

Request for Proposal
FELLOWSHIP COORDINATION CONTRACTOR

Deadline: December 3, 2012

11/9/12: RFP Launched

Update: 11/21/12 – Addendum added to questions about RFP. See Below

CRDF Global seeks to engage a contractor to provide logistical and administrative support for up to fifteen Iraqi fellows to be hosted in the United States as participants in a program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State (DOS) called the Iraq Science Fellowship Program (ISFP), which CRDF Global implements.

CRDF Global is a nonprofit organization authorized by the U.S. Congress and established in 1995 by the National Science Foundation. CRDF Global promotes international scientific and technical collaboration through grants, technical resources, and training. CRDF Global is based in Arlington, Virginia, with offices in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia; Kyiv, Ukraine; Almaty, Kazakhstan; and Amman, Jordan.

Background:

Initiated as a public-private partnership in 2008 and originally called the Iraq Engineering Enhancement Program (IEEP), the fellowship focus is on increasing the professional and technical capacity of Iraqi engineers while promoting infrastructure and workforce development. In 2010/2011, the fellowship program was expanded to include chemists and biologists in addition to engineers and was renamed the Iraq Science Fellowship Program.

ISFP is part of the U.S. and Iraq's ongoing commitment to the development of Iraq's science and technology sector. In 2008, the U.S. and Iraq signed the Strategic Framework Agreement (SFA), which ISFP supports through fellowships that allow Iraqi scientists and engineers to increase their professional and technical skills through opportunities in the U.S. Since 2008, U.S. academic institutions and private organizations have hosted 31 fellows.

ISFP applicants undergo a rigorously competitive selection process. The selected fellows come from Iraqi government ministries, universities and small businesses.

Fellows are typically between the ages of 30-55 and can be men or women. Fellows are required to receive approval from their employer in Iraq in order to attend the fellowship and to continue to receive their salary while away. Fellows are required to return to Iraq upon completion of their fellowship and are not allowed to bring family members. Upon completing the three to six month fellowship, participants return to Iraq with the knowledge of how to teach current industry practices and how to serve as liaisons between Iraqi and U.S. governmental ministries, educational institutions, and private sector companies.

2012/2013 Fellowship Program

Between October 2012 and May 2013, CRDF Global will be taking the following steps to implement the Iraq Science Fellowship Program:

- Distributing call for applicants and receiving applications
- Screening applicants and making final participant selection
- Identifying host institutions and matching applicants with hosts
- Preparing scopes of work between host institutions and fellows

Summary of Expectations for the Logistical Contractor:

The contractor will be integral to the implementation of the Iraq Science Fellowship Program by providing logistical support for up fifteen fellows beginning with their pre-departure from Iraq, throughout their stay in the U.S. and concluding with their return back to Iraq. Below is a list of tasks and deliverables that outline the cradle-to-grave involvement and coordination CRDF Global will expect the contractor to undertake and perform successfully.

Along with organizing the fellows' housing, emergency medical insurance, travel arrangements and orientation, the contractor will to facilitate fellows' monthly stipend payments as well as to approve and facilitate payment of supplementary fellowship activities and all reimbursement requests in conjunction with CRDF Global.

Tasks and Deliverables:

CRDF Global is seeking a contractor to provide the following services in support of the Iraq Science Fellowship Program:

A. Program Logistics

- 1) Obtain U.S. J-visas for fellows.
- 2) Secure emergency medical insurance for each fellow, for time in U.S. and during travel. (Note: Each selected fellow must receive a medical exam to certify that they are fit for travel.)
- 3) Compile and send to fellows relevant pre-departure guidance or orientation materials.
- 4) Establish e-mail and phone communication with each fellow and arrange travel to the U.S. (Round-trip Iraq-U.S.).
- 5) Secure housing for fellows in their respective host cities; for leased housing, secure renter's insurance for duration of stay.
- 6) Organize a cultural and administrative orientation for incoming fellows. The orientation should cover the following:
 - a. Handling of administrative and logistical activities including, but not limited to:
 - i. Establishing U.S. bank accounts
 - ii. Communication (cell phones, SIM cards etc...)
 - iii. Health Insurance
 - iv. Stipends and Finance
 - b. Address any pending issues, conduct cultural orientation workshops, and do local site seeing as a cultural introduction to the U.S.
 - c. Conduct any necessary onsite orientation for fellows that arrive to the U.S. individually.
- 7) Arrange domestic travel for fellows.
 - a. Arrange orientation lodging in Washington, DC, and arrange flights for each fellow from Washington, DC, to their respective host cities post-orientation.
 - b. Arrange travel within the U.S. for activities that will supplement their fellowships (i.e. conferences, trainings, certification courses, etc.).
- 8) Distribute monthly stipends and facilitate payment of supplemental fellowship activities and materials. All payment requests from fellows need to be approved by CRDF Global.

B. Care and Monitoring

Provide ongoing care and monitoring of fellows to address personal or logistical issues via weekly monitoring calls, including but not limited to:

- a. Housing
- b. Transportation
- c. Health and insurance
- d. Travel
- e. Financial
- f. Legal issues
- g. Personal emergencies

C. Reporting

Submit quarterly reports to CRDF Global detailing incurred expenses.

Proposal Requirements:

Each proposal should address the bidder's approach to the task and deliverables, including an explanation of the overall philosophy in implementing fellowships for foreign nationals in the United States.

The proposal should demonstrate a proven track record of providing excellent logistical and administrative services for international fellowship programs, demonstrate ability to work with a diverse group of individuals and bring cultural sensitivity and awareness to project implementation.

In addition, each proposal must include:

- Resumes of key staff that would be responsible for implementing the contract
- Cost proposal with itemized fee detail as related to tasks and deliverables.
- Fee Validation
- A minimum of two professional references

Timetable:

November 16, 2012	Deadline for Bidder questions on the RFP
November 20, 2012	All questions will be addressed by CRDF Global and issued to all parties that received the RFP
December 3, 2012	RFP submissions due
December 21, 2012	Contractor selection made
February 1, 2013	Contract start date (CRDF Global expects the group to arrive in one cohort in June 2013)
December 31, 2013	Contract end date

Contractor Selection Criteria:

CRDF Global will select the contractor that provides the best value to CRDF Global in terms of the contractor's ability to meet the requirements, level of past experience with fellowship programs, past performance and total cost. Experience administering fellowships for international visitors is preferred, as is having staff members who are proficient or fluent in Arabic.

Contract Award:

CRDF Global reserves the right to not award a contract to any candidate, if none are deemed suitable.

Submission:

Proposals should be submitted to Mr. Galaal Elsamadicy, at gelsamadicy@crdfglobal.org, no later than 5:00 PM EST on December 3, 2012. Proposals should be submitted as electronic documents in PDF, Word or Excel format.

Addendum: Questions answered about RFP (See Highlighted Answers). Added 11/21/12

1. "Task and Deliverables" for the Logistical Contractor:

- a) American Hospitality was incorporated into the current ISFP. Will this be an option for the Fellows to partake in 2013, and will the arrangements and assistance for this activity be included in the Logistics Contractor's Scope of Work?
a. CRDF Global: We invite bidders to propose options for the orientation arrangements.
- b) Will English courses be an option for the Fellows, and will the arrangements and assistance for this activity be included in the Logistics Contractor's Scope of Work?
a. CRDF Global: No, our funder has made it clear English language training will not be included in ISFP III.

2. “Reporting” for the Logistical Contractor:

- a) The only reporting requirement stated is the quarterly expense reports. The current ISFP requires monthly and final program reports, as well as monthly supplemental expense updates and quarterly program expense projections to be submitted to CRDF Global. Please clarify if there are additional reporting requirements for 2012-2013 ISFP.

a. CRDF Global: It was not our intention that the RFP would detail all possible reporting elements for ISFP III. Specific reporting requirements will be determined in coordination with the selected contractor.

- b) What is the level of details required of the financial reporting?

a. CRDF Global: Please see above response.

3. What is the level of effort for the Logistics Coordinator in ISFP alumni engagement? In the current ISFP, alumni from previous years were contacted and prepared to assist incoming Fellows during the pre-arrival stage including the Pre-Departure Orientation. Additionally, alumni were asked to complete an alumni survey to measure impact of the program.

a. CRDF Global: We welcome engaging ISFP I and II alumni in the Pre-Departure Orientation (PDO) for ISFP III, but we would like to confine their engagement to the PDO. We will not expect the Logistics Coordinator to facilitate a survey to measure the impact of the program.

4. The “Proposal Requirements” states that a “fee validation” must be submitted along with the proposal. Would you please clarify what this is referring to?

a. CRDF Global The fee validation, or a rate certification, is a statement to the effect that all hourly rates and fees proposed to CRDF Global are comparable to your rate/fees for similar projects for other clients. A NICRA will suffice as certification of any indirect rates assessed in the proposal.