# THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP
# COLLABORATIVE TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION INITIATIVE

**REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL AND
APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

**DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF PROPOSAL:**

**Tuesday, June 20, 2017**

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**SECTION 1: OVERVIEW**

The Institute of International Education (IIE) is pleased to provide you with application materials for the Language Flagship Collaborative Technology Innovation Initiative. The Language Flagship is a major initiative of the National Security Education Program (NSEP), which is part of the Defense Language and National Security Education Office (DLNSEO). IIE considers it a distinct pleasure to serve as the administrative agent for this important effort.

NSEP was created by Congress in 1991 to increase the ability of Americans to communicate and compete globally by knowing languages and cultures of other countries. NSEP recognizes that the scope of national security has expanded to include not only the traditional concerns of protecting and promoting American well-being, but also the new challenges of a global society, including sustainable development, environmental degradation, global disease and hunger, population growth and migration, and economic competitiveness.

The Language Flagship has already achieved national success in launching new and innovative programs of advanced instruction in Arabic, Chinese, Hindi Urdu, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, and Turkish. The purpose of this solicitation is to offer a funding opportunity for Domestic Flagship Programs to build collaborative projects across multiple Flagship institutions that conceive, design, adapt, improve, deliver and test effective means to blend technology into existing Language Flagship Programs to improve language teaching and learning. The emphasis of this initiative is on partnerships among institutions and programs as they design, develop, implement, evaluate, and disseminate findings and projects.

THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP AND TECHNOLOGY

The Language Flagship has spent over a decade developing high-quality classroom-based language learning coupled with activities that enhance the curricula (tutoring, workshops, cultural events, etc.) to address the unique challenges of supporting advanced language proficiency for students of all majors during their undergraduate studies. The Language Flagship model goes far beyond the classroom and impacts the entire career of an undergraduate Flagship student. Therefore, rather than a "stand-alone" technological approach to improve language learning, The Language Flagship seeks to support a blended approach.

Any proposed design and development of technology integration must build on The Language Flagship's well-established best practices for innovative face-to-face, discussion, and presentation opportunities that are integral to the Flagship curriculum. Effective integration of technology, therefore, will require a comprehensive analysis of which skills are best acquired in face-to-face environments and which are best enhanced through the effective use of technology outside of the brick and mortar setting. In short, how can the Flagship community improve the time spent in the learning experience through a well-designed blended learning process? Successful proposals will clearly demonstrate how each project will ensure that learning outcomes achieved through enhanced technology integration are as effective as or better than outcomes achieved through current Flagship practices.

THE LANGUAGE FLAGSHIP TECHNOLOGY CENTER

In 2014, NSEP established a new Language Flagship Technology Innovation Center (Tech

Center) at the University of Hawaii, Manoa to enhance language learning at Flagship institutions through the effective use of technology. The purpose of the Flagship Tech Center is to conceive, design, adapt or improve, deliver, and test effective means to blend technology into existing Language Flagship Programs. For this reason, the Tech Center will play an important role in supporting and disseminating Flagship technology projects. During the 2015-16 academic year, the Tech Center held three seminars using design-thinking processes to help support a Flagship-wide strategy to leverage existing initiatives and resources from the public and private sectors. A summary of these efforts are available at the Flagship Tech Center website: http://lftic.lll.hawaii.edu/.

Since the beginning of The Language Flagship, all Flagship Programs have integrated some kind of technology into their overall programs. Based on surveys undertaken by the Tech Center, it was found that many programs currently use online course management systems (such as Canvas) and the internet for access to and delivery of television, film, talk shows, documentaries and other forms of media, as well as for access to existing courseware available through the web. In addition to technology used at the institutional level, The Language Flagship integrates technologies across programs in administering language proficiency assessments, as well as in registering and certifying student success in reaching Flagship goals. While all of these uses of technology are beneficial, the Flagship Collaborative Technology Innovation Initiative will develop the means to capture best practices and assess which technologies are most effective for learning different skills.

## PROJECT GOALS

The goal of the Flagship Collaborative Technology Innovation Initiative is to identify and develop technology-based practices for effective instruction and learning within a select group of Flagship institutions.

Technology Innovation Initiatives are intended to primarily serve domestic Flagship Programs, but may also explore ways to link and strengthen domestic and overseas Flagship instruction more broadly. Competitive projects will clearly define a plan that leverages participation and implementation of the project across Flagship institutions involved in teaching the same language areas, and must include one of the following languages: Chinese, Arabic, or Russian. As The Language Flagship sponsors grants to multiple institutions for Chinese (12), Arabic (5) and Russian (4), there is strong support and interest among the community in developing a shared and collaborative approach toward language learning that draws upon the strengths of each of the programs and their staff.

Successful proposals will describe how the project will help students achieve specific improvements in language skills and proficiency by blending technology with classroom instruction, tutoring, and other assigned language learning. They will specifically address how the proposed initiative will enhance both teaching and learning, how teachers will be trained to integrate technology into courses, how technology will be used in teacher professional development, and how skill improvement will be measured and tracked. A successful applicant will take into account how the role of instructors and the use of classroom time may change in the technology integration process. Successful proposals will offer a strategy for engaging select Flagship institutions for initial piloting of concepts with the goal of integrating technology and practices more broadly in later project stages.

In addition, successful proposals will demonstrate how they will draw upon best practices in blended learning and creative uses of language learning technologies such as augmented reality games, intelligent tutoring, online role playing, group and individual video teleconferences (VTCs), gaming, online student portfolios, and targeted conversation practice through multiple platforms. Successful applicants will also describe how their project will bring experts in the areas of learning technologies and language pedagogy together to improve the quality of existing language curricula leading to advanced proficiency in the Flagship languages. Applicants must clearly describe the role of each of the partners in project development.

Successful proposals will also clearly demonstrate how the integration of technology supports both teachers and students by providing ongoing feedback on a student's strengths, weaknesses and overall progress. As crucial stakeholders, the significant involvement of students in the development, piloting and evaluation of the project is strongly recommended. Finally, any proposed use or development of adaptive technologies should be user-friendly, be able to create a continuously updated learner profile, include recommender engines that specifically tailor instruction to a student's current needs and provide both formative and summative assessments.

## ELIGIBILITY

Institutions that currently host a Domestic Language Flagship Program, and that have not received an NSEP Technology-related grant in the past three years are eligible to respond to this solicitation.

## TIMELINE

IIE anticipates making an award under this solicitation with the effective start date of September 1, 2017. Proposals will address important outcomes and timetables for the period encompassing September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018. Proposals should also outline benchmarks and plans through August 31, 2018.

## FUNDING

Institutional funding for these awards will be administered by IIE. IIE anticipates that funding up to $150,000 will be available for the period September 1, 2017 to August 31, 2018. Support for up to two additional years may be possible depending on the availability of funding and project performance.

Funding will be provided for the collaborative development of a state-of-the-art approach that effectively integrates technology into selected Flagship curricula using best practices in blended learning and assessing the impact of the approach. Funding may be used for development or adaptation of pedagogically sound materials for delivery through educational technology. Funding may be requested to support personnel and consultants who are subject matter experts, to travel to participating Flagship institutions and meetings of Flagship Program directors, to examine existing models using online technology and to convene workshops and planning meetings that include leaders in the fields of educational technology and foreign language pedagogy. Support may be requested to cover the costs of travel, lodging and meals for workshop and meeting participants.

**SECTION 2: PROPOSAL GUIDELINES**

This solicitation is open to current Undergraduate Higher Education Institutions who currently host the Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Korean, Persian, Portuguese, and/or Turkish Undergraduate Domestic Flagship Programs. Institutions that have received an NSEP Technology Grant within the past three years, or currently have one, are not eligible to apply.

Successful applicants will coordinate closely with The Language Flagship teams at NSEP, The Tech Center, and IIE throughout the project period, and will support The Language Flagship to achieve program goals through the integration of state-of-the-art language learning technology that improves program performance and outcomes.

Applicants must propose drawing on existing capabilities as well as nationally-recognized best practices and resources to develop a project that provides a blended solution for increasing a specific skill or proficiency for students learning specific Flagship languages. Working closely with the Flagship community, successful applicants must describe how they will plan, develop, and execute short- and long-term plans for the effective integration of technology into selected Flagship curricula. Successful projects will describe how they are partnering with existing Flagship Programs to design, pilot, test and evaluate technology integration.

Successful applicants will identify and describe partnerships with institutions and organizations that support language teaching in any Flagship language with at least one of the following Flagship languages included:

- Arabic
- Chinese
- Russian

Strong proposals will clearly demonstrate how the applicant will take into account the specific needs and experiences of Flagship Programs, including curricular and co-curricular activities already developed that lead to ILR 2/ACTFL Advanced and ILR 3/ACTFL Superior language proficiency.

**PROPOSAL STRUCTURE**

The proposal narrative should outline a clear implementation plan. The plan must include a detailed work plan, a description of methods and approaches to technology to improve language instruction and outcomes, identification of individuals and resources to support the proposed project, and a timeline of activities and major outcomes.

Competitive proposals will discuss the current uses of technology integration in learning environments and how the proposed project will build upon, improve, or create an approach to integrating technology into Flagship curricula and teaching to increase the impact of the teaching and learning process in Flagship Programs. Applications must describe, at a minimum:

**A Vision for the Proposed Project**, focusing on how the applicant would draw upon experts, experience, and best practices from all relevant areas (i.e., Technology, Language Education, Second Language Acquisition, Instructional Design, Curriculum & Instruction, Professional Development for Instructors, Testing & Assessment, and Blended Learning) to ensure that innovative ideas are turned into effective practice within the context of the Flagship program initiatives. The project should provide context of how this idea builds upon effective approaches. This project should explain not only how this will support innovation at their institution, but more importantly, how they will assure that other domestic Flagship programs will be involved with developing and using this innovation.

- **A Clear Description of Purpose and a Plan**, focusing on the specific language or linguistic improvement the innovative project is attempting to achieve. For example, is the Technology innovation attempting to improve listening skills or speaking skills? For which language(s) and to what level? How does this fit into the programmatic and curricular structure of Flagship programs?

- **A Clear Description of Effective Methods and Approaches Used to Blend Technology into Courses** to help Flagship students reach Advanced and Superior language skills across all four modalities (Speaking, Reading, Listening, Writing). Applicants are strongly encouraged to illustrate specific examples in their proposals of students at all levels of language acquisition within the Flagship program.

- **A Work Plan that ensures the Proposed Project will be used at multiple Flagship Partner institutions**, focusing on how the applicant would implement the vision at their home institution as well as across participating Flagship institutions focusing on the particular language. Resources developed must be openly available to all Flagship institutions by the end of the grant period.

> Sample Vignette of Flagship Language Learner
>
> John Doe has just applied for Russian Capstone in Kazakhstan. By all accounts, John is an excellent student. However, his test scores show that he needs to improve his listening and reading skills before he can be allowed to study abroad. The Russian selection committee has reviewed his application and determined that he will need to retest to receive at least an ILR 2 in listening within 3 months. Our project aims to help students like John improve his listening skills by doing………………

- **The Expertise of the Proposed Team and Personnel,** especially in the areas of the design and implementation of blended language learning, Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL), adaptive learning technologies, Language Education, Curriculum & Instruction, Instructional Design, Second Language Acquisition, and Language Testing and Assessment.

**Applicants must also outline how they will approach activities and projects that include:**

- Design, development and completion of targeted plans to improve technology integration into selected Flagship Programs.

- Development and implementation of pilot or model technology integration into selected Flagship Programs or languages.

- Evaluation and assessment of the new approaches through independent or 3$^{rd}$ party means.

Applicants are encouraged to obtain letters of commitment from partner Flagship institutions. Successful applicants will be expected to discuss project coordination with the Flagship Tech Center AFTER the award begins, but are NOT expected to coordinate with the Flagship Tech Center during the competition. Applicants do NOT need to include a letter from the Tech Center.

## SECTION 3: MERIT REVIEW PROCESS AND EVALUATION CRITERIA

### MERIT REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals will be evaluated by a merit-review panel organized by IIE. The panel, which may include outside evaluators, will rank proposals and make recommendations. Final funding decisions will be made by NSEP, in consultation with IIE, and will be based on the review panel recommendations, funding availability, and program priorities. Final award funding levels may be lower than those proposed.

Final awards will be made by IIE to successful institutions. IIE may discuss a grant application with an applicant if deemed necessary. IIE also reserves the right to award grants without discussion with any applicants. IIE may cancel the competition, or may reject any or all applications if they do not sufficiently demonstrate their ability to meet the stated program goals.

### EVALUATION CRITERIA

1. **Capacity to Solve Critical Language Learning Problems in The Language Flagship Program**                                                                 **(20 Points)**

   a. Clear description of what language learning or instructional challenge this project intends to solve or overcome; a clearly stated pedagogical goal.
   b. Brief but detailed, illustrative narratives of the students and/or instructors whose problems you are attempting to solve (see vignette on Page 7).
   c. Detailed description of how this project builds on academic research, in relevant fields such as Curriculum & Instruction, Second Language Acquisition, Applied Linguistics, Instructional Design, Instructional Technology, Computer Assisted Language Learning, or Language Education.
   d. A clear and sound plan for assessing the efficacy of each pilot project and learner skill improvement using quantitative and/or qualitative approaches.
   e. Plan for communicating and disseminating materials, lessons learned, and best practices from this project across The Language Flagship Program.
   f. Discussion of the anticipated impact of the project on the Flagship institutions and language programs involved.
   g. Transition Plan for extending the technology or best practice across The Language Flagship, including among courses and instructors at a given institution, across the same language at multiple institutions, and across multiple languages.

2. **Effective Implementation Plan**                                                                 **(20 Points)**

   a. Comprehensive description of project design and plans for implementation, activities, roles and responsibilities and adequacy of resources to undertake the project.
   b. Clear description of activities planned, timeline and projected outcomes.
   c. Plans for professional development and other instructor training in technology and blended learning required to carry out the project.
   d. Detailed description of collaboration among Flagship institutions, language departments, programs and institutional partners in the project.

e.  Clear plan for project administration and management, individual project team member responsibilities and description of reporting lines.
f.  Description of expected outcomes and assessment methods that will be used, in addition to a clear plan for evaluating outcomes and managing assessment data collected.
g.  Clear plan for ongoing dissemination of technology innovation within the Flagship community and nationally, including sharing documentation, data, data-sets and other related research and education products.

## 3. Strength of Collaboration, Sustainment, and Dissemination Plan    (20 Points)

a.  Strength of commitment to ensure open usage and open source protocols for projects and materials for access, use, and adaptation and development across the U.S. higher education community, government training institutions, and their partners.
b.  Strength of plan to ensure that projects and materials are readily available for improvement, adaptation, and adoption across the U.S. higher education community, U.S. government training institutions and their partners.
c.  Strength of plan to openly share, partner, and disseminate project approaches and materials to other Flagship institutions, higher education institutions, and government training institutions.

## 4. Strength of Key Personnel and Project Team    (20 Points)

a.  Description of relevant qualifications of the project director and other key personnel.
b.  Clear description of project team collaboration, including roles, responsibilities and reporting lines.
c.  Time commitment of team members to the project.
d.  Strength of letters of commitment from partner Flagship programs.

## 5. Budget and Cost Effectiveness    (20 Points)

a.  Request must be adequate and reasonable to successfully meet project objectives.
b.  Budget narrative must be clear and comprehensive.
c.  All costs must be allowable, allocable, and reasonable. IIE/NSEP/DLNSEO will consider whether the budget has the ability to support the proposed project in an efficient and effective way while demonstrating a reasonable and appropriate allocation of funding.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

As one of the primary intentions of this RFP is to consolidate resources through sharing and dissemination of advancements, applicants should make every effort to ensure any technology developed follows commonly accepted best practices in developing open source software in regard to licensing, distribution, collaboration, and interoperability.

## Licensing

Successful applicants should use open source licenses for all new software development that clearly define the terms and conditions for use, reproduction, and distribution of the software and related content.  In circumstances where source code components with other licenses will be

used or restricted works are proposed, open architectures and/or standard interfaces based on Web APIs are preferred.

## Distribution

For active grants, associated principal investigators or other key personnel shall be required, annually, to participate in Government-hosted meetings for the purpose of integrating and sharing various research efforts executed under the provision of this grant. In-person participation is highly encouraged, but teleconference or Video Teleconference (VTC) participation may be granted as an exception with prior approval of the Government.

IIE and NSEP retain the right to share grant products (e.g., reports, paper submissions, conference presentations, learning modules, software, and other materials) with other educational institutions or government training centers to promote support collaboration and integration.

## Source Code Collaboration

In an effort to allow developers funded under this grant to collaborate and share source code during the developmental stages, successful applicants will show how they will contribute to an accessible Git-based source code repository, giving a plan for how often they will contribute. Such an approach fosters collaboration by enabling developers to view and contribute to each other's projects as they work. The Technology Innovation Center will provide a centralized source code repository and other software development tools via their website at: http://lftic.lll.hawaii.edu/.

## Interoperability Considerations

In order to ensure any technology funded under this grant is not a stand-alone system, proposals must confirm use of an interoperability protocol that allows the tracking of student performance, collection of user data, and the communication and distribution of user data with other systems. Applicants are highly encouraged to review Advanced Distributed Learning's (ADL's) Experience API (xAPI) and Total Learning Architecture (TLA) interoperability specifications (see http://xapi.adlnet.gov) and/or to use other industry-standard Web APIs and data formats when reporting student performance in any technical products developed under this grant.

## MINIMUM STANDARDS

The applicant must meet the minimum standards for receiving federal funds, as defined in 32 CFR 22.415, which state:

To be qualified, a potential recipient must:
a. Have the management capability and adequate financial and technical resources, given those that would be made available through the grant or cooperative agreement, to execute the program of activities envisioned under the grant or cooperative agreement.
b. Have a satisfactory record of executing such programs or activities (if a prior recipient of an award).
c. Have a satisfactory record of integrity and business ethics.

d.  Be otherwise qualified and eligible to receive a grant or cooperative agreement under applicable laws and regulations (see § 22.420(c)).

The applicant must agree to abide by all federal rules and regulations regarding performance and financial management, including, but not limited to:

a.  The International Air Transportation Fair Competitive Practices Act (Fly America Act) of 1974 (49 U.S.C. 40118) and the interpretative guidelines issued by the Comptroller General of the United States in the March 31, 1981, amendment to Comptroller General Decision B138942
b.  DoDGARs Part 32, "Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Non-Profit Organizations"
c.  2 CFR 200, "Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards"

*The Institute of International Education and The Language Flagship are committed to the principle of diversity. No applicant will be discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, gender, sexual preference, or national origin.  Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Institutions are encouraged to apply.*

# SECTION 4: APPLICATION PROCEDURES

PROPOSAL CONTENT

Information outlined in the previous section provides guidance regarding required components of proposals being submitted to IIE. Proposals that fail to include the required sections may not be accepted or reviewed.

A successful proposal should include and/or address the following:

1. Transmittal letter from the applicant institution's Sponsored Projects/Research Office.
2. Title page.
3. Abstract of no more than 250 words.
4. Proposal narrative of no more than twenty (20) pages that responds to the guidance provided in this solicitation and in the selection criteria.
5. A program outline that indicates the faculty and/or staff members responsible for each task.
6. A list of key individuals directly involved in the development and management of the proposed Flagship Collaborative Technology Innovation Initiative, including key partners across the institution and at other institutions and clear reporting lines from the project director to all levels of university leadership. Include complete contact information: mail and email addresses, and telephone and fax numbers.
7. An appendix with short curricula vitae of _no more than three_ (3) pages for each lead individual involved in the proposed Initiative and "mini-bios" for other key individuals.
8. Support letters from appropriate senior university leadership (i.e., president, provost, vice president of academic affairs, deans, department chair) indicating institutional support, fit with mission, and willingness to host and support a Flagship Collaborative Technology Innovation Initiative.

BUDGET CONTENT

A complete budget should include:

1. An itemized budget (see template)
2. A budget narrative

The following budget guidelines must be adhered to when developing the project budget for the proposal. When developing the budget, best efforts should be made to include competitive costs and discounts in order to best leverage federal dollars. While all costs that comply with the Uniform Guidance and adhere to the guidelines below will be considered, IIE and NSEP reserve the right to reduce, revise or otherwise adjust proposal budgets in accordance with project needs and goals, and the availability of funds.

Please ensure that each line item is thoroughly justified in the budget narrative. The budget narrative should include a breakdown of the expenses, if not clear in the detailed budget, and a description of how each of the expenses will benefit the project.

The budget and budget narrative must:

a. Include a separate note for each line item in the budget. Budget notes must follow the order of the line items in the budget. (The only cost category not requiring individual line notes is fringe. In the case of fringe benefits, a summary description can be used. Additionally, a link to the university's fringe benefits rates and policies should be provided. If this information is not available online, provide a copy of the relevant documents with the budget narrative.)
b. Include a clear description of responsibilities for any budget requests for salary support or contracted time.  Descriptions should be concise.
c. If faculty are included in the budget, describe how this work will be covered (e.g., course buyouts, summer salary, etc.).
d. Justify, in a detailed manner, any administrative positions included in the budget. Positions not justified in a detailed manner may not be supported.
e. If travel is included in the budget:
    - provide a note explaining the university's travel policy, particularly noting its hotel and per diem policy.
    - include the destination city and state or country, the anticipated number of travelers and the estimated number of days for the trip, and provide a breakdown of costs for each trip.
f. Explain the basis for estimating the costs of professional personnel salaries and wages, including annual salary or hourly wage rate and percentage of staff time; employee benefits per person, including rates and percentage of staff time; employee travel per person/per trip; consultants and subcontracts, including non-employee travel; materials and supplies; other costs, including printing, telephone expenses and equipment rental; and indirect costs.
g. Explain how the major cost items relate to the proposed activities.
h. Provide a link to the university's Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA). If this information is not available online, provide a copy of the relevant documents with the budget narrative.

**APPLICATION FORMAT**

*NOTICE: Failure to abide by the following requirements or failure to submit a complete proposal will result in disqualification.*

1. Margins: 1" on all sides
2. Type face: 12 pt., Times New Roman
3. Spacing: double-spaced throughout
4. Printing: double-sided when possible
5. Binding: binder clip
6. Copies: one (1) signed original and ten (10) copies
7. Pages numbered consecutively, starting with title pages, and in the order specified in "Proposal Content"
**8.** No use of first person pronouns, with the exception of support letters

**APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

A webinar will be held to field questions regarding this solicitation on:

- **Monday, May 1, 2017 at 2 pm ET**

To participate in the webinar, please send an e-mail to flagship@iie.org indicating the name(s) and e-mail address(es) of the participant(s). Participants will receive a confirmation email with instructions for joining the webinar.

Following the webinar, FAQs related to this solicitation will be sent to eligible applicants.

In addition, a Technical Assistance Session will be hosted at the Flagship Annual Meeting in Bloomington, Indiana.

Applicants are encouraged to attend the scheduled webinar and Technical Assistance Session. Questions regarding the application process or specific questions about open source technical specifications should be addressed via email to flagship@iie.org for a prompt response.

**TRANSMISSION INSTRUCTIONS**

Please send one (1) original plus ten (10) copies of your proposal by U.S. Postal Service or by delivery service (e.g., FedEx) to:

> The Language Flagship
> National Security Education Program
> Institute of International Education
> 1400 K Street, NW, Suite 700
> Washington, DC 20005
> [Telephone for delivery services: 202-898-0600]


**The DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT is 4:30 p.m. (EST), Tuesday, June 20, 2017**. The burden of timely delivery is the applicant's. Proposals received after the deadline will be disqualified. Proposals must be mailed or delivered (e.g., FedEx). Faxed and emailed proposals will not be accepted.