



## IDEAS Program – FAQs

The following is an account of relevant questions and answers from the Capacity Building Program for U.S. Study Abroad, also known as the IDEAS Program (Increase and Diversify Education Abroad for U.S. Students). The responses are divided into four categories:

1. Grant Allowables
2. Budget Questions
3. RFP Clarifications
4. Other questions

This document will be updated and posted on our website with additional questions submitted during the FY19 competition.

### Grant Allowables

**1. Would it be possible to use the grant with an audience of high school students or is it restricted to college students only?**

A1. No, these grants cannot be used for high school programs. These grants are intended to be used for primarily (although not necessarily exclusively) undergraduate study abroad programs. Graduate students may also benefit from the planned study abroad programs, but the primary focus should be on undergraduate students. The competition is open only to accredited U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs).

**2. To what types of locations are IDEAS grants allowed to support student travel?**

A2. IDEAS grants support U.S. study abroad student programs in locations outside of the United States and its territories that are a U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory Level 1 or 2. Proposals to locations with a State Department Travel Advisory Level 3 must outline safety and security procedures for the proposed study abroad programs. Proposals to locations with a State Department Travel Advisory Level 4 will not be considered. Please consult the Travel Advisory list here:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>. Note that the grant proposal may NOT fund student travel costs or other student scholarships.

Accredited higher education institutions within Puerto Rico and other U.S. territories may apply to the grant competition to build a study abroad program that sends students outside of the United States and its territories. For example, an HEI in Ohio may not propose sending students to Puerto Rico. Also, an HEI in Puerto Rico may not propose a program to send students to the U.S. Virgin Islands or Guam or any other U.S. territories as part of its proposal.

**3. Can a single application cover costs for multiple programs in multiple countries? Can a single proposal fund multiple faculty fact-finding trips?**

A3. Yes, a single application can include costs for multiple programs, countries, and/or faculty

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factfinding trips as long as said application is within the budget limit. U.S. HEIs may also submit more than one proposal. Those proposals would be considered individually.

**4. Can two or more institutions apply as partners or a group on one proposal? Can institutions apply in two proposals if [they are] part of separate consortium in each proposal?**

A4. Yes, institutions can apply as partners and can be in more than one consortium and/or partnership.

**5. Are programs supported by an IDEAS grant required to be for-credit programs?**

A5. Study abroad programs supported by this grant may include both short- and longer-term study abroad programming for academic credit, as well as internships abroad for academic credit. Non-credit granting programs are not permitted.

**6. Can grant funds be used to fund U.S. faculty travel abroad?**

A6. Yes, grant funds may be used to fund U.S.-based faculty travel abroad. Grant funds may not be used to fund travel for foreign faculty/staff to the U.S.

**7. Can proposed study abroad programs occur after the technical close of the grant period (July 2020-August 2021)?**

A7. Yes, the creation, expansion, and/or diversification of proposed study abroad programs may occur outside of the grant period as long as the work plan clearly lays out the steps that will be taken to prepare for the proposed study abroad travel, including prospective travel dates. Many proposals will have program plans where students travel overseas during the grant period but some may not. For example, projects that set up semester-long exchange programs may propose to have their first round of semester students study abroad during the fall 2021 semester after the grant period ends.

*Note that any program components that require grant funding must occur within the grant period (July 2020- August 2021).*

**8. Can grant funds be used to support a foreign host institution that hosts students and supports student programming?**

A8. Yes, partnership with one or more foreign institutions is encouraged. IDEAS funds provided to a foreign host institution may not be construed as covering student costs including tuition, international travel, ground transportation in the United States or in the foreign country(ies), incidentals, and/or meals. Funding requests to support foreign higher education institutions should be justified within the proposal.

**9. Given that student travel and scholarship costs are not permitted in the proposed grant budget, what program expenses through the grant may benefit students? or are allowable expenses only those borne by faculty and support staff or program providers? For example: group activities such as site visits (entrance fees) and guest lectures?**

A9. Faculty and staff expenses (including travel and salaries) can be covered as a part of the proposed grant budget. Applicants should provide a justification for all indicated expenses noting how those expenses would support program goals and note how the program would be sustainable in the future after the grant period ended.



**10. Can Education Abroad providers with negotiated packages be used for Faculty travel? Will a full budget breakdown be required for the negotiated package? Must Education Abroad provider-purchased flights comply with the Fly America Act?**

A10. Yes, Education Abroad providers with negotiated packages may be used for Faculty travel. A budget breakdown of the negotiated package is not required. All flights purchased with grant funds, including those purchased through an Education Abroad provider, must be comply with the Fly America Act.

**11. Can faculty hire graduate research assistant to travel to investigate the study abroad site, and can the research assistant's salary, cost of travel, living expenses etc. be included in the budget?**

A11. Expenses related to the hiring of graduate assistants as program staff are permitted.

**12. May the grant cover the cost of travel for student mentors, including if those mentors are also undergraduate students? For example, second, third, or fourth year undergraduate students who act as peer leaders for first year students on study abroad programs.**

A12. Travel costs for student mentors who are considered program staff are permitted in the proposed budget. The proposal must also provide information on the ratio of study abroad mentors/faculty/study abroad administrators to students. However, if the student mentor is considered a study abroad program participant, their travel costs cannot be included in the proposed budget.

## Budget Questions

**13. Does the grant require matching funds or cost share to apply?**

A13. Cost share (or matching funds) is not a requirement but will be considered if proposed. A grantee institution that proposes cost share or matching funds will be required to meet said commitment as part of the terms of the grant.

**14. Can we request funding to attend a conference in the application for the IDEAS grant?**

A14. Conference attendance may be incorporated in the proposal for the IDEAS grant competition as long as it is tied to the goal of creating, expanding, or diversifying a study abroad program, all related costs are allowable for staff or faculty of the grantee institution, and the request is justified within the proposal.

**15. What are some examples of budget items?**

A15. Please refer to page 7-8 of the [Request for Grant Proposals](#) for a breakdown of potential budget line items. It is not necessary to budget funds under each line item.

**16. Would Indirect Costs be included in the \$35,000 budget limit?**

A16. Yes, the \$35,000 budget limit should include all Indirect Costs.

**17. What is the indirect cost allowed if an organization does not have a specific agreement?**

A17. If the applicant does not have a NICRA, an institution may elect to use a de minimis rate of 10% of Modified Total Direct Costs in accordance with [2 CFR 200.414](#).

## RFP Clarifications

**18. What does the term “near-term” mean?**

A18. “Near term” does not imply any specific time period but does require that the proposed study



abroad take place within a reasonable amount of time following the awarding of the grant. Many proposals will have program plans where students travel overseas during the grant period but some may not. For example, projects that set up semester-long exchange programs may propose to have their first round of semester students study abroad during the fall 2021 semester after the grant period ends.

**19. Are applicants permitted to create their own logic model document – still using the elements and language from the template?**

A19. We ask that applicants use the logic model and budget documents provided under “Request for Grant Proposals and Application Instructions” (<http://www.studyabroadcapacitybuilding.org/>).

## Other Questions

**20. Are abstracts/examples/proposals of former awardees available?**

A20. While copies of previous awardees’ applications are not available, abstracts of past awardees’ projects are available on the IDEAS program website.

<http://www.studyabroadcapacitybuilding.org/2019-grants/>

**21. Are former awardees permitted to apply?**

A21. Yes, former awardees may apply for a FY19 IDEAS grant, although preference may be given to applicants that have not recently received a grant from the program.

**22. What has the average ratio of proposals submitted to proposals awarded been for past iterations of the grant been?**

A22. World Learning received 120 applications for the FY18 small grant competition. Ultimately, 22 applications were awarded—approximately 18% of the total pool.

**23. Where is the application located?**

A23. The application is located on the [program website](#), by clicking on the button which states “Apply for the Grant Competition.” Please refer to the [Application Instructions](#) for more details about creating an account and logging into the application.

**24. Is it possible to send a draft proposal to World Learning for feedback prior to submission?**

A24. No, World Learning will not be available to review draft proposals. If you have any specific questions about the proposal, please email [IDEASProgram@worldlearning.org](mailto:IDEASProgram@worldlearning.org).

**25. If the proposed project does not align with a listed U.S. foreign policy goal, will that affect the chances of funding? How should a proposed program seek to address the foreign policy goals?**

A25. All applications will be evaluated against all of the criteria. However, for institutions with higher levels of existing study abroad capacity who propose to expand or diversify their study abroad programming, preference may be given to applications with programming that also address one or more of the U.S. foreign policy goals. In other words, a proposal that also addresses foreign policy goals may be given preference, if the evaluators deem it to be a strong overall proposal.

The foreign policy goals may be addressed through the program’s subject matter and may affect students in a broader sense (i.e. career path). A brief explanation of the way(s) in which your program will address the goal(s), if addressed, will be required in the application portal.



**26. Please clarify the page allowances for the proposal elements, as well as which elements are considered to be part of the Technical Proposal.**

A26. Total proposal: 18 pages

Technical proposal (12 pages)

- Cover page
- Executive summary (1 page)
- Program description (4-7 pages)
  - Capacity building plan
  - Project activities
  - Logic model
  - Sustainability plan
- Monitoring and Evaluation plan (2 pages)
- Calendar of Activities/Work Plan (2 pages)
- Staff CVs

Budget Documents (6 pages)

- Budget summary (1 page)
- Detailed Budget (1-2 pages)
- Budget Narrative (2-3 pages)

**27. What are the reporting requirements for grantees? Are grantees required to submit reports after the grant ends?**

A27. Grantees submit quarterly reports to World Learning during their grant period and a final report following the close of their grant. Following the close of their grant, grantees do not submit formal reports to World Learning but may be asked for updates.

**28. Can applicants from past grant cycles receive feedback on their past, unsuccessful proposals?**

A28. Yes, past applicants can ask World Learning for proposal feedback on previously submitted proposals by emailing [IDEASProgram@worldlearning.org](mailto:IDEASProgram@worldlearning.org). Feedback will be condensed.

**29. Is there a minimum institutional or study abroad program enrollment number needed to qualify for a grant?**

A29. No, there is not a required enrollment number needed to qualify for a grant. The grant competition is open to all accredited U.S. colleges and universities. The program seeks to engage the full diversity of U.S. higher education, including community colleges and Minority Serving Institutions, of all sizes.

**30. What is the nature of the subaward's payment terms?**

A30. The subaward payments can be issued on an advance or reimbursement basis, depending on the preference of the recipient institution. Reimbursements may be processed as frequently as monthly. Advance payments may be issued for expenditures that will be incurred during an outlined period, not to exceed one month.

**31. Are there particular regions which are a priority to the U.S. Department of State?**

A31. A goal of the IDEAS Program is to “diversify American student mobility, both in terms of the students taking part and the destinations where they travel”. While there are not regions of priority to



the State Department for this program, an applicant may refer to the [Open Doors](#) data regarding leading destinations for U.S. student study abroad.

**32. Can a proposal related to a new or existing program focus on the needs and/or participation of a specific student group?**

A32. Yes, proposals may focus on the needs of a specific student group.

**33. What percentage of funding goes to two-year colleges?**

A33. The IDEAS Program small grants competition and capacity building initiatives are open to all accredited U.S. colleges and universities. The program seeks to engage the full diversity of U.S. higher education, including community colleges and Minority Serving Institutions. For the FY18 grant competition cycle, approximately 30% of grantees were two-year colleges.