



THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

Creating Global Professionals

Undergraduate Arabic Flagship Program FAQ October 1, 2014 Webinar

Please Note: The following is an edited version of a transcript of the technical assistance webinar (October 1, 2014) held to address questions related to the Undergraduate Arabic Flagship Program Application Guidelines released by the Institute of International Education (IIE) in August, 2014. 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. Additionally, questions received after the webinar have been added to this document.

General Questions:

Q: Please clarify the 25-page proposal length cited in the RFP. May the timeline, list of key individuals, other appendices and letters of support be included in addition to the 25-page limit?

A: The 25 pages should be used to present a proposal narrative that explains the applicant's plan, including expected outcomes, for the proposed program. Supplemental materials such as the timeline (usually included in the form of a chart), list of key individuals, letters of support and any other materials should be added separately as appendices. Please keep in mind that reviewers will likely appreciate applications that are clear and concise.

Q: Are there past grant proposals that are available for review?

A: No, we do not make past grant proposals available. Therefore, it would be helpful for potential applicants to communicate with existing Flagship Programs when developing their proposals to learn about what they are doing and to consider whether similar types of program structures or activities might be appropriate for their proposed programs or for their institutions.

Program Description:

Q: Can you provide some information on the types of activities that would fulfill the cross-disciplinary requirements?

A: There are two aspects of cross-disciplinary components to consider: the inclusion of students from across the institution, as well as the inclusion of disciplinary-focused language teaching.

With respect to inclusion of a variety of students, the applicant should ensure that students from all majors and schools are welcome to the proposed Arabic Flagship Program and are given the chance to

participate. In order to ensure all students can participate, there will likely need to be flexibility in the scheduling and recruitment of various types of students, which means that applicants will need to engage with colleagues in other departments and schools to ensure buy-in and support of the proposed Flagship effort.

The second cross-disciplinary aspect is the instructional piece that helps students learn the lexicon required for them to engage in direct enrollment courses and internships during the overseas Capstone year. Cross-disciplinary partnerships may be modelled in different ways. One example would be to include Arabic add-on sections to existing courses in science, social science or business where students are able to work with faculty, instructors and/or tutors to identify appropriate material and work on readings and other activities that help them prepare to function in Arabic in the language of that field.

The different models used in existing Flagship Programs depend on the characteristics of the institutions and resources that are available. We have not indicated how cross-disciplinary content should be taught, rather we ask applicants to include specific information on disciplinary-focused language teaching based on their institutional resources, capabilities and infrastructure on which a Flagship Program can be built. We have seen over time that the way in which language is dealt with through content is very important in Flagship, in particular, in preparing the students for the immersion year overseas, in which they directly enroll in courses in their fields of study.

Q: Is there a particular design for the curriculum design section of the proposal?

A: There is no template that we expect applicants to use for outlining the curriculum. In the past, successful proposals have shown pathways that include courses currently available and proposed courses that would be enhanced and/or developed. Successful proposals have also shown proposed pathways that students in a variety of majors could undertake in the proposed Flagship Program.

Assessment Questions:

Q: Are there particular methods for assessment that must be used to measure proficiency throughout a student's involvement with the Program (e.g. ILR or ACTFL)?

A: All Flagships students are given Flagship reading and listening tests and OPIs before and after overseas summer and Capstone experiences. These tests are administered by the American Councils for International Education, the overseas program administrator for the Arabic Flagship. For domestic summer programs, Flagship Programs generally coordinate with the University of Texas Arabic Flagship for testing.

With regards to the academic year domestic program, Flagship Programs use different methods of assessment. While there is flexibility for domestic programs, assessment is a required component. Official Flagship capstone scores are on the ILR scale, but Flagship uses assessment instruments scored on the ACTFL and ILR scales for other testing events. Applicants will have to determine when to test students during the academic year, what tools they will use for testing and what tests are appropriate at

different levels or milestones. Information about plans for testing should be included in the proposal, including the tools that will be used and an anticipated testing schedule. Therefore, the assessment plan should fit the applicant's academic calendar, as well as when students are expected to go through major transition points based on coursework completed.

Funding:

Q: Beyond the first and second years, how many more years do you expect to financially support a Flagship Program?

A: The two-year timeframe mentioned in the RFP is not correlated to the intent for length of funding, but is a reflection of internal administrative matters. We cannot guarantee that funding will be available after the two-year period. However, historically we have been able to provide longer-term support and commitment to our Flagship Programs, contingent on performance and the availability of funding. Proposals should include evidence of institutional support so that there is evidence of the potential for longer-term program sustainability. We continue to support Flagship Programs that demonstrate success through results and it is our intent to continue to support strong programs for the longer-term provided that there is available funding.

Q: Can grant funds be used to hire additional faculty?

A: Yes, but with a caveat. In the past we have provided seed funding for faculty and instructor positions, but only to those institutions that have made a commitment to assume these costs and positions in the long-term. The Language Flagship hopes to build institutional strength and capacity, so grant funds can be used to help develop and expand on the faculty/instructors available to teach Arabic. However, our intent is not to keep paying for these positions year after year. Grant funds should be used to help increase institutional capacity, which means that we hope the investment we make "stays on campus" and that any faculty/instructor positions hired with grant funds stay if/when the grant ends. Therefore, it is important for applicants to demonstrate in the proposal that the institution is serious in making these types of commitments in the long-term.

Q: Do you anticipate that there will be another Arabic Flagship RFP two years from now?

A: We do currently have plans for another Arabic Flagship RFP.

Budget Questions:

Q: Can you please clarify the institutional budget form? Both budget forms included in the RFP have lines for trips. Does that mean you expect to see the cost for a given trip split between the funds from the grant and the institution in some way? Or can the institution provide funds for additional trips, if appropriate, while funds from the grant support required trips?

A: The budget forms included in the RFP are simply templates and include major budget cost categories. We ask applicants to include a breakdown of funds being requested and, if appropriate, being

contributed within these larger budget categories. There is no intent or requirement that applicants split costs between grant funds and/or institutional funds.

Q: Is there a particular level of Institutional support that you look for such as a dollar for dollar match, or some fraction of a dollar for every dollar the grant provides?

A: The Language Flagship does not require cost-share and there is no dollar for dollar match expected. However, it is essential for the applicant to demonstrate evidence of support from the institution to help build and sustain the program in the long-term. In past competitions, reviewers have sometimes viewed reduced indirect costs as a competitive advantage because more of the core grant funding can then be made available for the project itself.

Q: The section on Financial Aid is a little unclear. We understand student support funding should not be requested now, but do you want to see the plans for student support as part of this application?

We included information about financial student support since most applicants are aware that we have provided some funding for this through our grants. The funding for students is awarded through a separate process altogether and falls outside the scope of this RFP.

Applicants should outline a plan for potential alternative/additional sources of funding for students in the Flagship program and provide a description of the types of activities and connections you have or will make, on- or off-campus, to identify sources of support for students (e.g campus resources, federal and state scholarship programs, etc.). We recognize that there are real program costs to the student and ask you to address within the proposal how your institution could help.

Overseas Questions

Q: Are there study abroad programs that are certified by The Language Flagship?

A: Yes. As part of the Arabic Flagship Program, qualifying students participate in the year-long Capstone program developed by The Language Flagship currently in Meknes, Morocco at AALIM and Moulay Ismail University. Additionally, there is a Flagship- approved overseas summer program in Meknes. Flagship student support funds may only be provided to students for this site, either for the summer or Capstone programs. Although some Flagship students participate in other programs overseas, they must do so with their own or other financial resources.

We ask that applicants describe articulation of the overseas and proposed domestic programs in your proposals, so having a good understanding of the overseas program is very important. The Flagship Capstone program in Meknes, Morocco is administered by the American Councils for International Education, and we recommend that you contact them if you have questions about the overseas program structure.