POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

Project Manager / Post-Doctoral Researcher

Exploring the Potential Nexus between Organized Crime and Radiological / Nuclear Terrorism in the Central American Region

The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) is hiring a full-time Project Manager / Post-Doctoral Researcher to work at START’s headquarters at the University of Maryland, College Park. The post-doctoral researcher will play a central role in a large, multiyear study assessing the potential nexus between organized crime and radiological / nuclear smuggling in the Central American region. This is a full-time, non-tenure track faculty position, with an initial term of 12 months (starting in October 2010).

Responsibilities:

The Post-Doctoral Researcher will manage the day-to-day operations of the project as part of a multidisciplinary, multi-institutional team, as well as conducting substantive research, including literature reviews, organizational profiles, case studies and analysis.

Primary duties will include:

- Coordination of a research team of several researchers, including facilitating collaboration, scheduling research activities and maintaining a high level of communication across the research team.
- Managing all reporting requirements to the project sponsor.
- Supporting research under several research topics. This will include, but is not limited to, identifying, collecting and summarizing open-source information on transnational criminal organizations. It will also include the production of a variety of case studies, such as examples of smuggling of rare artifacts or behavioral profiles of nuclear materials smugglers.
- Reviewing all expenses associated with the project.
- Assisting with the preparation, editing and publication of all final reports and other products of the research.

The Post-Doctoral Researcher will report directly to the project’s Principal Investigators and will work closely with senior researchers at both the University of Maryland and the Ridgway Center at the University of Pittsburgh.

Qualifications:

- PhD in criminology, political science or a related discipline relevant to the nature of this project.
- At least 2 years of experience in a coordinating role as part of a substantial, collaborative research effort.
- Graduate level coursework in qualitative research design and methodology.
- Superior communication skills (both written and oral).

Preference will be given to candidates with graduate level coursework or practical experience in areas related to transnational organized crime or the Central American region (including the Caribbean). Preference also will be given to applicants with demonstrated experience in systematic data collection and analysis from a range of open-source resources.

Description of Project:

While often asserted as a threat in the media and by pundits, there has been little robust empirical, theoretically-grounded examination of a potential nexus between transnational criminal organizations (TCOs) and terrorist organizations with respect to weapons of mass destruction. The National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START) has assembled a multi-disciplinary research team consisting of renowned scholars and specialists in the areas of organized crime, terrorism, nonproliferation and smuggling and proposes to conduct research examining the prospective dynamics of such a nexus specifically with respect to nuclear and radiological (RN) materials and focusing on the Central American region (including the Caribbean). The research will approach the question from the vantage point of why, given the apparent ease with which TCOs in this region seem to be able to smuggle a wide variety of items—from illegal narcotics to human beings into the U.S. homeland—they could not utilize the same avenues to smuggle RN materials (or weapons) on behalf of terrorist actors seeking to attack the United States. Answering this question will require understanding both the motives and capabilities of the parties involved.

Position Details:

The annual salary for this position will be commensurate with education level and experience (starting at $50,000) plus full University of Maryland benefits (as explained at http://www.uhr.umd.edu/documents/new_hire_overview_exempt-faculty_rev_070710.pdf). The person selected for this position will work on site on campus at the University of Maryland, College Park.

Qualified applicants should submit a cover letter, CV, and unofficial transcripts for graduate coursework via email (with subject line “Org Crime Post-Doc Position”) to infostart@start.umd.edu. Please include contact information for two references with your application. Applicants may also submit relevant publications (i.e., conference papers, journal articles, white papers, etc.).

Applicants will be reviewed on a rolling basis until the position is filled. Candidates are encouraged to apply by October 12, 2010, for best consideration.

Women and minorities are encouraged to apply. The University of Maryland is an equal opportunity, affirmative action employer.