

U.S. Embassy Dili Notice of Funding Opportunity

(NOFO): 2016 – 2018 English Access Microscholarship Program

Announcement Type: Call for grant proposals

Deadline: June 29, 2016 (Extended)

Executive Summary: the U.S. Embassy Dili announces an open competition for grants to develop and implement the English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) at multiple sites in Timor-Leste. The English Access Microscholarship Program is designed to provide two years of after-school English to academically-gifted, economically-disadvantaged teenagers. The program emphasizes fluency in English and couples language study with strong cross-cultural, civic, information technology, and leadership building components.

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

The U.S. Embassy in Dili requests proposals from non-profit and/or educational organizations interested in a grant award from the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) together with implementing partner-FHI 360 to manage one or more English Access Microscholarship Programs (Access) in Timor-Leste.

Access is a global scholarship program supported by the U.S. Department of State that provides a foundation of English language skills to talented teenagers, primarily from economically-disadvantaged and minority backgrounds, through after-school classes and intensive sessions. Access students also gain an appreciation for U.S. culture and democratic values through enhancement activities. Access seeks to equip selected students with strong English language skills that can lead to better jobs, educational opportunities, and the ability to participate in and compete for future exchanges and study in the United States. Since its inception in 2004, over 110,000 students in more than 80 countries have participated in the English Access Microscholarship Program. In Timor-Leste, where the program has been in operation since 2009, almost 150 students have participated in the program. Another 67 students are currently enrolled and scheduled to complete the two-year program this summer.

In addition to the general goals of the Access program as outlined above, the Access program in Timor-Leste aims specifically to also provide opportunities for students from outside of Dili the chance to improve their English language skills and understanding of American culture, as well as impart on all Access scholarship recipients the confidence, soft skills, leadership skills, cross-cultural skills, social & environmental awareness that will empower them to transform their own lives, realize their potential, and become agents for positive change in local society.

Audience: An essential program requirement is that Access students are between the ages of 15-16 years old on the first day of class and be scheduled to complete high school by the end of two-year Access program. Access students should come from minority, lower income or disadvantaged households. Applicants will need to complete an application form with information related to the requirements of the Access Program. The information in these applications will be verified by the provider implementing the program. The provider will verify that the selected students represent the local youth population from diverse racial, ethnic, religious, geographic, or physically challenged backgrounds as appropriate, with the vast majority coming from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Additionally, classes must be gender-balanced with 50% girls and

50% boys. The selection process to determine who will participate in the Access program (2016-2018) will be carried out in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy, with the Embassy reserving the right to make final determination on selection of scholarship recipients.

Instructors/Trainers: In addition to working with the Embassy to recruit scholarship recipients, the provider will also be responsible for recruiting English teachers for the Access program(s) they are managing. For each site, we expect that there should be at least one designated Access teacher and an Access teacher's assistant. Another key requirement will be that Access teachers be Timorese, possess appropriate level English skills, and be willing to serve as mentors and role models for the scholarship recipients through the duration of the program. These teachers will be selected in tandem with U.S. Embassy.

Venues: We are seeking to open 2016-2018 Access groups in Dili (x2), Manatuto & Liquica. The target number of students for each site is listed below:

Liquica: 16 students. (1 teacher and one teacher's assistant)

Manatuto: 16 students. (1 teacher and one teacher's assistant)

Dili: 14 students. (1 teachers and one teacher's assistant)

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Providers may bid on one group only, or a multiple number of groups at different locations. Providers are responsible for securing appropriate venues in each of the locations where they are bidding on the sites in partnership with the Embassy and local authorities.

Immersion Camp/Activities: In addition to organizing classes for the Access students for the academic year, the provider will also be responsible for arranging at least one extra-curricular activity per month during the academic year and at least one immersion activity for at least one week every summer, including both the first year and the final year. These activities will be organized in cooperation with the U.S. Embassy in Dili.

Timeline: The ideal time for the commencement of the grant work is August, 2016 with the recruitment and training of teachers taking place through October, and the recruitment and initial immersion camp for new Access students taking place in August. Classes of the new Access program would formally begin in September-October, 2016.

B. AWARD INFORMATION:

Type of Award: Grant

Approximate Number of Awards: 1-4

Floor of Award Range: none

Ceiling of Award Range: \$1,000 per student

Anticipated Award Date: August/October, 2016

Anticipated Project Completion Date: December 31, 2018

Additional Information:

The U.S. Embassy in Dili, the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs, and FHI360, the partner organization for the implementation of the Access program, will have substantial involvement on the program planning, implementation, and close-out, as well as selection of sites.

Before submitting a proposal, all applicants are strongly encouraged to consult with the Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy Dili during normal working hours at the following address: PADili@state.gov.

C. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION:

Local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and/or educational institution are invited to submit a proposal that describes how each of the following criteria will be administered:

- Evaluating your institution's ability to implement Access for two years;
- Working closely with the U.S. Embassy to plan effective and efficient programming;
- Advertising and recruiting participants for the student scholarships;
- Collaborating with the U.S. Embassy during the participant selection process;
- Providing the same standardized pre- and post-test to all students upon entering and exiting the Access Program;
- Implementing the program according to the oral and written guidelines from the U.S. Embassy which include approved proposals and signed official documents;
- Hiring highly-qualified personnel (i.e. Access Coordinators, Teachers, Teaching Assistants, Soft skills/Activity facilitators/trainers) to implement the program in accordance with the relevant official documents as well as to highlight best practices and address challenges quickly;
- Planning regular enhancement activities that provide hands-on and interactive opportunities for students to engage in discussions, games, community service, and other activities related to U.S. culture and values;
- Including at least one intensive session in the proposal (several days in a camp-like setting for extended English practice and community building, either onsite or in a retreat center);
- Sending invitations to the U.S. Embassy to notify them of special events, and opportunities to visit and speak;
- Organizing ceremonies in conjunction with the U.S. Embassy and providing certificates signed by the U.S. Ambassador to each Access student at the beginning and end of the Access Program; and
- Submitting financial reports and alumni data according to the schedule outlined in official documents and when requested by the U.S. Embassy.

Proposals and budgets must be submitted using the official Access proposal template and include:

- Organization name, address, and contact information
- Information about the team of people who would execute the work, with descriptions of the experiences and skills of each and his/her role in the organization and in the team

- A management plan for the work (planning, implementing, and closing out)
- A timeline for the work
- Descriptions of intensive sessions and proposed enhancement activities
- An additional detailed budget broken down in detail by cost categories of instruction, books & materials, transportation, activities, administration, food, and accommodation
- Administrative costs not to exceed 10% of the grant
- Description of prior experience in youth education programming

Length of grant will be for two years to accommodate the minimum required length of instruction: 360 hours.

D. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION:

Note: Please read the complete announcement before sending inquiries or submitting proposals. Once the NOFO deadline has passed, Embassy staff may not discuss this competition with applicants until the proposal review process has been completed.

Proposals should be submitted electronically to PADili@state.gov by 26 June, 2016. Please attach narrative proposals, summary budget, and budget breakdown in MS Word and MS Excel formats only with “Access Program Proposal” in the subject line. Late submissions will not be considered.

E. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

Proposals will be measured as follows:

Public Affairs Office of U.S. Embassy Dili performs an initial review to make sure proposals meet eligibility requirements and analyzes the proposal against each of the criteria noted above.

- Regional English Language Office of U.S. Embassy Jakarta performs an additional review.
- If the proposal passes the reviews, a panel of Department of State employees reviews the proposals and selects a winner.

F. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

Award Notices

The successful applicant will receive notice by email stating that the application has been selected. This notice will be sent before the U.S. Embassy has actually made the award and is not an authorization to begin performance. Any pre-award costs expended will be at your own risk. The notice of award signed by the Grants Officer and implementing partner at FHI360 is the authorizing document and will be sent directly to the applicant selected for this grant via email. As soon as selection is made notifications via email will also be sent to unsuccessful applicants.

Administrative and Policy Requirements

Please refer to the Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions for both U.S. Based and Foreign Organizations at <https://www.statebuy.state.gov/fa/Pages/TermsandConditions.aspx>

Reporting

The funds for this cooperative agreement will be disbursed in several periods. Financial reporting for the use of each payment will be required at the time the request for the next payment is made. All receipts, originals scanned electronically, should be submitted to U.S. Embassy Dili before a further disbursement will be authorized. Financial reporting, through the same method, will again be required at the conclusion of the grant period.

G. CONTACTS

To receive the required templates for the narrative and budget proposals or if you have any questions related to this announcement, please contact us at PADili@state.gov or 332-4684 ext.2035 during working hours (Monday - Friday 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.).