Department Of State

Request for Proposals: Title VIII Program for Research and Training on Eastern Europe and Eurasia (Independent States of the Former Soviet Union)

SUMMARY: The Department of State, Bureau of Intelligence and Research, invites organizations with substantial and wide-reaching experience in administering research and training programs to serve as intermediaries conducting nationwide competitive programs for U.S. scholars, students and institutions pertaining to advanced research and language training on the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. U.S.-based public and private nonprofit organizations and educational institutions may submit proposals to carry out Title VIII-funded programs that 1) support and sustain American expertise on the countries of Eurasia and Southeast Europe, 2) bring American expertise to the service of the U.S. Government, and 3) further U.S. foreign assistance and policy goals. An explicit connection must be made to current policy relevant issues, broadly defined. The grants will be awarded through an open, merit-based competition. The purpose of this request for proposals is to inform potential applicant organizations of programmatic, procedural and funding information for the fiscal year 2008 Title VIII grants competition.

We request that applicants read the entire announcement before addressing inquiries to the Title VIII Program Office or submitting a proposal. This notice contains three parts. Part I addresses Shipment and Deadline for Proposals. Part II consists of a Statement of Purpose and Program Priorities. Part III provides Funding Information for the program.


PROGRAM INFORMATION: In the Soviet-Eastern European Research and Training Act of 1983 (Title VIII), the Congress declared that independently verified factual knowledge about the countries of that area is "of utmost importance for the national security of the United States, for the furtherance of our national interests in the conduct of foreign relations, and for the prudent management of our domestic affairs." Congress also declared that the development and maintenance of such knowledge and expertise "depends upon the national capability for advanced research by highly trained and experienced specialists, available for service in and out of Government."

The Title VIII Program is managed by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) and provides financial support for advanced research, graduate and language training and other related functions on the countries of the region. The program operates on a “pass-through” basis in that grantee organizations serve as intermediaries and conduct nationwide competitive programs to distribute grant funds to individual scholars, language students or universities. The program’s goal is to support and sustain a cadre of U.S. experts by providing a full spectrum of financial assistance spanning the careers of scholars and students who wish to pursue policy-relevant research and critical languages in the region. Title VIII
recipients are also encouraged to make a career commitment to the study of Southeast Europe and Eurasia. The Department of State’s Title VIII Program Office, housed in the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, brings this open-source research and expertise to the service of the U.S. Government. The Title VIII grantees and scholars regularly provide policy briefs and products for dissemination throughout and U.S. Government including the Intelligence Community. Title VIII contributes to the overall foreign policy objectives of the U.S. Department of State and addresses key issues relevant to the Intelligence Community. The full purpose of the Title VIII Program and the eligibility requirements are set forth in Pub. L. 98-164, 97 Stat. 1047-50, as amended.

The following countries are eligible for funding under this request for proposals: Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Poland, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan. Proposals regarding Kosovo are also eligible for funding under this request. Travel to certain countries may be subject to restrictions due to unforeseen world events, Congressional restrictions, U.S. embassy requirements, or general security concerns.

SCOPE: The Title VIII legislation states that the program should develop a stable, long-term, national program of unclassified, open source advanced research and training on the countries of Eastern Europe and/or Eurasia. Applicants’ proposals should outline programs that: 1) support and sustain American expertise on the countries of Eurasia and Eastern Europe, 2) bring American expertise to the service of the U.S. Government, and 3) further U.S. foreign assistance and policy goals.

ELIGIBILITY: U.S.-based public and private non-profit organizations and educational institutions with substantial and wide-reaching expertise in administering advanced research and training programs and conducting nationwide competitive programs for scholars, students and institutions pertaining to advanced research and language training on the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia and related fields may apply. To demonstrate eligibility, applicant organizations should describe their experience and expertise in each of the following:

- Conducting national, open, merit-based competitions for the purpose of distributing grant funds for advanced research and training, including language training, at the graduate level and above;
- Peer review mechanisms and applicant support;
- Recruiting individuals who are likely to make a career commitment to the study of Eastern Europe and/or Eurasia;
- Ability to stay abreast of U.S. assistance and policy goals;
- In-country communications with U.S. embassies;
- Federal grants policy and management.

Individual scholars and students seeking Title VIII support should refer to the Title VIII Program website for funding opportunities: [www.state.gov/s/inr/grants](http://www.state.gov/s/inr/grants). Proposals from institutions or organizations to fund their own projects, i.e., projects that are not national in scope and/or do not involve open, merit-based recruitment of participants will not be considered.
GUIDELINES: Programs proposed for this competition should be national in scope and may:

(1) award contracts or grants to U.S. institutions of higher education or nonprofit organizations in support of post-doctoral or equivalent-level research projects, to be cost-shared with partner institutions;

(2) offer graduate, post-doctoral and teaching fellowships for advanced training on Eurasia and certain countries of Southeast Europe, and in related studies, including training in the languages of the region, to be cost-shared with partner institutions;

(3) provide fellowships and other support for American specialists enabling them to conduct advanced policy-relevant research on the countries of Eurasia and Eastern Europe, and in related studies;

(4) facilitate research collaboration among U.S. scholars, the U.S. Government, and private specialists on Eastern Europe and Eurasia studies;

(5) provide field-strengthening activities that stimulate interaction and sustained relationships among junior and senior scholars;

(6) provide advanced training and research in certain countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia by facilitating access for American specialists to research facilities and resources in the U.S. and those countries;

(7) facilitate the accessibility and dissemination of research findings, methods and data, and policy papers among U.S. Government agencies and the public;

(8) strengthen the national capability for advanced research or training on the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia;

(9) bring Title VIII scholarship to the service of the U.S. Government in ways not specified above.

In addition to the above guidelines, support for specific activities will be guided by the following policies and priorities:

Support for Transitions and U.S. Assistance Goals: Program activities are strongly encouraged that build expertise among U.S. specialists on the region, and also: 1) promote fundamental goals of U.S. foreign assistance programs such as establishing functioning market economies and promoting democratic governance and civil societies, and 2) provide knowledge to both U.S. and foreign audiences related to current U.S. policy interests in the region, broadly defined. This includes: Peace and Security: Counter Terrorism (cross-border research), Combating WMD, Transnational Crime (emphasis on Cyber Crime), Conflict Mitigation, Stabilization Operations and Defense Reform; Governing Justly and Democratically: Rule of Law and Human Rights, Good Governance, Political Competition, Civil Society; Investing in People: Health, Education, Social Services and Protection for Vulnerable Populations; Economic Growth: Trade and
Investment, Environment, Infrastructure and Financial Sector. For overseas research, applicants are asked to propose effective means through which individual grant recipients’ work may complement assistance activities in the region. Grant recipients should demonstrate close coordination with U.S. Embassies. Applicants are strongly encouraged to propose programs where grants for overseas work include a service component such as lecturing at a university or participating in workshops with host government and parliamentary officials, nongovernmental organizations, and other relevant audiences on issues related to transitions in the region.

- **Research Topics:** The Title VIII Program supports research topics that strengthen the fields of Eurasian and East European Studies (and related fields), and address U.S. policy interests in the region, broadly defined. Historical or cultural research that promotes understanding of current events in the region is acceptable only if an explicit connection is made to current policy relevant issues, broadly defined. **Technical research in fields such as mathematics is not eligible for funding under Title VIII.**

- **Regional Focus:** Priorities include issues on democracy in Central Asia, the Caucasus, Ukraine and Belarus; and the Balkans, especially issues related to the Final Status of Kosovo. The greater Central Asia region is critical in the global war on terrorism; therefore, also eligible are proposals that incorporate a focus on “Cross-Regional Issues” and include specifically the countries of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and/or Uzbekistan, relative to their shared historical, ethnic, linguistic, political, economic, and cultural ties with such countries as Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Korea, China and Turkey. Proposals regarding Central Asian Islamic practices are also a priority.

- **Balanced National Program:** In making its recommendations, the Advisory Committee will seek to encourage a coherent, long-term and stable effort directed toward developing and maintaining a national capability on the countries of Eastern Europe and Eurasia. Program proposals can be for the conduct of any of the functions enumerated, but in making its recommendations, the Committee will concern itself particularly with the development of a balanced national effort that will ensure attention to all eligible countries, as well as to the broad spectrum of students, scholars and researchers in various sectors and career stages.

- **Promoting Federal Service for Title VIII Grant Recipients:** Although the Title VIII Program does not require a federal service commitment for individuals receiving funding, the Advisory Committee urges grantees to encourage individuals receiving Title VIII funding to pursue U.S. Government career opportunities, internships, or short-term sabbaticals after completing their awards, and to otherwise bring their research to the service of the U.S. Government. Grant recipient organizations are encouraged to: 1) identify individuals for funding who have an interest in pursuing careers in the U.S. Government; and 2) provide opportunities for individuals in disciplines with Eurasian and/or Southeast European studies concentrations to serve on a temporary basis as a policy or other expert in U.S. Embassies, U.S. Government agencies and/or with NGOs in the region; and 3) provide opportunities for students and researchers to submit and present their research in a variety of formats, including policy briefs, white papers and policy forums. Applications proposing more productive interaction among U.S. Government agencies, universities and non-government organizations (NGOs) in the U.S. and overseas are strongly encouraged.
• **Publications:** Funds awarded in this competition should not be used to subsidize journals, newsletters and other periodical publications.

• **Conferences:** Proposals to fund conferences will be considered for funding only if the conference is an interactive, field-strengthening activity and if it is a component of a larger program with greater duration and scope. Conference panelists must be selected through an open, merit-based selection process. In addition, conference proposals will be assessed according to their relative contribution to the advancement of knowledge and to the professional development of cadres in the fields, and will be competed and evaluated against research, fellowship or other proposals for achieving the objectives of this grant competition.

• **Critical Language Support:** As part of the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), a U.S. government interagency effort to expand dramatically the number of Americans studying and mastering critical foreign languages, Title VIII supports funding for U.S. master’s and Ph.D. students to participate in intermediate and advanced level Russian study. The Advisory Committee also encourages a focus on the non-Russian languages of Eurasia and the less-commonly-taught languages of Southeast Europe. Institutions seeking funding in order to offer language instruction are encouraged to apply to one or more of the national programs with appropriate peer review and selection mechanisms.

• **Support for Non-Americans:** The purpose of the program is to build and sustain U.S. expertise on the countries of Southeast Europe and Eurasia. Therefore, the Advisory Committee has determined that highest priority for support always should go to American specialists (i.e., U.S. citizens or permanent residents). Support for such activities as long-term research fellowships (i.e., nine months or longer), should be restricted solely to American scholars. Support for short-term activities (i.e. conference or workshop) also should be restricted to Americans, except in special instances where the participation of a non-American scholar has clear and demonstrable benefits to the U.S. scholarly community and/or the U.S. Government. In such special instances, the applicant will be required to notify the Title VIII Program office prior to the activity and justify the expenditure by clearly describing the expected benefit to the field(s) and/or the U.S. Government. Despite this restriction, collaborative projects are encouraged – where the non-American component is funded from other sources – and priority is given to institutions whose programs contain such an international component.

• **Cost-sharing:** (1) Title VIII legislation requires cost-sharing for projects involving post-doctoral or equivalent-level research projects; and graduate, post-doctoral and teaching fellowships for advanced training or language studies for institutions or individuals. Cost sharing is strongly encouraged in all programs. (2) Research solely on, and/or travel to, countries outside of eligible countries as outlined in this request for proposals, is not eligible for funding. Proposals may include a plan to support research projects on, and travel to, countries eligible AND ineligible for funding, to address cross-border issues, regional or comparative studies, etc., in which case travel to ineligible countries would be cost-shared with funding from other sources. (3) All proposed cost sharing should be included in the budget request in a separate column, and explained in the budget notes. The basis for
determining the value of cash and in-kind contributions must be in accordance with OMB Circular A-110, (Revised), Subpart C.23 - Cost Sharing and Matching.

- **Program Data Requirements**: Organizations awarded grants will be required to provide data on program participants and activities in an electronically accessible format for the Title VIII Intelligence Community Products of Open Source Research and Training database (icPORT). Requested information would include (but is not limited to) the following: Name; Institution; Address; Contact Information; Field(s) of Expertise; Type/Title of Award; Location(s) of Research, Fellowship, or other Activity; Research Products/Titles; Overseas Travel and Contacts; Service to the U.S. Government; Host Institutions; Contribution to U.S. Assistance and Policy Goals; etc.

- **Reporting and Funding Acknowledgement**: Successful applicants will be required to electronically submit semi-annual financial and program reports, and regular data system reports, and will be expected to acknowledge (when appropriate) the Department of State, The Bureau of Intelligence and Research, and the Title VIII Program in all Title VIII-supported research products, advertising, recruitment tools, announcements, and other related electronic or written communications.