

Sponsor/Title: Department of State (DOS) - FY 2026 Ngawang Choephel Fellows Program

External Link: <https://www.grants.gov/search-results-detail/361401>

Funding Opportunity Number: DFOP0017864

Submission Limitation per Institution: One (1)

Notre Dame Limited Submissions Listing:

<https://research.nd.edu/our-services/funding-opportunities/faculty/limited-submissions-program/>

Internal Expression of Interest Deadline: 2026-03-17

Sponsor Application Deadline: 2026-05-01

Purpose: The Global Leaders Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges at the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) is seeking proposal submissions for one to two cooperative agreements to design, implement, and oversee the FY 2026 Ngawang Choephel Fellows Program. Launched in 1997, the Ngawang Choephel Fellows Program is a two-way economic exchange program designed to enhance leadership and professional skills and build lasting partnerships between emerging entrepreneurs from Tibetan communities in China, India, Nepal and Bhutan, and the United States. The defining element of the program is a minimum four-week U.S.-based exchange which will provide Fellows with opportunities to discuss and share best practices for initiating and supporting business and/or community initiatives.

The award recipient will be responsible for planning and administering all components of the Ngawang Choephel Fellows Program. The non-U.S. Fellow component will feature a series of virtual engagement opportunities leading up to a minimum four-week U.S.-based exchange for up to 25 participants. This component will consist of professional and leadership development activities which may include, but shall not be limited to: trainings, workshops, site visits, job shadowing, team building exercises, panel discussions, case studies, resource-sharing, and networking events. The U.S. Fellows component will enable up to 10 U.S. professionals, who engaged with the non-U.S. Fellows during the course of their program, to travel to India, Nepal or Bhutan for approximately two weeks to assist the non-U.S. Fellows' follow-on plans and conduct alumni engagement activities.

Goals and Objectives: The program has the following broad goals:

1. Strengthen Indo-Pacific partnerships and deter authoritarian aggression by championing Tibetan self-determination and countering Chinese economic coercion across the region.
2. Strengthen the business and leadership skills of Ngawang Choephel Fellows to facilitate commercial engagement with U.S. companies, expand U.S. exports, and promote American business practices.
3. Advance U.S. economic interests and global leadership by fostering business partnerships between entrepreneurs from Tibetan communities in China, India, Nepal and Bhutan and the United States.
4. Build a network of entrepreneurs and U.S. business partners committed to supporting American economic growth, job creation, and commercial leadership in the region.
5. Leverage technology to facilitate application, training, networking, and alumni engagement, ensuring seamless collaboration and measurable outcomes.

Internal Application Requirements: Upload the following information to the Google Form at <https://forms.gle/BzmaWZ9dSFDZbMUx9> by the internal deadline:

- Name of the Principal Investigator (PI)
- Project Title
- All ND Collaborators:
 - For each ND Collaborator listed, include name, department or unit, and specific role for this project in three sentences (maximum).
- Project Summary: Three (3) pages (maximum) addressing the following Review Criteria as outlined on page 27, in the NOFO.
 - Quality of the program idea
 - Program planning and purpose
 - Multiplier effect/impact
 - Institutional Capacity and Record/Ability
 - Follow-on Activities
 - Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E)

Questions: Contact Notre Dame Research Limited Submissions at limited@nd.edu.

Unless otherwise noted, all internal applications are due by 11:59 PM Eastern Time on the internal expression of interest deadline.

Applications submitted after the deadline will not be accepted.