

SOLICITATION

For

Universities, Colleges, Community Colleges, Public or Private Schools/Districts, and/or Not for Profit
Entities

2022 STARTALK Programs

CFDA # 12.900

Estimated Period of Performance Dates:
June 2022 – June 2024
(Camps: Summer 2023)

SECTION I – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

This solicitation sets forth guidelines for areas of interest in language education for eligible academic institutions for the STARTALK program. This solicitation is issued under Section 6.102(d) (2) of the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR), and under section 22.315 of the Department of Defense Grant and Agreement Regulations (DoDGARs), which provides for the competitive selection of proposals. Proposals submitted in response to this BAA that are selected for award are considered to be the result of competition in accordance with 10 U.S.C. 2361 and 32 C.F.R. Section 22.315 and 22.325.

The National Security Agency/Center for Education, Innovation and Outreach is soliciting proposals for grants in the area of language education and skills development from eligible institutions. Proposals using innovative and creative approaches, employing input from a diverse set of language education professionals are sought.

1.2 STARTALK PROGRAM

The National Security Agency's National Cryptologic School manages STARTALK to provide language training programs for Elementary, Middle, High School and College (K-16) teachers and students to meet future national security challenges.

STARTALK responds to a recognized need to develop and teach critical need foreign language skills at the K-16 levels. The program achieves this by providing grants to universities, public or private schools or school systems to conduct in-residence, commuter, virtual, or hybrid learning events for students and teachers.

1.3 MISSION AND VISION

STARTALK is a federal grant program funded by the National Security Agency with the objective of increasing the number of US citizens learning and teaching less commonly taught languages throughout our nation and inspiring those students to language careers, thereby contributing to language workforce development for the Federal Government. Established in 2006 in response to the President's National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), STARTALK provides funding and support to institutions to conduct K-16 language student education and teacher development programs of less commonly taught and critical-need languages that meet the national security and defense priorities. Currently, these languages include Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, and Russian.

1.4 PROGRAM GOALS

Through these programs, the STARTALK program seeks to achieve these four goals:

- Increase the number of students enrolled in the study of critical languages
- Increase the number of highly effective critical-language teachers in the U.S.
- Increase the number of highly effective materials and curricula available to teachers and students of critical-need languages
- Enhance workforce development in the federal government to meet national security needs through the study of critical languages

1.5 FUNDING

STARTALK is funded by the National Security Agency (NSA). Other federal partners may contribute funding on an annual basis.

1.6 SCHEDULE

Proposals are due no later than Friday, January 7, 2022, at 11:59pm EST. Grant awards are anticipated to be announced by April 2022 with funding awarded in May 2022. Grant awards are effective two years from the date awarded. Please consider this when writing your proposal.

1.7 PROPOSED TIMELINE

If funded, the following is an estimated timeline:

- *Summer 2022*: Proposal status notification (PoP summer 2022- summer 2024)
- *Fall/Winter 2022*: Planning, marketing, recruiting
- *Winter/Spring 2023*: Pre-camp outreach activities
- *Summer 2023*: Summer camp experience
- *Fall/Winter 2023/Spring 2024*: Post camp outreach activities
- *Summer 2024*: Finalize grant paperwork

1.8 ELIGIBILITY

The institution applying must be a university, college, community college, public/private school or school system, and/or a not-for-profit entity.

Applicants shall adhere to the following criteria:

- Applicants previously awarded a STARTALK grant must be current on all reporting requirements and may not be delinquent in submission of invoices for previous grant awards.
- Returning STARTALK grantees must be in compliance with all other conditions of previous awards, to include attendance at mandatory meetings, filing of required reports, etc.
- Institutions proposing to conduct a Chinese language program must provide a non-affiliation statement acknowledging that:
 - Confucius Institute employees and instructors will not provide instruction or educational support to the program; and
 - Confucius Institute employees and instructors will have no authority with regard to the curriculum and activities of the program.

1.9 MANAGEMENT OF FOREIGN NATIONAL INVOLVEMENT ON GRANTS RESULTING FROM THIS SOLICITATION

Individuals supported by a grant awarded as a result of this solicitation must be U.S. Citizens, or permanent residents admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence prior to award. To be eligible for an award, an organization must submit a certificate of Assurance or Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and be constantly in compliance with the Act. It is the responsibility of the grantee to validate the citizenship of proposed individuals.

- Faculty (Principal Investigators (PI)/ Program Director (PD)/Co-PIs), Administration, Other Support Staff, all research assistants, student workers, anyone receiving a salary from the grant must be a US Citizen or permanent residents admitted to the U.S. for permanent residence.
- All instruction must occur in the United States (with the potential for U.S. territorial or tribal participation). STARTALK funds cannot be used to fund study programs abroad. The applying organization must not be organized, chartered, or incorporated under the laws of any country other than the U.S. or its possessions or be controlled by an individual who is not a U.S. citizen. STARTALK funds may not be used to support a foreign owned entity.
- All student and teacher program participants must reside in the United States and be enrolled in or teach at a United States school or home-schooled

1.10 HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH

The NSA STARTALK Program Office strongly discourages proposals that include the use of human subjects research. Should the offeror believe that the proposed project would absolutely need the use of human subjects the offeror must follow DoD and NSA rules and policies. The use of human subjects is required to be coordinated through the funding entity prior to the grantee performing any human subjects research activities funded by the grant. Once coordinated, human subject research, prior to occurring, shall adhere to DoDI 3216.02, NSA/CSS Policy 10-10, and any requirement imposed by the NSA/CSS Human Protections Administrator, including review by an applicable Institutional Review Board (IRB), the IRB's determination and post-IRB determination, Human Research Protections Official review by the grantor.

1.11 PROPOSAL

Concise proposals addressing the offeror's plan are requested. Focus on the institution's commitment to the proposal, faculty, and staff qualifications, and what the proposal offers to the subject of the project. Proposals shall be submitted in accordance with guidance in Attachment A, Proposal Preparation Instructions.

1.12 AWARD TYPES AND FUNDING.

Awards made as a result of this solicitation will be in the form of a Grant. Grant awards are effective two years from the date awarded (NSA Grant Office signature); there will be no extensions beyond the two-year timeframe. Please consider this when writing your proposal.

The 2022 STARTALK Program is offering the following distinct funding opportunities. STARTALK grant awards are anticipated to be \$125,000-\$350,000 each, dependent upon the proposed activity.

The Program Office reserves the right to request a budget modification prior to final grant status notification. Offerors may submit a proposal for each of the four (4) categories below. Offerors are cautioned to write clear and concise proposals that answers the requirements of the Proposed Program. Proposals that overlap multiple categories will automatically be disqualified. One proposal cannot be dependent on another category proposal. (Example: Your Student Camp Proposal cannot require activities from the Teacher Camp proposal.) Each proposal will be evaluated separately; therefore, one proposal must not be dependent upon another in any way.

Due to the increased interest in the STARTALK program, grant award competition has increased.

Accordingly, previous STARTALK grantee status does not guarantee a grant award.

Offerors currently managing active STARTALK program grants should carefully consider current commitment levels before investing in a proposal to lead another initiative under this proposal. Any proposals submitted in this situation should clearly state how taking on this responsibility will not impact other commitments.

Offerors may exceed the posted funding levels with compelling justification. See Figure 1 below for funding amount for each initiative. The STARTALK Program Office may elect not to exceed a proposed budget amount if the justification is not deemed worthy of the additional funding. Maximum funding amounts listed in figure 1 are based on low or no cost to participants. Programs that charge a fee must reflect a reduced grant request commensurate with anticipated income from fees, with explanation of fees and budget reductions reflected in the proposal. Commensurate reduction of grant budget request also applies to camps receiving support from sponsors. To meet STARTALK diversity objectives, camps charging low, or no fees will be given priority.

Figure 1. Summer camp formats and maximum funding

<p align="center">STARTALK PROGRAM FORMATS (Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Persian, and Russian)</p>	<p align="center">Funding Max (each)</p>
<p>1 STARTALK Student (Grades K-12) Traditional Summer Camp - minimum 40 hours of summer camp and a minimum of 40 total hours of pre/post-outreach required (face-to-face, virtual, hybrid)</p>	<p align="center">\$ 125K</p>
<p>2 STARTALK Year-round Student (Grades 7-14) Summer Camp - minimum 60 hours of summer camp and a minimum of 60 total hours of pre-/post-outreach required (face-to-face, virtual, hybrid)</p>	<p align="center">\$ 200K</p>
<p>3 STARTALK In-Person Year-round Student (Grades 9-14) Residential Immersion Camp - minimum two weeks of summer camp and a minimum of 60 total hours of pre-/post-outreach required (face-to-face, virtual, hybrid)</p>	<p align="center">\$ 350K</p>
<p>4 STARTALK Year-round Teacher Summer Camp (Grades K-16) – minimum 60 hours of summer camp and a minimum of 60 total hours of pre-/post-outreach required (face-to-face, virtual, hybrid)</p>	<p align="center">\$ 200K</p>

SECTION II – PROPOSED PROGRAMS

2.1 CATEGORY DESCRIPTION

The program office is looking for creative, innovative, and out-of-the-box thinking in submitted proposals.

Format 1: STARTALK Student (Grades K-12) Traditional Program. This program is preferred to have a face-to-face component for the minimum 40 hours of summer camp, but may be virtual or hybrid, should COVID impact persist and/or any public safety concerns make in-person impractical. A minimum of 40 hours of pre- and post-camp outreach may be live, virtual or hybrid, depending on plans for the summer program and local conditions. Target population for this pilot will be students in grades K-12 at the beginning of the academic year 2022. Format 1 may be geared to Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced proficiency levels at the beginning of the program, with the objective to prepare students for the next proficiency sublevel.

Format 2: STARTALK Year-round Student (Grades 7-14) Program. This program is preferred to have a face-to-face component for the minimum 60 hours of summer camp, but may be virtual or hybrid, should COVID impact persist and/or any public safety concerns make in-person impractical. Pre- and post-camp outreach may be live, virtual or hybrid depending on plans for the summer program and local conditions. Target population for this pilot will be students in grades 7-14 at the beginning of the academic year 2022. Format 2 programs should be geared to intermediate or advanced levels at the beginning of the program, with the objective to prepare students for the next proficiency sublevel before the following school year.

Format 3: STARTALK In-Person Student (Grades 9-14) Residential Immersion Program. This immersion option is expected to have a residential summer component of at least two weeks, where students are expected to converse primarily in the subject language. Intermediate proficiency should be a prerequisite for admission to the summer immersion element, but the pre-camp outreach activity may be used to help candidates for the residential program reach that proficiency level. Target audience is students entering ninth grade through entering their sophomore year of college at the beginning of the academic year (before the residential element). Pre- and post-camp elements may be live, virtual or in-person. Programs that plan virtual pre- and post-camp elements and recruit students from a wide geographic area (regional or national) are preferred but not required. Proposals for Format 3 immersion programs may request a grant exceeding the stated maximum with adequate justification, which must include **no fees** for participants and more than two weeks duration of the summer immersion experience.

Format 4: STARTALK Teacher Summer Program (Grades K-16). This program is preferred to have a face-to-face component for the minimum 60 hours of summer camp, but may be virtual or hybrid, should COVID impact persist and/or any public safety concerns make in-person impractical. Pre- and post-camp outreach may be live, virtual or hybrid depending on plans for the summer program and local conditions. Target population for this pilot will be foreign language teachers in one of the five required languages. Teacher participants must be provided feedback on activities completed. Institutions are encouraged to work with teacher participants to build a local/regional Teacher Learning Community (TLC).

SECTION III - GRANT SUBMISSION INFORMATION

3.1 APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

To be eligible for STARTALK grant funding under this solicitation, all proposal submissions must meet the following threshold criteria.

- **BRANDING:** All activities funded under this grant must be branded as STARTALK activities to include the program name. Institutions who receive funding are encouraged to use STARTALK branded items (lanyards, backpacks, t-shirts, etc....) at their camp (and these items should be included in the budget as appropriate). The proposal must acknowledge the requirement and provide specific details for STARTALK branding in the proposal narrative.
- **STAFF EXPERTISE:** If the student camp is for grades K-12, utilization of a K-12 pedagogical expert (an individual with K-12 classroom experience) in the curriculum development and camp delivery is a requirement and must be included in the proposal.
- **COST:** Camps are to be low cost or free to all participants.
- **SAFETY:** All programs funded under this grant **must** include a safety plan to ensure that all participants (students and teachers alike) can learn in a safe, secure environment for the duration of the program.
- **PRE-EXISTING CURRICULUM:** STARTALK does not provide curriculum; however, it is permissible to use pre-existing modules and resources. When using these pre-existing curricula, time must be spent to ensure that the use of curriculum is presented in a way that is age-appropriate and unique to this STARTALK program. When using this curricula, the STARTALK program office expects to clearly see that less time is spent on curriculum development than would otherwise be should an institution choose to create completely unique curriculum.

3.2 GRANT PROPOSAL SUBMISSION

See Attachment A – Proposal Preparation Instruction

3.3 SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated by a panel of Department of Defense language professionals and other subject matter experts. The STARTALK Program Office will make **all** final decisions.

3.4 EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Government anticipates multiple awards as a result of this Grant Solicitation, however, the Government reserves the right to select for award all, some or none of the proposals received, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Government. The actual number of grants awarded will depend on the number of complete and acceptable proposals, cost of individual awards, availability of funds and geographic locations.

The evaluation is a complete assessment of the offerors proposal. Decisions to fund selected proposals are based on the selection criteria identified below and the ability of funds. As a result of funding constraints, not all proposals deemed selectable may be funded. Awards resulting from the Grant Solicitation will be made by the Government, considering cost and non-cost factors. Where there are no significant differences in the evaluation of non-cost factors among proposals determined selectable, and such proposals are found to be equally important in support of critical need foreign languages education, then funds availability alone

will be the determining criterion for award. **Prior STARTALK Grantee status does not assure a 2022 grant award.**

The STARTALK Program Office shall use price analysis techniques to determine price reasonableness. These methods of evaluation may include information/input from sources such as, but not limited to, other grant programs and personnel. The STARTALK team reserves the right to require the submission of any data (e.g., data other than cost and pricing) necessary to validate the reasonableness of an offer

Proposals will be evaluated against the following criteria:

Eligibility – The proposal, the offeror and all coalition members meet the eligibility requirements listed in section 1.8.

Sound & Reasonable Methodology - Institution demonstrates a sound method for achieving the stated goals. A timeline of activities is included as Pre/Post camp outreach and the summer camp requirement are outlined and meet minimum qualifications as described in the solicitation.

Quality and Experience – Proposals must clearly state the qualifications of the offeror and the proposed team members to fulfill the objectives of the solicitation and certifies each participant’s professional commitments allow time to perform on the grant. The Program Office reserves the right to consider past performance and demonstrated competence in final award decisions.

Deliverable – Proposal clearly specifies plans to meet the required deliverables of the solicitation. The proposal acknowledges the deliverable will be provided to the NSA STARTALK Program Office and/or contractor support and will be made available to the STARTALK Community, as appropriate.

Solicitation Objectives – The proposal includes detailed description of how the proposal meets the objectives of the solicitation.

Cost – Institution describes how the costs are reasonable in proportion to the scope of the proposal. In cases where multiple proposals meet requirements and are evaluated to be equal in quality of proposal and ability to fulfill objectives, the Program Office will evaluate the cost of the proposal against the proposed methods, deliverables, and associated costs and will select the best return on investment for cost.

Clarity – The solicitation clearly accounts for all solicitation requirements.

Other Items - The Government anticipates multiple awards as a result of this Grant Solicitation, however, the Government reserves the right to select for award all, some or none of the proposals received, if it is determined to be in the best interest of the Government. The actual number of grants awarded will depend on the number of complete and acceptable proposals, cost of individual awards, availability of funds and geographic locations.

- The Government intends to evaluate proposals and make awards without discussions; however, the Government reserves the right to conduct discussions, at the discretion of the Grants/Contracting Officer. Due to the unique nature of each proposal, the Grants Officer may select one or more individual proposals for discussions. Selection of one or more

proposals for discussion will not obligate the Government to enter into discussions with any other offeror.

- The evaluation will be based on a complete assessment of the offeror's proposal. Decisions to fund selected proposals will be based on the selection criteria already identified and funds availability. As a result of funding constraints, not all proposals deemed selectable may be funded. Awards resulting from the Grant Solicitation will be made by the Government, considering cost and non-cost factors. Where there are no significant differences in the evaluation of non-cost factors among proposals determined selectable, and such proposals are found to be equally important in support of critical need foreign languages education, then funds availability alone will be the determining criterion for award.
- The STARTALK Program Office shall use price analysis techniques to determine price reasonableness. These methods of evaluation may include information/input from sources such as, but not limited to, other grant programs and personnel. The STARTALK team reserves the right to require the submission of any data (e.g., data other than cost and pricing) necessary to validate the reasonableness of an offer.

3.5 AWARDS

Refer to chart found on page 5.

3.6 REPORTING

The awardee is required to deliver a final report no later than 60 days after completion of the grant. Barring any proprietary information, the reports may be published on an internal government database to share among those doing similar work.

Minimum of three lesson plans – A minimum of three lesson plans must be submitted along with the final report to the program office or contractor support.

Awardees will also be required to submit SF-425, Federal Financial Report www.grants.gov along with the final invoice (SF-270) 60 days after completion of grant.

Awardees may be required to submit DD-882, Report of Inventions and Subcontracts <https://www.onr.navy.mil/en/Contracts-Grants/manage-grant/grants-forms-download>.

Awardee must respond to requests for information (i.e., emails/surveys/etc....) from the program office and/or contractor support.

Regarding 508 Compliance: All delivered materials, documentation and information technology will meet the NSA Information Communications Technology Accessibility Standards, derived from Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act (29 USC 795d) and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 AA requirements.

3.7 OTHER ITEMS

- To be eligible for an award, an organization must submit a certificate of Assurance or Compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and be constantly in compliance with the Act.
- As indicated in Executive Order 12549, "...Executive departments and agencies shall participate in a government wide system for non-procurement debarment and suspension. A person who is debarred or

suspended shall be excluded from Federal financial and non-financial assistance benefits under Federal programs and activities. Debarment or suspension of a participant in a program by one agency shall have a government wide effect.”

• Grants and Cooperative Agreements - As defined in the DOD Grants and Agreements Regulations, DoD 3210.6-R, a grant is “A legal instrument which, consistent with 31 U.S.C. 6304, is used to enter into a relationship:

- Of which the principal purpose is to transfer a thing of value to the recipient to carry out a public purpose of support or stimulation authorized by a law of the United States, rather than to acquire property or services of the Department of Defense' direct benefit or use.
- In which substantial involvement is not expected between the Department
- The Government is not obligated to make any award as a result of this solicitation.

The Offeror shall follow the guidance provided within the NSA ICT Accessibility Standards and the NSA ICT Accessibility Score Sheet to conduct a self-evaluation of their course materials, and vendor delivered information technology (software and hardware). The Offeror shall identify how materials, documentation, and information technology can be interacted with the keyboard only, a third-party screen-reader (JAWS or NVDA), and that no information/instruction is presented in single-sense format only (auditory, color, visual, etc.), through the completion of the self-evaluation. Additionally, if the Offeror’s individual criteria scores fall below a 5.0, they shall provide documentation regarding those criteria, why they fail, the deliverables negatively impacted, how it will affect end-users, and a procedure and report that demonstrates how they plan to remediate or alternatively meet the Agency Accessibility Standards.

The Offeror shall document and demonstrate any instance where the NSA ICT Accessibility Standards and Score Sheet Requirement are not directly applicable to the ICT under procurement. If the Offeror demonstrates non-applicability, they must document how the ICT meets the NSA ICT Fundamental Accessibility Requirements. If they are unable to demonstrate for all fundamental requirements, they shall provide documentation regarding those criteria, why they fail, the deliverables negatively impacted, how it will affect end-users, and a procedure and report demonstrating how they plan to remediate or alternatively meet the Agency Fundamental Accessibility Requirements. All solicitation response documentation delivered will also be produced in an accessible format that meets the NSA ICT Fundamental Accessibility Requirements, and will additionally be available in braille format, upon request.

3.8 SYSTEM OF AWARD MANAGEMENT (SAM)

SAM is the primary Government repository for prospective federal awardee information and the centralized Government system for certain contracting, grants, and other assistance related processes. All contractors must be registered in the SAM to receive solicitations, awards, or payments. To register in the SAM, you may use any one of the following methods:

- Telephone: 1-866-606-8220
- SAM Website: <https://www.acquisition.gov>. Processing time for registration of an application submitting an application may take up to five (5) business days.
- Should you need additional information, visit their home page at: <http://www.sam.gov>

3.9 ACQUISITION RESOURCE CENTER (ARC)

Acquisition Resource Center (ARC) Business Registry means the primary Maryland Procurement Office (MPO) repository for contractor information required for the conduct of business with MPO. "Registered in the ARC Business Registry," means that all mandatory information is included in the ARC Business Registry. By submission of an offer, the offeror acknowledges the requirement that a prospective awardee must be registered in the ARC Business Registry prior to award, during performance, and through payment of any contract resulting from this solicitation. Lack of registration in the ARC Business Registry shall make an offeror ineligible for award. MPO established a goal of registering all contractors in the ARC Business Registry to provide a market research tool and to facilitate communication between the MPO and the contractor community. Offerors that are not already registered in the ARC should apply for registration immediately upon receipt of this solicitation. The offeror is responsible for the accuracy and completeness of the data within the ARC, and of any liability resulting from the Government's reliance on inaccurate or incomplete data. The Contractor agrees to periodically update information when previously provided information changes. To remain registered in the ARC Business Registry after the initial registration, the Contractor is required to confirm annually on or before the anniversary of the initial registration that the information is accurate and complete. Offerors that are not already registered in the ARC Business Registry shall register via the internet at: <http://www.nsaarc.net/>

3.10 ELECTRONIC INVOICING

Effective 2018 January 1, per 17(b) of the standard Terms and Conditions incorporated into all grants, invoices must be submitted electronically through the Maryland Procurement Office (MPO) website. Invoice submission through the MPO website is MANDATORY for organizations that have grants with National Security Agency (NSA). Grantees must have a current PKI Certificate to utilize this function. Hardcopy invoice will no longer be accepted after this date. Be advised that hardcopy invoices will be rejected unless otherwise approved by the Office of Contracting and Accounts Payable.

Access to the MPO website requires an External Certificate Authority/Interim External Certificate Authority (ECA/IECA) PKI Certificate. Information on purchasing an ECA/IECA Certificate, including its initial and annual cost, is available on the internet at: <http://iase.disa.mil/pki/eca> (must be a Medium Assurance Certificate). The grantee shall contact the Electronic Commerce Office at (410) 854-5445 if they need additional information. After obtaining the ECA/IECA certificate, the grantee must contact the Electronic Commerce Office to obtain an account if one does not currently exist.

Steps for Obtaining a PKI and Instructions for Invoicing Electronically

- Obtain an ECA Medium Assurance Certificate through either ORC, Identrust, or DoD. Certificates come in three forms either software (browser based), token (preloaded USB device), or hardware (CAC card loaded). It is the grant awardee's preference what form of the ECA certificate that is chosen. Costs range from \$100 - \$300 (per year). This process normally takes one to one-and-a-half weeks to receive the certificate. Costs may be charged as a direct or indirect cost. No additional funds will be allocated to the grant as a result of this action.
- Once the certificate is received, contact the MPO Help Desk to request an account.
- Contact can be via email at dialogue@ec.ncsc.mil or phone at (410) 854-5445. It takes about 20-25 minutes to create the account.
- You will receive a welcome email entitled Welcome to the MPO Website that includes the user ID, password, and instructions on getting started.

- The MPO Help Desk can provide any detailed support needed for access and submission of electronic invoices through MPO.
- Invoices MUST be submitted using Standard Form SF270 as 300 dpi black and white .TIF using Group IV compression or as 300 dpi black-and-white .PDF images. Invoices shall be legible, quality, unskewed images. Invoices shall not contain smudges, markings, shading, writing, stamps, annotation, coffee rings, highlighted data, circling, or redacted data.

3.11 CERTIFICATE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE

Applicants must provide a certificate of liability insurance to document that student safety, liability, and insurance issues are addressed. This certificate must be submitted with the proposal.

3.12 DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

See the proposal preparation instructions for details on the submission of proposals. Institutionally approved, signed, completed proposals must be submitted electronically through the STARTALK Proposal System on/before Friday, 7 January 2022. In addition, two hard copies (unbound, single-side printed page) of ALL required documents (including Certificate of Liability and all others listed in PPI) must be mailed to the program office with a postmark of the 7 January 2022 due date.

3.13 LATE SUBMISSIONS

The institution is responsible for electronically submitting the proposal to the STARTALK Grants Program Office at the National Security Agency by the date and time specified.

- If receipt is not acknowledged on the due date or within 24 hours, please contact the program office immediately (STARTALKgrants@nsa.gov and startalk@uwe.nsa.gov). Institutions who do not follow-up on a missing proposal will not be considered.

3.14 INCOMPLETE PROPOSALS

Proposals submitted in the wrong format, using wrong forms, or missing items will be deemed incomplete and will not be considered for an award.

3.15 CONTACT INFORMATION

The central points of contact for information regarding this solicitation is:

STARTALK Grants Program Office
National Security Agency
9800 Savage Road
SUITE 6810
Fort George G. Meade, MD 20755-6810
STARTALKgrants@nsa.gov
startalk@uwe.nsa.gov

STARTALK Principles for Effective Teaching and Learning

The STARTALK Principles for Effective Teaching and Learning describe characteristics of highly effective language teaching and learning. Each STARTALK principle is focused on creating learning experiences that allow learners to develop their linguistic and cultural competence. Educators apply the STARTALK principles to ensure that learners are engaged in meaningful, real-world learning experiences that prepare them to use the target language beyond the classroom. Each of the STARTALK principles is explained in the context of teaching and learning, identifying learner experiences that are possible because of the work done by the teacher. Application of the six STARTALK principles require:

- 1. Implementing a Standards-Based and Thematically Organized Curriculum:** Teachers use units that incorporate the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, providing a meaningful and purposeful context that is cognitively engaging and relevant to learners. Units follow the backward-design process by stating what learners will be able to do for each mode of communication, aligning performance assessment tasks and learning experiences. Lessons support the goals of the unit by sequencing clearly stated lesson can-do statements that indicate what learners will know and be able to do in order to prepare them for the performance assessment tasks.
- 2. Conducting Performance-Based Assessment:** Teachers share unit and lesson goals with learners and monitor how well learners are doing in meeting those goals. Learners engage in relevant real-world performance tasks to demonstrate how well they are meeting the performance targets and goals of the unit for each mode of communication. Teachers use evidence from performance assessment tasks and formative checks for learning during lessons to provide timely descriptive feedback to learners and adjust instruction as needed.
- 3. Integrating Culture, Content, and Language:** Teachers use units and design lessons that are culturally rich and cognitively engaging, creating a context in which learners use their language skills to learn more about the target culture(s) and the world they live in. Learners build, reinforce, and expand their knowledge of other disciplines and the world while using the target language. Learners interact frequently with authentic resources, exploring the products, practices and perspectives of the target culture(s). They have opportunities to communicate and interact appropriately with others who speak the target language.
- 4. Using the Target Language and Providing Comprehensible Input:** Teachers facilitate learning through the use of the target language and ensure that the target language is used at least 90 percent of the time. Teachers deliberately determine if and when it is necessary to translate. Teachers use a variety of strategies to make the target language comprehensible and frequently check for understanding in a variety of ways in order to modify input as necessary. Learners have frequent meaningful opportunities for target language production and are able to engage in learning activities without resorting to their native language.
- 5. Facilitating a Learner-Centered Classroom:** Learners benefit from an environment in which teachers and learners collaborate as partners in the learning process. Teachers make instructional decisions based on learners' ages, interests, abilities and needs. Teachers create multiple opportunities for learners to engage in real-world tasks in the target language that spark curiosity and invite inquiry. Teachers plan multiple opportunities for learner-to-learner interaction, enabling learners to collaborate and communicate about topics that are meaningful to them.

6. **Adapting and Using Age-Appropriate Authentic Materials:** Teachers select authentic texts and resources appropriate for the theme and performance targets of the unit. Teachers plan how to make the texts and resources comprehensible and accessible to learners. Learners engage frequently with age-appropriate resources that are intentionally selected to appeal to the interests, preferences, and life experiences of members of the target culture