



THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP

Creating Global Professionals

2021-2025 Requests for Proposals for Overseas Flagship Capstone Programs in Arabic, Chinese, and Russian

RFP Questions and Answers

ELIGIBILITY

Q: Are the Overseas Capstone awards available only for institutions that have a current domestic Flagship program?

The RFP is open to all U.S. higher education institutions. They do not need to currently have a domestic Flagship program.

Q: Is it necessary for an overseas university to apply together with a domestic university?

Eligible applicants for this RFP are U.S. higher education institutions, who can then partner with an overseas institution, program provider, language institute, etc. The primary recipient of this award will be a U.S. higher education institution.

Q: Can an institution apply for more than one language?

Yes, one institution can submit applications for more than one language. Please note that the institution would have to respond to the RFPs in separate proposals, by language.

Q: Does the applying institution need to have a major in the target language?

There is no requirement for a major to be offered by the applying institution. However, it is expected that the institution is able to provide academic leadership for the program that allows for effective implementation of all components of the program. Please review the curricular aspects of the RFP for more details.

Q: Is there any requirement for the institution to have specific number of faculty members. Should they be professors or instructors?

There are no requirements of this nature. However, the proposing institution will be the lead for the program, so the Project Director at the proposing institution should preferably be a tenured faculty member or administrator who can appropriately manage the responsibilities of a complex overseas federal grant program. The RFPs outline related requirements.

PROGRAM DETAILS AND STRUCTURE

Q: Are there specific requirements for the in-country partner? For example, does the local partner have to be a public school? Can the local partner be a private school of language, for example?

At least one of the partners should be a local university (public or private) that can provide a variety direct enrollment classes in the target language as requested by the RFP. Proposals can include multiple partners. The university partner does not have to be the provider of the internship program or language instruction. For example, a language institute could work to provide language instruction in partnership with a local university that provides direct enrollment options.

Q: Who are the students participating in the program?

The Capstone program is attended by Flagship students who have completed the domestic portion of the program at their home institution. There are 31 domestic Flagship programs across the U.S. The Capstone program will typically be in the 4th or 5th year after the domestic portion is completed and the student obtains the target assessment scores.

Q: Can you clarify what year of undergraduate study the students will be in during the Overseas Capstone; i.e. are they juniors or seniors?

Students are most likely seniors or super seniors, though there some juniors an occasionally a sophomore. They have to meet the eligibility for Capstone on the ILR scale to be eligible for participation.

Q: How many student intakes are there each year?

For Russian and Arabic there is one intake per year. For Chinese there can be one or two intakes depending on the model that is proposed.

Q: Are the Capstone experiences held in the summer, or during fall/spring? Do they need to have a minimum duration, or would an "embedded short-term study abroad" experience of 1-2 weeks qualify?

Minimum durations are in the individual RFPs. In general, they are an academic year up to 12 months in length.

Q: What is the definition of "domain training"?

Domain training is language training in the students' academic areas and professional interests. If a biology student is interested in pursuing biology and completing an internship at a lab overseas, then the domain training is the knowledge of language in the specific target field in conjunction with the lab internship.

Q: The RFP calls for scalability upwards. How much does the number of students going on the Overseas Capstone fluctuate? Would there always be a minimum number of students? Or could there ever be fewer students if there is less interest from the students and fewer applications for some reason?

Estimated enrollment numbers are based on the minimum of what it is expected that domestic programs send, and applicants should expect this number. However, it is possible that there are fewer students than anticipated and there will be fluctuation year to year.

The importance of qualifying students for Capstone is stressed to the domestic programs. Selection standards are not lowered to keep minimum enrollment numbers.

Q. The RFP states that tuition should not be greater than \$8,000. Is this tuition for the direct enroll course only? Or, is this for the total credit hours?

It is expected that the majority of educational costs will be covered through the operational grant. However, when tuition is required for the applicant's in-country partner, the RFP states that tuition charged to students typically should not exceed \$8,000 unless these costs cover all instruction and instruction is not included in the operational budget.

PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT AND SUBMISSION

Q: What is the U.S. institution's role if it does not have to have an established Flagship program? Will faculty be sent to teach abroad or does the institution

work with an overseas institution that already has a study abroad program to develop a Capstone program? Is the role more of coordination between domestic Flagship programs and overseas institution?

The proposed configuration is up to the applicant as long as it responds to what is requested in the RFP. There should be coordination from the U.S. institution with partners overseas that have academic expertise in the target language.

Q: Can a Russian program in Kyrgyzstan be proposed?

No. The Russian RFP requests proposed programs in Kazakhstan.

Q. Should applicants collaborate with domestic Flagships in the proposal process, for example for curricular review?

This is permitted and encouraged.

Q: How closely should the curriculum be aligned with the domestic Flagship programs' curricula (during the proposal process)?

They should be quite aligned. The Language Flagship requires excellent articulation between domestic and overseas programs. Articulation is a process, so proposals should describe that process and what collaboration will happen with domestic programs to ensure seamless articulation.

Q: Must the resident director be a U.S. citizen, or is U.S. permanent residency or a holding a green card sufficient?

The resident director must be a U.S. citizen.

Q: The RFP states that the program's resident director "must be a U.S. citizen on a work or business visa or other visa status that allows for the conduct of the required duties." By what criteria will the committee determine whether the resident director's visa status will enable them to carry out their required duties?

The resident director's visa status must be appropriate for U.S. citizens leading a study abroad program. Applicants should describe the visa arrangements for the resident director within their application.

Q: How developed does the curriculum need to be at the time of submission?

At minimum, the proposed curriculum should be developed and comprehensive enough to respond effectively to the RFP. The reviewers should

have a solid understanding of curricular design and have confidence that the goals of the program will be met. They will determine if there is enough planning and substance to make the program run.

Appendix C does not have a page limit, so applicants may provide very detailed curricular plans. Please note that program assessment and curricular revisions are encouraged, so it is expected that improvement of curriculum will be an ongoing process with the selected applicant.

Q: Is there a way to get acquainted with a sample of a successful application?

We do not provide past successful applications.

Q: Are there any specific guidelines or templates for the application?

All requirements regarding the format of submissions are included in the Application Procedures section of the RFP.

Q: Does the institution need to make a cost-share commitment, an unreimbursed commitment of faculty or administrative time, or any other kind of commitment of resources such as a commitment to sustain these capstone experiences after the conclusion of the grant?

There is no required cost-share for this award. Institutional commitment of any kind would likely be seen positively in the review of a proposal, but there is no expectation that the Capstone program will continue beyond the end of the award. Only Flagship students attend the Capstone program, so should the award end no Flagship students would be in attendance.

Q: Does the institution need to make a commitment to send a specific number of students?

If the applying institution does not have a domestic Flagship program in the language of the proposed Capstone program, no. Only Flagship students can attend the Capstone program. Each domestic Flagship program is expected to send 10 – 20 students on Capstone per year.

Q: Can the overseas Capstone be an existing study abroad opportunity, or must it be something new just for the Flagship program?

Existing programs can be leveraged and adapted to create a Capstone program, but it is expected that Flagship Capstone be distinct in practice. For

example, Flagship students would only be in language classes with other Flagship students. However, the classes could be created using a language center that runs other programs.

Q: Can you please describe in more detail what will be expected of the awarded organization during the first planning and development phase?

The planning and development phase is intended to put all of the proposed program elements in place in anticipation of receiving the first cohort of students. Start-up activities might include putting agreements in place, hiring, training, refining curriculum, securing housing, and other program administration preparation. This phase will include attending the February Capstone selection meeting in Washington, DC and May Flagship Annual Meeting (location TBD).

Q: [Updated answer on 8/31/2020] The evaluation criteria include the following question: "Does the applicant provide evidence of support from the proposed overseas partner institution(s)?" Is there a specific document that applicants should include in their applications to demonstrate this support? Is it expected that partnership agreements should be demonstrated in the proposal through letters of commitment or teaming agreements?

Please review the Proposal Content section of the RFP for required information. Letters of commitment are requested in Appendix G. Teaming agreements are not requested. Strength of the partnership can also be demonstrated throughout the rest of the proposal, such as within the proposal narrative, the requested appendices, and the budget documents.

Please note that additional provided materials and appendices outside the required sections will not be reviewed as part of a submitted proposal. These sections will be removed from the proposal before the selection panel reviews the proposal.

Q: Does the subrecipient budget need to be detailed or can large cost categories be lumped together?

The subrecipient budget must be a detailed line-item budget. This is so reviewers can consider the budget's cost-effectiveness and reasonability.

Q. The current overseas Capstone program is different than what is described in the RFP. Is it acceptable to propose the same program as what is currently in place?

Proposals must respond to the RFPs. Any deviations in the RFPs from the current programs are intentional.

Q. The RFP states the successful applicant will coordinate post-Capstone OPIs and the online reading and listening tests. Should the budget include the costs of those tests?

Direct costs of the official pre- and post- Capstone tests should not be included in the proposed budget. That will be handled separately. Additional, non-required assessments that are built into the program should be included in the proposed budget.

Q. Are applicants required to submit one original plus ten copies of proposals by U.S. Postal Service or by delivery service?

The RFP was amended on August 27, 2020 to request digital submission of proposals only. Hard copies are no longer required.

Q. Is it correct to assume that Appendix A differs from Appendix B in that it will describe a timeline and the faculty responsible for project period one, the initial five-month preparation and planning phase?

Yes, this is correct.

Q. May the proposal include appendices beyond what is requested?

Please refer to Section 5: Application Procedures. This section details what documents are requested and will be reviewed. It includes the directive that materials over and above what is requested should not be included and will not be reviewed. While unrequested appendices will not be reviewed, if the applicant would like to share relevant information that is not requested elsewhere in the proposal, applicants may include this information within the proposal narrative following the stated page limit.