ensure all proposed selectees both meet eligibility criteria for U.S. participants provided by the ECA program office and represent the diversity of the United States. The five areas of diversity that CBYX is currently focused on include: gender, ethnicity/race, socio-economic status, disability, and population density in home community (urban/rural/etc.). In addition, the plan should endeavor to ensure that each state in a region is represented generally in proportion to its population within the region.
- Develop measures to ensure diversity in the applicant pool and to minimize unconscious bias that may disadvantage applicants.
- Provide proposed selections and detailed applicant data to ECA for final selection prior to notification of applicants (please build in two weeks for this approval process).
- Ensure that review of applications and selection of finalists occurs before and separate from review of health forms.
- Require U.S. applicants, as well as their parents or legal guardians, as applicable, to sign the U.S. Department of State CBYX Terms and Conditions statement provided by the ECA program office, prior to finalizing their participation in the program.
- Collect medical history and health records to facilitate participant safety during travel and while on program. Keep all records secure and share them only as required for ensuring the safety, health, and welfare of the participant.
- Make travel arrangements and facilitate the visa process, if necessary.
- Conduct a pre-departure orientation that includes appropriate information on recognizing and preventing sexual harassment/abuse and how to report sexual harassment/abuse; ensure that the German partner organization conducts an appropriate arrival orientation. The pre-departure orientation should also include information on the purpose of the program, the foreign policy context for the program, goals and expectations, program rules, personal and cultural adjustment issues.
- Coordinate with ECA to inform and encourage members of Congress announce the scholarship winners in their states/districts (i.e., post on members' website or in newsletters).
- In accordance with instructions provided by the ECA program office, within 30 days of selection, provide the names of all U.S. participants, dates of birth, U.S. home addresses,

email addresses, phone numbers, names of natural parents, name of school of U.S. matriculation, and confirmed information on the participant's Congressional representative district.

- Enroll all U.S. participants in the U.S. Department of State' Smart Traveler Enrollment Program and explain the services provided by American Citizen Services (ACS) at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate.

Placement

- Coordinate information and logistics with the German partner organization regarding U.S. students' arrival orientation, language training, school placement, housing and/or host family arrangements and program administration.
- Ensure that appropriate housing arrangements are made with a vetted host family or in other suitable housing.
- Ensure that students are placed in an appropriate school, and that internships are arranged in the participants' field of study.
- Inform the ECA program office of participants' initial lodging arrangements in Germany a minimum of one week prior to their departure from the United States. Update their placement information as permanent placements and subsequent changes occur per instructions provided by the program office.
- Follow instructions provided by the ECA program office on uploading U.S. participant finalist information (including applications, signed terms and conditions, and other key documents) and maintaining accurate records in the CBYX online database.

Participant Monitoring

- Work with the German partner organization to ensure the monitoring, supervision and support of U.S. students according to all applicable German regulations and policies, mirroring as closely as possible the support and supervision that would be provided to inbound post-secondary school exchange participants that visit the United States.
- Work with the German partner organization to monitor students' progress in academics, social adjustment, and program activities.
- Work with the German partner organization to identify when students may need additional support and arrange for that support, as needed. For minority participants, having support team members who are able to understand and relate to their unique experiences is key to ensuring that participants are supported. Please be sure to describe plans for ensuring that support team members are prepared to appropriately and compassionately address participant experiences with discrimination while overseas.
- Develop methods to ensure that staff who work to support participants are trained to address issues of race, sexual orientation, gender, and other common challenges that a diverse group of participants may encounter during an exchange year.

- Notify ECA's Youth Programs Division of serious On-Program Support (OPS) cases, including, but not limited to hospitalizations or serious health issues, serious adjustment and/or behavior issues that may lead to an early return, or other situations which involve the health, safety or well-being of the participant. Such reports should be documented in an Incident Report Form provided by the ECA program office.
- Prepare documentation necessary for ECA to make decisions on terminating a participant's program (known as early returns). If a Program Organization wishes to request that ECA approve an early return request of a U.S. vocational participant, the Program Organization should provide ECA with consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved student(s), host and natural families, as appropriate to the situation, are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. The Program Organization will prepare a clear and concise Incident Report of the circumstances, detailing communication between parties. A written statement should be obtained from the student with their perspective and the perspective of the natural family should also be documented when possible. Additionally, in the case of an involuntary return, at minimum the program organization must provide documentation that the student has been informed of the reason for the return and the return travel plans. The report and documentation must be submitted before the student begins travel back to the United States. The program office may share this report within the U.S. Department of State as appropriate. ECA and the Bundestag, not the Program Organization(s), will make the final decision on a participant early return. No participant is to be dismissed from the program without concurrence from ECA and the Bundestag.

Programming

- Work with the German partner organization to provide an appropriate program of enhancement activities that promote the goals of the program.
- Ensure that language training, which is funded with German government funds, is provided to U.S. participants.
- Ensure that a re-entry orientation is conducted for U.S. participants by the German partner organization prior to student departure. The re-entry orientation should bring closure to the students' exchange experience and prepare them for the return home.
- Report highlights of U.S. students' on-program activities, including any press coverage, to the CBYX Program Office. Partner Organizations are encouraged to consider providing an informal Wednesday weekly roundup of key program activities and participant highlights. These can then be compiled and included as an appendix to the mandatory semiannual reports. This will allow timely transfer of information to the program office as well as documentation for the official record of the program.
- Work with ECA and the Administrative Component Partner to plan and implement the American program-wide re-entry event. Each organization should plan for their participants and approximately two staff to join this event in Washington, DC in the June

2026. More information on the event can be found in the description of the Administrative Component on pages 4-6 of this POGI.

Young Professional Component

This Component provides scholarships for an academic year professional study and training experience in the host country in a variety of professional and technical fields to young Americans and Germans ages 18.5-24 as of August 1 of the program start year. This Component will also provide administrative support for the Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Staff Exchange (CBBSX). One U.S. organization will be selected to conduct programming for approximately 75 American and 75 German Young Professionals as part of CBYX and travel and logistical support for 10 American congressional staffers as part of CBBSX. ECA anticipates awarding approximately \$964,000 for this Component.

For CBYX, in the United States the U.S. recipient organization will conduct nationwide advertising and recruitment, process applications (using a CBYX specific application, either the one maintained by the Administrative Component Partner as detailed above OR a similar application approved in advance by ECA), screen and select U.S. participants, provide pre-departure orientations, manage all administrative and logistical matters, and arrange domestic and international travel. The award recipient will coordinate arrival and re-entry orientations for German participants, place them with host families or arrange other suitable housing, place them in colleges or universities, arrange internships in the participants' field of study, and arrange program enrichment activities. The U.S. recipient organization will conduct the recruitment, screening, selection, and orientation of host families; provide participant monitoring, supervision, and support to participants and host families; and manage all administrative and logistical matters including in-country travel arrangements. The partner organization in Germany will coordinate arrival and re-entry orientations for U.S. participants, place them with host families or arrange other suitable housing, place them in colleges or universities, arrange internships in the participants' field of study, and arrange program enrichment activities. Organizations should include in their proposal information about measures they will undertake to ensure diversity in their applicant pool and to minimize unconscious bias that may disadvantage applicants.

Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Staff Exchange (CBBSX) extends CBYX programs to congressional staffers through a short-term reciprocal exchange program between the U.S. Congress and German Parliament. Proposals for the Young Professionals Component should include approximately \$35,000 to provide administrative and logistical support for the Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Staff Exchange. This will include 10 U.S. Congressional staff traveling to Germany in 2026. The U.S. recipient organization will collect required travel information, arrange and pay for travel, and enroll participants in the ASPE medical benefit

program. Selection is handled by the U.S. Congress, pre-departure programming is conducted by the U.S. Department of State, and funding for the activities in Germany is provided by the German Bundestag and Bundesrat.

Below is a specific list of all the requirements for the program. Applicant organizations should closely review these bullets and submit a 20-page narrative proposal that reflects an ability to achieve the program requirements. It is not necessary to repeat this list word for word in the proposal. Instead, proposals should ensure that they demonstrate the ability to achieve the goals of the program, comply with the requirements of the program, and address all six of the review criteria outlined in the NOFO document.

U.S. Young Professional Participants:

Selection and Preparation

- Publicize the program nationwide, using a variety of methods including distribution of physical and digital promotional materials, engaging alumni and field staff, the media, and key professional organizations/networks wherever possible in efforts to maximize recruitment.
- Provide appropriate support throughout all phases of the program for any applicants and selected participants with identified disabilities, in support of the Bureau's emphases on diversity and inclusion.
- Develop a merit-based selection process for U.S. citizens who have completed secondary studies prior to the start of the program. This process should ensure all proposed selectees meet eligibility criteria for U.S. participants provided by the ECA program office and represent the diversity of the United States.
- Develop measures to ensure diversity in the applicant pool and to minimize unconscious bias that may disadvantage applicants.
- Provide proposed selections and detailed applicant data to ECA for final selection prior to notification of applicants (please build in two weeks for this approval process).
- Ensure that review of applications and selection of finalists occurs before and separate from review of health forms.
- Require U.S. applicants, as well as their parents or legal guardians, as applicable, to sign the U.S. Department of State CBYX Terms and Conditions statement provided by the ECA program office, prior to participating in the program.
- Make travel arrangements and facilitate the visa process, if necessary.
- Collect medical history and health records to facilitate participant safety during travel and while on program. Keep all records secure and share them only as required for ensuring the safety, health, and welfare of the participant.
- Conduct a pre-departure orientation for U.S. participants that includes appropriate information on recognizing and preventing sexual harassment/abuse and how to report sexual harassment/abuse; ensure that the German partner organization conducts an

appropriate arrival orientation. The pre-departure orientation should also include information on the purpose of the program, the foreign policy context for the program, goals and expectations, program rules, personal and cultural adjustment issues.

- Coordinate with ECA to inform and encourage members of Congress to announce the scholarship winners in their states/districts (for example, post on members' website or in newsletters).
- In accordance with instructions provided by the ECA program office, within 30 days of selection, provide the names of all U.S. participants, dates of birth, U.S. home addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, names of natural parents, current school/work affiliation, and confirmed information on the participants' Congressional representative districts.
- Enroll all U.S. participants in the U.S. Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program and explain the services provided by American Citizen Services (ACS) at the U.S. Embassy/Consulate.

Placement

- Coordinate information and logistics with the German partner organization regarding U.S. students' arrival orientation, language training, school placement, housing and/or host family arrangements and program administration.
- Ensure that appropriate housing arrangements are made with a vetted host family or in other suitable housing.
- Work with the German partner organization to ensure that students are placed in an appropriate school and that internships are arranged in the participants' field of study.
- In accordance with instructions provided by the program office, a minimum of one week prior to the U.S. students' departure from the United States, submit information regarding their initial lodging arrangements in Germany. Update placement information as permanent placements and subsequent changes occur per instructions provided by the program office.
- Follow instructions provided by the ECA program office on uploading U.S. participant finalist information (including applications, signed terms and conditions, and other key documents) and maintaining accurate records in the CBYX online database.

Participant Monitoring

- Work with the German partner organization to ensure the monitoring, supervision and support of U.S. participants according to all applicable German regulations and policies, mirroring to the extent possible the support and supervision that would be provided to inbound post-secondary school exchange participants that visit the United States.
- Work with the German partner organization to monitor participants' progress in academics, social adjustment, and program activities.

- Work with the German partner organization to identify when participants may need additional support and arrange for that support, as needed. For minority participants, having support team members who are able to understand and relate to their unique experiences is key to ensuring that participants are supported. Please be sure to describe plans for ensuring that support team members are prepared to appropriately and compassionately address participant experiences with discrimination while overseas.
- Develop methods to ensure that staff who work to support participants are trained to address issues of race, sexual orientation, gender, and other common challenges that a diverse group of participants may encounter during an exchange year.
- Notify ECA's Youth Programs Division of serious On-Program Support (OPS) cases, including, but not limited to hospitalizations or serious health issues, serious adjustment and/or behavior issues that may lead to an early return, or other situations which involve the health, safety or well-being of the participant. Such reports should be documented in an Incident Report Form provided by the ECA program office.
- Prepare documentation necessary for ECA to make decisions on terminating a participant's program (known as an early return). If a Program Organization wishes to request that ECA approve an early return request of a U.S. Young Professional participant, the Program Organization should provide ECA with consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved student(s), and host and natural families, as appropriate, are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. The Program Organization will prepare a clear and concise Incident Report of the circumstances, detailing communication between parties. A written statement should be obtained from the student with their perspective, and the perspective of the natural family should also be documented where possible. Additionally, in the case of an involuntary return, at minimum the program organization must provide documentation that the student has been informed of the reason for the return and the return travel plans. The report and documentation must be submitted before the student begins travel back to the United States. The ECA program office may share this report within the U.S. Department of State as appropriate. ECA and the Bundestag, not the Program Organization(s), retain the final decision on a participant early return. No participant is to be dismissed from the program without concurrence from ECA and the Bundestag.

Programming

- Work with the German partner organization to provide an appropriate program of enhancement activities for the participants that promote the goals of the program.
- Ensure that language training, which is funded with German government funds, is provided appropriately to U.S. participants.
- Ensure that a re-entry orientation is conducted for U.S. participants by the German partner organization prior to participant departure. The re-entry orientation should

bring closure to the participants' exchange experience and prepare them for the return home.

- Report highlights of U.S. participants' on-program activities, including any press coverage, to the CBYX Program Office. Partner Organizations are encouraged to consider providing an informal Wednesday weekly roundup of key program activities and participant highlights. These can be compiled and included as an appendix to the mandatory semiannual reports. This will allow timely transfer of information to the program office as well as documentation for the official record of the program.
- Work with ECA and the Administrative Component Partner to plan and implement the American program-wide re-entry event. Each organization should plan for their participants and approximately three staff to join this event in Washington, DC in the June 2026. More information on the event can be found in the description of the Administrative Component on pages 4-6 of this POGI.

German Young Professional Participants:

Preparation

- German Young Professional participants are selected by the German partner organization, but the U.S. Program Organization must work with the German partner organization to ensure that students receive both an appropriate pre-departure orientation and arrival orientation that follows all orientation guidance in 22 CFR Part 62. Pre-departure and arrival orientations should include information on the purpose of and the foreign policy context for the program; goals and expectations; program rules; practical logistical information; personal and cultural adjustment issues; and information on recognizing and preventing sexual abuse and how to report sexual harassment/abuse.
- Work with the German partner to facilitate travel and the visa process (including printing and delivery of participant DS-2019s), if necessary, and ensure that appropriate travel arrangements are made by German partner. ECA does not require to route participants via Washington, D.C.
- Collect medical history and health records to facilitate participant safety during travel and while on program. Keep all records secure and share them only as required for ensuring the safety, health, and welfare of the participant.
- Facilitate administrative and logistical matters including in-country travel to placements and any group activities.
- Collaborate with ECA to inform members of Congress and encourage them to announce the German scholarship participants in their states/districts (e.g., post on the members' website or in newsletters).

Placement

- Provide appropriate support throughout all phases of the program for selected participants with identified disabilities, in support of the Bureau's emphases on diversity and inclusion.
- Recruit and screen and orient host families or make other suitable housing arrangements, following all applicable regulations in 22 CFR Part 62. Host families should reflect the diversity of the United States. While ECA is interested in several diversity markers (as outlined above in the American recruitment section), for this award cycle, ECA requests that applicants outline plans for recruiting host families of color in an attempt to mimic nationwide ethnic/racial census data in the families who host CBYX participants.
- Place students in schools and facilitate internships, following all applicable regulations in 22 CFR Part 62.
- Participants are expected to be fluent in English; however, participants may select an English class as part of their regular course of study. To save costs, the organization is encouraged to seek tuition waivers and cost sharing with cooperating colleges.
- Place each German Young Professionals participant in an accredited two- or four-year college and in internship settings that clearly support the academic study program and the professional goals of the participant. Programming may provide full-time or part-time study and internships but should result in approximately one semester of full-time study (12 or more semester hours) and one semester of full-time internship over the course of the year.
- Arrange a Congressional Internship in Washington, D.C. or in the state office for a minimum of six week for at least five participants.
- A stipend for participant meals, incidentals, and reasonable local transportation expenses may be included in the budget, but the stipend may be substantially reduced or eliminated for participants working on paid internships. Where possible, hosting arrangements should be found that do not require subsidization.
- Ensure that all placement information for each participant is recorded in the CBYX online database or as directed by the program office in order to meet program and legal requirements.
- Ensure that all change of placement data is recorded in the CBYX online database as outlined in the CBYX Inbound Operational Guidelines.

Participant Monitoring

- Ensure the monitoring, supervision, and support of participants, host families, and local support volunteers (such as college coordinators) to ensure the health, safety, and well-being of participants.
- Monitor participant' progress in academics, social adjustment, and program activities.
- Identify when participants may need additional support and arrange for that support, as needed.

- Develop methods to ensure that staff who work to support participants are trained to address issues of race, sexual orientation, gender, and other common challenges that a diverse group of participants may encounter during an exchange year.
- Notify ECA's Youth Programs Division of serious On-Program Support (OPS) cases, including, but not limited to hospitalizations or serious health issues, serious adjustment and/or behavior issues that may lead to an early return, or other situations which involve the health, safety, or well-being of the participant. Such reports should be documented in an Incident Report Form provided by the program office in the CBYX Operational Guidelines.
- Prepare documentation necessary for ECA to make decisions on terminating a participant's program (known as early returns). If a Program Organization wishes to request that ECA approve an early return request of a German young professional participant, the Program Organization should provide ECA with consistent and thorough documentation that ensures that the involved participant(s), host families and natural families, as appropriate, are aware of the situation and have been included in its resolution. The Program Organization will prepare a clear and concise Incident Report of the circumstances, detailing communication between parties. A written statement should be obtained from the participant with their perspective, and the perspective of the natural family should also be documented where possible. Additionally, in the case of an involuntary return, at minimum the program organization must provide documentation that the participant has been informed of the reason for the return and the return travel plans. The report and documentation must be submitted before the participant begins travel back to Germany. The ECA program office may share this report within the U.S. Department of State as appropriate. Only the ECA program office and the Bundestag can make the decision to terminate a program and repatriate a participant; under no circumstances will award recipients, or anyone acting on their behalf, inform CBYX participants, or imply to them, that their programs will terminate or that they will be repatriated without specific direction from the ECA program office. Similarly, probation or warning letters that explicitly inform a participant that they are not being sent home should not be issued without express ECA approval.

Programming

- Encourage/facilitate participants' interaction with their Congressional representatives during the program in the local congressional offices and, when possible, the Washington, D.C. offices.
- Provide cultural enhancements to German participants that develop leadership skills, encourage learning about U.S. society and government, and facilitate a minimum of 25 hours of volunteer community service efforts per ECA program office community service guidelines.

- Distribute to all CBYX participants all information that the ECA program office provides regarding Department-initiated activities, including International Education Week, Global Youth Service Day, and program-related activities that may arise during the year.
- Facilitate the attendance of all CBYX young professional participants in special CBYX programming. In past years this has taken the form of Civic Education Workshops implemented by a third party programming partner. Award recipients will be required to collaborate with ECA and its partners to facilitate CBYX young professionals' participation in such activities.
- Facilitate the distribution of information provided by the ECA program office regarding alumni networks and activities.
- Provide to the program office highlights and images of significant participant activities, including any press coverage, to help promote the benefits of the CBYX program. Partner Organizations are encouraged to consider providing an informal Wednesday weekly roundup of key program activities and participant highlights. These can be compiled and included as an appendix to the mandatory semiannual reports. This will allow timely transfer of information to the program office as well as documentation for the official record of the program.
- Conduct a debriefing/re-entry orientation for German students to bring closure to the students' exchange experience and prepare them for the return home. Planning for these orientations must include advance consultation with the ECA program office regarding proposed dates and locations. ECA does not require these activities to take place in Washington, DC, but should be invited to these events to allow for end of program participant monitoring whenever possible.

Congress-Bundestag/Bundesrat Staff Exchange

- Collect biographical information and necessary travel related information from Congressional staff.
- Arrange and pay for travel for 10 U.S. Congressional staff traveling to Germany (roundtrip economy class airfare, a minimum of one checked bag per participant, seat assignments and economy plus upgrades where allowed by the Fly America Act, and local transportation costs to and from airports).
- Enroll the U.S. delegates in the Department of State's ASPE program for the duration of the exchange in Germany.

The following detailed guidance applies to the **Secondary School, Vocational, and Young Professional CBYX Components:**

1. **Program Promotion:** Participate in program-wide promotional activities including, but not limited to:

- a. Social media activities as outlined in the social media strategy provided by the ECA program office and/or the Administrative Component Partner, this will include posting a minimum of two times each week to CBYX social media properties during assigned weeks (which will be no more than monthly for each partner).
- b. Nominating a unique German participant for CBYX participant of the month at least three times each academic year.
- c. Ensuring that information about CBYX is easily accessible to people on the organization's webpage and that it is clearly indicated that the organization is an implementing partner for this U.S. Department of State and German Bundestag program.
- d. In an effort to educate more Americans about ECA programs, host family recruitment sites should include information for families to learn about the benefits of hosting a U.S. Government sponsored exchange student vs. private sector students.
- e. Working in close coordination with the ECA program office to share information about participant selection and placement with the program's namesake, the U.S. Congress.

2. Partnership with German Organization(s): Demonstrate the ability to cooperate with foreign partners in implementing exchanges. If selected to implement the program, organizations will need to enter into a written partnership agreement with their assigned German partners and submit a copy of this agreement to ECA. Please contact the ECA program officer if you require more information about the German organizations involved in the implementation of CBYX.

3. Insurance: The Bureau offers the Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) plan for students participating in the program at no cost to award recipients. Applicants must submit the health and accident insurance plans that they intend to use for the German participants of this program. American participants will be covered by German partner organization insurance but must also be enrolled in ASPE as supplemental coverage. Applicants are encouraged to use ASPE for the German participants but may choose to use their own plan instead. Detailed information on ASPE can be found in 10 FAM 240: <https://fam.state.gov/fam/10fam/10fam0240.html>. The current plan information can be found at www.usdos.sevencorners.com. Placement Organizations wishing to use a different plan for German participants must demonstrate that such alternate plan provides comparable or more comprehensive coverage. Coverage must begin when students arrive in the United States and not conclude until they return home. If ASPE is not used for German participants, the proposal must include a copy of the proposed insurance policy and the cost of the insurance should be included in the budget. The insurance you propose to use must meet the requirements of 22 CFR 62.14.

4. Fiscal Management and Reporting: Proposals should briefly describe how applicants will ensure proper accounting for and management of sub-award recipients (if applicable) as well as ensure the performance of required audits. Proposals should demonstrate organizational ability to meet all reporting deadlines and requirements outlined in this solicitation.

5. Follow-On: Proposals must also include a plan for follow-on contact with alumni after they return home and for their inclusion in future CBYX and program organization activities. All award recipient staff should be familiar with the U.S. Department of State's digital and other resources that may be of interest to alumni. Proposals should include a plan for encouraging participants to register and maintain updated contact information with the U.S. Department of State's International Exchange Alumni website, <https://alumni.state.gov>. To better explain the benefits and how to access resources, staff may request guest access to the International Exchange Alumni website from the ECA program office. While award recipients may also provide their own resources and on-line opportunities for alumni, these may not replace encouraging involvement with U.S. Department of State online communities. In cases where there might be potential overlap, proposals should explain how this overlap will be beneficial to the program and its alumni.

III. PROPOSAL CONTENTS

Proposal narratives should include a commitment to implement the program for the base year, plus two additional NCCs, pending successful performance and the availability of funds. The narrative should focus on details specific to the implementation of the base year program, with the understanding that the program design, duration, and participant numbers would be similar when/if the subsequent two NCCs are exercised. ECA will perform an annual performance evaluation/review to determine if a NCC will be exercised. Satisfactory performance and the availability of funds is a condition of continued administration of the program and execution of all NCCs.

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner.

Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

NOTE: Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF) - Prior to submitting applications through Grants.gov, please ensure you meet all Grants.gov system and software requirements, including Adobe software compatibility. You can verify if your version of Adobe software is compatible with Grants.gov, by visiting <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/adobe-software-compatibility.html>.
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

Online Forms

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, “Assurances – Non-Construction Programs,” (only required for organizations if its representations and certifications have not been completed in the System for Award Management (SAM.gov). If an organization is exempt from registering in SAM.gov, then it would still need to provide the form as part of its application.)
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA), form 990 Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax, SF-LLL Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (only required for organizations that engage in lobbying activities), etc.

Program Narrative

Executive Summary (One page)

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

1. Name of organization/participating institutions
2. Beginning and ending dates of the program
3. Proposed theme
4. Nature of activity
5. Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources
6. Scope and Goals
 - a. Number and description of participants
 - b. Wider audience benefiting from program (overall impact)

- c. Geographic diversity of program, both U.S. and overseas
- d. Fields covered
- e. Anticipated results (short and long-term)

Narrative

For Secondary School, Vocational, and Young Professional Component applications: In twenty (20) double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. Secondary School Component applicants bidding on more than one region should include an addendum with a maximum of two (2) pages which describes their unique capabilities in the regions they are interested in beyond the first ranked.

For Administrative Component applications: In ten (10) double-spaced, single-sided pages, provide a detailed description of the proposed activities and the organization's experience with similar activities.

1. Vision (statement of need, objectives, goals, benefits)
2. Participating Organizations
3. Program Activities (advertisement, recruitment, orientation, academic component, cultural program, participant monitoring)
4. Program Performance Monitoring
5. Follow-on
6. Project Management
7. Work Plan/Time Frame

Applicants are encouraged to review the six selection criteria outlined in the NOFO and the additional information in the PSI to ensure that each of these criteria are addressed in the proposal.

- **Additional Information to be Submitted**

- A budget overview in the format outlined in the PSI document.
- Administrative Component applications must include a detailed budget in Microsoft Excel format which must include:
 - Approximately \$90,000 for the 2026 program-wide bilateral partner meeting.
 - Funds to cover accommodation, meals, local transportation, and printing needs

for an American participant reentry workshop in the Washington, DC area in June 2026. The event will include approximately 350 participants and 25 partner staff, for a minimum of a two night, three day event that includes a half day with the U.S. Department of State as well as substantive programming on Capitol Hill. For budgeting purposes, please note that participants will be returning from Germany to Washington, DC (with international flights arranged by Secondary, Vocational, and Young Professional partners). Departing flights from Washington, DC to participants' home locations are arranged by natural families and/or partner organizations based on parameters provided by the Administrative Component Partner. Past event agendas are available upon request from the ECA point of contact listed in section VI of this document.

Administrative Component budgets also typically include:

- Website and application maintenance costs
 - Print material creation and printing costs
 - Staff costs to coordinate program-wide efforts
 - Modest honoraria and travel expenses for one or two CBYX alumni speakers for the program-wide re-entry
- Secondary, Vocational, and Young Professional Component applications must include a detailed budget in Microsoft Excel format which must include:
- A participant support line of at least \$6,000 to be used to accommodate participants who may require extra support to fully participate in the program including, but not limited to, those with disabilities or financial hardship.
 - Staff to travel to Washington, DC to take part in the American re-entry event in June 2026.
 - Secondary school applicants applying for more than one region are asked to provide one budget that incorporates all the regions that they are applying for.

Budgets also typically include:

- Orientations for students and host families, as well as costs for re-entry orientation
- Enhancement activity costs
- Travel and related costs (visa fees, etc.) for students – including international travel for U.S. students traveling to Germany
- Staff travel to conduct participant monitoring
- Staff travel for one staff person per organization to Washington, DC to attend the two-day ECA Youth Programs Division meeting
- Stipends and honoraria for non-salaried staff and volunteers
- Identifying, screening (e.g. criminal background checks and interviewing),

- selecting, and orienting host families
 - Monitoring students and host families, trouble shooting, counseling and re-settling students, as necessary
 - Program materials
 - Overhead costs (e.g. salaries, communication, supplies, etc.)
 - Mandatory school fees (while most participants should be placed in schools that do not require tuition, this can also include tuition costs for unique placement situations)
 - School tuition for participants only in extenuating circumstances with supporting documents that demonstrate need. These would include an explanation of how free public or private school options have been explored and determined to be unavailable or insufficient. The standard policy of this program is to place participants in public schools or private schools that waive tuition for the participant. However, extenuating circumstances can arise (e.g. a participant with a disability better served by a private school that specializes in education in that field, or a lack of public school availability) where a participant must be placed in a public or private school that charges tuition.
 - Insurance costs, if not using ASPE
 - Initial recruiting expenses for the next academic year
 - Participant stipends, as needed
- A detailed budget narrative that explains costs for each line in the detailed budget.

PLEASE NOTE: 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.

- Calendar of activities/itinerary, if applicable
- Letters of endorsement
- Resumes and CVs of all key staff (no resume should exceed two pages)
- First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable.

IV. APPLICATION SUBMISSION

The solicitation document indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program, call Tova Pertman, CBYX Program Officer in the Office of Citizen Exchanges Youth Programs Division at (202) 975-5367 or PertmanTA@state.gov.