



EUROPEAN UNION  
DELEGATION TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Press and Public Diplomacy

*Proposals must be received by 17:00 (EDT) 20 June, 2011*

European Union Centers of Excellence  
in the United States

*Call for Proposals for the 2011-2014 period*

**Section I. Program Overview**

In 1998, the European Union organized a competition to support European Union Centers in American universities, devoted to promoting the objectives of the New Transatlantic Agenda, and in particular building civil society 'bridges' across the Atlantic. Funding was allocated for annual grants over three year cycles subject to satisfactory annual performance reviews.

Building on the successful completion of initial cycles of funding, and the conclusions and recommendations of independent evaluations of the EU Centers, the European Union in 2005 sought to consolidate and strengthen the initiative by encouraging EU Centers to develop as centers of academic excellence in EU studies and as key focal points for outreach on EU issues. The resulting two funding cycles, 2005-2008 and 2008-11 of ten 'European Union Centers of Excellence' has had a further positive impact on understanding of the EU and EU-US relations within prominent US universities and their regional communities.

In 2010, the European Commission asked for an independent evaluation of the European Union Centers initiative covering the activities of the EU Centers in the US, Canada, Japan, Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. The evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and efficiency of the program and provided practical, operational conclusions and recommendations to be used as a reference point for any future development of this program. The EU Centers evaluation report may now be found on the EU's web page dedicated to the EU Centers [http://eeas.europa.eu/eu-centres/index\\_en.htm](http://eeas.europa.eu/eu-centres/index_en.htm) .

The European Union therefore is launching another three year grant competition for the EU Centers of Excellence program, inviting proposals from institutions of higher education in the United States to support 'European Union Centers of Excellence' during the 2011-2014 period. These Centers will be expected to implement high quality teaching, research, and regional outreach programs with EU and EU-US themes. Individual Centers are also expected to participate in cooperative activities within the national Network of EU Centers. Information regarding activities of the existing EU Centers of Excellence in the US is available at [www.euce.org](http://www.euce.org).

The European Union is allocating around €3.120 million to this program for the 2011-2014 period. Centers of Excellence selected will receive funding in the form of a

subsidy towards approved costs for the 2011-12, 2012-13, and 2013-14 academic years. An estimated 10 grants of up to €300,000 each will be awarded.

Applicants that did not receive funding under this program during 2008-2011 must provide a minimum cost share of at least 25% of eligible project costs (i.e. a minimum of €100,000 to match a request from the Union of €300,000, resulting in €400,000 in total eligible project costs). Applicants receiving grants in 2008 are required to provide a 50% match to the 2011-2014 competition cycle (i.e. a minimum of €300,000 to match a request from the Union of €300,000, resulting in €600,000 in total eligible project costs). Funding will also be provided for the Center taking a leadership role in networking and outreach activities (see below). The same co-financing ratios apply for institutions requesting supplemental funding as network coordinator and outreach coordinator.

## **Section II. Program Policy Objectives and Expected Outcomes**

The **broad aims** of the program are:

- (1) to promote understanding and knowledge of the European Union as a major player in the global political and economic system, with special focus on newly acceded member states, the institutional and policy impact of the Lisbon Treaty; and the EU's foreign and security policies.
- (2) to promote understanding of the importance of the transatlantic relationship, its political, economic, security and cultural dimensions, and the widening range of global and regional issues jointly addressed by the EU and US.

The specific objectives of the program, and the expected outcomes to be achieved are as follows.

**OBJECTIVE 1:** Develop centers of academic excellence in EU studies with a view to broadening and deepening the base of European Union studies, and increasing awareness of the Union's policies. Courses, lectures, modules should be part of a dedicated program for EU studies as well as part of more general curricula for international affairs, law, political science, economics, business administration, science and technology, etc. It is important to allow access to EU courses not only to a small group of students focusing on EU studies, but also to a wider number of students who follow another main curriculum and have a more targeted interest in specific aspects of the EU.

### ***Expected Outcomes:***

- New courses developed on the EU and on EU-US Relations.
- New material on the EU and transatlantic relations incorporated in existing courses.
- EU studies certificate, minor, and major programs created or refined.
- Material on the EU and transatlantic relations incorporated into curricula of professional schools such as, but not limited to, international affairs, law, business, agriculture, communications, and health.

- Academic research conferences devoted to issues of applied EU and EU-US public policies, also encouraging interaction between researchers and practitioners.
- Informed books, articles, and briefing papers devoted to issues of applied EU and EU-US public policies published.
- Increased numbers of doctoral students focusing their dissertation research on the EU and EU-US relations.
- Increased numbers of university faculty and other scholars, including professional school faculty and graduate students, conducting research on issues of applied EU and EU-US public policies.

Applicants may wish to add increased curricular and research opportunities for undergraduate students (see details in footnote below<sup>1</sup>).

**OBJECTIVE 2:** Promote greater understanding of the EU and EU-US relations among regional outreach constituencies. Beyond academic circles, such as opinion formers and leaders, business circles and organizations, think-tanks, government, school educators, the media, civil society including Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs).

***Expected Outcomes:***

- Outreach conferences, workshops, briefing sessions, and other information activities organized targeting local and state governmental officials, business people, and other civil society outreach groups.
- Regional universities and colleges (four year and two year) participating in EU Center activities, especially those in cities or regions where the EU is less well known.
- Training workshops, curriculum development exercises, and information materials organized for secondary school teachers (see footnote).
- Fora provided for prominent speakers, academics and practitioners, from the EU institutions and EU member states.
- In each of the above, strongly encouraging the attendance and participation of regional media.
- Broadcast or record events so that they can reach a broader constituency. This could be through web simulcast or video conferencing. Events should also be saved for later viewing on the dedicated Center website or on YouTube, iTunes or other internet media resource.

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<sup>1</sup> Applicants may choose to include in their proposals, on an entirely voluntary basis, annual participation in a **study tour of Brussels for EUCE staff, undergraduate students and associated secondary school teachers**. The Network Coordinator will schedule four days of briefings at the EU institutions for this purpose. Interested applicants should include a request in their proposals for the participation of up to three undergraduate students including transatlantic airfare and five night's hotel accommodation. Applicants may also include the participation of one EU Center staff member or affiliated faculty member in the tour.

**OBJECTIVE 3:** Strengthen “People-to-People Links” between university faculty, students, and their host institutions in the EU and the US

***Expected Outcomes:***

- Increased number of student and faculty research and exchange programs with universities in the EU.
- Visiting EU scholars and practitioners incorporated effectively into EU Center activities.
- Greater number of co-taught courses and other curricular development programs developed, for example, by effective use of video-conferencing and other technologies.
- Encourage greater synergies with other programs sponsored by the European Union, including the Jean Monnet Action and other elements of Erasmus Mundus, Erasmus Mundus Partnership, and the EU-US Higher Education and Vocational Training Agreement.
- Greater synergies with networks of professors in EU Studies in the US and in Canada.

**OBJECTIVE 4:** Consolidate and enhance the effectiveness of the network of EU Centers of excellence.

***Expected Outcomes:***

- Expand the sharing of best practices among Centers.
- Active networking, coordination, and project cooperation between EU Centers of Excellence.
- Planning and organizing the annual meeting of Directors of European Union Centers of Excellence.
- Maintaining and expanding the Network of Excellence web site, [www.euce.org](http://www.euce.org).
- Encouraging cooperative activities with EU Centers of Excellence in Canada and EU Centers in other countries.

**OBJECTIVE 5: Coordination with other Centers: Consolidate and enhance the effectiveness of the network of EU Centers.**

***Expected Outcomes:***

- Active networking, coordination, and project cooperation between EU Centers at national level;
- Encouraging cooperation amongst EU Centers North America;
- Encouraging cooperative activities with other EU Centers in the world. This includes participation in a worldwide meeting of EU Centers, to be held every

- two years. Typically, each Center would be invited to send 3 representatives (4 in the case of a consortium).
- Expanding the sharing of best practices among Centers worldwide.

## **OBJECTIVE 6: Attract additional support for Center activities**

### ***Expected Outcomes:***

- Center activities embedded in ongoing University programs.
- In the long-term, ensure mobilization of new financing sources to offset diminishing levels of EU support, as a percentage of total project costs, and maintain quality and volume of activities.

Applicants should propose activities which clearly promote the objectives and achieve the desired outcomes described above **and which they are confident will be implemented as planned, making full use of any EU funding awarded for these activities**. Competitive proposals will include a coherent mix of research, teaching, and outreach activities. In all cases, Center activities must have a basis in and be devoted to contemporary EU and EU-US public policy issues. Applicants may vary the level of project expenses during each of the three academic years covered, but Centers should strike a good balance of activities and funding across the grant period, with no more than 40% of total project costs budgeted for any one academic year.

## **Section III. Content of Applicant Proposals**

The [Proposal Narrative Form](#) and [Grant Application Form](#) provide a detailed guide to the information required from all applicants. In addition to a detailed presentation of their activities and proposed expenses, applicants should be aware of the following requirements (which are also addressed in the Proposal Narrative and Grant Application Forms).

### ***Host University Support and Center Visibility***

Applicants should explain how their activities will reinforce and benefit from any ongoing university efforts to support international and/or European programs. They should also explain how the university will support the Center with staff and other logistical assistance, and how the Center will ensure high physical and programmatic visibility within the university. Applicants receiving funding during the 2008-2011 period should explain their relative level of success in achieving the above, and also how they will enhance and expand that performance during the 2011-2014 period.

### ***Additional Funding for Networking and Outreach Coordination Activities***

Applicants may also apply for supplemental funding of up to €125,000 for the Network and Outreach Coordinator role for the entire 2011-14 grant period:

***Networking Coordinator:*** Promoting networking activity among the EU Centers of Excellence by hosting, maintaining and expanding a network web site, and by planning and organizing the annual Center Directors meeting. Also, planning the study tour of Brussels for EUCE staff, undergraduate students and associated secondary school teachers. The Network Coordinator will schedule four days of briefings at the EU institutions for this purpose and coordinate hotel arrangements for the group. Centers may request, in their proposals, that up to three undergraduate students and/or two associated secondary school teachers and/or one EU Center staff member or affiliated faculty member participate in the tour. Centers can request transatlantic airfare, up to five nights' hotel accommodation and per diem for the tour.

***Outreach Coordinator:*** Collecting and disseminating information regarding individual Center outreach activities, particularly in sharing 'best practices' regarding outreach to specific constituencies (secondary schools, business, state government officials). The outreach coordinator will also expand the 'best practice' list of Center syllabi, briefings and other publications on the Network web site regarding Center outreach activities.

For each of the above, applicants should explain how they will expand upon and enhance the current level of network and outreach coordination among the Centers of Excellence. The Grant Application Form contains additional information regarding these roles. Applicants wishing to do so must bid for both of these responsibilities.

### ***Measurement of Outcomes***

Wherever possible, applicants should provide measurable criteria for judging the outcomes of all activities. These include a target number of attendees at events, target number of hits on websites and on web media. These also might include the number and quality of events organized the number, quality, and interdisciplinary range of participants, the number of applicants to a faculty or student research award competition, evidence of sustainable impact upon research and curricular programs, and the production and dissemination of information products and education materials.

### ***Level of Detail for Activities***

Applicants are required to submit proposals incorporating activities for the entire three year period of the grant. However, it is recognized that in completing the Narrative Proposal Form applicants may not be able to provide the same level of detail for years two (2012-2013) and three (2013-14) as for year one (2011-2012). For example, applicants may be able to identify individual visitors during year one but not in years two or three. For those years a speaker profile is acceptable ('prominent European researcher to discuss EU competition policy'). In any case, applicants should strive to provide a complete picture of how project funds will be used over the three year period.

Proposed activities for years two and three, such as major conferences and research projects, should thus be described in as much detail as possible. If necessary, some program content may subsequently be adapted to respond to events, in consultation with the Delegation. However, any amendment to agreed project activities cannot be so substantial as to call into question the original award decision.

### ***No Research or Curriculum Development Awards for EU Center Staff***

EU Center Directors and other staff working directly for an EU Center may not receive individual research or curriculum development awards made by the Center using project funding. This is to ensure that Center funds will be used to promote broad participation by university faculty and students and to avoid the appearance of conflicts of interest in the award selection process.

### ***Annual Meeting of Center Directors***

Each Center will be required to send up to two representatives (preferably the Center Director and Associate or Assistant Director) to a one-day annual meeting of European Union Center of Excellence Directors, to be organized and hosted by the Network Coordinator. The purpose of this meeting will be to monitor the progress of the initiative as a whole, to explore the potential for co-operative activities between Centers, and to enable Centers to exchange useful experience. Travel and up to two nights of accommodation expenses for each participant in the annual meeting may be included in the proposal submitted to the EU.

## **Section IV. Proposal Submission Guidelines**

All applicants should consult the Guidelines for Grant Recipients for general guidance regarding the proposal submission process.

All applicants should provide an original and four copies of the following:

- official grant request letter, dated and signed;
- Completed Narrative Proposal Form and completed and signed Grant Application Form, together with the required supporting documents indicated in the annex to the Application Form. These documents must include an external audit report certifying the applicant's accounts for the last calendar or academic year, and giving an assessment of the applicant's ongoing financial viability.<sup>2</sup>

*NB: In the event that a grant is awarded, the same individual signing the Grant Application Form must also sign the Grant Agreement, and have the authority to legally commit the applicant institution to the terms of that Agreement;*

- curriculum vitae of individual(s) principally responsible for the project;
- list of principal related projects undertaken in the last three years (Part A, Section 3B of the Application package);

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<sup>2</sup> An audited financial statement taken from the applicant's most recent annual report may be presented for this purpose.

- signed Applicants' Declaration (Part B, Section 15 of the Application package);
- completed, signed and stamped Legal Entity Form (Part E of the Application package);
- completed, signed and stamped Financial ID form<sup>3</sup>; and
- itemized budget of project costs and revenues, in Euro<sup>4</sup> sufficiently detailed to allow identification and monitoring of the operations involved; and drawn up using the model in the Grant Application Form.

Successful applicants should also be prepared to provide electronic copies of their Narrative Proposal and Grant Application forms.

The [Grant Application Form](#), [Narrative Proposal Form](#), and [Model Grant Agreement](#) may be downloaded from the Washington Delegation web site.

All applications must be submitted in English. Electronic proposal submissions will not be accepted.

These materials should be sent by registered mail (including by private express mail contractors) to:

Mark Pituch  
Press and Public Diplomacy Section  
(Ref.: Call for the EUCE 2011-2014)  
Delegation of the European Union  
Suite 800  
2175 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037

***Applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. US EDT on June 20, 2011.***

### **Eligibility Criteria**

All applicants must:

- be a university or other institution of higher education based in the United States; consortia are allowed

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<sup>3</sup> A blank Financial ID form can be found at the following link;  
[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/financial\\_id/fich\\_sign\\_ba\\_gb\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/contracts_grants/info_contracts/financial_id/fich_sign_ba_gb_en.pdf)  
. This form should be completed, signed and dated by your organization then signed and stamped by the bank (to save time you could add a copy of your bank statement (with actual amounts blacked out) to avoid having to have the bank sign and stamp it) before resubmitting the original. Please ensure the ABA number is clearly visible on either the form (in the remarks section) or on your bank statement. Please also see the European Commission Privacy Statement at:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/contracts\\_grants/info\\_contracts/privacy\\_statement\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/budget/library/contracts_grants/info_contracts/privacy_statement_en.pdf) .

<sup>4</sup>Prices must be quoted in EUR (euro) using the appropriate EU official monthly EUR to US Dollar exchange rate, available on the first working day of each month at the following website:  
[http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/budget/infoneuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=currency\\_historique&currency=USD&Language=en](http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/budget/infoneuro/index.cfm?fuseaction=currency_historique&currency=USD&Language=en) .

- demonstrate status as a legal person in the United States, to be documented by Articles of Incorporation or other proof of legal status;
- submit a properly completed application and all required supporting documentation as requested above.
- must contribute to the specific objectives listed above.
- They must be contained in the maximum time frame of 36 months.

#### **Exclusion Criteria**

Applicants must state that they are not in any of the situations described in Articles 93, 94 and 96, paragraph 2 point a) of the Financial Regulation applicable to the general budget of the European Communities (Council Regulation (EC, Euratom) No 1605/2002) and set out below.

Applicants may not participate in this call for proposals or be awarded grants if:

- a) They are bankrupt or being wound up, are having their affairs administered by the courts, have entered into an arrangement with creditors, have suspended business activities, are the subject of proceedings concerning those matters, or are in any analogous situation arising from a similar procedure provided for in national legislation or regulations;
- b) They have been convicted of an offence concerning their professional conduct by a judgment which has the force of *res judicata*;
- c) They have been guilty of grave professional misconduct proven by any means which the contracting authority can justify;
- d) They have not fulfilled obligations relating to the payment of social security contributions or the payment of taxes in accordance with the legal provisions of the country in which they are established or with those of the country of the Contracting Authority or those of the country where the contract is to be performed;
- e) They have been the subject of a judgment which has the force of *res judicata* for fraud, corruption, involvement in a criminal organisation or any other illegal activity detrimental to the Communities' financial interests;
- f) Following another procurement procedure or grant award procedure financed by the Community budget, they have been declared to be in serious breach of contract for failure to comply with their contractual obligations;
- g) they are currently subject to an administrative penalty referred to in [Article 96](#) of the Financial Regulation
- h) They are subject to a conflict of interest;
- i) They are guilty of misrepresentation in supplying the information required by the contracting authority as a condition of participation in the grant award procedure, or fail to supply this information.

All applicants must confirm this by signing the Declaration in the [Grant Application Form](#).

## **Selection Criteria for Applicants**

The EU will assess the applicant's technical and economic capacity to undertake the proposed project. This assessment will be based on:

- proven previous experience in the organization of activities based on the list of the principal related projects undertaken in the past 3 years;
- level of faculty knowledge and other university resources related to EU/US policies and the EU/US relationship;
- the details of the educational and professional qualifications of the person(s) principally responsible for undertaking the project, as demonstrated by curriculum vitae;
- financial and economic capacity enabling the applicant to perform the tasks involved in this project (stable and sufficient source of funding to maintain activity for the duration of the project), as demonstrated by annual accounts for the last year and other financial information provided in the Grant Application Form; and
- evidence that the applicant is able to meet co-financing requirements; own resources confirmed by the signature of the legally authorized officer signing the Application Form, and third party resources, if applicable, are to be confirmed in writing by the officer(s) identified in Part B, Section 14 of same.

## **Criteria for the Award of a Grant**

Proposals submitted in accordance with the submission guidelines and meeting the eligibility and selection criteria above will be evaluated according to the following criteria and assigned scores as indicated:

- Quality and relevance of the proposed program of activities, demonstrating in particular a capacity to achieve significant and sustainable impact and add value to the existing activities of the applicant institution (either by making existing EU studies more comprehensive, particularly for those applicants receiving funding during the 2008-2011 period, or through the development of entirely new activities). (maximum score 30, minimum 0)
- Proven multidisciplinary approach including active and meaningful involvement of professional schools. (maximum score 20, minimum 0)
- Effective outreach activities that encourage the involvement of target groups such as opinion leaders, business, government, the media, elementary and secondary school educators and students, and NGO's. (maximum score 20, minimum 0)
- Cost effectiveness in the implementation of activities proposed and particularly in the administration and working methods envisaged for the delivery, monitoring of, and reporting on the activities program. The degree of commitment of the host University (and possibly other partner institutions) to support and encourage the Center both financially and in terms of accommodation and logistical support. The capacity to mobilise external funding and other resources to supplement Commission financial support and the seriousness of self-sustainability prospects. (maximum score 20, minimum 0)

- Capacity to act within a network of other domestic academic and research institutions (maximum score 4, minimum 0)
- Capacity to coordinate with other Centers and to consolidate and enhance the effectiveness of the network of EU Centers (maximum score 3, minimum 0)
- Capacity to build on established international links with other academic and research institutions, including ongoing collaboration with universities in at least two EU Member States. (maximum score 3, minimum 0)

The total score of each proposal will be ranked against all competing proposals.

### **Applications for additional funding for networking and outreach coordination activities**

Only applications from Centers which have been selected as Centers of Excellence, in accordance with the criteria mentioned above, will be considered.

Applications will be evaluated according to the following additional criteria and assigned a score as indicated

- The ability to act as a coordination point at national level for organizing networking between Centers and on outreach issues. (maximum score 10, minimum 0)
- Quality and relevance of the proposed program of networking/coordination activities, demonstrating in particular a capacity to achieve significant and sustainable impact and add value to the activities of EU Centers of excellence. (maximum score 10, minimum 0)
- Cost effectiveness in the implementation of activities proposed and particularly in the administration and working methods envisaged for the delivery, monitoring and reporting of networking/coordination activities program. (maximum score 10, minimum 0)

The total score of each proposal will be ranked against all competing proposals.

### **Questions and notification of results**

Individual applicants should submit any questions regarding the competition **in writing** to [Mark Pituch](#). Within 21 days of publication of this Call for Proposals, the EU will post a 'Frequently Asked Questions' or FAQ page on the [Delegation grants web site](#) summarizing responses to technical questions asked by individual applicants.

The Delegation will organize a teleconference allowing potential applicants to discuss the competition with EU staff, to be held on 24 May at noon EST. To register for the teleconference and receive instructions for participation please send an e-mail message with your affiliation and contact information to Delegation mailbox ([Delegation-USA-EUCteleconf@ec.europa.eu](mailto:Delegation-USA-EUCteleconf@ec.europa.eu)). Relevant information from the teleconference will also be added to the FAQ published on the Delegation web site.

Applicants will be informed whether or not their proposal has been accepted. The EU intends to make its decisions by early to mid July.

### **Reporting requirements and payment arrangements**

Successful applicants will be required to submit annual narrative and financial reports in hard-copy and electronic format for each of the 2011-12, 2012-2013, and 2013-2014 academic years. These reports will be due no later than October 31 each year.

After approval of the narrative and financial reports, interim payments for 2011-12, 2012-2013 and final payment for 2013-14 will be made, based on eligible project expenditures.

Grant recipients requesting a pre-financing payment equal to 30% of the total Commission grant should submit an invoice for payment once the grant agreement has been signed by both parties.

The Center(s) selected to act as the network and/or outreach coordinator will be required to include those duties in the reporting schedule above.

Upon request as part of their reporting, grant recipients must provide by mail to the Delegation of the European Union in Washington, DC certified copies of receipts and other documentation serving as proof of project expense.<sup>5</sup> Where the EU decides to carry out an interim or ex-post evaluation and/or audit, the beneficiary is required to provide all necessary information.

Institutions not prepared to provide such documentation should not apply to this competition.

#### **Additional important information**

Nothing herein stated shall be deemed a financial commitment by the European Union or any of its component Institutions. Grants will be awarded on the basis of available funding and only after approval by the European Commission.

Grants will not be awarded for more than the amount requested, and the European Union reserves the right to award a grant of less than the amount requested by the applicant.

The terms and general conditions of a prospective grant are specified in the Model Grant Agreement, including the rules governing which categories of expenditure are eligible. Submission of an application implies acceptance of the terms and general conditions of the Model Grant Agreement. Requests to modify the terms and general conditions of the Grant Agreement will not be considered.

Indirect costs may be included in the amount requested from the Union, representing up to 7% of the Union contribution, and must be included in the €300,000 award ceiling. An amount of up to 7% in indirect costs may also be included as a proportion of the matching costs provided by the applicant. The same principle applies if supplemental funding is requested for both the network coordinator and outreach coordinator roles in addition to the €300,000 for core programming. In-kind contributions are not eligible and will not be taken into account when calculating the grant.

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<sup>5</sup> 'Certified' means that a responsible institutional official must affirm by signed letter that any copied receipts and other documents submitted are authentic copies of the originals.