October 4, 2010

Dear Colleague:

The National Foreign Language Center solicits proposals from eligible schools, post-secondary institutions, or community-based organizations to participate in the STARTALK project. STARTALK is part of a federal initiative to enhance the national capacity for critical need languages. The goal of the STARTALK program is to increase the number and expertise of students and teachers in critical languages. For more information on STARTALK please visit: startalk.umd.edu

In 2011, the STARTALK project will provide funding for programs that occur primarily in the summer in the following categories:

- Programs that offer professional development opportunities for current or prospective teachers of Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Hindi, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, and/or Urdu. Teacher programs are strongly encouraged to provide a student component to allow classroom observation and/or teaching practicum or micro-teaching. **Note the addition of Portuguese to the eligible languages.**
- Programs that offer Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Hindi, Persian, Russian, Swahili, Turkish, and/or Urdu language study for students within the K-16 range. Student programs will NOT be funded for Portuguese in 2011 except as part of a combination proposal with a teacher development program.

STARTALK’s expansion into new language programs along with the mandate to reach an additional eight states will most likely result in increased competition this year. Awards for independent and collaborative programs are expected to be in the range of $50,000 to $100,000 based on the number of participants and the type of program offered; for combination teacher and student programs, the amounts range up to $125,000.

Please note that budgets should include the cost of sending at least two representatives to spring and fall conferences. The Spring Conference will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico on April 29 and 30, and the Fall Conference will be held in the Washington, DC area during the month of October.
If funded, programs will be expected to adhere to STARTALK-endorsed “best practice” principles in implementing the program. Specifically, programs will be required to:

a. have all instructors and curriculum planners complete the Online Curriculum Design Guidelines tutorial: startalk.umd.edu/curriculum-guide

b. submit for approval curriculum plans for each level of language instruction in student programs and for teacher training programs

c. attend the April 2011 Spring and October 2011 Fall Conferences.

Research is an important part of the STARTALK Program. If funded, programs will be required to:

a. participate in STARTALK Central pre- and post-program online surveys for student and teacher participants;

b. participate in LinguaFolio Online for student programs, middle school and higher;

c. respond promptly to all requests for reports, data, and program information.

STARTALK Central will provide consultation and advice for programs selected for funding. Guidance will also be provided in the preparation of documents that will be required prior to program implementation, such as detailed curricula, lesson plans, and descriptions of expected participant outcomes.

The 2011 STARTALK application is online and located at startalk.umd.edu/proposals. We strongly encourage all applicants to apply online. If you are unable to submit or complete an online application form, please contact us at startalk@nflc.org. All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm, October 31, 2010.

Information on the STARTALK proposal and selection criteria is available at startalk.umd.edu/proposals. If you have a question about the online application or the application process itself, please submit it in writing to startalk@nflc.org, no later than Friday, October 15, 2010. Responses will be posted at startalk.umd.edu/proposals/faq. All applications must be submitted by 11:59 pm, October 31, 2010.

Additionally, help desk support for the STARTALK proposal process will be provided from October 4th to October 29th, weekdays, from 9am-5pm (Eastern time) and from 9am-9pm (Eastern time) weekdays from October 25th to October 29th. For assistance with any technological issues, please email: startalk-support@nflc.org. You may wish to include a phone number where you can be reached.

We thank you for your interest in the STARTALK program.

Sincerely,

Catherine Ingold
Director, NFLC