

STARTALK Invitation for Proposals for Summer 2008 Programs Frequently Asked Questions

Thank you for your interest in the STARTALK Program. The following are answers to frequently-asked questions regarding the proposal.

Eligibility:

- 1) **Are non-profit organizations eligible to apply for STARTALK funding?** Yes.
- 2) **Are state departments of education eligible to apply?** Yes.
- 3) **How does one provide evidence that student safety, liability, and insurance issues are addressed?** The simplest way to document this is to send us information on insurance coverage that you have for your regular programs, noting that such coverage extends to summer programs. Last year, several institutions sent us a web link to such information, or they referenced the master policy that extended to their schools.
- 4) **If we submit our grants electronically, will you accept the required signed forms as .pdf files?** Yes.

Level of Funding:

Generally, awards range up to \$100,000 for new programs and \$120,000 for continuing programs. In all cases, a reasonable cost per participant will be the determining factor.

- 1) **Our institution plans to offer both Chinese and Arabic student programs. Should we submit one or two proposals?** That is entirely up to your institution. Again, remember the criteria: reasonable cost per participant.
- 2) **What is a reasonable cost per participant?** There are several variables that determine reasonableness of cost: for example, residential v. day program; duration of program; hours of instruction; credit v. non-credit bearing program.
- 3) **What is the indirect cost (IDC) or facilities and administrative (F&A) cost rate for STARTALK?** STARTALK does not have a prescribed rate. Most Summer 2007 programs submitted IDC rates around 10%. Given the nature of the program, most awardees were able to negotiate these rates with their home institutions.

Program Planning:

Criteria and Priorities:

- 1) **What is meant by expansion or enhancement of an existing program? One example is** the use of STARTALK funds to support tuition and travel costs for students who would not otherwise be able to participate in the program. Enhancing a teacher training program by

- adding a second teacher trainer and a videographer to improve micro-teaching experiences is an example for teacher programs. Other examples include extending the duration of an existing program, increasing the number of participants, or providing better quality instructional materials.
- 2) **What do you mean in the priority that students will have the opportunity to develop language proficiency after the summer?** Priority will be given to proposals that are able to identify opportunities for students to continue their study throughout the academic year. These opportunities may consist of classes in a local community school, a community college, or an online offering. This is not a requirement, but we found that many students wanted to continue to study at their own pace after the summer program ended.
 - 3) **How does one differentiate between outcomes and performance indicators?** An outcome might be “students improve their ability to read Chinese texts,” while performance indicators could be “(1) students demonstrate comprehension of at least 45 characters; and (b) students read a two- or three-sentence paragraph in the target language and are able to summarize it in English.”
 - 4) **What do you mean by the three modes of communication?** The three modes as defined by the national standards are interpersonal, interpretive, and presentational.
 - 5) **Can the teacher training program applications include K – 12 teachers, or are they restricted to grade 6 – 12 teachers?** STARTALK Professional development opportunities are available to teachers in K-16.

STARTALK Central Support:

- 6) **What kind of consultation and training will be provided for institutions selected to run 2008 programs?** STARTALK Central will provide a 2-day workshop devoted to the criteria that will be used to monitor program effectiveness. In addition, STARTALK staff will work closely with each program to ensure that curricula, materials, and instructional strategies are in place before the program begins. Site visits will be made to each program during the first few days, and a mentoring plan will be developed, if necessary. There is also the possibility of a second site visit. Based on the objectives and expected outcomes of the program, STARTALK staff will work with you to determine appropriate assessment strategies.
- 7) **Will STARTALK Central market the summer language programs and recruit students, or is this the responsibility of the host institution?** Marketing and recruiting are the responsibility of the host institution. In the case of residential programs, STARTALK Central will act

as an enrollment clearinghouse, directing interested participants to programs that are not fully enrolled.

Other:

- 8) **Will STARTALK support study abroad programs?** No. STARTALK funds are for summer language programs for students (grades 6 – 12) and professional development opportunities for teachers within the US.
- 9) **Can we submit plans for more than one year?** No. Awards will be made for only one year.
- 10) **Are grant recipients required to offer to implement a program in Summer 2008?** Yes.
- 11) **What is the minimum number of students that are required to be served through this program?** There is no minimum number, but implementing a program for fewer than 10 students is not cost-effective. During the summer of 2007, each program projected at least 20 participants.
- 12) **Is there a minimum number of weeks for a program?** It depends on the nature of the program you are proposing: the objectives and the expected outcomes. Some programs may provide an orientation to language and culture; others, an overview; others may offer credit. Using Summer 2007 as a guide, all programs were two weeks or longer.
- 13) **Can we include students from grades 6-12 in the same class?** Yes, but experience indicates that such large variations in age were sometimes problematic due to the developmental differences in the learners.

Program Activities:

- 1) **What kind of extracurricular activities should we plan for?** Give careful thought to planning field trips and try to get student input. Survey results from Summer 2007 suggest a disconnect between activities planned for the students and what students found interesting and motivating. For example, trips to ethnic restaurants or shopping areas were not perceived to be particularly valuable by students. Also, many programs conducted awards ceremonies, but several had failed to budget for them.
- 2) **What do you mean by “plans for collaboration”?** There is no requirement for collaboration, but if you plan to work with an institution that will provide a service your institution cannot, we will need information about that collaboration. Summer 2007 collaborations were most successful when there were clearly defined roles and responsibilities and effective budgeting processes in place; we will look for evidence of these features if collaborations are planned.

- 3) **We are planning to offer a day program but have had requests to provide housing for students who need it. Is reimbursement of this expense allowed?** If you are conducting a day program, lodging for students should not be a part of your budget. Aside from the fact that it would increase the cost per participant as compared to other day programs, there are safety and liability issues involved. Students willing to travel to a language program should consider applying to one of the residential programs.

Budget:

- 1) **What is meant by the request to provide back-up documentation?** We are not certain at this point what level of documentation will be required for STARTALK 2008. When developing your budget, you should be as detailed as possible. For example, if you plan to hire a bus company for a field trip, get a quote from the company and be prepared to document it, if required. At this point, you do not need to submit the quote, but you should be prepared for that possibility in the future.
- 2) **Should we budget for travel to awardee meetings in Washington?** No. All meeting travel for the programs this year will be paid by STARTALK Central.
- 3) **What staffing levels should we plan for?** Overall, program directors from 2007 felt that they had not planned adequately for administrative support: recruitment, making copies, arranging for field trips, maintaining student lists, etc. One should carefully consider these tasks, the support that currently exists, if any, and budget accordingly.
- 4) **You seem to have collected a number of professional videos and pictures from Summer 2007. Should we plan on hiring someone to do document our proposed program?** Depending on the nature of your program, you should plan on a videographer and/or photographer. Our teacher training programs found that taking videos of micro-teaching or practicum experiences was most effective. The high school students enjoyed practicing for videoed performances, though more toward the end of their programs. You should consider your need for such services before making a decision about whether to include them in your budget.
- 5) **Who is the authorized financial officer who must sign the budget?** The person who has authority to sign on behalf of your institution. In some schools, the person resides in the department, while in others it is at the vice president level. We are looking for institutional commitment to carry out the tasks proposed for the amount requested.