



## THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

*Creating Global Professionals*

### 2018 Request for Proposal for Undergraduate Language Flagship Programs For Arabic, Korean, Portuguese and Russian

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#### RFP Questions and Answers from Webinars/E-mails

#### GENERAL QUESTIONS APPLICABLE TO ALL APPLICANTS:

**Q: The RFP details funding available for 22 months. How long-term to you expect the program to be?**

A: NSEP/IIE expects this to become a long-term partnership. The 22-month timeline will allow the new program to sync with the grant cycle of the other Flagship programs, which are in the middle of a 4-year grant cycle. Applicants should prepare their application submission and campus planning with the idea that this as a long-term continuing project and plan along those lines. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to apply for the subsequent 4-year cycle.

**Q: Is there an expectation for institutional commitment?**

A: While there is no formal cost-share or reduced indirect cost rate required by this solicitation, all applications must demonstrate significant institutional support and university leadership buy-in, which we have found to be critical for the success of a Flagship program. Institutional commitment comes in many forms and may include features such as dedicated space for students, measurable commitment of deans/provosts to support the program (i.e. course release for Flagship director, adding a tenure-line position, assuming the costs of additional lectureships, etc.) and procuring support from non-language departments to work with the program and have some flexibility for their students to participate. There should be a foundation to be built upon and excitement in the university for the Flagship undertaking. There should be a core team comprised of those that are committed to the program and believe in it.

**Q: Does The Language Flagship expect the Flagship model to continue after the Flagship program is over at the institutional level?**

A: The goal of Flagship is to change how languages are taught across the U.S. institutions of higher education. The Flagship investment in an institution is

predicated on the institutionalization of Flagship practices and goals. Thus if funding were to end, the goal and expectation is for much of the Flagship model to continue beyond the period of funding. The program aims to transform instructional practice including curriculum, pedagogy, instructional interventions, assessments and perhaps most importantly the expectation of success by the demonstration of high-level proficiency outcomes. The result of Flagship funding, and impact beyond that funding, would be that language programs continue to teach to different standards, with more effective approaches and integrate the use of proficiency assessment to demonstrate effectiveness.

**Q: Is it possible to consider the first half year as the start-up process? We likely need to hire more instructors, re-configure the curriculum, work with the registrar's office, etc. How should we think about these matters in terms of the proposal?**

A: As the standards of this program are high and are well defined, NSEP/IIE understand that this will take a certain amount of planning and time to ramp up the program. It would be beneficial to the proposal to describe what activities the applicant can start with right away. There are pieces that the applicant may be able to move forward with quickly, and provisions can be made to work in the other pieces later. Being explicit about the timeline for phasing-in these activities will give reviewers a better idea of the entire plan. NSEP/IIE's expectation is that applicants are laying the groundwork for long-term success. The first year the new program may be focused on building a cohort of first and second-year students, and the second year the focus may be building higher-level curriculum to specifically prepare for a Capstone experience. In the past, it has taken programs multiple years to get a cohort of students ready to go to Capstone.

**Q: The RFP talks about developing plans for students to reach ILR 3 within 5 years. Can you provide more details on this timeline?**

A: The applicant's job will be to have students reach ILR 2 domestically, then students will use the overseas Capstone to reach ILR 3. Many students take 5 years to complete the Flagship program, though some can complete it in 4 years. Domestic program student cohorts include a largest contingent of students who have no prior target language experience as well as those who have heritage/high school/StarTalk/NSLI-Y language experience. Experience has shown that those with some prior language experience are often better able to complete the Flagship program on a shorter timeline. Also to accommodate

STEM, other rigorous majors, ROTC and transfer students with tighter scheduling requirements, Domestic programs must demonstrate flexibility to enable these students to meet their degree/program requirements and also complete Flagship. Success for these students requires on-going advising and coordination on campus so that they can chart out their instructional programs to ensure everything fits and all degree/graduation requirements are met. For example, many students do intensive summer program early on to stay on track. A typical Flagship student will undertake 1 or 2 summer experiences (with one summer overseas) studying language before the Capstone year abroad.

**Q: How are heritage learners handled in existing flagship programs?**

A: Heritage learners are welcome in Flagship programs. All Flagship programs by their purpose and design must address the needs of students with no prior background in the language through to the completion of the Capstone year. For programs that have actively recruited Heritage students, Flagship has developed innovative curriculum designed to specifically address the gaps of these language learners. Ultimately all programs find ways to integrate heritage with non-heritage learners and get both learner groups successfully to and through Capstone.

**Q: How "late" into a college career can a student enter the Flagship program?**

A: To recruit a wide net of students, it is ideal to recruit from any level and provide multiple different pathways through the program. For example, students may be recruited as incoming freshman, as transfer students who completed language courses at a different institution, or students who start studying the language later in their undergraduate program who will then need to complete summer programs to develop their language and complete the Flagship Capstone prior to graduation. The key to developing multiple successful pathways is good student advising. However, since most Capstone programs require a successful intensive summer overseas program prior to undertaking the Capstone experience, program advising should alert students therefore that attempting to join Flagship during their late Junior or Senior year may not be feasible unless your institution allows graduation after a 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> year.

**Q: Do all Flagship students have to be a major in the language?**

A: No. Flagship students should be recruited from a wide variety of majors, though many participants will be language majors or double major with language and another discipline. The Flagship program is looking for students who have high-level language proficiency as well as training in another field to meet the future needs of government for language expertise. Accommodations and language course offerings need to take into account that the students are recruited from across the university and thus may need additional guidance to undertake their major and a Flagship program. Existing Flagship programs have found that by accumulating language credits their students become language majors as well as completing their other major programs. Flagship students are often double or triple majors.

**Q: What is a reasonable number of students participating in the overseas Capstone to consider the program a success?**

A: It will take a few years to build constant, sizable, cohorts of students as the new program is developed. Some years will be better than others, and it is typical to see fluctuation. However, upon development, programs should strive to have domestic cohorts of 80 students, this equates to around 20 students in each year of instruction, with the expectation that 20 would qualify for Capstone annually.

**Q: The RFP details Flagship students committing to government service (Boren Scholarships, ROTC). When is this expected?**

A: This all takes place during their undergraduate program and while they are enrolled as a Flagship student. The Boren scholarship, which has a federal service opportunity, may be used for Capstone year. In addition, The Language Flagship has been working with ROTC to recruit students for dedicated scholarships. Students may enter the program with an ROTC scholarship or receive it later.

**Q: Who is typically involved in administering the program? Is the program only administered by academic units like colleges, or can it be administered by departments such as the Office of International Programs as well?**

A: Flagship programs have different models, and in general, both examples described above are acceptable. However, we have found that Flagship programs embedded in the department that teaches the language and related culture courses have proven to be most successful. It is a challenge for an Office

of International Programs or other offices to directly administer and oversee the Flagship program through their dean/provost and then have the bulk of the academic and instructional program fall under the umbrella of another dean. Proposals should outline a clear institutional reporting structure and if the Flagship program proposal is not in the instructional department explain clearly why the program is not going through the line of department that overseeing language teaching. In addition, it is encouraged that the Flagship program is not separate from the existing on-campus language program.

**Q: Are co-Principle Investigators (co-PIs) allowed on this award?**

A: Yes, co-PIs are allowable.

**Q: Is the Principle Investigator (PI) expected to be a faculty member of the language?**

A: There are multiple models currently in use. It is possible for the PI to be a senior administrator who may not be a specialist in the language. If this is the case, there must be a co-PI or Flagship director who is a specialist in the language. It is generally encouraged that there be a tenured faculty member directing the program who can advocate successfully for the program. Ideally, 2-3 tenured faculty in the department would be involved with the program.

**Q: Does having a non-tenure line co-director in the proposal present an issue if a tenured faculty member is also proposed as primary director?**

A: This is allowable. A tenured faculty member should be a primary project director as they are likely in a strong position to advocate for the needs of the program.

**Q: What is the course-release expectation for the Flagship Director?**

A: Ideally the senior leadership for this program will be given the time and space to effectively implement the program. Programs achieve this in different ways. It is not uncommon for the Flagship Director to have a course release, especially as the program launches. Need for this is affected by available support staff for the program; will there be an associate director, a lower-level coordinator, or both? This team effort will determine if a course release is needed.

**Q: Is it essential for the project director's research specialization to be in second language acquisition and/or pedagogy?**

A: No, though the proposal should include a plan for incorporating instructional best practices for second language acquisition. Demonstrating familiarity across the teaching team with outcomes-based instruction, proficiency goals and assessment, learner-centered classrooms, and effective language interventions will be beneficial for addressing how a proposal and teaching team will reach Flagship goals.

**Q: There is an upper-limit for administrative staff. Are teaching assistants and tutors considered to be part of administrative staff?**

A: This depends on the duties of the position in question. The budget description for each position will be reviewed carefully to determine if duties are administrative or academic in nature.

**Q: Is it considered better to use an existing, experienced coordinator who works in a department, and would be added at 50%? Or is it more positive to have a new person who would work 100%? Can Flagship funds be used for the coordinator position?**

A: This is dependent on the administrative structure of the program and different models are used across Flagship programs. A more senior, existing coordinator will already be trained and may have more access. However, only 50% of a position is unlikely to be enough due to the amount of administrative work required for this program.

Among other duties, the coordinator is the main point of contact for students and faculty, coordinates cultural events and recruits new students. It is not uncommon for universities to have at least one full position, or two 50% positions. Note that it is important for applicants to be mindful of the 200% administrative cap for this award.

**Q: Would the Flagship support the hiring of additional full-time language instructors?**

A: In the short-term, yes. In the long-term, the expectation is to have the Flagship host institutions assume the cost. Typically, institutions start with a high percentage of costs on the Flagship grant, and then scale down that Flagship support each year for these positions. For example, the first year would be 75% support, the next year 50% support, and so on. As programs mature, funding should shift to the additional language interventions rather than core instruction.

**Q: I am the only instructor in a small language program. How realistic is it to apply?**

A: A successful Flagship program requires dedicated instructional and administrative staff. Therefore, applications must demonstrate enough instructional capacity to teach multiple sections of introductory language courses as well as the breadth of advanced content courses required for Flagship. Programs without this capacity are encouraged to work with their institutions to develop this capacity toward the goal of submitting a Flagship application once this capacity has been realized. In the meantime, it is recommended that program have their students engage with the Boren Awards, ROTC Project Global Officer, and keep up to date with the best practices being developed within Flagship.

**Q: How many faculty members are supposed to teach in the Flagship Program?**

A: There is no set number; instead it depends on the structure of the program. The Flagship instructional team members can hold a variety of positions, such as tenured professors, professors of practice, language instructors, Foreign Language Teaching Assistants, etc. The program should consider the core instructional curriculum and also the domain and content courses when determining the number on instructors needed to successfully provide a Flagship language program.

**Q: The RFP states that senior faculty and staff should be involved in core language instruction. Does this refer to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year level instruction specifically, or could it be primarily at more advanced course levels?**

A: The Flagship director and key faculty should be involved in the shaping all aspects of the instructional program to ensure that the curriculum of lower levels provides meaningful proficiency targets to ensure these courses articulate well into the advanced instruction and content courses. Flagships are most successful

when they design programs using backward design to develop clear instructional benchmarks for each course intervention and can thus better ensure that students achieve the domestic ILR 2 requirements through the domestic program. All Flagship language courses should be treated as components of an integrated and coordinated core instructional language program.

**Q: How important are the details about how peer tutors and language partners are chosen and trained in the proposal?**

A: It should be clear how tutors and language partners are working with students. What is the training plan, supervision, and contact with faculty? How will the program work with them?

**Q: Can you go into detail regarding the proficiency assessment aspect of this program?**

A: Student proficiency assessment should be conducted at various points throughout the Flagship program. The highest stakes testing is the testing done to qualify students for Summer Overseas and the Capstone year abroad, and at the end of the Capstone year. However, the expectation exists that at each level of a domestic program there will be instructional outcomes/proficiency targets, and successful applicants will describe effectively how they will demonstrate their students' attainment of these targets. Therefore, it is recommended that applicants provide a domestic program assessment plan that includes assessments at major course completions, placement testing for incoming students with prior language study, etc. On-campus proficiency testing is also useful tool for reflecting on curricular effectiveness as well as gauging student progress. Individual programs may decide to have students do formal testing or informal diagnostic testing. Programs are welcome to use their own assessments for this purpose as well. Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit clear assessment plans including proposed assessment, and schedules for their administration.

Students who receive Flagship student support to participate in a domestic or overseas intensive summer program are required to take a pre- and post-program OPI, and possibly the Flagship battery or as available the RPT, LPT, WPT tests through LTI. For the Flagship Capstone Overseas Program, all students undergo the same battery of assessments managed directly by IIE/NSEP in cooperation

with American Councils. Capstone applicants take a double-rated LTI/OPI tests, in addition to Flagship tests in Reading, Listening and for Arabic/Russian Writing. The qualifying score for all Capstone participation is ILR 2 in Speaking, an ILR 2 in Reading or Listening, and no lower than a 1+ in reading, listening, and writing (if applicable). This same battery of tests is used for Flagship Certification after the Capstone year.

**Q. Are there existing assessments that can be used as opposed to developing new tests and certifying of more testers?**

A. Yes, there are existing assessments. It is recommended that applicant programs select from the existing batteries of assessments available in their language of instruction, and those most appropriate for the level of instruction being assessed. There are enough instruments to work with for now. Flagship is interested in having instructors who understand the OPI and can teach for proficiency in a learner-centered classroom. However, programs do not necessarily need an ACTFL-certified tester on campus. Programs can decide what they need for their own diagnostic assessment.

**Q: The RFP notes that funds cannot be used for cost of OPI certification, however, professional development funding is allowed. Please explain the difference.**

A: Award funds may be used to do training and workshops that include OPI clarification, guidance or application for instructors, however, using award funds for OPI certification is prohibited.

**Q: Can my summer program be added to the list of summer programs that are approved for Flagship student support use?**

A: This is done in consultation with the Council of Directors for any given Flagship language. At minimum, summer programs must be at least 8-weeks in length and teach an equivalent of one year of instruction and ensure that students will effectively articulate to the next instructional year after the summer experience. Beyond this, the Flagship directors for the appropriate language decide if the proposed summer program will be added to the existing list of approved programs.

**Q: What is expected from the domestic Flagship program in terms of domestic academic and cultural preparation for the Overseas Flagship Center?**

A: While all Flagship programs follow set language proficiency standards for Capstone qualification, each language council has identified language specific academic, cultural and content areas that all pre-Capstone students should acquire prior to the overseas Capstone year. These requirements are an ongoing discussion between domestic directors and the overseas centers to ensure that student preparation and curriculum articulation expectations are met. Most language councils require participation in at least one summer program overseas to ensure the student will succeed in the overseas environment. The successful applicants will meet with their appropriate Flagship language council following award to discuss these requirements and how best to integrate these into their domestic program.

**Q: Will it negatively affect an application if the university currently only offers the language as a minor?**

A. Offering the language as a major is not a requirement for the Flagship program. Students who complete Flagship language courses generally accumulate enough credits for a major, and thus Flagship programs have either developed or enhanced a major after receiving Flagship funding. More important than having the major is demonstrating the capacity to produce students that demonstrate the required proficiency and possess the needed cultural skills and content knowledge to meet the goals of the Flagship program.

**Q: Do the courses offered through The Language Flagship need to be credit-bearing?**

A: While this is not a requirement for all Flagship courses, Flagship programs have found it beneficial for all core instructional program courses to be credit-bearing for student retention purposes. However, in the case of some required non-course program activities and for domain training/preparation these activities have been offered without credit. That said, the best practice is that Flagship courses are credit-bearing.

**Q: What kind of student support does The Language Flagship provide?**

A: For Capstone, students are encouraged to apply for Boren Scholarship, which is up to \$20,000, which comes with a federal government service opportunity for the award. In addition, ROTC Flagship scholarships exist for students involved with Army and Air Force ROTC. If students are on this scholarship, the branches will allow a 5<sup>th</sup> year and NSEP will pick up costs of the Capstone year overseas. Contracted Navy ROTC students are also eligible to receive funding from The Language Flagship for the full cost of attendance of their summer and Capstone programs. Flagship students are also very competitive for other national awards such as Gilman and the Critical Language Scholarship. The Flagship does also provide limited general Flagship student support to help students off-set some of the costs associated with the summer and Capstone experiences. This funding is provided in a separate award and is required to be distributed through the university. Student support funding is determined annually by IIE/NSEP and will be determined individually after this competition with the selected awardees.

**Q: Does a Flagship institution have to offer an intensive summer program on campus?**

A: No, if students need to participate in an intensive domestic summer program, it may be possible to take advantage of existing summer programs at other Flagship campuses or other summer program providers.

**Q: My institution is part of a consortium with other area universities. Can we recruit Flagship students from those universities and count them in our projected student participation?**

A: Yes, Flagship has funded consortium arrangements through the Flagship program. Currently, Flagship funds a consortia effort between Bryn Mawr College, Haverford College and Swarthmore College for Russian, in the past The Language Flagship funded a Swahili program at Howard University where students from across the "Washington Area Consortium Students" could take Flagship classes through the Howard Flagship program. The challenge for an institution is to decide and present how a proposed consortium will work, Flagship programs have two options:

1. All potential Flagship students take all their Flagship classes at the institution with the Flagship program; or

2. Lower level courses are taken at a student's home institution and instructors/faculty at each institution work cooperatively to ensure that the students all have the same low-level learning experience so they are ready to articulate to the core Flagship program, at some agreed upon point in instruction (typically 300 level and above). Courses are taught at the core Flagship institution to prepare students for the Overseas Capstone Program.

The decision relies on how closely the applicant Flagship institution team believes they can work with their peer instructors and students at the other institutions.

**Q: What does the typical review panel look like?**

A: IIE manages the in-person and/or virtual, face-to-face panel. The review panel is composed of three academic reviewers with different backgrounds. There will be a mix of current Flagship directors, and academics from outside of Flagship who understand the program very well. Panelists will discuss and rate each application based on the selection criteria outlined in the solicitation. Because of this, applicants should ensure that they are addressing all selection criteria thoroughly.

**Q: Are previous successful proposals in the public domain or available for review?**

A: No.

**Q: Is there a maximum percentage of indirect cost that an institution may claim in a Flagship award proposal?**

A: There is no set minimum or maximum. The indirect costs should be set by the proposing institution's policy and should be no higher than the negotiated indirect cost rate for the host institution.

**Q: The budget template has three tabs. Are cost-sharing details supposed to be included in the tab labeled "institutional budget"?**

A: Yes, that is correct.

**Q: There is no mention of a table of contents in the RFP. If a table of contents is included, will that count against the 25-page limit for the program narrative? Is it preferred that a table of contents is not included?**

A: Adding a table of contents would not count against the 25-page limit of the program narrative. Applicants are welcome into include a table of contents.

**Q: Do the curricula vitae and any tables need to follow the application format, including Times New Roman, 1" margin, and double-spacing?**

A: Yes, the formatting detailed on page 24 should be applied throughout the application.

**Q: Can the Flagship award be used to hire of additional part-time language teaching assistants (graduate students) apart from the tutors?**

A: Yes, this would be an allowable expense.

## ARABIC

**Q: Could you address the matter of teaching dialect in the Arabic curriculum?**

A: All Arabic Flagship students are given instruction in Modern Standard Arabic and the Egyptian and Moroccan dialects during the Capstone year. Students participating in the domestic program benefit from integrated instruction that provides instruction in Modern Standard Arabic, and includes exposure to dialects prior to this experience. This is typically accomplished through a combination of classroom instruction, supported by language partners or tables, and also through culture clubs. Applicants are encouraged to capitalize on their available language faculty resources to foster the teaching of dialects. Exposure to and instruction in an array of dialects, Egyptian, Moroccan, Levantine, Gulf, etc. helps in the development of Flagship Global Professionals. However, all Flagship students should be prepared sufficiently and to demonstrate colloquial proficiency in Egyptian and Moroccan to be successful in the Capstone program.

**Q: Is the Flagship summer program in Meknes required?**

A: No, the summer in Meknes Flagship program is not required. However, this is the overseas summer program for which students can obtain Flagship funding. Students may choose to attend other overseas summer immersion programs at other programs or in other countries as befits their interests. Many Flagship students successfully compete for Critical Language Scholarship, Foreign Language and Area Studies Scholarships or Gilman Scholarships, that support language study outside of Meknes. The typical trajectory for an Arabic Flagship student is to spend one summer at a domestic summer institute, and then spend the next summer in the Meknes or another overseas immersive summer program.

## KOREAN

**Q: Approximately how many students currently participate in the Korean Overseas Flagship each year? Does the Korean Overseas Flagship accept "at large" capstone students?**

A: The Korean Overseas Flagship does not accept "at large" students. All Capstone participants currently are from the University of Hawaii, and upon completion of this competition will begin to accept students from the new Korean Flagship Program. Generally, 10-15 Flagship students participate in Capstone annually, though the Flagship goal for 2020 is to have 20 participants from each Flagship institution.

**Q: My program already has an exchange with Korea University. Can this exchange be used for the Capstone year?**

A: This is a valid request that can be included in the proposal with execution pending additional information regarding the existing arrangement in the proposal. Currently, this is how the University of Hawaii at Manoa arranges their student mobility with Korea University. Details regarding the existing relationship will need to be presented to demonstrate whether this could be used to integrate students into the existing Capstone operations.

## PORTUGUESE

**Q: Is Brazilian Portuguese and Culture prioritized over the other varieties of Portuguese, such as those of Portugal and Mozambique?**

A: Yes, this is a Brazilian Portuguese program with a focus on the Brazilian variant of Portuguese language and culture. A special initiative through the Boren Awards, the African Languages Flagship Initiative, exists for students interested in studying Portuguese in Mozambique.

**Q: The University of Georgia is handling the administrative side of the Capstone year. What does that exactly mean? Is Capstone currently done at only one site through administration via University of Georgia? And if so, how does that affect the collaboration between the overseas site and the new domestic site?**

A: University of Georgia receives additional funding support for the overseas Capstone grant to work with the Federal University of São João del-Rei Capstone site. The overseas site is looking forward to welcoming students from a second university and the University of Georgia is prepared to coordinate the administrative requirements for the successful applicant to have their students participate in the program. After the competition selection, IIE/NSEP will work with the new program and the University of Georgia to coordinate student selection for the Capstone year. This will be done with faculty from both Flagship programs, as well as the IIE/NSEP staff and is done to ensure that all students are properly prepared for the Capstone year and meet the uniform Flagship Capstone proficiency targets.

One important aspect of the Flagship program is that best practices and curriculum is openly shared across programs. The existing and new Portuguese program will collaborate to agree on basic elements students must demonstrate before they go on Capstone. The new program will work with the program in Brazil so that they are ready to accept their students. The Flagship program encourages some faculty exchange from the overseas site to see first-hand what is happening on domestic side. Articulation of the domestic and overseas programs is key to success. The successful proposal will be a program that is open to cooperating and interested in finding ways to further the field together.

## RUSSIAN

**Q: The RFP discusses instruction in Kazakh language. Does the domestic program need to teach this language?**

A: Yes, all Domestic Russian Flagship programs provide Kazakh preparation for their students. However, in most cases rather than requiring a specific Kazakh language course, most programs use Flagship-developed online Kazakh materials designed to prepare students for their Capstone experience in Kazakhstan. This online instruction is more a language familiarization opportunity rather than a directed course. As a result, teaching Kazakh as a specific course offering in the domestic program is not required.

**Q: Can a Flagship program send its students on an existing summer program in Russia?**

A: Yes, however, Flagship student support funds cannot be used by students for any program in Russia. Students who either pay for themselves or obtain alternate funding can certainly study in Russia.

**Q: What are the start and end dates of the Russian Capstone in Almaty? Can Russian Flagship students begin Capstone in the Spring semester, or Fall only?**

A: The Russian Capstone program typically runs from late August to mid-May. Students may only begin the Russian Capstone during the Fall semester.