



Request for Applications (RFA)

Virtual Exchange Programs for English Language Educators

Proposal Due: January 29, 2021 to accessexchanges@fhi360.org

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About the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of English Language Programs (ECA/A/L)

The Office of English Language Programs in the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA/A/L) engages English language learners and educators abroad by funding and monitoring U.S. Embassy-sponsored English language programs that support curriculum and materials development projects, facilitate teacher training workshops, and advise foreign ministries of education, universities and NGOs. The programs, overseen by Regional English Language Officers abroad and Program Officers in Washington, foster mutual understanding, strengthen teaching and language skills, develop critical thinking capabilities, and convey balanced and accurate information about the United States. The Office of English Language Programs runs several educational exchange programs focused on English language teaching and learning. The programs include [English Language Specialists Program](#), [Online Professional English Network \(OPEN\)](#), [English Language Fellows Program](#), and [English Access Microscholarship Program](#). In addition, the office engages teachers and students on Facebook, YouTube and the AmericanEnglish.state.gov website.

About FHI 360

FHI 360 is a nonprofit human development organization dedicated to improving lives in lasting ways by advancing integrated, locally driven solutions. Our staff includes experts in health, education, nutrition, environment, economic development, civil society, gender, youth, research, technology, communication and social marketing — creating a unique mix of capabilities to address today's interrelated development challenges. FHI 360 serves more than 60 countries and all U.S. states and territories.

About the English Access Microscholarship Program

The Virtual Exchange Program proposed in the RFA is funded by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of English Language Programs (ECA/A/L) through a cooperative agreement with FHI 360 for the English Access Microscholarship Program. The English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) provides a foundation of English language skills to bright, economically disadvantaged students, primarily aged 13 to 20, in their home countries. The Access Program develops participants’ English skills that may lead to better jobs and educational prospects. Participants also gain the ability to compete for and participate in future exchanges and study in the United States.

A key element of Access are the professional development exchanges, implemented in the United States, third countries, and through virtual engagement, allowing US Embassies and Consulates to strategically select high performing alumni, teachers, administrators, and other professionals to expand their technical skills and cross-cultural competencies. Through professional and personal interactions, these exchanges capitalize on participants’ intrinsic motivation and creativity and sustain the program’s mission well into the future. Such participation in virtual exchanges for the future may include alumni to work as mentors in ensuing exchange cohorts.

Purpose

FHI 360 invites proposals from U.S. educational institutions and non-profit organizations to design and implement virtual exchange programs for *international, non-native English language educators* (who will be referred to as *participants* throughout this RFA). ECA/A/L intends to fund multiple programs under this RFA for *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Programs*. There is no limitation on the number of proposals an applicant can submit for this virtual exchange program. Each proposal should represent one virtual exchange program. For applicants interested in applying for more than one exchange, they must submit separate proposals.

In issuing this Request for Applications (RFA), FHI 360 anticipates awarding U.S. educational institutions or non-profit organization a cost-reimbursable agreement for each selected exchange program for up to \$70,000.00 Each virtual exchange program will be 10 weeks in length for up to 40 participants. When designing the *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program*, Applicants should budget separate costs for (1) the overall virtual exchange design and content development and (2) the delivery of the virtual exchange program to the selected participants.

Interested institutions should electronically submit a complete proposal to FHI 360 at accessexchanges@fhi360.org no later than January 29, 2021 at 5:00 PM EST.

I. Virtual Exchange Description

A. English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Programs Overview

The Office of English Language Programs (ECA/A/L) recognizes the need to foster greater collaboration amongst teachers and students worldwide through virtual exchange programs. The *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program* is a professional development opportunity to enhance participants' knowledge and skills around a theme related to English language teaching and learning through the exchange and sharing of expertise in and knowledge between participants and American education professionals. The program will also reinforce best practices for use of educational technology and virtual engagement by highlighting and modeling these throughout the program.

The learning outcomes of each virtual exchange should include but not be limited to: (1) the ability to apply understanding of Computer-Mediated Communication (CMC) to interacting with other members of the exchange in appropriate and effective ways, (2) knowledge of how to participate in synchronous and asynchronous activities, (3) increased knowledge of English language teaching and learning within an online environment, (4) a better understanding of U.S. educational and cultural values and practices as they relate to the topic of the exchange.

Each exchange should be developed with an awareness of participants operating in low-bandwidth environments, where classrooms are often under resourced, where

participants have a wide range of technology literacy, and where government restrictions may block the use of certain platforms and online resources.

B. Program Timeline and Duration

Each *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program* should be implemented during either **Spring 2021** or **Fall of 2021**, and carried out for a total of 10 weeks, to include 8 weeks for core programming and two weeks for pre-program orientation and closing activities. The purpose of the orientation is to familiarize participants with program materials, technological platforms and tools, introduce facilitators and participants, and introduce the complex environment of CMC. Closing activities will be dedicated for presentation of participant project work, graduation ceremony, and other close out activities.

As part of the proposal, applicants must submit a preferred start date for both the period of performance and actual virtual exchange program. Please refer to Attachment B, Application Cover Sheet, for additional information.

C. Participant Information

The participants of the *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Programs* will be international, non-native English language educators including Access teachers and other secondary school teachers. The applicant should be able to develop a virtual exchange to accommodate educators with a wide range of technology literacy. Applicants should design the exchange considering participants' range of abilities to effectively and appropriately use technology tools to access, manage, integrate, evaluate, create and communicate information. When designing the virtual exchange, the applicant should take into consideration a cohort of participants with high, moderate, and low levels of technology literacy and be prepared to accommodate their varying needs in addition to low bandwidth environments and limited equipment. Participants will represent different countries in several regions. Participants will be recruited and nominated by Regional English Language Officers (RELOs) based at U.S. Embassies around the world. Participants will have varying levels of English skills but will at least have a minimum English language proficiency equivalent to a B1, or Independent User, as outlined in the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) of Languages. However, proposals should consider targeting participants with lower levels of English and be prepared to provide them with opportunities to interact with their peers and improve their language skills.

D. Branding

The *English Language Educators Virtual Exchange Program* is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Office of English Language Programs. The partner institution should notify all participants, presenters and stakeholders involved of this role explicitly, following ECA/A/L branding guidelines. Specific details about branding

will be provided to the selected institution(s). During the synchronous part of the virtual exchange, a time should be allotted for ECA/A/L officials to greet the participants, and they must also be permitted to audit the exchange at any time. Upon successful completion of the virtual exchange program, each participant should be awarded a Certificate of Completion, co-branded with the implementing partner and ECA/A/L and a virtual award ceremony should be held with invited Department of State guest speakers.

II. Program and Proposal Guidance

A. Virtual Exchange Guidelines and Standards. As online learning increases, there is an awareness of the need for teachers to become competent with online technologies and knowledgeable about educational technology to effectively communicate in a virtual environment. The purpose of the *English Language Educators Virtual Exchange Program* is to provide an opportunity to engage educators in discussion and exchange with other educators around the world centered on the theme related to English language teaching and learning while strengthening participants' abilities to interact in an online environment. Applicants' design of a virtual exchange should include, but not be limited by the following objectives: (1) to provide participants the opportunity to discuss and learn more about a targeted theme in the field of English language teaching and learning, (2) to strengthen the ability of participants to collaborate online, and (3) to allow participants to demonstrate what they gained from the exchange through a culminating project.

Participants should be provided with online learning standards include using technology and Open Educational Resources (OER) which have free access to quality teacher training material to a global audience. These resources should be shared in social, cultural, legal, and ethical ways. Applicants should design the virtual exchange to include learning around these online standards among others:

- understand that online communication conventions differ across cultures, communities, and contexts by identifying similarities and differences in local and global communication.
- demonstrate understanding of multiple ways that computer-mediated communication (CMC) can be (mis)interpreted (e.g., using appropriate register, turn-taking, respecting expected length and content of messages, considering literal versus rhetorical meaning).
- conform to current social conventions when using technology in communication.
- identify cultural variables at play in interpreting and responding to a message.

Program-specific and ECA/A/L-approved guidelines and standards will be included as part of the grant agreement and must be used throughout the period of performance to ensure that the virtual exchange activities and corresponding resources meet the requirements of the funder:

1. [TESOL Content Standards](#)
2. [Instructional Design and Online Learning \(IDOL\) Guidelines](#)
3. [Creative Commons Guidelines](#)
4. [Creative Commons Licensing Manual](#)

Applicants will use these guidelines to design and implement the virtual exchange. The use of standards for language development (TESOL Content Standards) and online learning (IDOL Guidelines), as well as the use of openly licensed learning materials (Creative Commons Guidelines and Manual) will help guide the content and implementation of the program.

Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0)-licensed materials are an important component of the content for the *English Language Educators Virtual Exchange*. CC BY licensing of program materials allows for the free access to quality teacher training material to a global audience. Participants in the virtual exchanges will learn what CC BY-licensed materials are, how to find them, how to incorporate them, and how to properly attribute materials for future use of their own learning and teaching contexts. Participant learning about CC BY will occur during their first week orientation of the exchange. A module for Creative Commons use will be provided by FHI 360 through the Canvas Learning Management Systems (LMS) used for the virtual exchange.

- B. Digital Learning.** To enhance the experience of learning and communicating online, there should be a wide range of technology used to (1) ensure the delivery of content around the topic of the virtual exchange, (2) promote continual classroom discussion and engagement, and (3) ensure feedback to participants as they work through activities and the final project. During the first week of the program, there should be onboarding session(s) for the introduction of technology that will be used throughout the program and introductions to the facilitators who guide and promote the engagement of the exchange. The technology, to include Canvas, an LMS hub for all assignments and discussions used in the *English Language Educators Virtual Exchange*, will include a means to learn the topics of the exchange (linked PDFs, slide decks, videos, live events etc.), discussion boards to promote engagement around content, ability to share assignments, feedback of facilitators to participants as they develop responses to content and work through a final project in groups. The applicant needs to explain how facilitators will share learning content, build engagement, and achieve learning outcomes to ensure retention of participants throughout the program. Facilitators must provide outreach to participants who have not logged into Canvas,

are not participating in discussions, or not submitting responses to activities to support their entry and continued engagement in the program.

- C. Virtual Exchange Content:** The *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program* should be centered around a selected theme related to the teaching and learning of English. All aspects of the exchange should be delivered using the adult-learner model where the virtual exchange program allows participants to work collaboratively amongst themselves while the organization provides continuous guidance in the role of mentoring and coaching through expert support, office hours, and messaged evaluations of ongoing work.

The *English Language Educators Virtual Exchanges* are guided by TESOL and Online Learning Standards. Exchanges should also include opportunities to discuss U.S. education, culture, and democratic values throughout the program. The content should meet a minimum English language proficiency level of CEFR Intermediate (B1 level) with the understanding that participants' language proficiency will vary. Participants of this virtual exchange program should be active learners and gain knowledge and skills through hands-on approaches and activities.

1. Best Practices for Online Teaching. Proposals should encompass activities that address strategies for online teaching and learning incorporating subject matter for under-resourced environments. The virtual exchange content should include but not limited to:
 - Engage the participant in discovery learning of topics surrounding the theme of the exchange;
 - incorporating new and best practices and strategies surrounding the theme of the exchange;
 - use a wide range of online educational tools for online teaching/learning in both high and low tech/bandwidth learning environments; and
 - include discussions of the practical application of materials and ideas introduced during the exchange.
2. Cultural Exchange. This virtual exchange should incorporate cultural exchange to enhance the Participants understanding of U.S. culture, society, and democratic values and promote cross-cultural understanding, inclusivity, and diversity. The cultural activities can be synchronous or asynchronous and should include activities to build relationships with all participants (e.g., interactions with community groups, one-to-one conversations with Americans, virtual site visits to museums and historical places, etc.). The American participants should represent the diversity of the United States, in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, gender and

socio-economic status. Applicants are encouraged to propose innovative ideas for cultural activities.

D. Virtual Exchange Project Work. Through this program, participants will learn the core values that guide a high-quality project work from a student-centered pedagogy, Project Based Learning (PBL). This framework involves a dynamic classroom approach where students acquire a deeper knowledge through active exploration of real-world challenges and problems. This program should guide participants through a PBL approach to teaching and learning online by promoting and modeling three principles of PBL:

1. Educational equity. Where each learner gets what they need to develop to their full academic and social potential;
2. Real-world authenticity. Where learners explore issues and topics relevant to their interests, cultures, and identities, and
3. Learner agency. Promoted when learners make decisions about what and how they learn and how they complete the project and develop a growth mindset.

During each virtual exchange, participants should engage in activities that include individual application to weekly topics around the theme of the exchange and project work involving a collaborative design of a PBL project. Participants should choose their preferred project based on the relevance to their professional practice and specific needs. The project should demonstrate their commitment to implement a project for their classrooms and schools.

Guidance for the participants' final project should include learning objectives, learning topics, materials including readings (weblinks), videos, and live events spotlighting experts in the field or guest speakers for modeling PBL approaches. Project development should include assignments, facilitator feedback, and steps towards how participants work to complete the final project.

E. Virtual Exchange Activities. The *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program* must include both asynchronous and synchronous activities. Participants should receive at least three hours of asynchronous activities and at least one hour of synchronous activities each week. Due to participants coming from different time zones, it is important for applicants to design and deliver synchronous activities for the program at least twice per synchronous event to accommodate participant schedules across different time-zones. Asynchronous activities should focus on content delivery as well as activities that promote engagement around the weekly topics where facilitators provide ample feedback and where peer-to-peer learning can occur.

The virtual exchange activities should include but not be limited to:

- Facilitated discussions and interactions on the theme of the virtual exchange.

- Webinars/live events modeling different PBL projects or providing expert discussions about the theme of the virtual exchange.
- Synchronous and asynchronous activities that will foster collaboration and a sense of community among participants. The synchronous activities should be collaborative (small group or whole group depending on time zones) so participants can share their knowledge and backgrounds and exchange ideas, while learning from each other. The asynchronous activities can be completed individually and/or collaboratively.
- Authentic opportunities for participants to use and develop their English language skills through sharing their personal experiences, challenges, and successes on the topic areas, reflecting on program activities, and presenting to their peers.
- Connect participants with American professionals to promote the exchange of ideas and expertise and provide additional cultural lens to the virtual exchange. Based on available resources, this may include guest speakers, discussions with American teachers and/or administrators, and virtual visits to schools.
- Opportunities for reflection, revision and collaboration throughout the virtual exchange.

F. Virtual Exchange Collaboration. Keeping participants interested is especially important in an online virtual exchange, where ascertaining engagement may be difficult. It is important for the virtual exchange discussions to be collaborative and engaging. While question-and-response posts on discussion boards can be used as one method of fostering collaboration, more engaging alternatives are available and well-suited to the online space, including classroom debates, role playing (including asking participants to give demonstrations of classroom techniques), case studies, and “jigsaw” activities.

The applicant should design a virtual exchange experience whose goal is to foster collaboration and community amongst participants through intentional and purposeful synchronous and asynchronous activities. Weekly activities should involve participants logging into an LMS, where they engage in weekly learning modules which includes content in the form of linked readings, videos, and discussion boards around the theme of the exchange. Types of engagement should include individual and team tasks as well as whole group collaborative activities. Collaboration on a final project will require exchange between groups sharing ideas around learned content defining, ideating, and prototypic a design with a final product tied to the objects and theme of the exchange.

G. Feedback to Participants. A key component of the virtual exchange is a continuous loop of feedback from the virtual exchange online facilitators to participants at the

individual and group level to encourage online engagement. Applicants should plan for facilitators to provide communication before, during and after the virtual experience using a variety of communication forms to develop basic online interpersonal communication skills and to enhance academic language. They should also respond regularly on discussion board conversations and questions by participants. Facilitators should be available for assignment support throughout the virtual exchange experience.

Facilitators will encourage equitable participation by moderating and mentoring in a wide range of interactions throughout the exchange period to include individual weekly responses during office hours, providing support to weekly team discussions, and guiding webinars where experts and guest speakers present specific content. Facilitators should be cognizant of time zones differences and participants' availability and connect to the learning content objectives of each module. It is recommended that for each group of 40 participants that an appropriate number of facilitators be used for the design of the exchange and the continuous support.

In addition, to enhance participant engagement and help in understanding the success of the virtual exchange program, participants will receive badging for engaging in key activities and the final project. These activities will not be graded; however, engagement will be the criteria for badging. To earn a badge, a participant must engage in all major activities and submit a final culminating project. Attendance must be at 70% or more of all virtual exchange synchronous events. At the end of the program, applicants will notify ECA of all participants who meet these criteria and FHI 360 will award participant badges accordingly.

H. Technology. The *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program* should introduce participants to a range of different communication technologies and support them as they learn to use these new tools. The different types of tools that could be included are:

- Learning Management System (LMS): Canvas
- Email
- Messaging Apps
- Discussion/Message Boards
- Videoconferencing
- Co-Authoring Software
- Virtual presentation apps and tools

Preference will be given to proposals that use tools that are accessible in all countries and can be used on smart phones, tablets, and computers. Any additional tools should

be free for participants to use throughout the program and any costs for technology subscriptions or purchases should be included in the budget. Exchange activities should be structured so that Participants can interact with technology on a schedule that works for them locally, that allows for downloadable materials, short video segments and transcripts to videos as backup for low-bandwidth participants.

The LMS, Canvas, which is used for the virtual exchange will be housed and managed by FHI 360 and owned by ECA/A/L. The applicant will prepare materials for the virtual exchange, which will be uploaded to the Canvas shell provided by FHI 360.

Canvas provides features that allows an equitable access to materials and opportunities for engagement. Canvas supports asynchronous and synchronous learning throughout the program as well as the development and housing of all assignments and project work. The rationale for using Canvas is that exchanges with external links, plugins, or download requirements can present several challenges for participants including the potential for misinformation from a broken link or updated webpage, as well as the threat of viruses from compromised websites or plugins. To avoid this, the virtual exchange material will be housed on Canvas for safety and ease of use by participants. The applicant should demonstrate flexibility in programming to accommodate participant needs to include disabilities. All materials should be available to all participants in a downloadable packet at all times, not solely by request.

Applicants should ensure that any online tools or platforms used during the exchange program (in addition to Canvas) and materials developed will be accessible worldwide. Applicants should be aware of limitations to usage globally and address this in the justification of technology that will be used for engagement throughout the exchange. Virtual Exchange technology must be always completely accessible to FHI 360 and ECA/A/L and compliant with section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

- I. **Detailed Program Outline and Development Process.** Using the goals and objectives referenced in the RFA, applicants are asked to provide in their proposal an outline for each week of the virtual exchange program to include orientation and closing sessions. Applicants should provide full details per week for the planned activities and participant engagement around the theme including: (a) objectives and outcomes for the participants, (b) breakdown of synchronous and asynchronous activities and time requirements, and (c) possible OER resources. A weekly plan should include an explanation for how activities will be guided, an explanation of feedback to be given, and the rationale for the use of synchronous or asynchronous activities. Applicants should describe how facilitators will build engagement and achieve learning outcomes through these activities and ensure retention of participants throughout the program.

Once applicants have been selected to develop a virtual exchange program and a signed agreement is in place, there will be a kickoff call to review the scope of work,

clarify roles and responsibilities, review guidelines and finalize the program timeline. Applicants will receive access to a Canvas platform and a shell (or template) for designing the virtual exchange program. During the virtual exchange development phase, the awardee should expect to submit outlines for each weekly session of the exchange, along with draft materials and proposed activities for ECA review and approval. The awardee should expect that ECA will provide detailed, guideline-based feedback and requests for changes to ensure that the content and design of the virtual exchange meets program expectations and the objectives of the project. Applicants should budget appropriately for robust communication throughout the development process, and time to review and make the requested changes.

- J. Materials and Open Educational Resources.** ECA will approve all materials and resources used for the *English Language Educator Virtual Exchange Program*, and at the end of the program, retains ownership of all materials developed for the program. The materials must follow Open Educational Resource (OER) principles and guidelines and adhere to Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 (CC BY) licensing requirements. It is strongly encouraged that the institutions use OELP resources and tools throughout the program(s), including materials from americanenglish.state.gov. In addition, applicants are encouraged to use materials, including videos, articles, and handouts that are open sourced. If, in rare cases, it is necessary to use materials that are not OER, applicants should include the cost of using copyrighted materials in their budget. All materials should be free for participants to use throughout the program and allow ECA/A/L to deliver repeat iterations of the virtual exchange program in the future.
- K. Participant Support and Logistics.** The organization implementing the virtual exchange program will be responsible for supporting participants before and throughout the exchange program.
1. General Program Support. This will include managing all program-related communication and associated logistics as described in this RFA.
 2. Technology. Applicants must support participants with technology set up and use as it relates to the virtual exchange, including assistance with technology across regions where program participants are located to include those with low bandwidth constraints which limit the reliability and frequency of Internet access.
- L. Program Monitoring and Evaluation.** Appropriate plans should be put in place for program monitoring for the duration of the program. In addition, the applicant must plan for soliciting experience feedback data. It is important that the applicant communicates with FHI 360 and ECA/A/L about participants' engagement. The applicant will be required to submit an End-of-Program Evaluation report.

***Note:** FHI 360 will also conduct a survey after the completion of the program to assess participant satisfaction and the impact of the virtual exchange.

M. Staffing and Management Plan. The Staffing and Management Plan should describe the process to develop content and implement the virtual exchange throughout the period of performance and address the responsibilities of each person involved in the program, clearly defining their roles and experiences for each position. There should be appropriate delegation of technical and logistical tasks. There should be appropriate plans for participant support, logistics, program monitoring, and evaluation.

N. Curriculum Vitae For Key Staff. The proposal should include curriculum vitae of key staff, who will be responsible for the design and implementation of the virtual exchange.

O. Detailed Budget and Budget Narrative. Please provide a detailed budget using the template provided in Attachment C, as well as a budget narrative that reflects as accurately as possible the real costs for the above scope of work. The budget must be submitted using the provided Microsoft Excel template.

- Proposed budget should provide sufficient detail to allow evaluation of elements of costs proposed.
- All fees must be clearly stated including the basis on which they will be applied. For example, if your organization has a set fee or price list for these activities, please indicate it, also any agency or overhead fees if applicable.
- The proposal must contain the signature of a duly authorized officer or agent of the company submitting the proposal.
- If the execution of work to be performed by your company requires the hiring of subcontractors, you must clearly state this in your proposal. Subcontractors must be identified and the work they will perform must be defined. In your proposal, please provide the name, address, and EIN of the subcontractor. FHI 360 and ECA/A/L will not refuse a proposal based upon the use of subcontractors; however, we retain the right to refuse the subcontractors you have selected.

A brief narrative explanation and justification for each line item must be included in a separate document and include information to support actual costs and/or methodologies to support cost estimates. Budget estimates must remain valid for a period of at least 30 days from closing date identified in this RFA. Budget notes serve as justification for each cost included in a budget; they should be presented in such a way as to be easily referenced from the budget; and they should provide enough

information so that FHI 360 may sufficiently review a proposed budget for reasonableness.

- P. Indirect Rate Agreement.** The proposal should include fringe benefits rate, NICRA rate, F&A Cost Rate Agreement, or any other applicable documentation.

III. Scope of Work and Deliverables

A. Scope of Work

The implementing organization's scope of work will include the following:

- design and implement a virtual exchange program to the minimum specifications outlined in this document.
- maintain regular and robust contact with FHI 360 and ECA/A/L regarding program design and implementation, including frequent check-ins during the program.
- provide all the necessary support to participants and manage program-related communication and logistics.
- provide all online facilitators, guest speakers, and/or moderators for the program.
- select appropriate platform(s) for the virtual exchange and provide access to ECA/A/L and FHI 360; ECA/A/L will give prior approval of selected platform.
- conduct regular assessments and program monitoring of the virtual exchange program, level of participation, and make any necessary adjustments to the program; conduct an end of program evaluation to assess the success of the virtual exchange.
- respond to requests for information by ECA/A/L and FHI 360 in a timely manner throughout the period of performance.
- submit progress reports, final program report, and financial deliverables according to the schedule in the sub-award, including best practices and lessons learned.

Note: FHI 360 will be responsible for the following:

- work directly with the Regional English Language Officers (RELOs) and U.S. Embassy staff to manage the participant nomination process and will collect participant information.
- monitor the implementation of the virtual exchange program working closely with partner institutions and ECA/A/L.
- serve as main Point of Contact for communication with ECA/A/L, RELOs and U.S. Embassies.
- provide support to implementing partner and engage in regular communication with them before, during and after the exchanges.
- provide the Canvas shell for housing the provider's virtual exchange program.

- provide participant badging through Canvas.

B. Deliverables

The implementing organization will be required to submit the following deliverables.

Deliverables	Description
Pre-Program Report	The report will include updates on overall program preparations, up-to-date program plan and calendar, and discussion of any issues encountered as it relates to the program.
Final Program Report	The report will include a comprehensive description of the program delivery, activities, notable highlights and best practices, lessons learned, and feedback about the program
Final Financial Report	Final financial report and invoice must be submitted to FHI 360 for payment and close out of the subaward.

IV. Eligibility

This competition is open to any U.S. educational institutions and non-profit organizations. To be minimally eligible for funding, applicants must comply with the following conditions:

- Organizations must be legally registered or otherwise authorized to conduct business in their country or countries of operation
- Organizations must have a DUNS number
- Organization must have an active registration in System for Award Management (SAM)
- Organizations must submit their proposal in English

V. Criteria/Qualification for Evaluation

Applications will be reviewed according to the criteria stated below. These criteria are weighted as follows:

- *Organization's Capability* (35%): Capability will be assessed by reviewing your narrative and samples, to evaluate your ability to develop an engaging and effective virtual exchange.
- *Approach* (30%): Approach will be assessed by reviewing your narrative and outlines to evaluate the alignment of your proposed approach and outlines to the goals of the program and the specifications of the RFA, including your strategy for addressing the integration of language and content, the resources that will be used to develop engaging content and activities, including the incorporation of American culture and values, and the degree to which proposed activities meet the objectives for the exchange.
- *Staffing and Management Plan* (25%): The staffing and management plan and CVs will be reviewed to determine if appropriate resources are available to staff the project, and that they can be effectively organized to manage the exchange development process on the required timeline. CVs will be reviewed to evaluate the appropriateness of experience for the proposed role.

- *Cost and Budget (10%)*: The evaluation of the budget and budget narrative will consider the correct use of provided templates and the completeness of the requested information. The reasonableness of the budgeted hours/cost in relation to the requirements of the project will be assessed.

VI. Application Submission and Questions

Interested institutions should electronically submit a complete proposal to FHI 360 at accesschanges@fhi360.org no later than **January 29, 2021 at 5:00 PM EST**. Please note that inquiries and answers to inquiries will be shared with all applicants. Please do not contact any FHI 360 employees regarding this RFA. No telephone inquiries will be answered. Submission of questions or requests for clarification must be submitted in writing via email to accesschanges@fhi360.org by **January 4, 2021**. FHI 360 will post responses to all submitted questions on **January 11, 2021**.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to notify FHI 360 of intent to apply for this exchange opportunity. Please note FHI 360 shall, as a courtesy, reply via email confirming receipt of all proposals received prior to closing date. This receipt response shall ONLY be notification that an offeror email has been received by FHI 360 and is in no way to be construed as suggesting or acknowledging receipt of a valid, complete or otherwise acceptable proposal file.

VII. Attachments

A. Instructions to Applicants and Checklist

Please use *Attachment A: Instruction to Applicants and Checklist* to ensure that your application responds to all submission requirements.

B. Application Cover Sheet

Please use *Attachment B: Application Cover Sheet* to share your past performance and eligibility.

C. Virtual Exchange Budget Template

Please use the *Attachment C: Virtual Exchange Budget Template* and follow instructions tab.

Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered.

VIII. Terms and Conditions

Applicants are responsible for review of the terms and conditions described below:

Certification of Independent Price Determination

The applicant certifies that—

1. The prices in this offer have been arrived at independently, without, for the purpose of restricting competition, any consultation, communication, or agreement with any other

applicant, including but not limited to subsidiaries or other entities in which applicant has any ownership or other interests, or any competitor relating to (i) those prices, (ii) the intention to submit an offer, or (iii) the methods or factors used to calculate the prices offered;

2. The prices in this offer have not been and will not be knowingly disclosed by the applicant, directly or indirectly, to any other applicant, including but not limited to subsidiaries or other entities in which applicant has any ownership or other interests, or any competitor before bid opening (in the case of a sealed bid solicitation) or contract award (in the case of a negotiated or competitive solicitation) unless otherwise required by law; and

3. No attempt has been made or will be made by the applicant to induce any other concern or individual to submit or not to submit an offer for the purpose of restricting competition or influencing the competitive environment.

4. Each signature on the offer is considered to be a certification by the signatory that the signatory—

a. Is the person in the applicant's organization responsible for determining the prices being offered in this bid or proposal, and that the signatory has not participated and will not participate in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above; or

(i) Has been authorized, in writing, to act as agent for the principals of the applicant in certifying that those principals have not participated, and will not participate in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above;

(ii) As an authorized agent, does certify that the principals of the applicant have not participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above; and

(iii) As an agent, has not personally participated, and will not participate, in any action contrary to subparagraphs (a)(1) through (a)(3) above.

5. Applicant understands and agrees that —

(1) violation of this certification will result in immediate disqualification from this solicitation without recourse and may result in disqualification from future solicitations; and

(2) discovery of any violation after award to the applicant will result in the termination of the award for default.

Withdrawal of Application

Applicants may withdraw proposals by written notice via email received at any time before award. Proposals may be withdrawn in person by an applicant's authorized representative, if the representative's identity is made known and the representative signs a receipt for the proposal before award.

Right to Select/Reject

FHI 360 reserves the right to select and negotiate with those firms it determines, in its sole discretion, to be qualified for competitive proposals and to terminate negotiations without incurring any liability. FHI 360 also reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received without explanation.

Disclaimer

This RFA represents only a definition of requirements. It is merely an invitation for submission of proposals and does not legally obligate FHI 360 to accept any of the submitted proposals in whole or in part, nor is FHI 360 obligated to select the lowest priced proposal. FHI 360 reserves the right to negotiate with any or all firms, both with respect to price, cost and/or scope of services. FHI 360 has no contractual obligations with any firms based upon issuance of this RFA. It is not an offer to contract. Only the execution of a written contract shall obligate FHI 360 in accordance with the terms and conditions contained in such contract.

Request for Application / Firm Guarantee

All information submitted in connection with this RFA will be valid for three (3) months from the RFA due date. This includes, but is not limited to, cost, pricing, terms and conditions, service levels, and all other information. If your firm is awarded the contract, all information in the RFA and negotiation process is contractually binding.

False Statements in Offer

Subcontractors must provide full, accurate and complete information as required by this solicitation and its attachments.

Conflict of Interest

Subcontractors must provide disclosure of any past, present or future relationships with any parties associated with the issuance, review or management of this solicitation and anticipated award. Failure to provide full and open disclosure may result in FHI 360 having to re-evaluate selection of a potential subcontractor.

Reserved Rights

All RFA responses become the property of FHI 360 and FHI 360 reserves the right in its sole discretion to:

- To disqualify any offer based on subcontractor failure to follow solicitation instructions.
- FHI 360 reserves the right to waive any deviations by subcontractors from the requirements of this solicitation that in FHI 360's opinion are considered not to be material defects requiring rejection or disqualification; or where such a waiver will promote increased competition.
- Extend the time for submission of all RFA responses after notification to all subcontractors.
- Terminate or modify the RFA process at any time and re-issue the RFA to whomever FHI 360 deems appropriate.

- FHI 360 reserves the right to issue an award based on the initial evaluation of offers without discussion.
- Award only part of the activities in the solicitation or issue multiple awards based on solicitation activities.
- FHI 360 will not be able to compensate subcontractors for preparation of their response to this RFA.
- Issuing this RFA is not a guarantee that FHI 360 will award a purchase order.
- FHI 360 may choose to award a purchase order to more than one subcontractor for specific parts of the activities in the RFA.

DEADLINE FOR FINAL SUBMISSION: JANUARY 29, 2021 at 5:00 PM EST

[END OF REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS]