

**BASES OF THE CALL  
V SPANISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE COURSE FOR TOURIST GUIDES AND UNDERGRADUATE AND  
GRADUATE STUDENTS FROM FEALAC EAST ASIAN COUNTRIES  
ELE FOCALAE  
AUGUST-NOVEMBER 2017**

## **1. OVERVIEW**

### **1.1. Description**

#### **¿What is ELE FOCALAE?**

The ELE FOCALAE initiative was born in 2012 with the visit of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Patti Londoño Jaramillo, to some countries of Southeast Asia. During this visit, tourism authorities in the region highlighted the increase in tourists coming from Spanish-speaking countries and asked the Colombian Government for their collaboration to train their tour guides in Spanish.

Colombia's commitment was formalized at subsequent meetings of the Working Group on Culture, Sport, and Education of the Latin American and East Asian Cooperation Forum (FOCALAE), made up of eighteen countries in Latin America and sixteen countries in East Asia.

Thus, in 2012, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Colombia convened the Colombian International Cooperation Agency APC-Colombia, ICETEX, Instituto Caro y Cuervo and institutions of higher education with recognized programs of teaching Spanish as a language to develop the initiative, which has been carried out since 2013 thanks to the joint work of these entities and receives each year 60 fellows to learn Spanish in Colombia.

In 2016, in the fourth version of the initiative, 32 tour guides and 28 students came from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam, China, Mongolia, Myanmar, Philippines, Cambodia, South Korea, Brunei and New Zealand. The host universities were the Universidad Autónoma de Bucaramanga and Universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino in Bucaramanga; EAFIT and Universidad Pontificia Bolivariana in Medellín; Universidad la Gran Colombia in Armenia; Universidad de Caldas in Manizales; Pontificia Universidad Javeriana and Universidad de la Sabana in Bogotá.

A total of 223 tourist guides, journalists with an emphasis on tourism, and undergraduate and graduate students from East Asia have been benefited by the initiative, which opens the door to cultural and commercial exchange and the growth of tourism from Asia to Colombia. In addition, it seeks to contribute to the internationalization of Colombian educational institutions and consolidate the country's offer in Spanish language teaching.

In its four years of existence, nearly 700 people have come forward to participate in the initiative and the postulation has increased by more than 60% from 2013 to 2016, which testifies to the growing interest in the Latin American region in the countries of East Asia.

#### **Why is it important for Colombia?**

During its four years of execution, this program has strengthened the linguistic and cultural approach between Colombia and the countries of East Asia, members of FEALAC. Continuing the initiative is convenient for developing a foreign policy that seeks to position the country as a language learning destination, strengthen international cooperation strategies, diversify the thematic and geographical agenda and to boost cultural, touristic and educational approaches with Asia.

#### **What is ELE FOCALAE main goal?**

It aims to strengthen mutual understanding, trust, political dialogue and friendly cooperation between Colombia and East Asia through the teaching of Spanish as a foreign language and the promotion of the linguistic, cultural and touristic values of Colombia.

The initiative seeks to develop three components to achieve this goal:

- On the one hand, it helps tourist guides to improve their interaction skills with Spanish-speaking visitors. In addition, it aims to position the country as an important destination for learning Spanish in beneficiary countries and among people visiting those countries.
- In the educational area, it seeks to foster academic mobility in a double way through the participation of undergraduate and graduate students. It is hoped that they will contribute to mutual knowledge from the academy, as well as to the generation of lasting ties between institutions of higher education of the two regions.
- From the cultural point of view, it seeks that beneficiaries have the opportunity to know the different Colombian cultural expressions through gastronomy, typical dances, landscapes, etc. Their presence in the country is very enriching so that our nationals get to know other traditions and cultural expressions.

## **1.2. V version of the ELE FOCALAE initiative**

Taking into consideration the positive results obtained so far, in 2017 the Government of Colombia decided to continue this initiative in the terms detailed below:

### **a. Number of scholarships**

Up to 60 scholarships will be offered for tourist guides and undergraduate and graduate students from FEALAC countries interested in learning Spanish as a foreign language.

### **b. Training activities**

The course will be offered for one academic semester (approximately 4 months) and will be held in Colombian universities recognized for the high quality of their Spanish as a foreign language programs. During their studies, the fellows will have to carry out the following types of activities:

#### **o Academic activities**

They are related to the main component of the initiative, which is the teaching and learning of Spanish as a foreign language. They include both the classroom classes and the extracurricular tasks and activities programmed by host universities to guide the process of formation. The courses have a minimum intensity of 15 hours per week and each university is autonomous to set a higher hour intensity.

#### **o Volunteering activities**

This component is complementary to the process of learning Spanish. Its objective is to generate a greater approximation of the beneficiaries to the Colombian reality; contribute to the development of activities of interest to universities; support socially oriented projects; and generate greater exchange and socialization with the academic community.

Fellows must complete a minimum of 10 hours of volunteering. The activities are assigned by each university with guidance and follow-up of the Government of Colombia.

#### **o Cultural activities**

This component seeks to facilitate the mutual knowledge between both regions from the customs, traditions, food and other cultural expressions characteristic of Colombia and the origin countries of the scholars. They include cultural exhibitions, dances, gastronomic shows and related activities that will be programmed by the universities or in coordination with them.

Each university manages its own academic curriculum of teaching Spanish as a foreign language, as well as its volunteering programs, which is why there are differences between them. The assignment of the beneficiaries to the Universities will be carried out exclusively by the Government of Colombia and is not subject to any change.

### **c. Spanish certification exam**

The exam "Servicio Internacional de Evaluación de la Lengua Española" (SIELE) will be applied at the end of the course and will provide the scholars with an international support of their language sufficiency.

### **d. Contest "A Colombian from another world"**

This contest seeks to facilitate the approach to the day-to-day experiences of the scholars in Colombia. The central idea is that during their stay in the country they share their life experiences and language learning with the hashtag #SoyELEFocalae, through photographs, videos, gifs, boomerangs and collage, among others, published in social networks Twitter and Instagram. Also, those who participate must publish Spanish blog posts through the "Storify" platform on topics of their choice.

The prize will be awarded to two scholars, taking into consideration the following evaluation criteria:

- Using the hashtag #SoyELFocalae
- Creativity
- Contents
- Periodicity of publications
- The use of Spanish
- Have at least one blog entry in Spanish

The winners will have the opportunity to visit one of the National Parks of Colombia with tickets, accommodation and guided tour covered.

## **1.3. Target group**

- Tourist guides duly certified by the National Tourism Authority or Competent Authorities of their countries.

- Undergraduate students currently in their last two (2) academic semesters in any area and postgraduate students. The Government of Colombia will prioritize candidates who are studying courses related to Latin-American Studies, International Business, International Relations, International Trade, Business, Management and Foreign Languages.

## 2. REQUIRED PROFILE

- Be nationals from East Asian countries that are members of FEALAC.
- Be tourist guides duly certified or students who have outstanding academic results and are enrolled in the last academic year of their undergraduate course or in a postgraduate course.
- Have a good knowledge of English (level B1).
- Have good physical and mental health.
- Have been born between January 1, 1977 and December 31, 1997.
- Accept and carry out the rules of this 2017 initiative, submitted as **Annex I** of this document.
- Have the necessary resources to cover the costs of the first month of their stay in Colombia. It is suggested a minimum amount of \$600 (six hundred) US dollars.
- Preferably have basic knowledge of Spanish (level A1).
- Have not participated in past versions of this initiative, developed since 2013.

## 3. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

- **Application form completed**, which will be available on the webpage of the Colombian Embassies in the member countries of FEALAC. Point 8 below has the list of Colombian Diplomatic Missions with their contact details.
- A recent passport photo (3.5 x 4 cms).
- Copy of the principal passport page, containing biographical information. The passport must have a minimum validity of one year after the start of the program.
- Just for tourist guides: Acceptance letter or authorization of enrollment issued by the National Tourism Authority or Competent Authorities of their countries.
- Just for undergraduate and postgraduate students: Cover letter issued by University where enrolled that includes the Grade Point Average (GPA) of the candidate.
- For postgraduate students: copy of Undergraduate diploma.
- Medical certificate in English, signed by a doctor, certifying that the candidate is in good physical and mental health in order to take the course in Colombia.
- Documents evidencing the candidate has a proficient knowledge of English, equal or greater than B1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.
- Letter of acceptance signed by the candidate, submitted as **Annex II** in this document, to be signed only by the final beneficiaries.

Documents must be sent to the following e-mail: [elefocalae@heartforchange.org](mailto:elefocalae@heartforchange.org)

## 4. BENEFITS OF THE SCHOLARSHIP

- Round trip, air ticket in economy class from the capital of the home country to the Colombian city where the course will take place. The Colombian government will be responsible for assigning the placement city.
- Monthly stipend of one million six hundred (1.600.000) Colombian pesos for the beneficiary in order to cover basic living expenses, such as accommodation, local transport, and the cost of meals in Colombia. The monthly stipend will be proportional to the number of days of the beneficiaries' stay in Colombia, and will be paid once per month in arrears subject to the assistance to the Spanish lessons by the beneficiary. It will be checked through report, which will be submitted by the University to the Colombian authorities. Point 9 below presents detailed information about the monthly payments.
- Tuition scholarship for the Spanish as a foreign language course.
- International Health Insurance, whose coverage is presented as **Annex III** to this document.
- Courtesy Visa during the progress of the course, which be granted for a time of three (3) months and renovated in Colombia before its expiry date.
- SIELE exam to obtain Spanish as a foreign language certification.

Note: Any extracurricular activities that trainees wish to do at Colombian host universities must be carried out on their account and will not be financed by the Government of Colombia.

## 5. APPLICATION PERIOD

- Begins: March 10, 2017
- Submission deadline: April 21, 2017, 12 p.m. Bogotá time.

## 6. SCHOLARSHIP SUSPENSION OR TERMINATION

The Government of the Colombian Republic reserves the right to terminate the scholarship and withdraw its support any time, if any of the following situations occur:

- Non-compliance of the stipulated regulations of the initiative submitted in [Annex I](#).
- Checking by entities related to the initiative of the inaccuracy of the data provided by the fellow in the selection process.
- Being excluded from the Colombia University according to the rules of the institution.
- For reasons of serious illness or mental disability.
- Violation of Colombian laws.

## 7. TIMELINE OF THE PROGRAM

Dates in Colombia	Activity
March 10, 2017	Launching of the call: the applicant must fill out the application form in the link that will be available on the pages of the Colombian embassies, enclosing in PDF format the documents required in the bases of the call to the given e-mail.
April 21, 2017	Closing of the call.
April 24, 2017	Pre-selection process of candidates by the Colombian Government.
April 25, 2017	Notification by the Colombian Embassies of pre-selected candidates.
April 26 to May 3, 2017	Interviews to candidates through Skype by the Government of Colombia.
May 4, 2017	Final selection of candidates.
May 5, 2017	The Colombian Embassies will publish on their webpages the results of the selection process and will introduce the logistical coordinator of the initiative.
May 9, 2017	The selected students will present a test in their home countries in order to determinate their level of Spanish at the beginning of the course.
May 12, 2017	Acceptance letter of the scholarship signed by the fellows has to be sent to the Colombian Government through the operative coordinator of the program.
May 23 to 26, 2017	Remission of an information package to the scholarship holders, which will include air tickets, international medical insurance, the guide of the city where they will take the Spanish as a foreign language course, information on accommodation possibilities and application visa guide.
June 27 to July 7, 2017	Visas application by the fellows to enter the country.
July 11 to 13, 2017	Arrival of scholars to Colombia.
July 14, 2017	Welcome event at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
July 17 to 19, 2017	Training activities with the trainees developed by the operator of the initiative.
July 20 to 23, 2017	Departure to the designated cities other than Bogota.
24 to 30 July, 2017	Induction at the universities according to their internal schedules.
August 1st, 2017	Beginning of Spanish as a foreign language courses. Start of the contest "A Colombian from another world".
September 19 to 30, 2017	First round of follow-up meetings with each university made by the Government of Colombia.
October 13, 2017	Closing of the contest "A Colombian from another world".
October 20 to 21, 2017	Selection and notification of winners of the contest "A Colombian from another world".
October 18 to 25, 2017	Cultural presentations with the scholars in each university and second round of follow-up meetings.

November 4 to 6, 2017	Tour of the winners of the contest "A Colombian from another world".
November 14 to 17, 2017	Application of evaluation surveys of the initiative to fellows and universities.
November 17, 2017	Completion of Spanish courses and volunteering activities.
November 22, 2017	Application of Spanish certification exam in the Hacienda Yerbabuena of the Instituto Caro y Cuervo.
November 23, 2017	Closing event. Place: Hacienda Yerbabuena of the Instituto Caro y Cuervo.
November 23 to 25, 2017	Scholars return to their home countries.