



THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

Creating Global Professionals

Chinese Domestic Program Solicitation

*Q & A from Technical Assistance Webinars
September 19 & October 15, 2013*

Please Note: The following is an edited version of transcripts of The Language Flagship's technical assistance webinars (September 19 and October 15, 2013) held to address questions related to the Chinese Domestic Program Solicitation Guidelines released in August, 2013. The questions and answers below have been edited for clarity and brevity and have been reordered by topic. They are based on an unscripted dialogue and may contain small errors in grammar and flow.

Domestic Program

Q: What should be in place in an existing Chinese program on campus to be a competitive applicant for a Flagship program? (September 19th)

A: Please review the RFP carefully as it references several elements that programs should have. In order to develop a Flagship program, Chinese language programming must be in place. Flagship funding is intended to build upon the strengths of what already exists. It is very important that, in order to meet Flagship goals, funds are invested in programs that have an existing structure. Additionally, applicants must describe, through the proposal, what adjustments will be made to achieve Flagship goals over time. Existing programs must be able to teach intensive elementary and intermediate Chinese, and must have, or have the ability to develop, content learning in Chinese (media literary, classical, etc.). Achieving the levels that The Language Flagship demands is a great challenge. Having infrastructure in place, ensuring institutional commitment, and addressing all of the elements outlined in the RFP are all very important. Elements included in the solicitation come from experiences with programs that Flagship has supported in the past, and continues to support. Please discuss elements of the solicitation with the appropriate individuals and departments on your campuses. The importance of having institutional commitment and backing cannot be reiterated enough. Ultimately, Flagship programs must become an institutionalized part of your university.

Q: What type of articulation is expected between the domestic program and the overseas program in China? (October 17th)

A: As stated in the RFP, proposals should clearly describe what existing domestic courses and programs are in place. Reviewers will need to understand what resources exist, what they look like, and how they will be adapted or increased and expanded in order to reach the goal of The Language Flagship, which is to have students coming out of the program at level ILR 3 or ACTFL Superior.

It is expected that students should be able to join the domestic Flagship Program even if they have never studied Chinese before. This is a huge task, but there are programs that accomplish this, by doing a lot of creative thinking when developing their programs. For example, how do you structure a program and use summers and other opportunities to get students moving along and to intensify programs as needed?

Likewise, one of the important components of the domestic program is development of content courses, courses in the areas of study of the students, which can be challenging given the expectation that students should come from many different disciplines. Institutions have taken a varied approach on developing content courses for Flagship. Some of them have developed general education courses that are taught in the language; some have developed courses such as chemistry that are taught in the language; some institutions use courses that exist already, often in English, and then create an accompanying “rider” course where students work in the language, use authentic materials, etc. It does vary from institution to institution. There are a range of different types of ideas that are actually implemented. Students can come out of high school with proficiency, and Flagship expects them to be able to enter the program at the appropriate stage. In general, the domestic programs need to develop a program that will actually help students reach at least the ILR 2 or ACTFL Advanced level, which is the qualifying level for the Capstone program.

There is a formal review of applications and proficiency assessments of Flagship students in order to qualify for the Capstone year, either in Nanjing or Tianjin. The reviewers are the directors of the Chinese Flagship programs. This group provides shape to the policies of the Chinese Flagship program; they also help each other determine how to develop their programs domestically. Ultimately, they are looking at and providing guidance on the development of the overseas program. Having students from different domestic programs articulating into the overseas component can only be done through collaboration involving all of the parties, including Brigham Young University and American Councils for International Education, who administer the overseas programs.

The Language Flagship is very focused on the end result, which is why it is very important for the Flagship students to be either at the Nanjing program or the Tianjin program. Their domestic language work will prepare them to directly enroll in content courses in their majors or related disciplines at Nanjing or Tianjin, and to be able to do professional internships in the target language. For example, if they are an accounting student, they would be able to walk into an accounting firm in China and perform the work, having the accounting, finance and economics background, and sufficient Chinese language proficiency. In order to achieve this, the Chinese Council has identified 6 or 7 elements that programs should have, which can be found in the RFP. This means that domestic institutions have to intensify and expand their Chinese program. They also need to bring in students from disciplines beyond Chinese language and literature and get them to high levels, as well as create those types of high level content, media, and culture courses so students are prepared.

Q: Our University has a language track and a separate culture track. If we get a Flagship program, would it be yet a third major track, or could we just offer a Flagship certificate program? (September 19th)

A: Institutions have the flexibility to determine what is best for them. In many cases, there are Flagship major tracks. Few, if any, programs are providing just a certificate. Because of the number of courses that are required to achieve the ILR 3/Superior ACTFL proficiency level, a biology major, for example, who is also in a Flagship program, often qualify for a second major in the language. The most important thing, with regards to the proposal, is to demonstrate how the existing Chinese language

program courses (and the development of new courses, if needed) will be adjusted, starting with the lowest level courses, to get students ILR 3/ACTFL Superior within a four or five year period. So, whether or not to have a Flagship track, to a certain extent, depends on the institution and how the institution structures a major.

The goal of the program is for students from all majors, whether social science, hard science, humanities, or other professional fields to be able to complete the requirements of The Language Flagship program, and also complete their major requirements. A Language Flagship Certificate is awarded by the National Security Education Program office (NSEP) to students who meet all of the Flagship program goals. It is not an accredited academic certificate, but students will have something that verifies that they are a Flagship-certified global professional. About half of Flagship students are double majoring in their languages of study, but the emphasis is on students in a wide variety of majors achieving high level language proficiency.

Q: Are there Flagship-approved summer domestic programs? (September 19th)

A: Yes, there is one Chinese summer domestic program that is approved for Flagship study. That program is at Indiana University (IU). Flagship provided some support to develop that program but it is now self-sustaining. There are a number of Flagship students from other institutions who go to the IU summer program on the recommendation of their Flagship directors. Flagship is also trying to institute an evaluation process for other existing stateside summer programs. Currently, most Flagship programs send their students to IU or utilize an existing intensive summer program at their own university.

Q: Do we need to partner with K-12? (September 19th & October 15th)

A: There is not a direct requirement in the RFP to partner with K-12. However, The Language Flagship does emphasize recruitment, enrollment and retention of students, which usually requires some kind of relationship with K-12, particularly at the high school level. The applicant does not need to demonstrate a fully articulated plan for engagement with K-12 from elementary school through college; that is not within the scope of this solicitation. However, in the area of recruitment and retention, it is expected that there will be some kind of engagement and collaboration with K-12. If there are currently-existing or potential relationships with schools, they should be described in the section of the application related to recruitment for the proposed Flagship program.

In the future, we hope our efforts with the K-12 community will result in students with strong Chinese language backgrounds joining Flagship programs at higher proficiency levels. Applicants are encouraged to explore relationships with good K-12 programs and the Flagship Chinese Acquisition Pipeline (F-CAP) K-12 program, organized with Brigham Young University and the Utah State Office of Education, which is a consortium that extends into about 17 states. (For more information on this program, please see www.thelanguageflagship.org.)

Q: How would you like Flagship programs to work with ROTC? (September 19th)

A: There are excellent opportunities for ROTC students to participate in the Flagship program. The Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO) has entered into agreements with Army and Air Force ROTC in order to offer Flagship ROTC scholarships to Army and Air Force cadets. Cadets may receive funding from Army or Air Force ROTC through their senior year and then,

if they qualify for Capstone, Flagship would fund the Capstone year. This is a tremendous opportunity to train officers who will have high-level Chinese skills and an in-depth understanding of China and the region.

Q: Please elaborate on the initial 3 month planning period. (September 19th)

A: That was built in as a start-up period to provide some type of support for the initial phase of the program. During this time, most new programs hire someone to help manage all the pieces. Planning and recruitment has to begin almost immediately. There are immediate costs that are incurred, generally in the way of a person's time. Additionally, the program director of the new Flagship(s) is expected to attend the Flagship Annual Meeting in May. Because of this, the start-up costs also include some travel funds.

Q: Can the new program recruit current university students upon receiving the award? (September 19th)

A: Yes. High school recruitment should happen within the first year of developing a new Flagship program. However, Flagship also expects to see on-campus recruitment right away. In order to do this, most programs determine which current university students could be potential Flagship students and recruit them immediately. New Flagship programs should be tapping into their resources on campus to identify students at all levels who would be interested in joining the new program and testing out the Flagship curriculum being developed. As current university students are recruited, programs should consider implementing initial assessments in order to determine students' current proficiency levels in relation to stated program proficiency goals.

Q: What is the expected duration of a Flagship program for students? Is there a preference for it to be a 4 or 5 year program? (October 15)

A: The 4 or 5 years is really up to each individual program to determine. Some students graduate or complete the program in 4 years while some complete it in 5. This is why the RFP states that it could be a 4 or 5 year program. For Chinese, the trajectory has primarily been a 5 year program because so many of the students entering have little or no Chinese. In order to reach the ILR 3/ACTFL Superior level, a large number of contact hours and time on task are needed. Often the only way to do that is to have them in program for up to 5 years. There are some students and some programs where they are making concerted efforts to have their students complete in 4 years. The Language Flagship anticipates that the frequency of this may increase as some of the K-12 efforts take off. Additionally, many Flagship students accumulate double and triple majors, some of them majoring in science, and this can add some length to the program.

Q: After the initial planning and grant period, what kind of application or review process would a program need to go through in order for Flagship funding to be renewed? (September 19th and October 15th)

A: Prior to the end of the initial grant cycle, institutions will be provided with guidelines to prepare a new proposal addressing elements similar to those in the current RFP. The solicitation is only open to those institutions that have existing Flagship grants; it is not an open competition. Proposals are reviewed both for content and budget for the subsequent three-year funding cycle. IIE works very closely with NSEP when setting program budget levels. The level of support does vary depending on the overall Language Flagship budget each year, but every effort is made to inform programs well in

advance what we believe funding will look like in the next year, and possibly 2 and 3 years down the line.

During the initial grant cycle, Flagship does closely monitor the performance of the new program. The program sponsors (NSEP and IIE) are very hands-on and conduct in-person visits, conference calls, and video conferences. Flagship requires reporting and follow-up correspondence to address any issues. Flagship works to maintain an open relationship with grantees to ensure programs have every opportunity to move forward. Flagship also looks very closely at program and student results. Programs that are not showing progress in getting students to Capstone levels may not be invited to apply for continued funding. Through frequent site visits and periodic peer reviews, the new program receives consultation and feedback relating to teaching and pedagogical issues, curriculum construction and overall program structure. Flagship utilizes a number of feedback mechanisms, including the cooperation of the Chinese Council and support of the Capstone selection committee, which promotes a standard notion of proficiency goals students should attain and types of skills required. Flagship sponsors work very hard to support Flagship institutions, but continuation is contingent upon building strong programs and demonstrating results.

Q: What is the expected size of each Flagship cohort? (September 19th) How many students are currently on the Capstone program in China? (October 15th)

A: The Language Flagship recognizes that it takes time to build a program, but over time the goal is that at least 10-20 students annually will attend the Capstone overseas program from each institution. Healthy enrollments and students succeeding in the stateside program must lead to robust cohorts of students participating in the Capstone program. This year, there are approximately 55 total students participating in the Capstone program from all domestic programs.

Q: How should students be assessed throughout the duration of their participation in a Flagship program? (September 19th)

A: Assessment is already scheduled for pre- and post-summer (reading and listening), when a student participates in a Flagship-approved summer program, as well as pre- and post-Capstone. However, Flagship programs should set additional benchmarks for students throughout their time in the program. Flagship institutions should have a plan for interim testing and there are a number of instruments that can be used. There is an online test developed by BYU, which is utilized by Flagship. A number of students take the HSK, the standard Chinese proficiency test for non-native speakers. It is recommended that a Flagship institution set up a protocol for points at which to test students, particularly with the OPI.

Q: Can you clarify the language proficiency level required for entry into Capstone, and the anticipated proficiency level upon leaving Capstone? (September 19th)

A: The Language Flagship has specific criteria and a standardized pre-Capstone testing regime. The students take a battery of tests, including an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) administered by Language Testing International (LTI). Students must score at least a 2 in speaking on the Interagency Language Roundtable (ILR) scale, which is approximately equivalent to scoring an Advanced on the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Language (ACTFL) scale. In addition, online reading and listening assessments have been developed for the Flagship community, and students need to score at least an ILR 2 in one of those modalities, and not less than an ILR 1+ on either of them. A writing

rubric is utilized in order to demonstrate to the selection committee, made up of the Chinese Council, that a student can write at a level that will allow them to complete overseas coursework. In addition, students must have a successful academic record and write a statement of purpose for going abroad. A Flagship Certificate will be issued by NSEP to students who score an ILR 3 on the OPI after Capstone, in addition to completing all other Flagship program requirements. Additional requirements in other modalities may be added in the future; those would be agreed upon in advance by the Chinese Council.

Instituting a regular schedule of assessments at lower levels of the Flagship program assists instructors in evaluating what additional interventions, such as individualized coursework, additional tutoring, etc., students might need in order to reach ILR 2 by the time they apply for the Capstone program.

Q: Do students participating in the program have to be American citizens? (October 15th)

A: Students do not have to be American citizens to participate in the program. However, there are restrictions on the use of Flagship grant funds for students. A student must be an American citizen to be eligible to apply for a Boren Scholarship to fund their Capstone year abroad.

Q: Are there any issues with transfer students or community college students entering Flagship? (October 15th)

A: No. In a few cases, there are programs that are trying to work with their local community college to see if there is some way to have their language programs articulate with the Flagship institution so that students can more easily make the jump. There are also a couple programs where community college students do finish their Associates degree and then come to that institution and enter the Flagship program.

Q: Can undergraduates from other institutions participate in the Flagship program? (October 15th)

A: This can be fairly problematic. Programs have explored different models for this arrangement. There are some institutions that are geographically next to each other and have a lot of articulated course credit arrangements that allow students from both participate in Flagship. For example, Haverford students take courses at Bryn Mawr College with Flagship students and then participate together in the Capstone program.

However, it is often very, very difficult for a student from another campus to participate in all of the elements that are necessary to prepare them for the overseas Capstone program. So this is not a model that is necessarily encouraged, but there may be some institutions who have a very close sister institution that might be able to operate in that way.

Q: What is the number of heritage learners participating in Flagship? (October 15th)

A: Heritage versus non-heritage has not been a statistic that The Language Flagship has tried to gather, and of course there is such a range for who is considered to be a heritage learner. What's clear is that The Language Flagship has a very healthy mix of heritage and non-heritage students excelling and working together in a variety of settings. There are many programs with participants who are

primarily not heritage learners, and those students are able to participate in the program with great success.

Q: What type of information about students is tracked and maintained during the program? (October 15th)

A: Flagship utilizes a system called the Student Certification System. The data collected should not raise concerns for institutions. For example, information such as social security numbers is not gathered or tracked. The information captured about the student including their contact information, information about their language background, such as formal and informal training they have received, is being captured for future research purposes.

Q: What factors motivate students to join Flagship? (October 15th)

A: There are many reasons that students join Flagship. Programs are finding that American undergraduate students respond to the challenge that a rigorous program like Flagship presents. They respond to the challenge of being expected to succeed, to achieve high levels of language proficiency, and to attain serious global professional skills. They need to understand what high level language proficiency, regional expertise, and expertise in a culture can bring them both personally and professionally. Student must understand the types of opportunities that will be available to them if they are proficient in Chinese, understand China, and understand Asia in the coming 10, 20, or 40 years. They also have to understand that this is a unique opportunity in higher education, that they are part of a movement to advance undergraduate global education and language education. While The Language Flagship does offer some financial support for their studies, the possibility of financial support for summer or overseas study is not sufficient incentive to really motivate students to dedicate themselves to the program. Hopefully, Flagship students will be motivated to take opportunities such as the Boren Scholarship or other opportunities to serve in government and serve their nation. Another hope is that programs will be able to attract students from ROTC who are interested in having a strong language and international background as they become officers.

Overseas Programs

Q: Is there a difference between the two Chinese overseas sites? (September 19th)

A: The two Flagship Capstone sites are Nanjing University in Nanjing and Tianjin Normal University in Tianjin, and there is a structural difference between the two programs. The Nanjing Center is the original overseas Flagship site. The Nanjing Center's structure is different from most other overseas Flagship programs in that students do all of the academic components of Capstone including directed language study and direct enrollment, during the first semester overseas, and the second semester is fully dedicated to the internship component. Students may do their internships in Nanjing or elsewhere in China, and there is supplemental language support provided during this time through tutoring. Thus, the Nanjing program has two very distinct components.

The Flagship Capstone program at Tianjin Normal University is designed is to provide directed language study throughout the two semesters overseas. Students are expected to begin and end their Capstone experience at Tianjin, meaning that internships are located in Tianjin or nearby. Students in the Tianjin program continue to engage in directed language study and receive language

support while doing their internships, though they do not necessarily directly enroll in courses during the second semester. Tianjin is a new program; the first cohort of students is currently there now. The Language Flagship will be monitoring the Tianjin program very closely over the coming year to see how it is working and make any necessary adjustments.

Nanjing University's academic component is administered by Brigham Young University, one of the Chinese Flagship institutions. BYU has a long-standing relationship with Nanjing University. American Councils for International Education is responsible for managing student affairs and internships for the Nanjing program. The Tianjin program is fully administered by American Councils. In both cases, BYU and American Councils work very closely with the directors from each of the Chinese Flagship programs. Decisions regarding curriculum and administration of the Capstone programs in China are made in consultation with the project directors. Issues of curriculum, scheduling, housing, homestays, and other aspects are discussed and voted on by the Council, so no entity is unilaterally making decisions about the overseas sites. It is expected that the Chinese Council discusses and votes on how best to move the program forward or address a particular situation or issue.

Also, students can start in the Nanjing Capstone program in either the fall or spring semester, whereas students entering the Tianjin program must start in the fall.

Q: How does the overseas internship placement work? Does Flagship guarantee the internship opportunity? How are these opportunities chosen for the students? (September 19th)

A: Students are strongly encouraged to identify internship opportunities they might be interested in and to make connections on their own. However, this does not mean students get to pick their internships; ultimately an internship must go through an approval process. If the student does not find an internship or his/her choice is not approved, an internship will be assigned. Internships are carefully vetted and reviewed by Flagship staff through visits to internship sites both to ensure there is an understanding of what is expected of the internship for a student, and what the student will be able to contribute in return.

Every attempt is made to identify an internship in a student's field of interest, but sometimes this does not occur. This is why the Chinese overseas programs encourage students to help identify internships of interest - to help ensure there is a connection with their interests and backgrounds.

Q: When is the Capstone year offered? Is it always the senior year or possibly earlier? Who actually provides the final grades for the overseas coursework? (September 19th)

A: The timing of the Capstone year depends on the student and the domestic program. Only a handful of students go overseas in their junior year. Most Flagship students go overseas in either their senior year or fifth year. Because many students enter the Flagship program with no background in Chinese, it is quite challenging for them to reach the required proficiency level to qualify for the Capstone year and then to complete the Capstone year and reach ILR 3 in four years. Additionally, most students complete the requirements for their (non-Flagship) major prior to going on Capstone, though that can also vary.

The process for providing grades and credit for participation in the overseas Flagship program depends on the arrangement made by each domestic Flagship institution. Some universities may have a direct relationship with the overseas institution (either Nanjing University or Tianjin Normal

University) and arrange to have the grades transfer back, or have the credit count at their home institution. In other cases, the grades are processed as study abroad credit by American Councils, through Bryn Mawr College.

Q: Is there a specific Flagship summer study abroad program? What about existing relationships with other Chinese universities for the purpose of Capstone? Will that benefit an applicant? (September 19th) What is the process for a summer program becoming Flagship-approved? (October 15th)

A: With regard to summer study abroad, The Language Flagship program has not developed its own program. Each year, The Language Flagship updates its list of approved overseas summer programs based on these recommendations and separate evaluations of those programs. If the new Chinese Flagship has a summer program they are interested in using, the Chinese Flagship project directors, as well as NSEP and IIE, would review the program, and a consensus decision would be made regarding whether it fits the goals of the Flagship program.

Flagship recognizes that U.S. universities have existing relationships with universities overseas. However, the goals of The Language Flagship rely heavily on the close articulation between the domestic and overseas Flagship programs, including curriculum, tutoring, language partners, etc. Therefore, all Flagship Chinese students are required to do their Capstone overseas year either at Nanjing University or Tianjin Normal University.

Q: How do students pay for the tuition costs for the Capstone program? (October 15th)

A: This varies from institution to institution. Some Flagship institutions have vetted and approved the Capstone programs as one of their own programs. Often in those cases, the students may continue to pay tuition to their home institution. In some cases, students are considered to be in a study abroad status; they are off campus studying and they will pay their university matriculation or other fees, and then pay the tuition and some of the other expenses to the Capstone program administrator.

Program Leadership

Q: How important is it to have a tenured faculty member in the Flagship director position? (September 19th)

A: It is advantageous for a Flagship program to have a project director with tenure. Generally speaking, a tenured faculty member is better able to work effectively with the institution to carry out curricular changes and initiatives needed to implement the Flagship program on campus. Flagship programs generally have a tenured faculty member in the language department or other related department as the official project director, with the standing to advocate for the program within the university. However, various Flagship programs have very talented non-tenured faculty serving primarily as academic directors. They manage the conception of the curriculum, teacher-training, and other activities needed to meet the Flagship goals, but they are not necessarily the main administrator. A few Flagship programs have deans in the role of project director; however, deans have many responsibilities and demands on their time outside of Flagship. Thus, an optimal model is to have a senior faculty member in the project director role with some time slotted towards the administration of the Flagship grant.

Q: Can a senior tenured faculty member of a non-language department be the project director?
(September 19th)

A: Leadership is a key element to a successful Flagship program. The program must have leadership able to motivate and train students and, to the extent necessary, to train faculty. It is possible for a non-language department faculty member to be the director of the Flagship program, depending on the reporting arrangement and assuming support of relevant departments on campus. The possible advantage of this structure would be for the director to encourage non-language major students to join the program.

For this structure to succeed, there also needs to be strong leadership and expertise in language pedagogy and curriculum through an academic director of the program, because the language program needs to meet the Flagship goals each step of the way. Generally, in order to get a core of students to an advanced proficiency level, there is a need for at least some additional interventions and modifications to accelerate coursework, as well as work outside of the classroom that an academic director would need to be involved in. Also, in order to represent the program most effectively at the Capstone participant selection meetings, it is most helpful to have someone with expertise in teaching Chinese as a second language.

Depending on where the Flagship program is housed, it is very important that there be a strong relationship with the language department and that the language department be fully on board, and ready to adapt courses and make curricular changes as needed to achieve the goals of the program.

A note on reporting lines: If the proposed director is not in the language department, there must be a clear reporting relationship involving language faculty and the academic director. It is very important that the proposal lay out what the reporting lines are and how they will work. The ability of the Flagship program to function administratively is a challenge at some institutions, thus it is one of the evaluation criteria listed in the RFP.

Funding

Q: Must the university commit funds to the same level as that provided by IIE through the grant?
(September 19th)

A: The Language Flagship cannot require cost share. However, it is very important that the institution is fully committed to this project in many different ways, one of them being financially. Commitment can take different forms; it does not have to be in the form of cash, or dollar for dollar matching. Flagship institutions demonstrate commitment through new faculty lines, course release time, a reduction in the indirect cost rate (IDC), dedicated space and equipment, contributions towards travel, and oftentimes direct budgetary support as well. It is to an applicant's advantage to have support from the university. The ultimate goal is for Flagship programs to be sustained and become part of the fabric of the university or department. In the long term, the program should have enrollments that the university will see value in and will continue to support.

Q: Will Flagship funding help lessen, to a certain degree, any potential staffing shortages at the selected universities? (September 19th)

A: Flagship funding cannot be used to cover a shortage of language faculty which an institution may be experiencing as the result of cutbacks or budget restrictions. As with any federal award, the support an institution receives from Flagship must be used towards activities directly related to the Flagship program. The budget may include a request for support for some staff time, for example, for a lecturer or for administrative support to manage the program as it grows. Applicants may not be completely familiar with what they will need to implement the Flagship program, so adjustments to the budget over time may be necessary and IIE will work with award recipients to ensure this can happen.

Q: Would we be able to combine Flagship funding with, for example, funding from the Chinese government or other outside sources? (September 19th)

A: The Language Flagship is aware that there may be other sources of support available to help supplement Flagship activities. It is to an applicant's benefit to indicate in the proposal if that type of support has already been secured, the nature of that support, and the plan for using it in combination with the budget request being made to The Language Flagship.

Q: Can Flagship student support be used for non-Flagship or supplemental programs? (October 15th)

A: No. The total amount of Flagship student support funding available across all programs is limited. Thus, the funding is restricted to use for students participating in Flagship-approved programs. This includes the approved domestic summer program at Indiana University and approved overseas summer programs, as well as the Capstone programs in Nanjing and Tianjin.

Q: Do Flagship programs receive funding after the initial 3 year grant period? (September 19th)

A: The goal of The Language Flagship program and its sponsor, NSEP, is to build relationships with institutions to develop Flagship programs. The aim is to continue to support Flagship programs over time, provided that programs are making progress, that there are enrollments in the domestic program, and that students are being retained and successfully entering the overseas program. The commitment made by the university is also very important. The long-term goal is for Flagship programs to become part of the institution so that the program can exist should funding no longer be available. Thus, it is expected that the institution assumes some of the associated costs of the Flagship program over time in order to ensure the program is sustained in the long term.

Q: How many institutions are you planning to fund through this competition? (September 19th)

A: The Language Flagship is intending to fund up to two new Chinese Flagship programs through this competition. The number of new Chinese programs funded will depend on the availability of funds as well as the quality of the proposals.

Q: What is the level of grant funding that is associated with receiving this award? (September 19th)

A: The Language Flagship anticipates awarding up to \$60,000 for the initial planning period, March 1, 2014 through May, 31 2014, and then up to \$300,000 for each of the additional two years of the award. The budget must include expenses that are reasonable, allocable, and allowable according to federal guidelines. The funding is dependent on the appropriation of federal funds. Annually, an attempt is made to determine what level of support will be offered to Flagship institutions. IIE works

closely with NSEP to try to determine what future funding might look like and plan for any anticipated budget cuts.

Over time, one of the goals of The Language Flagship is to move towards program sustainability, with smaller institutional grants and more opportunities for student support for Flagship approved summer and Capstone experiences. Sustainability would mean funding for basic administrative, instructional, and recruitment costs coming from the university. Thus, the Flagship program must be an integral part of a university's mission.

Proposal Logistics

Q: The Flagship website indicates that there are several types of Flagship programs, including a partner program, a pilot program, a Flagship-ROTC program, etc. Do we need to select a type of program when applying? (September 19th)

A: The current competition is for a Chinese Language Flagship Program. At one point, Flagship opened a competition to bring in new institutions under a partner program model, but is moving away from this. There have also been several pilot initiatives that are related to Flagship, such as the Pilot Flagship-ROTC initiative, which was competed only once and has not been re-competed. In summary, when you submit your application for this competition, you will be submitting your application for a Chinese Language Flagship Program.

Q: When does The Language Flagship release calls for proposals? If we can't apply right now, when would be the next opportunity? (September 19th)

A: The Language Flagship does not necessarily issue solicitations on an annual or regular basis. It is dependent on the availability of funding. A competition for a Flagship program now does not mean there will be a competition one year from now. Unfortunately, the frequency of competitions cannot be predicted because of how the Flagship program budget functions.

Q: Is preference given to applications from a state where no Flagship program exists? (October 15th)

A: The review process is merit-based and the review criteria for this competition are included in the RFP. The existence of a Flagship program already in a particular state is not one of the review criteria. One of the most important factors is not only the strength of the proposed program, but also the ability to create sustained enrollment. This does not simply mean the ability to bring students in at the lower levels and participate in Flagship courses at the beginning, intermediate, and even advanced levels. Rather, programs must be able to recruit students and ensure that they are making adequate progress toward qualifying for and participating in the overseas component.

Q: To whom should the letters of support be addressed? (October 15th)

A: Letters can be addressed to the review committee of The Language Flagship. Letters of support should be submitted with the application. If there is a reason that the letters will come separately, please send an e-mail to flagship@iie.org describing the situation so that IIE can work with you on the issue.

Q: Could we be provided with a sample of a successful proposal? (September 19th)

A: Unfortunately The Language Flagship does not provide sample proposals. Please read the solicitation carefully and address all elements. You are invited to use the resources referenced in the solicitation. If you have specific questions regarding the overseas components please contact the administrators of the Nanjing and Tianjin programs (their contact information can found in RFP). It is also recommended that applicants look at existing Flagship programs, particularly in Chinese, and contact them if you have questions or if you want to learn more about what they are doing, how they are doing it, their challenges, and their best practices.

Q: What type of support are you (IIE/NSEP) offering to potential applicants in preparation for the submission? (September 19th)

A: Two technical assistance webinars have been held to field questions about the solicitation. IIE is accepting questions via email at flagship@iie.org. Depending on the nature of the question, IIE may request to speak with the applicant by phone. It is important to note that IIE convenes an independent review panel that evaluates applications and makes recommendations based on the merit review criteria. Neither IIE nor NSEP sit on the review panel.

Q: What is the application deadline and expected notification date?

A: The submission deadline for applications is November 7, 2013. Flagship is anticipating a notification date in mid-February, with an anticipated award start date on March 1, 2014.