



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM (CSP)

The Community Solutions Program (CSP), sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and implemented by IREX, provides the best and brightest community leaders, ages 25 to 38, from around the world with an intensive, professional development exchange program that includes a substantive hands-on learning experience in the United States from August to December 2019. Community Solutions Fellows gain valuable experience in community work and strengthen their capacity for leadership and development in their home countries.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- Applicants must be between the ages of 25-38 as of January 1, 2019
- Applicants must have at least two years of experience working on community development, either as a full-time or part-time employee or volunteer
- Applicants must be living and working in their home country (individuals with refugee status working on behalf of their home community may be given special consideration)
- Applicants must have a high level of proficiency in spoken and written English

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

Four-month U.S.-based fellowship: CSP fellows are matched with non-profit organizations, private entities, and government offices across the United States where they work with U.S. colleagues on initiatives related to issues they face in their own communities. Community Solutions leaders work in one of four technical areas: Environmental Issues, Tolerance and Conflict Resolution, Transparency and Accountability, and Women and Gender Issues. For example: A gender-rights activist from Vietnam focused on reducing human trafficking works with YWCA on human trafficking in Houston, Texas.

Community Leadership Institute: The Community Leadership Institute (CLI) is a leadership academy that provides customized learning and coaching to each CSP Leader. The CLI uses a blended-learning approach, where leaders participate in online sessions and in-person workshops, receive professional coaching, engage in experiential learning, and interact with other professionals in their field.

Community-based initiatives: CSP fellows develop innovative community action projects in collaboration with their U.S. host institutions and implement these projects after they return to their home countries to integrate their new skills and knowledge into their community work at home. Project summaries are made available online, allowing fellows to share their work with other community leaders around the world.

International network of community development professionals: CSP fellows continue to network and collaborate with like-minded leaders from around the world on global development issues through alumni activities and opportunities offered through the Community Leadership Institute online platform.

ELIGIBLE COUNTRIES BY REGION

Africa: Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe

East Asia and the Pacific: Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam

Europe: Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey, and Ukraine

Middle East and North Africa: Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Syria, Tunisia, and West Bank/Palestinian Territories

South and Central Asia: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan

Western Hemisphere: Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Paraguay, Peru, Trinidad and Tobago, and Uruguay

PROJECT IMPACT TO DATE

- Over 300 U.S. organizations in 90 U.S. cities have hosted CSP fellows, making life-long international connections.
- 559 grassroots leaders from 79 countries have participated in the Community Solutions Program since 2011.
- Over the past six years, CSP alumni have impacted over 260,000 individuals with their community development initiatives.
- 100% of CSP hosts provide in-kind contributions to the program, including staff time and expertise and office space and support that has resulted in over two million dollars since the program began.

CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS PROGRAM

- For questions, email IREX at: csp@irex.org
- For more information about the program and application details, see our website: www.irex.org/csp; <https://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/community-solutions>
- For updates on program activities and alumni, follow us on social media:
Facebook: [@CommunitySolutionsProgram](https://www.facebook.com/CommunitySolutionsProgram) and [@ExchangeProgramsAtState](https://www.facebook.com/ExchangeProgramsAtState)
Twitter: [@cspeairex](https://twitter.com/cspeairex) and [@ECAatState](https://twitter.com/ECAatState)

KEY DATES FOR EMBASSY ENGAGEMENT

September 19 – October 31, 2018	Recruitment: PAS are encouraged to assist in the recruitment and outreach effort. This Recruitment Toolkit includes information about the program, a region-specific flyer, suggested outreach activities, and sample social media content.
November 2018 – February 2019	Selection: PAS is invited to read eligible applications and participate in the interview process for selected semi-finalists from their country of service. PAS will also have an opportunity to express any concerns about the semi-finalists from their country of service.
February 2019	Notification: PAS receives a list of selected finalists and alternates from their country of service. Applicants are notified if they have been selected by March 1.
March – April 2019	English language testing: Selected finalists complete English language testing. PAS is encouraged to provide finalists from their country of service with study resources, as available.
April – July 2019	J-1 Visa applications and interview: PAS assists selected finalists to apply for and obtain J-1 Visas.
June– July 2019	Pre-departure orientation and preparations: Selected finalists complete a program-specific virtual pre-departure orientation designed by IREX. We encourage PAS to host supplementary pre-departure preparation activities such as welcome receptions, pre-departure meetings, or other events as time and budgets permit.
August – December 2019	U.S. orientation and fellowship: IREX will share quarterly newsletters with PAS, updating staff on program activities and successes. All fellowship activities on social media will also be aggregated under #CSP2018. We encourage posts to share relevant #CSP2018 tweets and Facebook posts on their own social media accounts as time and staffing permit.
December 2019	Fellows return home: IREX will connect PAS with returning fellows and share fellows' proposed community-based initiatives. We encourage posts to welcome fellows home, host debriefs with them, and invite them to join existing alumni networks.
January – June 2020	Community-based initiatives: Fellows will implement the community-based initiatives they designed with their U.S. partners. We encourage PAS to share any funding opportunities and engage with returning fellows.
March – June 2020	Partnering for Stronger Communities: Selected alumni and U.S. partners will travel to give technical support to selected community-based initiatives of current Fellows. We will work with alumni and U.S. partners to engage PAS in their countries of travel and proposed activities.