

## Request for Innovation Fund Grant Proposals

*Supported by The Mary Street Jenkins Foundation*

**Issuance Date:** October 9, 2018  
**Question/Answer Period:** October 9, 2018 – January 18, 2019  
Submit at [www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions).  
**Closing Date/Time:** January 31, 2019

### **Subject: Request for Proposals for Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Competition**

Dear Applicants,

Partners of the Americas (Partners), the U.S. Department of State (DOS), and NAFSA: Association of International Educators (NAFSA) announce a new Innovation Fund grant competition to create higher education institutional partnerships between Mexico and the United States.

The *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund is the public-private sector collaboration between the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassies, Partners of the Americas, NAFSA, corporations, and foundations working together to stimulate new higher education partnerships between the United States and the rest of the Western Hemisphere. The central mechanism to support this hemispheric-wide education initiative is the Innovation Fund, which builds bridges of connectivity, enhances institutional capacity, increases student exchanges, and strengthens regional education cooperation throughout the Americas.

Since its inception in January 2014, the Innovation Fund has awarded 178 grants to more than 350 teams of universities and colleges in 25 countries and 41 U.S. states. Higher education institutions in Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Peru, and Chile are currently the top six countries in the region to engage with the Innovation Fund in partnerships with U.S. universities and colleges.

Innovation Fund grant winning institutions provide students with access to short-term exchange and training opportunities in the United States, Latin America, and Caribbean. Students gain technical, linguistic, and cross-cultural skills, work in teams, conduct research, solve real-world problems, and become better prepared for today's workforce. Currently, over 1,800 higher education institutions have joined the Innovation Network, with 1,000 universities and colleges located in the United States.

For more information about current partner organizations that support the Innovation Fund and grant winning teams, please visit: [www.100kstrongamericas.org](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org).

**The Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Innovation Competition** is supported through a generous contribution from the Jenkins Foundation. Since 1954, the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation has promoted the growth and prosperity of Mexico by improving the quality of life of its people by spreading hope. The organization was founded by Guillermo Oscar Jenkins and his wife, Mary Street Jenkins, who moved to Mexico from the United States in 1901. After being the first to build a nursery for working mothers at the Corona factory and several schools at Atencingo sugar refinery, the Jenkins family continued to give back to their community, supporting culture, education, health, and sports for nearly 65 years. Today, the impact of the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation is clear. Young people have benefited from thousands of scholarships, schools, and sports centers, and the overall quality of life in the State of Puebla has improved due to the development of rural clinics and hospitals, as well as the provision of clean drinking water and public services in rural communities.

The Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Innovation Competition is open to all higher education institutions (HEIs) in the **United States and Mexico**.

Grant proposals should focus on creating new student exchange and training opportunities between both countries in the fields of **Social Sciences and Humanities**. Special consideration will be given to proposals that focus on academic areas of **Archaeology, Anthropology, or Education**, and exchange programs that would benefit economically-disadvantaged and/or racial/ethnic minority student populations.

The intent of the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Competition is to award up to **eight (8) Innovation Fund Grants** of \$25,000 to selected proposals, pending the final evaluation process.

The Department of State, Partners of the Americas, NAFSA, and the Jenkins Foundation reserve the right to fund any or none of the Innovation Fund grant proposals submitted for consideration. Please refer to Section I: “Funding Opportunity Description”, for a complete statement of goals and expected results.

## **Table of Contents**

Section I: Funding Opportunity Description.....	1
Section II: Eligibility Information .....	2
Section III: Award Information .....	3
Section IV: Proposal Submission.....	4
Section V: Anticipated Timeline .....	5
Section VI: Agency Contacts.....	5

## Section I: Funding Opportunity Description

### A. Purpose of this Innovation Fund Grant Competition

The purpose of the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Innovation Competition is to provide more opportunities for higher education institutions (HEIs) in the United States and Mexico to work together to provide new student exchange and training programs between both countries. The HEIs that are eligible for this grant competition include universities (public and private), colleges, technical/vocational schools, and other post-secondary institutions with credit-bearing programs.

This grant competition seeks proposals from teams of HEIs in Mexico and the U.S. that will increase student exchange and training in the fields of **Social Sciences and Humanities**. Proposals in the following academic disciplines will be given special consideration: **Archaeology, Anthropology, Education** and exchange programs that include and will benefit *economically-disadvantaged and/or racial/ethnic minority student populations* in both countries.

Proposed activities, including program design and planning, should take place beginning in August 2019 through July 2020; however, grant proposals may include information on activities that have occurred prior to this period that would provide the background and to demonstrate efforts in laying the groundwork for the proposed program, as well as activities beyond these dates in order to demonstrate continuation of the program beyond the grant period. Short-term and long-term programs are eligible. Students must receive some level of credit from their home institution.

Applicants should focus on presenting innovative ideas, practices, or models that will increase outbound opportunities for their students; expand the capacity for the partner institution(s) to host them or to reciprocate the exchange by sending students; expand their own capacity to host international students; or integrate increased flow in both directions. Applicants may propose to provide small scholarships to students in order to have an impact on their study abroad decisions as well as their ability to find a way to follow through on their study abroad plans. Another example is to incorporate variations on traditional study abroad models, such as student and faculty engagement through service learning.

We encourage grant proposals that include best practices and address topics discussed from *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund workshops and the [Latin American Forum at NAFSA](#). Topics include accreditation and credit transfer, community engagement, entrepreneurship, diversity and inclusion, inter-departmental collaboration, language training, public-private sector engagement, safety and security, student recruitment, technical skills development/training, and technology development, among others.

Applicant institutions should highlight in their proposals how this initial, incentive grant from the Innovation Fund would set into motion additional future plans and resources from the partnering institutions to continue to expand student exchange programs between Mexico and the United States beyond the Innovation Fund grant period.

## B. Expected Results

Higher education institutions that are successful in implementing Innovation Fund grants will demonstrate increased capacity to develop and administer programs that receive and/or send students between the United States and Mexico. These teams of HEIs will:

- Increase the number of students studying between Mexico and the United States;
- Demonstrate increased awareness of the barriers to student exchange opportunities;
- Design/implement new exchange/training models to engage students in Mexico and the United States; and
- Demonstrate continuation of effective partnerships with HEIs in Mexico and the United States beyond the initial Innovation Fund grant period.

## Section II: Eligibility Information

Higher education institutions located and legally registered in Mexico and the United States are eligible to apply for the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Innovation Competition. This competition seeks to receive applications from a diversity of HEIs, including public and private; four-year and shorter-term degree-issuing institutions; and large, small, rural, and urban institutions. The intention of selecting from these categories is to ensure representation of the broadest diversity of institutional profiles, so that successful innovations have the greatest possibility of replication across institutions and ultimately reaching the overall goal of the *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund. Proposals may involve new institutional partnerships or build on existing partnerships, but in all cases, should demonstrate strong institutional support and should focus on creating sustainable exchange programs among the proposed partnering institutions.

As autonomous institutions dedicated to the promotion of mutual understanding between Mexico and the United States, bi-national centers (BNCs) are also eligible to compete for the Jenkins Foundation Innovation Competition. **NOTE:** If a BNC is applying as the prime applicant, it must do so in partnership with at least one Mexican HEI, in addition to a proposed HEI in the United States. Also, if a BNC is entering as the prime applicant and is unable to issue credit themselves, they must ensure that students who participate in the proposed exchange program will receive some level of academic credit from the proposed HEI in Mexico and/or the United States. Proposals whose primary focus is support for BNC language training programs as preparation for study abroad are not eligible.

**Innovation Fund grant proposals for this Competition must include a partnership between at least one higher education institution in the U.S. and one higher education institution in Mexico.**

In order to increase the diversity of participating institutions, the Review Committee reserves the right to give preference to institutions that have not previously received Innovation Fund grants. However, all HEIs (including previous grant winners) are encouraged to apply.

## Section III: Award Information

### A. Estimate of Funds Available and Number of Awards Envisioned

The intent of the Mary Street Jenkins Foundation Innovation Competition is to award up to eight (8) Innovation Fund grants of up to \$25,000 to selected proposals. Partners of the Americas, the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) at the U.S. Department of State, NAFSA, and the Jenkins Foundation reserve the right to fund any or none of the applications submitted.

### B. Notification of Award Recipients

Winning institutions will be notified no later than May 31, 2019. The list of grant recipients will be published on [www.100kstrongamericas.org](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org).

### C. Period of Performance

Following the notification, Partners will inform recipients of the next steps to formalize and receive the award. The period of performance will be from August 1, 2019 to July 31, 2020, with the possibility of negotiating the start date and/or end date following an analysis of the program at the time of the request.

### D. Award Responsibilities

#### 1. Grant Recipients

Grant recipients will be responsible for sharing up-to-date information on the Innovation Fund grant program activities through required reports provided by Partners that will focus on:

- Progress on program goals and objectives, including student and faculty travel;
- Successes, challenges, and lessons learned in program implementation and evaluation;
- Testimonials on how the grant benefits students and institutions; and
- Program expenditures and cost-sharing.

#### 2. Innovation Fund Staff

The Innovation Fund staff at Partners will be involved in the following areas:

- Review of the recipient's progress reports;
- Approval of budget changes and additional expenditures;
- Approval of changes in program personnel;
- Approval of program extensions; and
- Request for additional information on program and student/faculty engagement.

## Section IV: Proposal Submission

### A. Proposal Format

Applications must not exceed a total of 25 pages and must utilize 12-pt Times New Roman font, single-spaced, typed in standard 8 ½" x 11" paper with one-inch margins, and each page numbered consecutively. Keep in mind the page limitations for each section of the proposal application as listed below. Any additional pages that exceed the page limitations will not be reviewed by the Review Committee.

- Cover Page (1 page)
- Table of Contents (1 page)
- Technical Narrative (10 pages max)
- Budget (3 pages max)
- Annexes (10 pages max)

A detailed description of the application format and requirements can be found at [www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org/app-format/).

### B. Online Submission Process

Proposals must be submitted online through the Application Form found on the *100,000 Strong in the Americas* website ([www.100kstrongamericas.org/grants](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org/grants)) by the deadline indicated on the cover page of this RFP. Applications that are received late or are incomplete will not be considered in the review process. No applications will be accepted via email unless otherwise instructed by Partners of the Americas. **Applications may only be submitted in English.**

**Note:** Prospective applicant institutions seeking information or clarification about this competition should complete the online form at [www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions).

It is recommended that interested applicants review the questions and answers submitted in past competitions at [www.100kstrongamericas.org/100k-competition-faqs](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org/100k-competition-faqs).

### C. Proposal Evaluation

All applications received by the closing date will be reviewed for responsiveness and programmatic merit in accordance with the specifications outlined in these guidelines and the [application format web page](#). Proposals will be evaluated by a panel of experts organized by the Innovation Fund. All information provided in the applications remains confidential and will only be used for no other purposes than to complete the evaluation. Reviewers are required to be bound by agreements of confidentiality and conflicts of interest prior to participating in the review panel.

## Section V: Anticipated Timeline

ACTIVITY	TIME PERIOD
Launch of Grant Competition	October 9, 2018
Application Period	October 9, 2018 – January 31, 2019
Close of Grant Competition	January 31, 2019
Proposal Evaluation Process	February 1, 2018 – April 30, 2019
Notification of Status of Proposal	By May 31, 2019
Award of Grant Funds to Winners	June – July 2019
Period of Performance for Grantees	August 1, 2019 – July 31, 2020

## Section VI: Agency Contacts

Questions concerning this RFP must be sent via [www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions](http://www.100kstrongamericas.org/questions) prior to the deadline mentioned on the cover page of this document. **No phone calls.**



**PARTNERS**  
*of the AMERICAS*



*100,000 Strong in the Americas is supported by the U.S. Department of State in partnership with Partners of the Americas and NAFSA: Association of International Educators.*