

Request for Proposal
FELLOWSHIP COORDINATION CONTRACTOR

Deadline: November 8, 2013

CRDF Global seeks to engage a contractor to provide logistical and administrative support for up to ten 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 focused 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 also include chemists and biologists 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 DOS and CRDF Global support 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 60 fellows.

ISFP applicants undergo a rigorously competitive selection process. Fellows are typically between the ages of 30-55, men and women, and come from Iraqi government ministries, universities, and small businesses. Fellows are required to:

- Receive approval from their employer in Iraq to attend the fellowship and to continue to receive their salary while away;
- Return to Iraq upon completion of their fellowship; and
- Not bring family members on their fellowship.

Upon completing the three to six month fellowship, fellows 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.

2013/2014 Fellowship Program

Between September 2013 and May 2014, CRDF Global will take the following steps to implement ISFP:

- Distribute the call for applications and receive applications;
- Screen applicants and make final participant selection;
- Identify host institutions and match applicants with hosts; and
- Prepare scopes of work between host institutions and fellows

Summary of Expectations for the Logistical Contractor:

The contractor will be integral to the implementation of ISFP by providing logistical support for up to ten 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 logistics contractor to undertake and perform successfully.

Tasks and Deliverables:

CRDF Global is seeking a logistics contractor to provide the following services in support of ISFP:

A. Program Logistics

- 1) Manage pre-departure arrangements, including:
 - a. Establishing e-mail and phone communication with each fellow
 - b. Obtaining U.S. J-visas for fellows
 - c. Arranging medical exams in Iraq to certify that fellows are fit for travel
 - d. Securing comprehensive emergency medical insurance for each fellow
 - e. Arranging roundtrip travel to the U.S., and in-country travel to host city
 - f. Securing fully-furnished housing for fellows in their respective host cities, with renter's insurance, as close to host institution as possible. Homestay housing not preferred
 - g. Arranging a pre-departure orientation in Baghdad, Iraq, that should cover Program information, policies and regulations, as well as guidance related to international travel, at a minimum.
- 2) Provide an orientation in Washington, DC, prior to fellows' arrival at their host institutions. Contractor will make all necessary arrangements including fellow lodging and event catering. May be held at the CRDF Global Arlington office. Past orientations have been between three to five days in length. Orientation should cover:
 - a. Introduction to ISFP (material provided by CRDF Global)
 - b. Administrative and logistical concerns 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
 - c. A cultural orientation to living in the U.S.

In past orientations, bank accounts were opened in person with the fellows and cell phones were purchased for them. Inclusion of a local sightseeing outing preferred.
- 3) In case a fellow cannot participate in the group orientation, the Contractor may be expected to provide an on-site orientation to individual fellows at their host institutions.
- 4) Arrange all payments to fellows and fellowship vendors, including but not limited to:
 - a. Monthly stipends, as appropriate for each fellow's location and not to exceed the FTR travel allowance maximums. Stipends are meant to support the fellows' regular living expenses, including meals and incidentals (personal care, clothing, etc.)
 - b. Ground Transportation allowance
 - c. Rent and lodging related expenses
 - d. Any allowable reimbursable expenses to the fellows (baggage fees, etc.)

Note: In years past, fellowships ranged from 3-6 months in length. Proposals can assume an average of 5 months of expenses per fellow. The actual length of each fellowship will be determined in early 2014.

- 5) Arrange travel for fellows to approved supplemental activities, such as professional conferences, laboratory visits, trainings, etc. Travel arrangement may include airfare, lodging, per diem, ground transportation and any necessary registration/event fees. CRDF Global expects an average of two supplemental activities per fellow with expenses averaging \$1,500.00 per trip.
- 6) Arrange U.S. culture exposure opportunities, which may include: dinner with American families, visits to museums, state/local fairs, etc., in respective host cities.

B. Care and Monitoring

Contractor is to be the fellows' first point of contact for all fellowship-related issues and concerns, including those related to housing, health/insurance, travel, financial and legal issues and any personal emergencies. Contractor will be expected to provide ongoing care and monitoring support of fellows to address personal or logistical issues via phone or email. In the past, bi-weekly calls were scheduled for the length of the fellowship.

C. Reporting

Contractor will provide regular programmatic reporting to CRDF Global on fellowship matters. In addition, Contractor will be expected to submit quarterly reports detailing incurred and projected expenses, including detail on individual fellowships.

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.

CRDF Global is seeking an experienced logistics contractor that can show initiative and flexibility in difficult, time-sensitive situations, can offer strong written and oral communication skills with non-native English speakers, exercises sound judgment when arranging logistics that are in the best interest of the fellow and has on-call availability for emergency situations.

In addition, each proposal must include:

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

Contractor Selection Criteria:

CRDF Global will select the contractor that provides the best value to CRDF Global in terms of the logistics contractor's ability to:

- Meet the requirements;
- Highlight examples of past experience with fellowship programs and/or similar programs, particularly with international visitors'
- Proposed total cost; and
- Have staff members who are proficient or fluent in Arabic is preferred.

Contract Award:

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

Timetable:

October 18, 2013	Deadline for Bidder questions on the RFP
October 25, 2013	All questions will be addressed by CRDF Global and issued to all parties that inquired about the RFP
November 8, 2013	RFP submissions due
December 1, 2013	CRDF Global selects logistics contractor
January 1, 2014	Logistics contractor start date (CRDF Global expects the fellows to arrive in one group in June 2014)
December 31, 2014	Logistics contractor contract end date

Submission:

Final proposals should be submitted to isfp@crdfglobal.org, no later than 5:00 PM EST on November 8, 2013. Proposals should be submitted as electronic documents in PDF, Word or Excel format.