



## **2025 Grant Guidelines**

Congressional Office for International Leadership  
Open World Program

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## CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

### **OPEN WORLD PROGRAM CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP 2025 GRANT GUIDELINES**

#### **Introduction**

The Congressional Office for International Leadership (COIL) is a legislative branch agency that supports the U.S. Congress by hosting international visitors on the Open World program.

#### **Mission Statement**

COIL engages Members of Congress and their constituents in congressional and citizen diplomacy with political and civic leaders from around the globe. COIL achieves this through the Open World program, a ten-day professional exchange dedicated to strengthening mutual understanding and sharing best practices in accountable governance, civil society, the private sector, and the rule of law.

#### **Open World Program**

The Open World program is a ten-day professional exchange built on the foundational values of authentic communication and immersive cultural experiences. The program begins in Washington DC, where participants get acquainted with American federalism, culture, and leadership. Participants engage with Members of Congress and their staff to discuss common challenges and participate in unfiltered dialogue. Traveling to communities across the United States, participants meet with their professional counterparts to share expertise and establish lasting partnerships. During the program, participants stay with host families, giving them an intimate view of American life. The program allows American leaders and their counterparts from participating countries to engage constructively with one another in a manner that complements the U.S. Congress's legislative diplomacy efforts on a wide array of timely issues.

#### **History**

Congress founded the COIL in 1999 as the Center for Russian Leadership Development under the leadership of Librarian of Congress James H. Billington. Through a coalition of congressional, embassy, and NGO allies, the new congressional agency's Open World program invited more than 2,500 Russians to American communities in its inaugural year. Soon, Congress approved the expansion of the Open World program to the 11 other former Soviet republics and Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. In response, the Board of Trustees reorganized the Center for Russian Leadership Development into the Open World Leadership Center in 2003 to reflect the broader geographic scope of the agency. Early on, these programs emphasized accountable governance, rule of law, and free

markets as the bases for an exchange of ideas between program participants and Americans, but programming evolved over time to include cultural leadership and technical expertise.

After a final name change in 2021 that better reflects its service to Congress, COIL remains the only exchange program of the legislative branch. Since 1999, COIL has brought more than 30,000 delegates to the United States on its programs and built a network of over 9,000 host families in nearly 2,100 communities throughout the United States.

Following the unprovoked Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, 2022, COIL has indefinitely suspended its Russia programming. In its place, COIL has emphasized Ukrainian programming in support of the war effort on themes such as medical practices and veterans' issues. Additionally, COIL began a program of "helping the helpers" of Ukrainian refugees in Moldova, Poland, and Romania and expanded its programming in the Baltics. COIL has also truly gone global with the start of Indo-Pacific programming in 2022 at the behest of Congress. COIL continues to serve Congress and the American people through the Open World program's facilitation of congressional and citizen diplomacy.

### **2025 Open World Program**

COIL will bring leaders from around the globe to the United States on the Open World program and strive to foster lasting ties that result in ongoing cooperation and collaboration. This solicitation seeks proposals to host participants in calendar year (CY) 2025 from the following countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Mongolia, North Macedonia, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Romania, Serbia, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu and Vietnam. COIL will give greater weight to those 2025 hosting proposals that (a) give participants significant exposure to federal, state, county, and local legislators; the structure and functions of legislatures; and the legislative process; (b) include planned meeting(s) with relevant Members of Congress and their staff; (c) are likely to produce new partnerships or further existing ones; (d) include specific follow-on project activities and significant projected results, such as plans for substantive future reverse travel;<sup>1</sup> (e) include collaborative programming with American young professionals organizations; and (f) provide for significant cost-sharing of program expenses. Some hosting proposals will be judged specifically for their ability to program as described in (a) above, especially in a state capital when the state legislature is in session.

Overall, the Open World program focuses on developing an international leadership network through which professional counterparts with mutual interests are able to consult and cooperate with each other on issues affecting their communities. Reflecting its identity as a U.S. legislative branch entity, COIL ensures that *all* delegations receive significant exposure to the role and procedures of American legislative bodies. As part of this focus, COIL asks local host organizations to set up meetings with Members of Congress, congressional staff, and state, county, and local legislators and their staff members, so that participants can review functions such as lawmaking, legislative oversight, and constituent relations with officials engaged in these activities. Participants should also learn about the effect of legislation on their exchange's assigned theme.

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<sup>1</sup> Reverse travel is when someone affiliated with an Open World U.S.-based exchange travels to a participating Open World country and meets with alumni during this visit. Open World cannot fund reverse travel or follow-on activities.

## 2025 GRANT PROCEDURES

### Grants Overview

**COIL intends to award grants for the hosting of 86 delegations under these guidelines for CY 2025.** Final CY 2025 hosting numbers will depend on available funding. The number of programs could decrease or increase before the end of the 2025 program year. Each delegation will consist of five delegates and one facilitator.<sup>2</sup> While some candidates are nominated by international organizations, most are nominated by U.S. and participating-country agencies and institutions. The Open World program looks for talented, emerging leaders. Candidates are vetted using the following criteria: (1) demonstrated leadership skills and a commitment to building a civil society; (2) extent of activities in one or more of the thematic areas for Open World exchanges; (3) participation in the political process, especially as legislative officeholders, candidates, or staff; (4) community involvement or volunteer work; and established U.S. ties or the potential to forge such ties. Ideal nominees will have no previous travel to the United States. English-language fluency is not required.

Program participants will participate in up to 10-day exchange programs<sup>3</sup> in the United States. Homestays with American host families are an integral element of the program and a requirement for Open World programs.

COIL invites U.S.-based organizations with established foreign visitor programs and/or demonstrated ability to host foreign visitors to propose hosting up to 86 delegations from the participating countries. Organizations proposing to host under this solicitation that have projects and/or partnerships with their colleagues in participating countries that wish to further those projects/partnerships through Open World programming are strongly encouraged to offer to defray and/or cover some of the costs of such programming. Such partner programming also provides the Grantee with the opportunity to nominate qualified candidates for their program. Such candidates would be held to the strict qualifications needed to be selected for participation in the Open World program.

COIL will award grants for hosting the delegations described in this solicitation to approved organizations that support its objectives (see below). Grantees may also be asked to host additional delegations that COIL may add to its CY 2025 calendar of programs in the future should funding allow.

**COIL may make additional funds available to grantees for a maximum additional two years at the government's sole discretion, without competition, subject to awardee's satisfactory performance under its current grant award, subject to the availability of funds and subject to the grantee's submission of an acceptable fundable proposal.**

**Proposals for all country programming in this solicitation are due close of business Monday, August 19, 2025. Please see page 42 for instructions on submitting proposals.**

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<sup>2</sup> Facilitators are co-nationals of the delegates, with excellent English skills and, usually, previous experience living in the United States. They will provide after-hours interpretation support, especially for meals and cultural events, along with facilitating logistical and cross-cultural matters.

<sup>3</sup> Delegations stay in Washington, DC, for two days to attend an orientation program hosted by COIL, and then spend eight days in the local host community. Exceptions may be made by COIL on an as-needed basis, and in close consultation with the appropriate grantee(s).

## Grant Guidelines Content

This document contains, in order:

- Eligibility requirements for a grant and programming priorities
- Open World program objectives
- Short hosting theme descriptions
- Proposed 2025 travel dates
- Grantee programming and administrative requirements
- Local-hosting document deadlines
- Results tracked by COIL
- Key dates and deadlines
- Criteria for evaluating grant applications
- A grant proposal outline
- Financial procedures, including methods of determining in-kind contributions
- Appendixes
  - Procurement guidelines
  - Cost principles
  - A cost share report form and instructions for reporting cost shares
  - A glossary of terms
  - Host Organization Profile Form

Please note: the section on results describes outcomes tracked by COIL and explains grantees' and local host organizations' roles in helping report them.

### Eligibility for a Grant from COIL and Programming Priorities

Any U.S.-based organization with either established foreign visitor programs or demonstrated ability to host foreign visitors is eligible. U.S.-based organizations with ongoing project activity or initiatives in any of the countries covered by this solicitation that can be furthered by an Open World program visit should describe this activity. An applicant proposal:

- Must demonstrate that the applicant organization has the ability, experience, and expertise to provide excellent programming in the Hosting Theme(s) for which it is applying and/or will establish cooperative agreements with expert local host organizations that can do so.<sup>4</sup>
- Will be given preference if it demonstrates that the applicant organization has the ability to provide programmatic activities with federal, state, county, and local legislators and legislative staff that will enhance the participants' understanding of the legislative process and the structure and functions of American legislative bodies.
- Will be given preference if it is likely to produce new partnerships or further existing ones.

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<sup>4</sup> Local host organizations for past Open World exchanges have included local affiliates of grantee organizations; colleges and university-based centers; and civic associations that have experience with international visitors. Each local host organization designates a local host coordinator who will have overall responsibility for the eight-day community visit.

- Will be given preference if it includes ideas for specific follow-on project activities and/or significant projected results.
- Will be given preference if it demonstrates how the applicant organization will involve one or more organizations composed of young American professionals<sup>5</sup> in providing some of the delegations' professional, networking, and cross-cultural programming. To the extent possible, such young professional organizations should be focused on activities relevant to a delegation's Hosting Theme.
- Will be given preference if its accompanying budget submission includes a significant cost share/in-kind contribution for Open World delegations, such as paying all or a significant portion of local hosting expenses, or all or portions of airfares.
- Will be given preference if it demonstrates how results (as defined on page 38 below) will be accomplished.

On a limited basis, COIL will permit organizations awarded 2025 Open World grants under these guidelines to nominate candidates for competitive delegate selection for exchanges that will support the organizations' ongoing or proposed projects/partnerships. **Any applicant organization that wishes to nominate candidates must include in its proposal a clear strategy for nominations that demonstrates the organization's ability to identify qualified candidates who match the Open World program's criteria.** If the applicant organization plans on having one or more participating-country organizations propose candidates for a specific hosting program, the rationale for using each organization, and each organization's complete contact information, must be included in the proposal. The nomination strategy must also demonstrate that the candidates will meet the program's selection criteria, enhance a community partnership and/or project, and/or foster long-term collaboration with U.S. counterparts.<sup>6</sup>

Any candidates nominated by grantees must submit the Open World program's standard participant application form and go through the same competitive, transparent vetting process as other nominees for the program. COIL will closely coordinate the nomination process with the relevant grantees, and grantees can submit their list of nominees in priority order. Please note that these programs receive extra scrutiny from the vetting committees, and if there are not sufficient finalists from the grantee's nominees, other Open World program finalists that fit the delegation will complete the delegation.

COIL also seeks proposals that, for one or more local programs, clearly specify the type(s) of participants desired (e.g., regional and local legislators, mayors, NGO leaders, media professionals) and/or localities that participants should come from, in order to have Open World exchanges that support specific projects or foster existing partnerships. Please make such requests very clear in any proposal.

## Objectives

Open World program participants include some of the participating countries' most dynamic, highly educated leaders, who are eager to share their experiences with Americans for a robust and mutually

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<sup>5</sup> Types of organizations include young-adult chapters of professional and business organizations; young-alumni associations, and young-adult branches of charitable organizations.

<sup>6</sup> If an applicant organization anticipates that one or more of its prospective subgrantees will want to nominate candidates, its proposal should include the information requested in this paragraph for each such prospective organization/subgrantee.

beneficial exchange of ideas—an element critical to our programming. Each proposed Open World program must ensure that participants have the opportunity to:

- Develop an understanding of the role of the U.S. Congress and state, county, and local legislatures in shaping, overseeing, and/or funding programs and institutions connected with the applicable Open World hosting theme and subtheme.
- Observe and learn about their American professional counterparts and their role in society/people who interact with them. For example, a delegation of mayors and other city officials might meet with the host community’s mayor, city manager, city council members, mayor’s office staff, key departmental staff, and local political reporters.
- Share their professional expertise through planned formal presentations, panel discussions, and/or roundtables with their American counterparts and contacts, and present information about their country’s culture, history, and current affairs to members of their host community (this is a program requirement).
- Develop an understanding of how citizens and interest groups work to affect the legislative process (at the federal, state, county, and local levels) on issues related to the participants’ hosting theme.
- Network with American professionals and hosts who are interested in maintaining contact beyond the eight-day community visit for ongoing cooperation and collaboration.
- Exchange views with influential representatives of appropriate federal, state, county, and local government agencies; legislators; civic organizations and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs); and the business and education communities.
- Participate in community events to gain an understanding of the role of community organizations and their interactions with all levels of government.
- Receive an overview of the relationships among:
  - a) the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state, county, and local government;
  - b) the business and civic communities and government; and
  - c) individual citizens and government.

Through the Open World program, the participants should also be introduced to basic concepts of American civil society so that they:

- Can make constructive comparisons with civil society organizations in their own country and identify best practices.
- Acquire an understanding of governance and the rule of law in a mature democratic society, including the concepts of accountability and transparency, the separation of powers, and the interrelationships of federal, state, county, and local governments.
- Acquire an understanding of the roles of American government, civic institutions, free enterprise, and voluntary organizations as they relate to the relevant Open World Hosting Theme.



- Acquire a better understanding of American culture and society and contribute to enhanced American knowledge of the Open World country’s society, culture, and institutions.

## **Hosting Themes**

The **2025 Open World Program** offers a different set of travel dates and themes for each participating country. Themes are developed in close consultation with the U.S. Embassy in each participating country, NGOs, experts on the region, and participating-country organizations. Participants will be selected based on their professional and civic activities and background in one or more of the themes and are generally nominated for a specific program.

Since COIL is a legislative branch agency that serves the U.S. Congress, its historical mission includes exposing participants to the role of legislatures and legislators. COIL, therefore, asks grantees and their local host organizations to set up meetings and other professional activities for their participants with Members of Congress or their staff, state legislators, and city council members and other local lawmakers. The purpose of these activities is to give program participants firsthand insights into how American legislators carry out such functions as lawmaking, legislative oversight, and constituent relations, especially as these functions relate to a delegation’s hosting theme. Meetings with Members and staff of state legislatures, legislative committees and legislative support agencies are also encouraged, when feasible.

COIL’s staff oversees the process of forming and placing delegations in host communities that are comparable to their own communities and that can offer experiences and information directly relevant to the participants’ interests. COIL’s staff will also work closely with grantees on matching specific participants or specific types of participants with approved grantee programs. Wherever possible, these placements will be based on already-established ties or plans specified in grant applications to forge new ones. COIL’s staff will also work with grantees to ensure that host-community visits include opportunities for participants to give voluntary presentations and to meet with lawmakers and legislative staff.

The host community visit should provide Open World program participants firsthand experience with their professional counterparts’ daily work routines and offer a view of American life through community and cultural activities and homestays. All programming should include extensive exposure to legislative processes, and how these processes affect the hosting theme. Participants will prepare for their host community activities by attending a pre-departure orientation followed by an arrival orientation program conducted in Washington, D.C. The orientation programs will review the Open World program goals and provide an overview of the delegations’ hosting theme(s); federal, state, and local governments and their interrelationships; a general overview of the federal legislative process; the balance of powers; current issues in U.S. governance and politics; the rights of individual citizens; and American culture. The participants will also learn about American home life and practices to prepare them for their homestays.

Applicant organizations are asked to indicate in their proposals for which countries, themes and subthemes, and dates they seek to host, and provide a Host Profile Form (attached below) for each proposed program. Proposed travel dates by country and theme can be found in the table below.

**Below, listed by country, are the hosting themes, each with an accompanying theme description.**

## **Armenia**

### Rule of Law: Legal Reasoning and Writing Skills – April 23

Legal reasoning and judicial writing skills are essential for judges worldwide, and Armenian judges are no exception. Members of the Armenian judiciary, both new and more experienced judges alike, recognize the need for incorporating into their own daily work international best practices and methods in legal reasoning while applying laws to facts in order to answer legal questions. Judges need to be authoritative, credible, and persuasive in their writing as legal regulations are often subject to multiple interpretations and laws are often written in a way that makes them difficult to understand. As a result, lawyers will use legal reasoning to argue for the interpretation that they find most convincing or that is most favorable to their client. Therefore, it is critical for judges to be skilled legal writers while conducting interpretation of legal texts and to apply a systematic approach. It is important for Armenian judges to study the U.S. judicial systems and judiciary's best practices in legal writing and drafting decisions, judgements, as well as all documents filed at court, including motions, briefs, and memoranda. Gaining experience of this kind will strengthen Armenian judges' ability to research facts and cases, analyze all relevant legal matters, present information, and ultimately make an argument.

### Parliamentary Staffers – May 7

Armenia's parliament maintains permanent staff who support day-to-day operations as well as parliamentary committees, legislative drafting and public engagement. They also play a critical role as experts supporting the government's reform agenda, including in defense and judicial reform, human rights, economic development, and service delivery. More could be done to ensure these have the expertise and skills to function effectively and fulfill their legislative and oversight roles in a non-partisan manner. Armenian professional parliamentary staff would benefit from observing first-hand how U.S. legislative staffers and committees manage draft bills, assess the effectiveness of legislations, provide oversight of budget processes, and engage outside stakeholders such as media, civil society, special interest groups, and constituents. Armenian staff would also benefit from learning about the mechanisms used in the United States for strengthening the capabilities of civil servants, including training, mentorship, and connections with subject matter experts.

### Historic Preservation through the Arts – October 29

This program will address preservation of intangible cultural heritage and the role of the arts in advancing social change. It will examine the influential role the arts play in advancing civil society, promoting social justice, inclusion of vulnerable populations, and intangible heritage preservation. Participants will explore how professional performing and visual artists, educators, and those promoting economic development through the arts, mentor disenfranchised youth, advance equity and inclusion, and address social challenges, such as intangible heritage preservation. The program will also focus on the role of the arts in intangible heritage preservation and engaging youth and displaced populations for social impact. Participants will learn about best practices from the U.S. arts community in advancing social change and preserving cultural heritage such as oral traditions, rituals, languages, music, dance, and other forms of intangible heritage, ensuring their transmission to future generations. The program will showcase the U.S. experience in engaging communities, practitioners, and stakeholders in the decision-making processes, as well as engaging youth and vulnerable populations. This includes ensuring active participation and ownership while recognizing and respecting the diversity of cultural expressions and practices. Participants will include government representatives, artists and representatives of various arts and cultural fields engaged in intangible

heritage preservation, and arts NGO leaders working with vulnerable populations and inclusion of displaced persons.

### Strengthening Electoral Management – October 29

Armenia is expected to hold national elections in mid-2026. While the last national elections in 2021 were considered mostly transparent and well-managed, the government is continuing to reform and modernize the country's electoral processes. Priorities include improving electoral management and oversight, civic awareness, campaign finance, resolution of electoral disputes, and access for voters with disabilities. Other potential areas of improvement include the use of information and communication technology for election management, best practices for observation and vote tabulation. NGOs and partner nations are also helping Armenia develop the capacity of its emerging political parties and advising on the management of pre-election debates. Despite these efforts, the next national election will be a challenge in terms of engaging an increasingly disaffected public, navigating a highly polarized political landscape, and ensuring that the government is continuing to deliver on its promise of good governance. Government leaders, Central Electoral Commission staff, and civil society representatives would benefit from engagement with U.S. policy makers, election experts, and NGOs to discuss best practices to address these issues ahead of the 2026 election. Candidates will include policy makers, members of the Central Election Commission, and civil society organizations operating on national and local levels.

### Youth and Civic Engagement – October 29

Since 1992, under an MOU with the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport (ESCS), Peace Corps Armenia has helped civil society organizations build capacity to reach Armenia's development objectives. For more than 5 years, Peace Corps' Youth in Development Volunteers have worked alongside staff in Armenian non-profit organizations to promote positive youth development, foster cross-cultural understanding and build volunteerism and civic engagement. The Ministry's Youth Policy Department is currently updating the State Youth Policy Strategy and has announced its intention to transform select regional NGOs into youth centers. These new centers will be at the heart of a non-formal education "ecosystem" of domestic and international stakeholders who can support youth, build leadership and employment competencies, and help young people prepare for active engagement in Armenian society. To realize this bold vision, Armenia requires a broad new cadre of youth development professionals. Youth workers, NGO staff, and local civic leaders could greatly benefit from direct contact with policy makers, practitioners, thought leaders, methods, and experiences in coordinated, holistic youth development in the United States. These youth leaders are also at the forefront of support displaced persons from Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) through social inclusion and other civic engagement initiatives. Supporting their professional development in social inclusion, also meets a critical need as Armenia continues to grapple with the long-term needs of the displaced person population. Objectives of this program include showing Armenian youth leaders youth-centered programs and institutions and exploring youth worker recruitment, training, licensing, and professional development models.

## **Azerbaijan**

### Green Energy Transition and Electricity Management – March 26

This program will be both technical, focused on electricity grid integration and management, and policy-driven, focused on liberalization of electricity markets. This program would be a follow-up

engagement on energy after Baku hosts COP29. Ideally it would take place in a state like Texas, which has its own electricity grid.

### Members of Parliament – December 2

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system.

## **Belarus**

### Cultural Heritage Preservation – February 19

With the mass protests and arrests following the fraudulent presidential elections in Belarus in 2020, together with Belarus' support of Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022, an emphasis has been placed on preserving Belarusian culture and acknowledging its distinctness from Russian culture. The program will focus on preserving Belarusian language and other cultural identifiers. Participants will include language specialists, museum employees, and organizations that work with diaspora on preserving their culture through language. Participants will most likely be currently living outside of Belarus

### Informal Education – August 6

This program will focus on working with secondary school students on informal educational programs, including from small towns. The program will partner with the Belarusian Youth Hub, a Belarusian diaspora organization located in Poland that provides programming for Belarusians living in Poland. Participants will be nominated from across Belarus and focus on organizations and professionals working with secondary school students inside Belarus in the field of informal education, for example, leading "What? Where? When?" intellectual clubs.

## **Estonia**

### Serving Children with Special Educational Needs – February 5

Students with special needs, including mental and physical disabilities, often struggle to get connected to the right resources in the current education structure in Estonia. This program will target educators and support specialists to observe and learn from different systems in the United States that work with differently abled students. Topics could include different teacher training models, support structures and measures for students with Special Education (SpEd) needs, inclusive education, and support for SpEd teachers. The program would also illustrate how the families of children with special education needs are included in all stages of the education process.

### Local Journalism/Regional Media – July 23

Regional news is essential to a well-informed public and a thriving democracy, especially when the public is regularly bombarded with disinformation and propaganda. Media outlets in Estonia face challenges to keep their doors open. This program would expose regional media leaders (including editors, executives, journalists, etc.) to local media publications/papers and other media outlets in the United States. This program should focus on ways to use modern digital media tools to engage citizen

journalists and the community at large and explore creative financing/fundraising options for local media.

### Future Political Leaders – October 29

This program is designed for emerging leaders from Estonia who have shown political interest/promise. This invaluable cross-cultural exchange will enable participants to learn about American political practices and institutions directly, and during a critical election. This program will also be aimed at strengthening bilateral ties and promoting mutual understanding between Estonia and the U.S., paving the way for future collaborations and partnerships. Investing in the development of young Estonian political leaders through international exposure contributes to the growth of a skilled and globally minded cohort capable of driving positive change in Estonia's political landscape.

## **Georgia**

### Children's Behavioral Development/Autism - February 5

This topic has not been a significant public issue in Georgia, but it is becoming a growing area of focus/awareness throughout the country. This topic has become of societal interest post-COVID, because an increasing number of children in Georgia are being diagnosed with developmental needs and the country is seeking ways to serve this community. Many organizations in Georgia have adopted U.S. models and approaches to neuropsychological understanding of children with behavioral needs. These organizations use Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and Occupation Therapies, and there are several such programs funded by USAID in Georgia to expand these practices. This Open World program will benefit educational supervisors, professionals, and therapists from Georgia by demonstrating U.S. (best) practices to educate/include children with special education needs into the education system firsthand, including Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) tests and evaluations.

### Inclusivity and Women's' Empowerment - June 11

The Law on Gender Equality was passed in Georgia in March 2010. This law prohibits gender related discrimination and includes provisions to guarantee gender equality. In 2020, Georgia was ranked 74 out of 153 countries in the World Economic Forum Gender Gap Report. In Georgia, women represent 55 percent of those with higher education, and 57 percent of those who attend vocational training. However, women's participation in the formal labor force in Georgia is significantly lower than men. Even though 30 percent of breadwinners are women, a UN study on social attitudes in Georgia cited perceptions that "a woman should obey her husband and let him be a leader in different spheres," which restricts women's roles from the start. Women make 42 percent less pay per year on average when they work in the informal economy, which is what may Georgian women do, and these disparities are even greater in rural and mountainous regions. An Open World program in this field will illustrate how activists in the U.S. fight for gender equality and explore how societal gains in gender equality and societal inclusivity can be made through activism, legislation, and practice, and how societal norms can evolve to be more inclusive.

### Youth Outreach and Engagement/American Spaces and Libraries - June 11

Preparing Georgia and its citizens to achieve their Euro-Atlantic integration aspirations is a major goal of United States' policy in that country. Russian malign influence and attacks on democratic institutions have significantly intensified in Georgia exemplified by the recent passing of the Foreign

Agents Law. The American Spaces program is a flagship programs of the U.S. Embassy in Georgia aimed at engaging local youth in all regions of Georgia, promoting civic education and helping them become leaders in their communities. The American Spaces network is a partnership between the U.S. Embassy and local organizations, typically libraries. This Open World program will explore the many roles and functions of libraries in American society and participation in the program will greatly contribute to American Spaces and Libraries directors'/coordinators' professional development. Open World program participants will examine the wide variety of U.S. public, private and academic libraries, the enrichment programs they devise for their diverse patrons, and their use of information technology to create innovative programs and to extend outreach efforts. Participants will gain knowledge and tools to attract and engage target audiences in dialogue and activities of relevance to U.S. foreign policy interests and build bridges between the people of the U.S and Georgia.

### Parliamentary Staffers - July 15

This delegation of five senior staffers from Georgia will seek to explore connections with the U.S. Congress and learn from the work of their colleagues who work as staff for Members, Committees, and other Congressional bodies. One focus will be on the work of permanent Congressional staff. The delegation will have the opportunity to compare and observe the working of the legislative branch at both the national and local levels and will explore best practices, and relationships between different political parties. Because the relationship between the Government of Georgia and the United States is currently strained, and the Parliament of Georgia is seen as not responsive to the Georgian people, exploring these challenges, and working with their American colleagues will be of great interest to the group and will work to improve U.S.-Georgia ties.

### Oct. 29 – NGO Management/Youth Activism

Enhancing civic participation and cultivating youth leadership in Georgia has become increasingly important priorities in recent years. These efforts underscore a commitment to foster an engaged and empowered citizenry, driving positive change and development within the country. Challenges to these efforts persist, including limited access to resources and opportunities for citizen and youth engagement, as well as barriers to participation faced by marginalized and underrepresented groups. Addressing these challenges requires sustained efforts and collaboration among government, civil society, and the private sector to create an enabling environment for effective NGO management and increased youth civic participation and leadership development in Georgia. This Open World program will examine youth engagement and leadership in the United States (mostly within the NGO community) as a means of developing a civically engaged society and to provide new socio-economic opportunities. Participants will examine the impact of NGOs and other organizations that promote youth leadership and look at innovative ways to use social media to establish networks that engage youth and the citizenry of Georgia as agents of social and political change in the community. The participants will also explore innovative non-profit management strategies, including strategic planning, use of social media and new technology, fundraising, board development, and the effective use of volunteers.

## **Hungary**

### Climate Policy: Clean Energy Solutions – June 11

In an effort to achieve global climate targets and carbon neutrality Hungary has to deploy clean energy solutions at a faster degree. The group of 5 Hungarian experts (including government officials and

NGO representatives) will explore U.S. government programs, non-government strategies, and private-sector investments, at federal, state and municipal level that tackle climate change, transit to clean energy sources, mitigate environmental impacts and enact sound energy policies. The program would demonstrate examples to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, achieve carbon capture solutions (e.g. direct air carbon capture in Texas), pivot to clean energy sources (such as green hydrogen, sustainable generation of solar and wind power, success stories from California). Through meetings, site visits, and other activities participants will observe how innovations in energy (e.g. by visiting an energy lab) can lead to greater energy independence and environmental sustainability, and discuss strategies for better natural resources' stewardship such as land and water management. To meet its climate goal Hungary is seeking rapidly electrifying its economy including the transport sector through EV production. The United States is also rapidly developing this sector, and can provide critical learning opportunities for the Hungarian participants in balancing competing equities and developing a circular economy that promotes prosperity and helps achieve ambitious climate targets while safeguarding people and nature and security. The group of experts would greatly benefit from exploring practical examples of public participation in decision making that facilitate a safe and responsible green energy development which is an increasingly challenging process in Hungary.

#### Local Government Representatives – June 11

This group of five Hungarian local government staffers, advisors, or representatives will seek to explore connections to counterparts in the United States and avenues of cooperation between local government and other local stakeholders. In addition to a general introduction to the U.S. political system, the group will have a special interest in sub-themes of local and national level cooperation, looking in particular to learn lessons that can be applied upon to their return to their home country of approx. 10 million, where the second-largest city after the capital is a town of just 200,000. Civil society is not particularly strong and well-developed in Hungary; civil society representatives face multiple challenges getting their messages out and managing their organizations with limited personnel and financial resources. Exploring potential avenues of cooperation between civil society and local government partners will also be of interest to the group. Other themes to consider touching on could minority communities, cooperation with local media, education and international relations of local governments. The delegation is likely to include staffers or advisors who are relative newcomers to local government work, with the delegation's visit coming less than a year after local elections. Because the relationship between the central government and local governments is often strained in Hungary, exploring relevant challenges in public service will also be of interest to the group.

#### **Indonesia**

##### Members of Parliament – September 16

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

#### **Kazakhstan**

##### NGO Management – February 19

Civil society organizations in Kazakhstan are going through a critical time to stay on track in protecting human rights and demanding accountability from the government. They also are trying to

be more transparent and ensure they can secure funding for everyday operations. This program will explore innovative non-profit management strategies for engaging communities, defending civil rights, and fundraising, as well as strategic planning, use of social media and new technologies, board development, and the effective use of volunteers. The delegation should also look at public-private partnerships. Participants will see how small NGOs obtain local support to ensure sustainability and effectiveness. The program will also highlight examples of successful cooperation with private or government sectors to help foster a new generation of NGO managers in Kazakhstan.

#### Public Library Development – February 19

This program will cover the role and functions of libraries and information specialists in the United States, examining the wide variety of U.S. libraries, exploring the latest information technology applied by libraries, including online and digital services, and studying policy-making for programs and activities in American libraries. The program will also focus on the role of public libraries as community hubs.

### **Kosovo**

#### Strengthening Electoral Processes – March 26

This program will improve election integrity and competitive political processes that are foundational to democratic legitimacy. In addition, it will improve election administration and oversight. Through direct observation and interaction with U.S. elections officials, Kosovan election officials would gain invaluable insight into electoral best-practices. Meetings and site visits will highlight U.S. approaches to diverse polling stations, identification of voters, by-mail voting process, monitoring public opinion polls, etc. Participants would also discuss measures taken to ensure fair and transparent electoral processes. This project will expose participants to current electoral system at the federal, state, and local levels in the United States. It will allow participants to better understand: voter outreach, education, by-mail registration and voting, election trainings, civic engagement strategies, issues specific to minority groups, political parties, campaigns, and the voting system in general. A special focus would be placed on rules and procedures related to mail-in voting. Participants would also learn about cooperation between civil society and election administrators at the local and national levels, as well as civic educational programs. This program would be especially timely as Kosovan election officials work to implement new regulations under the recently passed Law on Elections. Participants will include Kosovo Albanian and Serbian Representatives from Central Election Commission.

#### Renewable Energy, Security, and Market Stability – March 26

The program will brief participants on U.S. clean energy policy, energy security and energy transition priorities, and explore different means of financing future projects. Participants will hear from a variety of stakeholders to understand the different perspectives that exist in the renewable market; examine how electricity market regulation creates incentives for investment in renewables; and better understand trends in renewable investment. By joining this program, energy stakeholders will have the opportunity to connect with peers, share insights, brainstorm ideas, and contribute to a network of leaders committed to building a cleaner energy future for Kosovo. The project focuses on effectively diversifying energy sources to reduce reliance on fossil fuels. Approximately 95% of energy generated in Kosovo comes from coal, meaning only 5% comes from other sources. In March 2023, the Government of Kosovo approved a new National Energy Strategy, which commits Kosovo to—among other things—increasing generation from renewable energy sources to at least 35% by 2031. To meet these targets and make the clean energy transition, Kosovo will need to learn how to address the



challenges that arise when transitioning to renewable energy sources and attract the large amounts of investments required. The proposed participants will be energy regulators, policy makers at the central and local level, energy association representatives, and private sector investors. Participants will reflect Kosovo's extensive diversity, including groups of mixed ethnicities, gender, geographic location, political affiliation, socio-economic status, and disability.

#### Rule of Law: Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence and Violence Against Women – June 4

The program will expose participants to best practices and effective models in preventing secondary victimization, victim protection, risk assessments, victim centered approach, and evidence-based prosecutions. The program will also explore various victim support programs, and helpline services. The program will help improve access to justice and accountability. The group should visit specialized police departments that respond to cases involving violence against women; attend court hearings; visit courts and prosecution offices; visit helpline services; visit shelters and rape crisis centers; meet directly with prosecutors and judges with experience in domestic violence cases, sex crimes and human trafficking; and meet with victim service providers. Preventing and responding to all forms of violence is a cornerstone of Kosovo government's commitment to promoting human rights, and furthering gender equity and equality. However, gender-based violence and crimes against women remain among the most prevalent crimes in Kosovo, including crimes such as domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assaults, and rape. Kosovo's legislation criminalizes all forms of violence, including physical, psychological, sexual, and economic abuse. Lack of inter-institutional coordination and/or response to gender-based violence incidents often lead to revictimization and/or fatalities. Law enforcement's failure to identify as well as to determine the risk of future violence requires immediate intervention. Participants will represent Kosovo's full ethnic diversity and will include prosecutors, judges, victim advocates, law enforcement officers, social workers, civil society members, and shelter representatives.

### **Kyrgyzstan**

#### Effective Advocacy and Legislative Education – October 15

This program aims to provide U.S. best practices to civil society representatives, including media professionals, on how to build a constructive dialogue with legislators and effectively provide them with evidence-based information. Participants would meet with representatives from U.S. think tanks to understand their approach to providing evidence-based information to legislators. They would also visit Congressional offices to understand firsthand how legislators interact with civil society representatives and think tanks. The participants would also meet with advocacy groups from across the U.S. political spectrum to learn best practices in building and maintaining ethical and constructive communication with government bodies.

### **Latvia**

#### Civil Society/NGO Development – February 5

A recent report on “Civic Space” in Latvia had the following recommendations for Latvia to enhance the participation of civil society and NGOs throughout Latvian communities: “identify the institutions responsible (at political and civil servant level) for the development of civic society and the strengthening of democracy, through cross sectoral policies to guide and coordinate reforms; develop and support mechanisms for societal self-organization and resilience, as well as the establishment and

implementation of a crisis management system, which is particularly relevant in the current geopolitical situation.” They also suggested improvements to increase the participation of civil society in decision-making at all levels and ensure public participation in the planning and monitoring of public funding for this sector. This Open World program will look at how Civil Society and NGO activities are conducted in the United States and look at best practices for including civil society in decision-making processes that have significant impact on the citizens in local communities and the country.

### Journalism/Fighting Disinformation – July 23

With a history of confronting Russian aggression and propaganda, Latvia stands at the forefront in countering Kremlin disinformation. Most disinformation encountered in Latvia originates from Kremlin-related sources and is strategically aimed at undermining NATO, the EU, and Western institutions while bolstering Russia’s credibility and influence on the global stage. Within Latvia’s borders, a wealth of leading experts, committed volunteers, and reputable NGOs actively combat disinformation, showcasing some successful models of countering false narratives. This Open World program is aimed at working with our Latvian colleagues to bolster their efforts to counter the malign influence of propaganda/disinformation and more effectively counter it. The program is also aimed at informing the participants’ American colleagues of their efforts to counter disinformation and bring such information to the public.

### Social Media Influencers/Civic Engagement – July 23

Latvian social media influencers remain small compared to international influencers follower-wise, and this growing industry is not being properly monitored and regulated. As a result, Latvian Instagram influencers are going unpunished for fear of violating the Unfair Commercial Practices Prohibition Law. More than 220,000 people use the Instagram social network in Latvia every month, which is more than watch the most popular news shows. This accessibility in a nation of just 2 million people provides a growing platform for bloggers/influencers to engage broad communities in Latvia. This program will be aimed at illustrating the social media trends in the United States/globally and investigate what best practices are in place for influencers to participate in progressive and positive civic engagement in Latvia.

## **Lithuania**

### Accessibility in Education – Feb. 5

In late 2024, new legislation in Lithuania will take effect requiring public schools to accommodate children with disabilities, but many teachers feel unprepared to meet the needs of these children. This program will allow Lithuanian educators to exchange ideas and learn from American education professionals that specialize in inclusivity/accessibility in education, contributing to Lithuania’s capacity to foster an education system that meets all students’ needs.

### Emergency and Crisis Preparedness – May 7

Lithuanian professionals will explore U.S. approaches and best practices for crisis preparedness and emergency response in a variety of sectors (e.g., natural disasters, external threats, cyber threats, and health threats), This program is aimed at empowering participants to reinforce Lithuania’s emergency and crisis response system.

## Historical Memory for All – July 23

Lithuania's school curricula recently changed to include Holocaust education at all levels. This Open World program will reinforce this positive trend by providing classroom strategies for incorporating students of all ethnicities in the discussions of historical memory, treatment of national minorities, and the advantages of an honest treatment of national history. Of course, being in the shadow of Soviet/Russian oppression and aggression, broad understanding and knowledge of history is critical for the citizenry of Lithuania so that such tragedies such as the Holocaust and Soviet/Russia aggression will never again take place again.

## **Moldova**

### Cultural and Creative Entrepreneurship for Inclusive Development – March 5

This program aims to implement actions that will create a cohesive and effective cultural development framework to drive cultural and creative growth and improve livelihoods in Moldova. This program will collaborate with creative sectors and in particular within Tourism, Fashion, and Gastronomy to enhance cooperation between North Carolina and Moldova through Creative Entrepreneurship initiatives at a national and regional level. By leveraging the cultural and creative entrepreneurial ecosystem, analyzing creative sector development dynamics, and identifying strategic priorities aligned with the needs of institutions and diverse citizen groups, the program aims to elevate the role of Culture in the national economic and social context. Additionally, it aims to promote inclusive development in Moldova by focusing on various sectors such as economy, culture, creative industries, youth, environment, and tourism within interconnected regions. The guiding principles for regional development include promoting participation from various population groups, ensuring equal access to cultural services for all citizens, fostering cooperation and capacity-building for community involvement and growth, and actively communicating progress. **Priority will be given to hosting organizations in and around Raleigh, NC due to the Moldova-NC State Partnership.**

### Continuing Education for Universities – August 6

This program will promote educational and professional growth through programming focused on management and leadership, strategic communication, performance management, and quality control strategies in public administration, healthcare, and agriculture. By facilitating cross-cultural immersion and collaborative initiatives among university faculty the program aims to enhance master's and doctoral programs, broaden professional perspectives, and strengthen international relations between the United States and Moldova. This initiative seeks to provide participants coming from Moldova's four main higher education institutions with invaluable experiences that enrich their professional careers and contribute to the advancement of their respective fields, ultimately promoting global understanding and cooperation in the academic field in Moldova.

### Cultural Tourism Development – August 6

The Cultural Tourism Leaders program is designed to catalyze the growth of Moldova's tourism sector by fostering a supportive environment for tourism-related businesses. Participants in this Open World program will gain valuable insights and experience in devising strategies that integrate cultural heritage with profitable tourism practices, thus securing long-term benefits for their regions. The program will aim to create learning opportunities for Moldovan tourism leaders on utilizing the existing tourism potential and rich local traditions and culture to boost economic growth, create job opportunities, and drive significant investments in infrastructure development. The initiatives

anticipated to emerge from participation in the Open World program will aim to enrich the business landscape and elevate the standard of living in rural communities. These efforts will contribute significantly to building a more vibrant and sustainable tourism ecosystem in Moldova.

#### Sustainable Economic Development and Governance in Local Communities – October 15

This program is aimed at addressing governance, economic, and social cohesion issues by promoting sustainable local growth and improving living standards. In light of challenges such as political instability, corruption, emigration, and external destabilizing factors like the impact of the war in Ukraine, collaboration among the government, private sector, civil society, and citizens is crucial for Moldova's self-sufficiency. The country is facing unprecedented challenges worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic and Russia's war on Ukraine leading in a contraction of GDP by 5.9% for 2022. Moldova has been significantly impacted by the war, leading to security threats, energy crises, an influx of refugees, and an exodus of residents. Collaboration between North Carolina and Moldova will focus on transferring knowledge to North Carolina host organizations to enhance governance, waste management, promote democracy, social cohesion, and local economic development. Continuous support in these areas of focus involves improving essential services, stimulating private investment, creating jobs, and increasing citizen participation in governance. Strengthening these ties will support transparency, accountability, citizen participation, access to government services, employment opportunities, and economic specialization in local communities. Expected outcomes include improved institutional capacity, increased stakeholder participation, better public services, and a supportive environment for livelihood building through investments in democracy, accountability, and economic development. **Priority will be given to hosting organizations in and around Raleigh, NC due to the Moldova-NC State Partnership.**

#### **Mongolia**

##### Judicial Rule of Law – April 23

COIL is also happy to continue its partnership with the Mongolian Judicial General Council. This program examines the U.S. commitment to the promotion of transparency, ethics, and judicial independence in a democracy. Meetings and site visits will highlight the judiciary's role in preserving democratic practices such as due process, trial by jury, the right to representation and a fair trial, the role of the public defender, the appeals process, judicial appointments/elections, and governmental accountability. Participants will learn about federal and state judicial systems under the U.S. model of federalism. In examining the workings of an independent judiciary in criminal and civil proceedings, the participants will observe trials and court procedures, meet with judges, prosecutors, public defenders, local law schools and other relevant agencies.

##### Rule of Law: Prosecutors – June 4

COIL is happy to continue its partnership with the Mongolian Prosecutor General's Office. This program will provide an overview of the U.S. Judicial system with a focus on the role of the prosecutor, sharing best practices and tools used by both federal and local prosecutors. Meetings should include the local U.S. Attorney's office, as well as local or regional prosecutors. If the community has an Indian Reservation, a meeting on the tribe's judicial system and prosecutor would also be of interest.

##### Members of Parliament – September 16

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

## **North Macedonia**

### Members of Parliament – April 1

A program for MPs from North Macedonia will bring together elected representatives of North Macedonia's newly-formed government following 2024 parliamentary elections. Participants will represent the governing coalition and opposition parties to build relationships and networks across party lines for collaboration and progress on legislation in the interest of all citizens and constituents represented.

### Public Administration – July 23

A program for Mayors and municipal-level elected employees, such as council members, will emphasize local political collaboration with a community focus. Participants will reflect a wide geographic region and ethnic and political diversity of North Macedonia.

## **Papua New Guinea**

### Members of Parliament – July 15

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

## **Poland**

### Cybersecurity – January 29

Keeping state and institutional data safe is one of the most important tasks for countries today. Rapid development of technology goes along with advanced tools and ways to attack IT networks. Cyber space is where many proxy wars are ongoing. Unauthorized access to citizen or classified state data can not only damage infrastructure but also cause vast inability in countrywide operating systems. Protection of data has a crucial meaning to provide country security. This program will bring together state officers dealing with data protection as well as experts and specialists in cybersecurity. Solutions and techniques to counter cyberattacks and prevent them will be explored as well as legal, operational and economic aspects in the field.

### Renewable Energy/Energy Independence/Nuclear Energy – January 29

Energy independence is crucial for long term security of the state. After Russian aggression in Ukraine, Poland has intensified its effort to seek alternative sources of energy. This program seeks candidates from government, civil society, and the private sector who are interested in developing infrastructure and capabilities for renewables and nuclear energy. Some topics to be explored include:

models for public-private collaboration, funding and budget management, and challenges related to social change in terms of alternative sources of energy.

### Business & Academia/University Partnerships: Entrepreneurship – October 29

Cooperation between Academia and Business in Poland is crucial to advancing both sectors and the overall economy. There is a clear call for the implementation of more effective strategies and policies to elevate this cooperation within Poland, fostering innovation and sustainable growth. This program will demonstrate how U.S. Universities collaborate with the business community to spur innovation and conduct research. The focus will be on the process of how, from the higher education's point of view, to build partnerships with businesses to be effective for both parties; how universities could encourage companies to invest in programs, and/or sponsor internships, stipends, research projects and provide resources to ideas so as not to lose people's potential.

### Economic Development of Small & Medium Sized Municipalities – October 29

In the current legal framework in Poland, the most crucial tasks related to local development are assigned to municipalities, which serve as the fundamental units of local government. Local government entities in Poland are increasingly engaged in consciously shaping the conditions for economic development at the local and regional levels. This program focuses on sustainable economic growth, integration of underserved communities by equipping citizens with the skills needed for a modern economy, and resilient democracy that attracts investments and reduces "brain drain." Participants will focus on local economic development issues related to working with the state/central level authorities and how to attract business to support community-based initiatives; inter-municipal and non-government organizations cooperation with American counterparts will be explored.

### **Regional (Balkan)**

#### Women in Business – May 7

Please note that this program will have seven participants- two delegates from Kosovo, two delegates from Serbia, two delegates from North Macedonia, and one facilitator. This program will bring together women business leaders from three different countries to learn about public and private businesses in the U.S. The program will also focus on women-owned businesses.

#### Youth Engagement – September 10

Please note that this program will have seven participants- two delegates from Kosovo, two delegates from Serbia, two delegates from North Macedonia, and one facilitator. This program will examine effective ways for involving diverse youth in local decision-making processes and methods for co-designing and co-managing youth issues together with diverse young people and organizations representing their interests. The program focuses on improving interethnic integration and local public participation practices which, if functioning well, incentivize institutions to improve transparency, responsiveness, and minority inclusion. Participants will also explore U.S. values and voluntarism to build and reinforce a sense of responsibility and civic duty among youth.

### **Regional (Central Asia)**

#### Combatting Gender Based Violence – March 26

This program will include one delegate from the following countries- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and one facilitator. The program will focus on combatting gender-based violence as it is a timely theme in the region given that several countries have recently passed domestic violence laws. The group should visit specialized police departments that respond to cases; attend court hearings; visit courts and prosecution offices; visit helpline services; visit shelters and crisis centers; meet directly with prosecutors and judges and meet with victim service providers.

#### Strengthening Local Governance: Women Leaders – October 15

This program will include one delegate from the following countries- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, and one facilitator. Participants will be women representatives of local government including members of local councils. The program will delve into local governance models in the US, exploring local government responsibilities in budget-setting, plan development, and service delivery, emphasizing the role of active citizen participation. Participants will observe citizen engagement in hearings, including budget discussions, and engage with formal and informal associations of local government representatives to understand association and network building. Local councils represent a unique window of opportunity for women, youth, and other marginalized groups to increase their participation in the political process at the local level. This program will counteract the silencing of local voices and promote inclusivity in local government and the building of coalitions.

### **Romania**

#### Journalism – March 5

Independent reporting is critical to the maintenance of public information and trust within a healthy civil society. As hostility towards journalism and distrust in media rises across the globe, COIL is pleased to host a delegation of young investigative journalists focused on playing the critical role of the fourth estate in civic life. This program will focus on young investigative journalists. The opportunity for Romanian journalists to engage in discussions with United States experts in publication, reporting, and communications will help develop useful connections and experiences for all participants.

#### Education/School Management – August 6

Although Romania has long since moved past the Soviet education method, adopting a more French style, they still have wide gaps in education access. The quality of education and availability varies greatly from city to rural areas. This Open World program will allow Romanian school administrators to connect with their American counterparts to start addressing the systemic issues Romania faces. By experiencing and interacting directly with school systems, these Romanian administrators will return to their country better prepared to implement changes.

#### Education/School Management: Vocational/Rural – August 6

Although Romania has long since moved past the Soviet education method, adopting a more French style, they still have wide gaps in education access. The quality of education and availability varies greatly from city to rural areas. This Open World program will allow Romanian school administrators to connect with their American counterparts to start addressing the systemic issues Romania faces. By experiencing and interacting directly with school systems, these Romanian administrators will return

to their country better prepared to implement changes, particularly for vocational and/or rural and underserved communities.

#### Members of Parliament – December 2

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

#### **Serbia**

#### Members of Parliament – March 11

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system.

#### **Solomon Islands**

#### Members of Parliament – July 15

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

#### **Tajikistan**

#### Enhancing Professional Journalism and Media Experts to Counter Disinformation – March 26

Due to geographic remoteness, limited internet penetration, and malign misinformation about the United States and a lack of international reporting in Tajik media, many Tajiks have inaccurate or limited understanding of U.S. foreign policy and U.S. activities in Tajikistan. The news and media sources they do consume largely come from Russia and Iran. This Open World program will help to improve top journalists' views of the U.S. and to counter disinformation that undermines the ability of the United States to achieve policy objectives in Tajikistan and Central Asia. Participants will include editors, journalists, and news agency directors.

#### Modern Mining Operations – October 15

This program will focus on mineral output and economic competitiveness rather than environmental impact. Efficiency in mining and refining practices have reduced overall energy inputs, increased output of finished materials, and a decreasing mineral-to-waste ratio. This Open World program will emphasize technical expertise in modern mining and refining processes that automate key factors of mineral production, reducing overhead costs and extracting the most amount of material with less waste.

#### Religious Freedom and Countering Violent Extremism (CVE) – October 15



The constitution of Tajikistan provides for freedom of religion, and the government generally respected this right in practice; however, the government monitors the activities of religious institutions to keep them from becoming overtly political or espousing "extremist tendencies," and some local administrative offices misinterpret the term "secular state" as involving a bias against religion. Women and children are prohibited from attending prayer in mosques and access to Islamic teachings by imams is somewhat restricted. Recent research shows that vulnerable populations are susceptible to being radicalized through social media, where radical voices are often more active, organized, and better funded than competing voices that advocate tolerance and non-violence. Young, poor, and marginalized people who are most susceptible to radicalization often look more to celebrities, athletes, and online imams for guidance than to their local community leaders. This Open World program will help show how religious repression could affect violent extremism, and show participants alternate ways of promoting both security and religious freedom, and CVE activities in the United States.

## **Turkmenistan**

### Information Resilience – March 26

This program aims to raise media literacy and improve quality of reporting in Turkmenistan. It also aims to integrate Turkmenistan into regional programs and information trends which affect the country and the U.S. interests in the region, including decolonization and disinformation narratives in the light of influence from Russia and China. The participants will include content producers (journalists, freelancers, social media opinion leaders, etc.), civil society organizations and individual activists.

### Members of Parliament – April 1

The goal of this program is to educate Turkmen parliamentarians on the U.S. federal system of government and encourage participants to examine the role of non-governmental players in the formation of domestic and foreign policy. As part of this program, if possible, Turkmenistan would like to ask for an opportunity for the parliamentarians to shadow their American counterparts for a day or two while staying in their host communities to experience campaigns and engagement with their constituency.

### Education: STEM for High Schools and Role of Technology & Internet – October 15

Though on track for change, the educational system in Turkmenistan is still heavily based on principles of the Soviet era systems. As a result, graduates of Turkmen secondary schools tend to lack critical thinking, curiosity, persistence, decision-making, leadership, entrepreneurship, acceptance of failure. Introduction of STEM education concepts into core curriculum of secondary schools will have major impact on overall capacity building of citizens of Turkmenistan, which in turn will create a robust and self-reliant society able to withstand external influence and pressure. Digitalization and modernization of the educational system is also a high priority for the government of Turkmenistan. However, the government also exercises a strict control over internet and most educational platforms, university websites, exchange programs and etc. are constantly among the blocked websites. This program will underline the importance of technological progress and internet accessibility as key elements of education.

## **Ukraine**

### Serving Children in Times of War – January 28

Ukraine's vast state childcare program, a legacy of the government's prominent role in society during Soviet times, is struggling as war forces millions to flee their homes often makes tracing relatives impossible. Some of the children in Ukraine's network of shelters are orphans, but more often they have been taken from families struggling with drug addiction, alcoholism, and domestic abuse. Around half of them have physical or mental disabilities. Research proves that without a caring parent figure and individual care, attention and stimulation, children's brains and neurological systems do not develop normally. These youths develop learning disabilities, have growth delays, and suffer diminished intellectual capacities. As adults, they are less likely to complete school and more likely to commit crimes, be homeless, and have children at a young age. Additionally, many struggle with the psychological trauma of losing their parents and the neglect or abuse that led to that outcome. With the added burden of the war the situation is dire. The situation continues to worsen as Russia increasingly targets civilian populations and children, and the leadership of Russia has been indicted by the international criminal court for the mass abduction of Ukrainian children. An Open World delegation in this theme will work to solve these problems and bring the broad international awareness that is needed to bring these atrocities to an end and better serve the children of Ukraine.

### Young Veterans Integration – January 28

By the end of 2022, there were more than half a million combatants in Ukraine, with every fourth being a young person under the age of 35 (approximately 26% were individuals aged 18-34). With the new mobilization age lowered from 27 to 25 years old, more young people will continue to be enlisted. Given the significant increase in the number of military personnel and the uncertain duration of the Russian war against Ukraine, it can be expected that the number of young individuals who will have the status of combatants and persons with disabilities because of the war will increase significantly. Most veterans will be of working age. Young veterans will need to rediscover a sense of belonging in civilian life while engaging in social activities with their civilian peers. They will require upskilling or reskilling to enter the job market and reclaim their professional identities. Ukrainian communities need to become veteran friendly with built-in support systems, as in education, youth work, leisure, economic activities, and more. Organizing and facilitating reintegration activities must consider the specific needs of young veterans, including those with disabilities, and such reintegration needs to be gender sensitive. This program will support Ukrainian public officials and community leaders in learning strategies for youth veteran reintegration into the community (formal and non-formal education, employment, psychological and social support, etc.) and preparing the community to effectively interact with young veterans thus creating a more cohesive society.

### Resilience and Community Building – March 5

Amidst the turmoil of a war of aggression and when natural disasters occur, stories of resilience and community building highlight the strength and unity of Ukrainian communities. Just as communities throughout the United States that are affected by natural disasters have come together to support one another, Ukrainian communities can draw inspiration from these experiences to navigate through the challenges they face. Additionally, with large populations of internally displaced persons (IDPs), a vulnerable group, the importance of community support networks in aiding and including those displaced in their new communities and providing opportunities and solidarity is critical at this time to those forced to flee their homes. This Open World program will demonstrate how U.S. communities try to reach out to the under-served/suffering/displaced in American society and improve their lives and the opportunities that they are provided with.

### Conflict Resolution and Peace Building – March 5

Amid conflict and in the aftermath of natural disasters, fostering dialogue and understanding among diverse groups is essential for promoting peace and reconciliation in communities throughout Ukraine. Drawing on experiences from regions of the U.S. that have undergone conflict resolution and peacebuilding efforts after natural disasters, participants can learn valuable lessons in reconciliation and cooperation. Moreover, addressing the needs of IDPs within the context of conflict resolution emphasizes the importance of inclusivity and addressing the root causes of displacement (and discussing solutions for these communities) for a sustainable peace during this time of war and after victory in this war.

#### Cultural Heritage Preservation – March 5

Program participants will have the opportunity to draw parallels between the preservation of cultural heritage sites affected by natural disasters in the United States and the challenges faced in safeguarding Ukraine's cultural heritage amid conflict. Through examining successful strategies employed in the U.S. for cultural preservation and restoration, participants can gain valuable insights to help protect and conserve Ukrainian cultural artifacts and traditions. Additionally, insights regarding UNESCO standards regarding historical preservation will further enrich the discussions and inform potential approaches to ensure the longevity and resilience of Ukraine's cultural heritage.

#### Inclusivity in Society – March 5

The Government of Ukraine has recognized that investing in people and the social support and services they need will be critical for Ukraine's long-term recovery, socio-economic future, and pathway to European Union accession. The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine is actively pursuing an ambitious social reform agenda and has committed to building a more holistic, inclusive, and efficient social system that encompasses the support and services needed to overcome vulnerability and promote individual growth and potential. Protecting equality for members of the LGBTQ+ community and other marginalized groups is necessary and essential on Ukraine's path to democracy and Euro-Atlantic integration. Despite the efforts of the interested stakeholders, Ukraine remains far from reaching the democratic standards of equality and inclusion. This delegation will investigate how to promote the adoption of democratic draft laws, how to advocate for human rights and equality, and how to engage other groups of population and turn people into their supporters and allies.

#### Veterans Integration Through Education – March 5

This program aims to demonstrate educational and career advising services tailored to the specific needs of veterans. There is a lack of qualified specialists in this field, and Ukraine seeks to address this gap by utilizing educational institutions to offer re-training programs for veterans. Ukraine's higher education institutions are looking to provide curriculum, train teacher assistants and provide practical training to veterans to assist with their integration throughout the country. This delegation will learn about organizations responsible for training tutors and assistants for universities, and those that can provide guidance on practical/career-oriented education and training programs aimed at the further integration of veterans into society through the higher education system and the resources it provides.

#### Members of Parliament – April 1

This program will provide the opportunity for Members of Parliament to meet with their colleagues in the U.S. Congress and allow them to learn about the workings of national and state level legislatures and governments, and other stakeholders in the political process. They will also learn about constituent

relations and how legislators serve their communities with the goal of working toward a more transparent legislative process. The program will also provide the Members with critical and timely access to Members of the U.S. Congress and the leadership of the community that they will be hosted in, providing a platform to widely disseminate information regarding Ukraine's war effort in response to Russian aggression.

#### Serving Children in Times of War – May 6

Ukraine's vast state childcare program, a legacy of the government's prominent role in society during Soviet times, is struggling as war forces millions to flee their homes often makes tracing relatives impossible. Some of the children in Ukraine's network of shelters are orphans, but more often they have been taken from families struggling with drug addiction, alcoholism, and domestic abuse. Around half of them have physical or mental disabilities. Research proves that without a caring parent figure and individual care, attention and stimulation, children's brains and neurological systems do not develop normally. These youths develop learning disabilities, have growth delays, and suffer diminished intellectual capacities. As adults, they are less likely to complete school and more likely to commit crimes, be homeless, and have children at a young age. Additionally, many struggle with the psychological trauma of losing their parents and the neglect or abuse that led to that outcome. With the added burden of the war the situation is dire. The situation continues to worsen as Russia increasingly targets civilian populations and children, and the leadership of Russia has been indicted by the international criminal court for the mass abduction of Ukrainian children. An Open World delegation in this theme will work to solve these problems and bring the broad international awareness that is needed to bring these atrocities to an end and better serve the children of Ukraine.

#### Public Health Issues – May 7

Ukraine is in the process of developing a national healthcare information system and a veterans' registry. Systems integration and PII protection are very important current issues in Ukraine. Representatives of civil society, local government, and private sector will benefit from a crash course in data collection, storage, protection, visualization, and analysis as part of the health care processes/system in the United States to look for efficiencies and to better serve those in need. In addition, this program will focus on cooperative efforts between governmental agencies in public health and social services and NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). It will explore advocacy strategies for priority health issues, aiming to foster a more collaborative environment for policy development and implementation.

#### Humanitarian Aid/Support Services – May 7

With many communities in Ukraine facing urgent humanitarian needs due to the horrors of Russian aggression and displacement due to the war, providing effective support and assistance is essential to alleviate suffering and begin rebuilding lives. Drawing on the American experience with natural disasters and other crises, participants can gain insights into the challenges and opportunities in providing humanitarian aid and support services in crisis situations. Programming looking at the needs of IDPs will highlight how targeted assistance and advocacy for vulnerable populations can be done effectively. This delegation will also look at humanitarian assistance efforts in place in American communities that are helping their Ukrainian colleagues in this time of need to assure them of transparency and to compare notes/look at synergies/efficiencies in this work.

#### Legal Dimensions of Modern Warfare – June 3

This group will focus on the law of war and such topics as the protection of cultural heritage sites/objects, the legal issues involved in modern warfare (including psychological warfare), court martial procedures, decisions regarding jurisdiction for investigations and trials, the adjudication of war-related cases, how crimes are investigated (including civilian crimes in the war environment), and social and legal protections of active-duty servicemen and veterans. This group will focus on legal advisors from the Ministry of Defense and legal professionals from military institutions.

### Processing War Crimes – June 3

The great journalist Masha Gessen on August 1, 2022, wrote "twenty-five thousand cases (of war crimes) have been identified thus far - what does justice look like for the victims of Russia's atrocities?" International agencies are joining Ukrainian prosecutors in what may be the biggest effort ever to hold war criminals to account. But the difficulties and dangers they face are exceptional. Ukraine's judicial system is now almost wholly devoted to investigating atrocities and war crimes (now well over 120,000 cases), with most of its 8,300 prosecutors fanned out across the country collecting evidence. Open World delegations in this theme will review current atrocity and war crimes processes including prosecutions and adjudication practices and discuss ways to effectively prosecute those that have committed war crimes, including state actors.

### Anti-Corruption/Monitoring of Foreign Assistance – September 10

The goal of this program is to enhance the knowledge and skills of Ukrainian civil servants in combating corruption and effectively overseeing foreign assistance. This program aims to further a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity within government institutions and in the private sector. Participants in this exchange program will focus on various aspects of anti-corruption practices and oversight mechanisms related to foreign aid. They will investigate international best practices, legal frameworks, and strategies for preventing and detecting corruption, as well as the role of civil servants in ensuring the efficient use of foreign assistance funds. The delegation can also demonstrate to the American public the impressive anti-corruption measures and practices that Ukraine has already put into place.

### Fighting Disinformation – September 10

Russian propaganda and disinformation have attacked Ukraine's right to exist and painted it as a neo-Nazi state committing genocide against its Russian population. Russian propaganda also accuses the United States and NATO of controlling Ukraine and building up its military infrastructure to threaten Russia. This overwhelming disinformation campaign is an important element of Russia's hybrid war against Ukraine. Recently, the United States and Poland announced an international operation representing 12 countries based in Warsaw with its mission being to help Ukraine counter Russian disinformation. This Open World program is aimed at working with our Ukrainian colleagues to bolster their efforts to counter the malign influence of propaganda and more effectively counter it. The program is also aimed at informing the participants' American colleagues of their efforts to counter disinformation and bring such information to the public.

### Public Health Issues – September 10

Ukraine is in the process of developing a national healthcare information system and a veterans' registry. Systems integration and PII protection are very important current issues in Ukraine. Representatives of civil society, local government, and private sector will benefit from a crash course in data collection, storage, protection, visualization, and analysis as part of the health care

processes/system in the United States to look for efficiencies and to better serve those in need. In addition, this program will focus on cooperative efforts between governmental agencies in public health and social services and NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs). It will explore advocacy strategies for priority health issues, aiming to foster a more collaborative environment for policy development and implementation.

#### Health Care Systems/Communication – September 10

The United States government through the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is taking decisive steps to reach Ukrainians in need with life-saving HIV medications and services amid the humanitarian crisis caused by the Kremlin’s war on Ukraine. This Open World program is aimed at illustrating to our Ukrainian colleague’s diverse communication channels, including various media platforms, that are used to develop impactful campaigns aimed at addressing health disparities and promoting inclusive communication and care. Through this program data-driven approaches and peer-to-peer networks will be explored to ensure that communication strategies are tailored to the needs of diverse communities. Such programming, by demonstrating how to engage families and foster inclusive dialogue, will seeks to empower individuals to make informed health decisions and cultivate healthier lifestyles within their communities.

#### Members of Parliament – October 7 1

This program will provide the opportunity for Members of Parliament to meet with their colleagues in the U.S. Congress and allow them to learn about the workings of national and state level legislatures and governments, and other stakeholders in the political process. They will also learn about constituent relations and how legislators serve their communities with the goal of working toward a more transparent legislative process. The program will also provide the Members with critical and timely access to Members of the U.S. Congress and the leadership of the community that they will be hosted in, providing a platform to widely disseminate information regarding Ukraine’s war effort in response to Russian aggression.

#### War Recovery/Peer to Peer Programs – November 4

The development and implementation of peer-to-peer mentoring programs is critical for a war-torn Ukraine. No one understands the trauma and difficulties a veteran (wounded and/or scarred from the ravages of war) like another veteran or someone with experience working with veterans. Many Ukrainian veterans (including those held as prisoners and those tortured) suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a treatable anxiety disorder. Peer-to-peer programming arms veterans with tools for resiliency. They learn to build an immunity against daily stress to increase impulse control to reduce reactive or violent behavior. This Open World program will focus on veterans programs that highlight peer-to-peer programming as part of their service to veterans and those wounded in war.

### **Uzbekistan**

#### Air Quality – February 19

The air in the Uzbek capital, Tashkent, is among the most polluted on Earth, with residents and authorities blaming the poor quality on the extensive use of coal, the large number of vehicles, and a declining number of trees. This program will explore ways states and cities have worked to improve air quality and reduce air pollution.

## Water Resource Management – February 19

This program aims to bring a range of water experts to the United States to learn more about inter-agency and inter-state-nation coordination on water issues. Access to water and consequent conflict between national/regional governments, private/public sector bodies, and industrial groupings is an increasingly salient issue in Uzbekistan and Central Asia. Understanding how American states and municipalities manage the conflict will be highly valuable in contemporary Uzbekistan. The program would aim to assist professionals from the Ecology Ministry and independent water experts to learn the U.S. best practices in such areas as addressing inter-agency coordination, introducing efficient irrigation and water supply systems, rehabilitation of existing drinking water supply infrastructure and designing and executing other water management reform programs.

## Members of Parliament – October 7

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

## **Vanuatu**

## Members of Parliament – July 15

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

## **Vietnam**

## Members of Parliament – September 16

This program will allow Members of Parliament to engage with Members of Congress, congressional staff, state and local lawmakers, and other stakeholders involved in working toward a more transparent legislative process. It will also allow Members of Parliament to learn more about the U.S. political system both at the federal and local level.

## **2025 Open World Program – Proposed Travel Dates**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Theme</b>	<b>Number of Delegations</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
28-Jan	Ukraine	Serving Children in Time of War	1	6
28-Jan	Ukraine	Young Veterans Integration	1	6
29-Jan	Poland	Cybersecurity	1	6

29-Jan	Poland	Renewable Energy/Energy Independence/Nuclear Energy	1	6
5-Feb	Estonia	Educational/Societal Solutions to Children with Special Needs	1	6
5-Feb	Georgia	Children's Behavioral Development/Autism	1	6
5-Feb	Latvia	Civil Society/NGO Development	1	6
5-Feb	Lithuania	Accessibility in Education	1	6
19-Feb	Belarus	Cultural Heritage Preservation	1	6
19-Feb	Kazakhstan	NGO Management	1	6
19-Feb	Kazakhstan	Public Library Development	1	6
19-Feb	Uzbekistan	Air Quality	1	6
19-Feb	Uzbekistan	Water Resource Management	1	6
5-Mar	Ukraine	Resilience and Community Building	1	6
5-Mar	Ukraine	Conflict Resolution and Peace Building	1	6
5-Mar	Ukraine	Cultural Heritage Preservation	1	6
5-Mar	Ukraine	Inclusivity in Society	1	6
5-Mar	Ukraine	Veterans Integration through Education	1	6
5-Mar	Moldova	Cultural and Creative Entrepreneurship for Inclusive Development	1	6
5-Mar	Romania	Journalism	1	6
11-Mar	Serbia	Members of Parliament	1	6
26-Mar	Azerbaijan	Green Energy Transition and Electricity Management	1	6
26-Mar	Kosovo	Strengthening Electoral Processes	1	6
26-Mar	Kosovo	Renewable Energy, Security, and Market Stability	1	6
26-Mar	Central Asian Regional	Combatting Gender Based Violence	1	6
26-Mar	Turkmenistan	Information Resilience	1	6



26-Mar	Tajikistan	Enhancing Professional Journalism and Media Experts to Counter Disinformation	1	6
1-Apr	Ukraine	Members of Parliament	1	6
1-Apr	Turkmenistan	Members of Parliament	1	6
1-Apr	North Macedonia	Members of Parliament	1	6
23-Apr	Armenia	Rule of Law: Legal Reasoning and Writing Skills	1	6
23-Apr	Mongolia	Rule of Law - Judges	1	6
6-May	Ukraine	Serving Children in Time of War	1	6
7-May	Ukraine	Public Health Issues	1	6
7-May	Ukraine	Humanitarian Aid/Support Services	1	6
7-May	Armenia	Parliamentary Staffers	1	6
7-May	Lithuania	Emergency and Crisis Preparedness	1	6
7-May	Balkan Regional	Women in Business	1	7
3-Jun	Ukraine	Processing War Crimes	1	6
3-Jun	Ukraine	Legal Dimensions of Modern Warfare	1	6
4-Jun	Mongolia	Rule of Law - Prosecutors	1	6
4-Jun	Kosovo	Rule of Law: Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence and Violence Against Women	1	6
11-Jun	Georgia	Inclusivity and Women's Empowerment	1	6
11-Jun	Georgia	Youth Outreach and Engagement for American Spaces and Libraries	1	6
11-Jun	Hungary	Climate Policy- Clean Energy Solutions	1	6
11-Jun	Hungary	Local Government Representatives	1	6
15-Jul	Georgia	Parliamentary Staffers	1	6
15-Jul	Papua New Guinea	Members of Parliament	1	6
15-Jul	Vanuatu	Members of Parliament	1	6

15-Jul	Solomon Islands	Members of Parliament	1	6
23-Jul	Estonia	Local Journalism/Regional Media	1	6
23-Jul	Latvia	Journalism/Fighting Disinformation	1	6
23-Jul	Latvia	Social Media Influencers/Civic Engagement	1	6
23-Jul	Lithuania	Historical Memory for All	1	6
23-Jul	North Macedonia	Public Administration	1	6
6-Aug	Moldova	Continuing Education for Universities	1	6
6-Aug	Moldova	Cultural Tourism Development	1	6
6-Aug	Belarus	Informal Education	1	6
6-Aug	Romania	Education/School Management	1	6
6-Aug	Romania	Education/School Management: Vocational/Rural	1	6
10-Sep	Ukraine	Anti-Corruption/Monitoring of Foreign Assistance	1	6
10-Sep	Ukraine	Fighting Disinformation	1	6
10-Sep	Ukraine	Issues of Public Health	1	6
10-Sep	Ukraine	Health Care System Communications	1	6
10-Sep	Balkan Regional	Youth Engagement	1	7
16-Sep	Indonesia	Members of Parliament	1	6
16-Sep	Vietnam	Members of Parliament	1	6
16-Sep	Mongolia	Members of Parliament	1	6
7-Oct	Ukraine	Members of Parliament	1	6
7-Oct	Uzbekistan	Members of Parliament	1	6
15-Oct	Central Asian Regional	Strengthening Local Governance- Women Leaders	1	6
15-Oct	Kyrgyzstan	Effective Advocacy and Legislative Education	1	6

15-Oct	Moldova	Sustainable Economic Development and Governance in Local Communities	1	6
15-Oct	Turkmenistan	Education: STEM for High Schools and Role of Technology & Internet	1	6
15-Oct	Tajikistan	Modern Mining Operations	1	6
15-Oct	Tajikistan	Religious Freedom and Countering Violent Extremism	1	6
29-Oct	Armenia	Heritage Preservation through the Arts	1	6
29-Oct	Armenia	Strengthening Electoral Management	1	6
29-Oct	Armenia	Youth and Civic Engagement	1	6
29-Oct	Estonia	Future Political Leaders	1	6
29-Oct	Georgia	NGO Management/Activism	1	6
29-Oct	Poland	Business+Academia/University Partnerships: Entrepreneurship	1	6
29-Oct	Poland	Economic Development of Small & Medium Sized Municipalities	1	6
4-Nov	Ukraine	War Recovery/Peer to Peer Programs	1	6
2-Dec	Azerbaijan	Members of Parliament	1	6
2-Dec	Romania	Members of Parliament	1	6

### Grantee Programming and Administrative Requirements

Successful grantee organizations will be responsible for approximately eight days and eight nights of programming (including weekends) for delegations (most consisting of **five delegates** and **one facilitator**) typically arriving in the United States on a Wednesday and arriving in their host communities on a Friday.<sup>7</sup> Grantee organizations will be expected to successfully complete and/or oversee the following programmatic and administrative activities:

- Recruit and select local host organizations and families. The local host organization must demonstrate expertise in, and programming resources for, the Hosting Theme(s) and subthemes selected by the grant applicant. Programs should emphasize mutual learning and dialogue. Grantees are encouraged to recruit host coordinators, presenters, and home hosts who

<sup>7</sup>COIL will consider proposals that contain different provisions (for the length of stay, size of delegations, arrival day, etc.) than those outlined here, if needed to deliver quality programming.

are interested in maintaining contact with the Open World program participants after their U.S. visit through joint projects, ad hoc and/or formal organization-to-organization ties, and regular communications.

- Submit a **Host Organization Profile Form** for each local program to be hosted by a local host organization approved by COIL. The grantee organization must submit the form(s) to COIL as a part of the grant proposal. The form (Appendix 5 below) asks for the local host organization's theme/subtheme preferences and preferred hosting dates, a general description of the planned local program, and descriptions of three or four proposed professional activities. This information, which will be shared with COIL's logistical contractor, American Councils for International Education (ACIE) and with US Embassy partners to improve COIL's ability to match delegates with local host organizations appropriately.
- If grantee wishes to provide nominations: (1) ensure that nominating partners (both domestic and international) submit only names of highly qualified candidates and the necessary background program and partnership/project information **by the designated deadlines**, and (2) be responsible for reviewing nominees' applications prior to their submission to ensure that nominees meet Open World program criteria and that the information in the applications is complete and accurate. Nominators identified by the grantee will work closely with COIL staff to select appropriate applicants.
- Be responsible for effective implementation of each program developed by local host organizations.
- Participate, either in person or via telephone conference, in coordination meetings with representatives of COIL and/or representatives of its logistical contractor, ACIE.
- Attend the 2025 COIL grantee orientation meeting, which is expected to be held in early December 2024 or January 2025. This meeting will be held virtually.
- Help make arrangements for COIL staff to conduct site visits during local hosting programs, if requested.
- Submit required reports by scheduled deadlines (page 37), including the host coordinator post-program report for each visit, the final program report, federal financial reports, and cost-share reports.
- Assist COIL staff in coordinating press outreach, if requested, with local host organizations.
- Report on visit outcomes as required (see Results section below).
- Ensure that local host coordinators are aware of COIL's website and social networking resources; have local host coordinators encourage presenters and host families to find COIL on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/openworldleadershipcenter2](http://www.facebook.com/openworldleadershipcenter2); and get up-to-the-minute information on the program by following COIL on X at <https://x.com/OWprogram> and Instagram @OWprogram.

- Adhere to federal income tax regulations.

Grantees are responsible for ensuring that they or the local host organizations will:

- Coordinate with COIL on congressional outreach in the local communities and Washington, D.C., and ensure, when possible, that delegates have the opportunity to meet with Members of Congress or their local staff, and send any photos from such meetings to COIL staff as soon as possible.
- Ensure that participants have opportunities to share their professional expertise and their knowledge about their native country in meetings with their American counterparts and in public settings such as conferences, colloquia, classroom and civic-association presentations, town meetings, and media interviews.
- Provide local transportation during participants' visits, beginning with pickup at the U.S. final destination airport and ending with delivery to the departure airport. **Participants may not take public transportation to a professional activity unless the grantee gets advance approval from COIL, and a local escort must accompany the participants in most cases.**
- Provide a suitable homestay placement for each delegate, usually for eight days, including weekends. **Homestays are a centerpiece of the Open World experience and a major factor in grant application evaluations.**
- **Each participant must be given his or her own private bedroom.** If this cannot be arranged, the grantee must get advance approval from COIL to make alternate arrangements.
- Ensure that breakfast, lunch, and dinner are provided daily to the delegates and facilitator(s) during their stay. Unlike similar U.S. government programs, **COIL does not provide per diem to its participants.**
- Interpretation services are not required in the grant submission; COIL uses the services of a contractor. The COIL interpretation coordinator will make contact with local host coordinators in advance of the program to introduce the assigned interpreter and request additional information needed for logistical purposes.
- Prepare an eight-day program for each delegation that reflects the selected hosting theme and includes other activities that meet program objectives. **Approximately 32 hours** of programming should directly address the hosting theme. Time spent in professional sessions with federal, state, county, or local legislators and legislative staff counts toward this total. Cross-cultural activities should be scheduled for weekends and some evenings. A cross-cultural activity is an activity designed to promote exposure and interchange between the delegates and Americans in order to increase their understanding of each other's society, culture, and institutions. Cross-cultural activities include cultural, social, and sports activities.
- Provide an end-of-visit review session for the program participants and host coordinator to review program successes/weaknesses and to identify any new projects, or any joint projects,

reciprocal visits, or other continued professional interactions between participants and their new American contacts, that will likely result from the Open World program.

- Coordinate with COIL on press outreach, including sharing drafts of any press material developed for each delegation in advance, if requested, and review any relevant press material developed by COIL, if requested. COIL strongly encourages local host organizations to try to get press coverage of Open World program visits. **Local press releases on Open World program exchanges must credit the Congressional Office for International Leadership and the U.S. Congress.**
- Track results efficiently and regularly report them. Definitions of results, and requirements and methods for reporting them, are given in the Document-Exchange Deadlines table on the next page and in the Results section that immediately follows it.

### Grantee Interaction with COIL Contractors

COIL contracts with a logistical support organization, ACIE, for programs with Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Romania, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan. ACIE will provide administrative and logistical support for the Open World program, including assistance with (a) planning and administration of the nominations process in the countries included in this solicitation; (b) visas and travel arrangements; (c) selection and training of facilitators; (d) formation of delegations; (e) organization of pre-departure orientations; and (f) review of program agendas (which supplements COIL’s own review of the agendas). Grantees and their local hosts will be required to work closely with ACIE through all steps of the planning process and meet the relevant deadlines in the following table.

COIL staff will serve as the logistical contractor for the delegations from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Hungary, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, North Macedonia, Papua New Guinea, Serbia, Solomon Islands, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

COIL contracts with an interpretation service provider that will recruit and contract with all interpreters needed for Open World programs. Grantees and their local hosts will be required to work closely with this contractor to ensure that interpreters are placed in appropriate lodging and receive all program documents and information prior to a delegation’s arrival in the hosting community.

### Deliverables timeline for Open World program

The table below lists the major deadlines for information and document exchange between grantees/local host coordinators and COIL, measured backward from the delegation’s U.S. arrival date (two to three days before the host-community arrival date).

<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Host Coordinator provides:</i>	<i>COIL provides:</i>
<i>8-6 weeks before arrival</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant Names and Profiles</li> </ul>
<i>4 weeks before arrival</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft Program Agenda</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Flight Itineraries</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host Family Forms (including contact info. and brief bios)</li> </ul>	
<i>2 weeks before arrival</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Updated Program Agenda (with changes highlighted)</li> <li>• Emergency Contact Information (if different from that on the Updated Program Agenda)</li> </ul>	
<i>3 weeks after departure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post-program Report (Host Narrative, Post-program Program Agenda, Final Host Family Forms, Media Coverage, Photos)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delegation Feedback on Program to Grantee and Local Host Coordinator</li> </ul>

\*The required forms will be sent to grantees by COIL staff. The Host Narrative Form asks for information on professional activities, including meetings with Members of Congress and congressional staff; brief descriptions of actual and potential trip results; and host-coordinator comments and recommendations. The agenda submitted as part of the Post-program Report is to show the actual activities conducted. COIL’s handbook for local host coordinators now asks hosts to make press articles and photos from their exchanges available to staff as soon as possible, rather than waiting to include them with the Post-program Report. **Grantees are requested to make available to COIL staff any photos they receive from their local host organizations as soon as possible.** COIL also asks that photos come with captions or are explained in text.

## Results

COIL tracks the results of the Open World program using eight categories, or “bins.” Below are definitions and examples of these categories, along with explanations of which results categories grantee and local host organizations *must* report on and which categories they are *encouraged* to report on.

<b>RESULT</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>EXAMPLES</b>	<b>GRANTEE/SUBGRANTEE REPORTING REQUIREMENTS</b>
<b>Benefits to Americans</b>	The Open World program promotes <b>mutual</b> understanding and benefit. Hosts, presenters, and others can gain new information from delegates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Estimate of audience size for delegate presentations.</li> <li>• Publicity for host organization.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Final Program Report</b> (submitted by the Grantee) and the <b>Host Narrative</b> must report any benefits to Americans that resulted from the exchange. <b>The total number of people reached should be included.</b></li> </ul>

<b>Partnerships</b>	An American organization involved in a visit partner with an organization from the delegates' country on a joint project or starts an affiliate in that country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• University-to-university e-learning partnerships.</li> <li>• Sister-court relationships.</li> <li>• Community-to-community interactions between governmental entities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Host Narrative</b> is to report on any partnerships that might result from the exchange. The <b>Final Program Report</b> must report on actual post-visit partnership activities.</li> </ul>
<b>Projects</b>	A delegate implements an idea inspired by the Open World program experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opening city council meetings to the public.</li> <li>• Creates an organization or starts a project based on something experienced in the host community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Host Narrative</b> is to report on any delegate projects that might result from the visit. The <b>Final Program Report</b> must report on any actual projects that the grantee learns about.</li> </ul>
<b>Multipliers</b>	A delegate shares his/her new knowledge back home, thereby “multiplying” the Open World experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• After returning home, a delegate gives talks on knowledge gained during the visit.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Host Narrative</b> is to report on any potential multipliers mentioned by delegates. The <b>Final Program Report</b> must report on any actual multipliers that the grantee learns about.</li> </ul>
<b>Reciprocal Visits</b>	Americans involved in the exchange meet with alumni in-country or work in-country on an Open World–inspired project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host family visits delegate in their home country.</li> <li>• Professional presenter travels to delegate’s home country to present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Host Narrative</b> is to report on any reciprocal visits that might result from the exchange. The <b>Final Program Report</b> must report on reciprocal visits by grantees or subgrantees.</li> </ul>
<b>Press</b>	A delegation’s visit is covered by local media.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Host</b> is to send press on the visit to COIL and the logistical contractor. Grantees are encouraged to include later articles in the <b>Final Program Report</b>.</li> </ul>



<b>Contributions</b>	In-kind (in hours or material goods) or cash donations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Volunteer hours to plan and conduct hosting.</li> <li>• Private donations to Open World events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Grantees must submit the Open World Cost-Share Report Form. The <b>Host</b> must report to the <b>Grantee</b> on contributions.</li> </ul>
<b>Professional Advancement</b>	Alumni are promoted or experience other career enhancements after their Open World visit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An alumnus wins a grant to fund an NGO project.</li> <li>• An alumna is elected to office.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The <b>Final Program Report</b> must report any professional advancement that the grantee learns about. (A <b>Host</b> learning of post-visit advancement is encouraged to report it to Open World.)</li> </ul>

**Key Dates and Deadlines<sup>8</sup>**

**For all programs covered in this solicitation, grant proposals are due Monday, August 19, 2024.**

A final program report on the overall administration of COIL grant and hosting activities, including recommendations for future program changes and a description of outcomes achieved (as defined in the Results section above), **must be submitted by the grantee organization within 90 days of its final hosting activity under the grant.**

All 2025 grants will end on **March 31, 2026**, when final financial reports are due to COIL, unless a later date is agreed to in writing by COIL. Please note again that grantees are encouraged to submit all final financial documentation by ninety (90) days after the completion of programming activities.

**COIL may make additional funds available to grantees for a maximum additional two years at the government’s sole discretion, without competition, subject to awardee’s satisfactory performance under its current grant award, subject to the availability of funds and subject to the grantee’s submission of an acceptable fundable proposal.**

**Criteria for Evaluating Grant Applications**

All grant applications for hosting the Open World program under these guidelines will be evaluated on the following factors, listed in order of importance:

1. Degree to which proposed program plans address COIL’s thematic programming priorities and objectives, especially with regard to (a) giving delegates significant exposure to federal, state, county, and local legislators, the structure and functions of legislatures, and the legislative process; (b) the likelihood of producing new partnerships or furthering existing ones; (c) the potential for follow-on project activities and/or significant projected results, such as plans for

<sup>8</sup> See table on page 37 for deadlines for document delivery to the logistical contractor.

future reverse travel; (d) collaborative programming with American young professionals organizations; and (e) providing significant cost share.

2. Past experience in hosting similar programs.
3. Demonstrated ability or experience in creating programs in the Hosting Theme(s) proposed.
4. Demonstrated ability to recruit or plan for recruiting host coordinators, presenters, and home hosts who are interested in maintaining contact with the delegates after their U.S. visit.
5. Quality of submitted sample professional meetings included in the Host Profile Form.
6. Ability to home host, which is a program requirement.
7. Per person cost. (Please note that the “per person cost” does not stand alone as a criterion. COIL also looks at the ratio of administrative costs to program costs, as well as the cost share amount the organization is proposing.)
8. Ability to host on theme dates.
9. Quality of submitted work plans, including plans for the implementation of the U.S. programs, results tracking and reporting, and the nomination strategy (if applicable).
10. For previous COIL grantees: assessments of previous hosting quality and results. Assessments are based on input from Open World program managers, facilitator reports, and informal delegate surveys, and on the quality and promptness of grantee programmatic/administrative and financial reporting, including the accuracy of financial records.
11. For proposals that contain plans for nominations, COIL will weigh the degree to which the proposed programs advance programming priorities indicated above in the first criterion.

## **GRANT PROPOSAL OUTLINE**

Proposals and budgets should be e-mailed to COIL Senior Program Manager, Matt Tucker, at [matu@coil.gov](mailto:matu@coil.gov) **Please put “2025 Open World Grant Proposal” in the subject line.** Please contact COIL at (202) 707-8943 or [matu@coil.gov](mailto:matu@coil.gov) if you have questions regarding this solicitation.

The COIL grants committee will review applications and respond no later than 35 calendar days after receipt of an application.

**ACTUAL DETERMINATIONS OF PARTICIPANT HOSTING LEVELS AND THE DATE OF AWARDS WILL DEPEND ON AVAILABLE FUNDING.**

**All submissions must provide the following cover sheet:**

NAME OF ORGANIZATION  
MAILING ADDRESS  
PROGRAM CONTACT – NAME, EMAIL ADDRESS, AND PHONE NUMBER

**All submissions must follow the outline below.<sup>9</sup>**

**1. Project Summary** – A brief narrative document providing the following information:

- Overview of your organization.
- Estimates of your hosting capabilities, i.e., number of host communities and number of participants (delegates and facilitators) to be hosted.
- General description of your programming capabilities for the programs for which you are applying.
- Descriptions of how your organization will fulfill the program objectives, programming priorities, and the requirements outlined in this solicitation, including how results will be accomplished and reported, and how participants will interact with legislators (including Members of Congress), legislative staff, and legislative entities, processes, and functions.
- Examples of how your organization’s hosting activities and past experience will be applied to recruiting host coordinators, presenters, and host families interested in maintaining contact or developing joint projects with delegates.

**2. Proposed Programs** – For each program that you propose to host for, please submit the following:

- Detailed description of your capabilities to host in the proposed theme(s) and subtheme(s).
- Proposed schedule of selected hosting dates (with proposed hosting sites) by country. Please prioritize the programs desired by any specific local host organization.
- Sample of activities or draft agendas for programs being proposed.
- Organizations and persons participating.
- Any special resources required.

**3. Summary of your organization’s past experience with similar programs**

**4. Statements of any unique qualifications for this program**

**5. Work Plan** – The work plan is a chronological outline that demonstrates your ability to administer the grant and meet all required deadlines, including those for reporting on results and cost sharing.

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<sup>9</sup> Pages 69-70 contain more information on financial management and budget requirements, including a recommended budget form (page57).

6. **Budget Submission** – The budget submission is the financial expression of your organization’s proposal to become an implementing partner in the Open World program. Therefore, your budget submission needs to reflect your administration of a program that meets the objectives and theme rationales outlined above.

## FINANCIAL PROCEDURES – 2025 GRANTS

### PLEASE READ CAREFULLY

#### I. Grant Proposals

Every grant proposal must be accompanied by a **project budget** ideally in Excel with formulas to calculate amounts, (per instructions below) as well as the prospective grantee’s **latest audit report**.

##### a. Budget Submission

Budget categories should contain a **narrative description** detailing what the funds for this category will cover, and how those estimates were calculated (for example, salary costs should delineate the position, the hourly rate, the number of hours calculated, etc.).

Each budget category should include an accounting of any **cost-share contribution** the organization is providing. **Cost-share contributions are an important factor in the grant selection process.** Organizations are encouraged to carefully consider their ability to share in the cost of the program and to offer the maximum contributions feasible. All organizations awarded grants by Open World will be required to submit cost-share report forms by April 10, 2025.

Below are some **sample** categories for your budget submission. Each category in your budget proposal must provide dollar amounts accompanied by a narrative justification. When an individual category will be under \$500, you might want to combine one or more like categories. **NOTE: When preparing your budget, please keep in mind that an overage of 10 percent or more in any one category will require prior written approval from the COIL’s Executive Director/Budget Officer, Jane Sargus.**<sup>10</sup>

1. Personnel Compensation – Salaries and wages paid directly to your employees.
2. Personnel Benefits – Costs associated with employee benefits.
3. Local Travel and Transportation – Local travel and transportation of staff and/or local transportation for delegates.
4. Office Expenses – Postage, telephone, supplies, etc.

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<sup>10</sup>Under no circumstances does obtaining Open World’s written approval for an overage in a given category permit a grantee to exceed the total amount awarded by Open World.

5. Cultural Activities & Refreshments – Receptions, admissions to events, meals, etc.
6. Sub-grants – Grants made to others by your organization.

Budget submissions reflecting any General and Administrative Overhead Costs must have such costs shown as separate line items and supported by narrative justifications.

**Sample Budget Submission:**

<b>Proposed Budget for Submission Under the 2025 Open World Program</b>			
<b>Proposed Number of Participants:</b>			
<b>Cost Per Participant:</b>			
<b>Budget Category<sup>11</sup></b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Cost Share</b>	<b>Narrative Justification</b>
Personnel Compensation	\$XX,XXX	\$XX,XXX	Director and Specialist will work for 2 months as follows: Director: XXX hours @ \$XX/hour=\$X,XXX Specialist: XXX hours @ \$XX/hour=\$X,XXX
Personnel Benefits	\$X,XXX	\$X,XXX	Benefits calculated @ XX% of salary
Administrative Travel	\$XXX	\$XXX	Transportation to, from, and within Washington, DC; one-night hotel stay
Local Travel and Transportation (domestic)	\$X,XXX	\$X,XXX	Local transportation for staff and rental of transport for delegation (one van @ \$XXX per day for X days); \$XXX taxi and public transportation <sup>12</sup>
Office Expenses	\$XXX	\$XXX	Utilities, supplies, printing, etc. Utilities=\$X,XXX Supplies, phone, printing=\$XXX
Cultural Activities & Refreshments	\$XXX	\$XXX	Receptions, admissions, etc. For meals, please use the number of delegates X 5 lunches X local per diem lunch rate + number of delegates X 2 dinners X local per diem dinner rate
Sub-Grants	\$XX,XXX	\$XXX	E.g., three local organizations will each receive a grant for \$X,XXX=\$XX,XXX to cover hosting expenses
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$XX,XXX</b>	<b>\$XX,XXX</b>	
<b>PROPOSED BY:</b>			
<b>Signature Program Officer and Date:</b>			

<sup>11</sup> Please note that Open World does not fund equipment purchases.

<sup>12</sup> Participants (delegates and their facilitator[s]) may not take public transportation to a professional activity unless the grantee gets advance approval from Open World, and a local escort must accompany the participants.

## **b. Allowable Costs**

The reasonableness, allowability, and allocation of costs for work performed under a COIL grant shall be determined in accordance with the applicable federal cost principles and the terms and conditions of the grant award.

1. **Pre-Award Costs.** Applicant organizations may include project costs incurred within the 90-calendar-day period immediately preceding the beginning date of the grant in the proposed budget. Pre-award expenditures are made at the risk of the applicant organization, and COIL is not obligated to cover such costs in the event an award is not made or is made for an amount that is less than the applicant organization anticipated.
2. **Travel Costs.** Travel costs are the expenses for transportation, lodging, subsistence, and related items incurred by those who are on official business attributable to work under a grant. Such costs may be charged on an actual basis, on a per diem or mileage basis in lieu of actual costs, or on a combination of the two, provided the method used results in charges consistent with those normally allowed by the grantee in its regular operation, as set forth in the grantee's written travel policy. Airfare costs in excess of the lowest available commercial discount or customary standard (coach) airfare are unallowable unless such accommodations are not reasonably available to accomplish the purpose of travel. All air travel that is paid in whole or in part with COIL funds must be undertaken on U.S. air carriers unless COIL gives prior written approval for use of non-U.S. carriers.

## **II. Grant Documentation and Compliance**

### **a. Introduction**

Working from a comprehensive set of grant principles established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), COIL has identified specific rules that will apply to all grantees and subrecipients of COIL grants. These rules are explained below. It is important to become familiar with these provisions and comply with them.

Title 2 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Grant Agreements is the basis for all federal grants. All OMB federal grant circulars have been combined into 2 CFR Part 200. Title 2 CFR Part 200 may be referred to as the new super circular, Uniform Grant Guidance (UGG), Uniform Guidance (UG), or 2 CFR 200.

Please note that the COIL, as a legislative branch agency, is not required to apply the OMB grants-related guidance for executive branch agencies and departments found in Title 2 of the CFR. Nevertheless, it is the policy of COIL to follow this familiar grant guidance and to deviate from it only when in the best interest of the Open World program. Consequently, 2 CFR 200 will apply as customarily implemented by COIL in connection with the Open World program. For example, the requirement in 2 CFR 200.107 for clearance through OMB of any deviations to the terms of the CFR will not apply to Open World. Instead, grantees should direct any questions about COIL's implementation of the CFR to Jane Sargus, Executive Director/Budget Officer, at [jsar@coil.gov](mailto:jsar@coil.gov)

Unless otherwise specified herein, sections from the CFR, as interpreted and implemented by COIL, will be incorporated by reference into COIL grant awards.

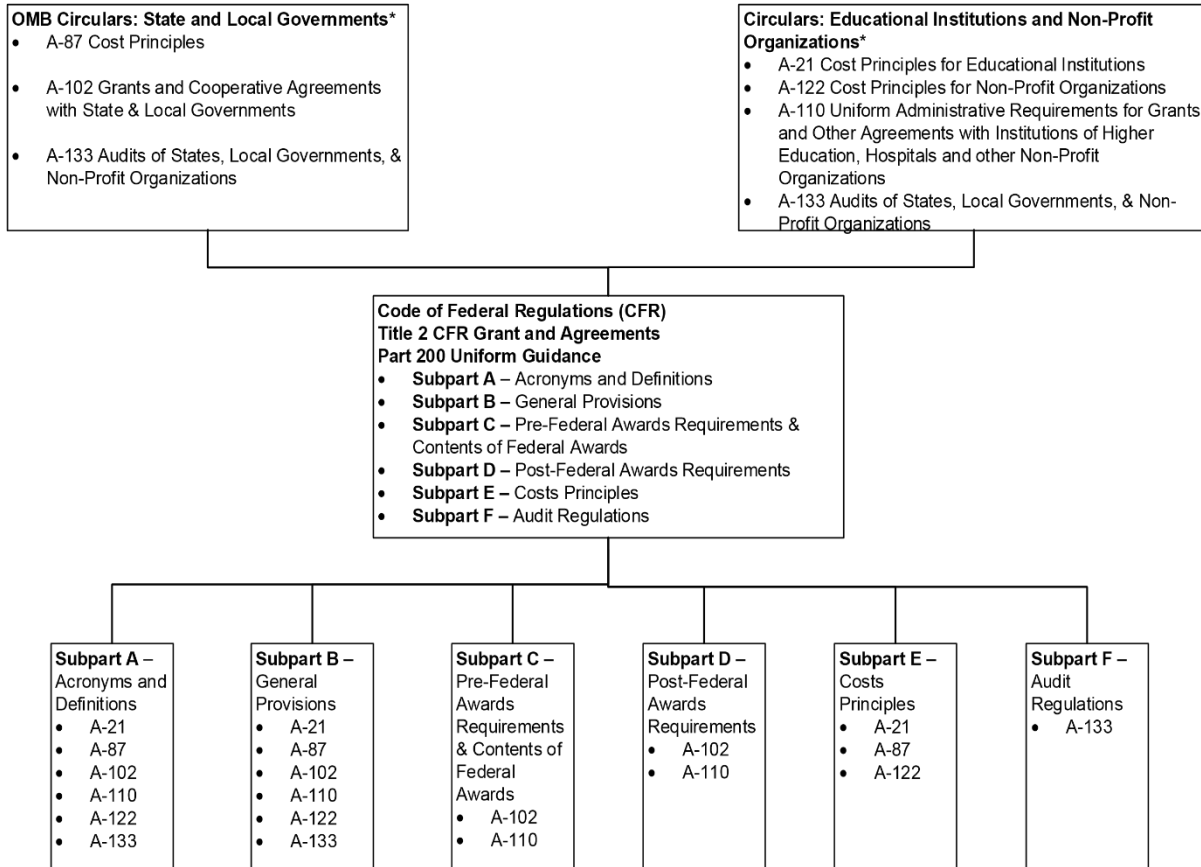
The full text of these authorities is available as follows:

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 2, Grants and Agreements, Part 2, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, is available online via the Government Printing Office (GPO) website at: <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200.pdf>
- Copies of relevant authorities are also available from COIL upon request.

# New Uniform Grant Guidance Flow Chart

## Code of Federal Regulations (CFR)

### Title 2 CFR Grant and Agreements





## **b. Basic Grantee Responsibilities**

The grantee holds full responsibility for the conduct of project activities under a COIL award, for adherence to the award conditions, and for informing COIL during the course of the grant of any significant programmatic, administrative, or financial problems that arise. In accepting a grant, the grantee assumes the legal responsibility of administering the grant in accordance with these requirements and of maintaining documentation, which is subject to audit, of all actions and expenditures affecting the grant. Failure to comply with the requirements of the award could result in suspension or termination of the grant and COIL's recovery of grant funds. The grantee also assumes full legal responsibility for any contracts entered into relating to the grant program.

## **c. Compliance with Federal Law**

Applicant organizations must certify that their programs operate in compliance with the requirements of various federal statutes and their implementing regulations. These are described below. Grantees are also required to obtain an executed certification of compliance with these statutes from all organizations that are subrecipients under a COIL grant.

1. **Nondiscrimination.** Grants are subject to the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (as amended), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended), the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (as amended), and the regulations issued pursuant thereto. Therefore, no person on grounds of race, color, national origin, disability, or age shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subject to discrimination under a program funded by COIL. In addition, if a project involves an educational activity or program, as defined in Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, no person on the basis of sex shall be excluded from participation in the project.
2. **Lobbying Activities.** The Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment, 31 U.S.C. 1352, prohibits recipients of federal contracts, grants, and loans from using appropriated funds to influence the executive or legislative branches of the federal government in connection with a specific contract, grant, cooperative agreement, loan, or any other award covered by § 1352. 18 U.S.C. 1913 makes it a crime to use funds appropriated by Congress to influence members of Congress regarding congressional legislation or appropriations. Finally, 2 CFR Part 200.450 identifies activities that are unallowable "lobbying" charges to grant funds or cost sharing.
3. **Drug-Free Workplace.** The Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, 41 U.S.C. 701, requires grantees to have an on-going drug-free awareness program; to publish a statement notifying employees that the unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of a controlled substance is prohibited in the workplace; to maintain evidence that this statement was given to each employee engaged in the performance of the grant; and to identify in the funding proposal or to keep on file in its office the place(s) where grant activities will be carried out.
4. **Debarment and Suspension.** Applicant-organization principals must not be presently debarred or suspended or otherwise excluded from or ineligible to participate in federal assistance programs. An applicant or grantee organization shall provide immediate written

notice to COIL Grants Officer if at any time it learns that its certification was erroneous when submitted or has become erroneous by reason of changed circumstances. Grantees shall not make or permit any subgrant or contract to any party which is debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in federal assistance programs. Grantees and subgrantees must not make any award or permit any award (subgrant or contract) at any tier to any party which is debarred or suspended or is otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participation in Federal assistance programs

**Grantee organizations must complete two forms annually in reference to the above: Disclosure of Lobbying Activities (Form LLL) and Assurances – Non-Construction Programs (Form 424B). Both forms will be provided by the COIL.**

### **III. Grant Period and Extensions**

**Grant Period** - The grant period is the span of time during which the grantee has the authority to obligate grant funds and undertake project activities. However, when approved by COIL, a grantee may incur necessary project costs in the 90-day period prior to the beginning date of the grant period. **All 2025 grants will begin on the date of the grantee’s signature on the award letter and end no later than March 31, 2026.**

**Final Program Report** - A **final program report** on the overall administration of Open World grant and hosting activities, including recommendations for future program changes and a description of outcomes achieved, **must be submitted by the grantee organization within 90 days of its final hosting activity under the grant.**

**Financial Reports - Final financial reports** are due for the period ending March 31, 2026 to COIL no later than April 10, 2026, unless a later date is agreed to in writing by COIL. Please note that grantees are encouraged to submit all final financial documentation with the final program report by ninety (90) days after the completion of programming activities. See Section IV for detailed information on quarterly financial reporting.

**Extension of Grant** - COIL may authorize a one-time extension of the expiration date established in the initial grant award if additional time is required to complete the original scope of the project with the funds already made available. A single extension that shall not exceed 2 months may be made for this purpose, provided it is made prior to the original expiration date. Grant periods will not be extended merely for using the unliquidated balance of project funds.

### **IV. Reporting Requirements**

Each organization awarded a grant by COIL is required to submit by e-mail the following reports. **Please include the Open World Grant Number (e.g., COIL-1976) in the e-mail’s subject line each time a report is submitted. Failure to meet these deadlines will negatively affect consideration for future grants from COIL.**

#### **a. Federal Financial Reports (Standard Form 425)**

A Federal Financial Report (Standard Form 425) is required for each grant awarded and still open. The quarterly reporting periods are:

1. Beginning of grant award–December 31, 2024 (Due 1/10/2025)
2. January 1–March 31, 2025 (Due 4/10/2025)
3. April 1–June 30, 2025 (Due 7/10/2025)
4. July 1–September 30, 2025 (Due 9/30/2025)
5. October 1–December 31, 2025 (Due 1/10/2026)
6. January 1–March 31, 2026 (Due 4/10/2026)

**When submitting Federal Financial Reports, please include the Open World Grant Number in the e-mail’s subject line.**

**b. Cost Share Report**

A Cost Share Report (form provided by COIL) must be completed no later than April 10, 2026. The report must identify all cost-share contributions made toward the program for which the grant was given. When submitting, please include the Open World Grant Number in the fax’s or e-mail’s subject line.

**c. Final Financial Reports**

In addition to the Final Program Report, the following documents must be submitted to close a grant:

1. Final Federal Financial Report (Form 425)
2. Request for Advance or Reimbursement (Form 270), if appropriate, and marked “Final”
3. A Variance Report that compares actual expenditures by major budget categories against the grant award budget categories. The variance report shall give the following data: approved budget categories; amount approved for each category; amount expended in each category; and the percent over/under the approved budget amount in each category.

**NOTE: Please keep in mind that an overage of 10 percent or more in any one category would have required prior written approval from the Congressional Office for International Leadership’s Budget Officer.**

4. Cost Share Report (form provided by Open World).

Final Financial Reports for the period ending March 31, 2024 must be submitted to COIL no later than April 10, 2024, unless a later date is agreed to in writing by COIL. When submitting, please include the Open World Grant Number in the e-mail’s subject line.

## V. Payments and Interest

Grantees may be paid on an advance basis, unless otherwise specified in the grant award, and payment will be effected through electronic funds transfer. Whenever possible, advances should be deposited and maintained in insured accounts. Grantees are also encouraged to use women-owned and minority-owned banks (banks that are owned at least 50 percent by women or minority group members).

- a. **Payment Requests.** Requests for advance payment shall be limited to no more than 50 percent of the funds remaining on the grant, with the expectation that the advance will be used within a thirty-day period from when it is requested, unless otherwise specified by COIL. Grant funds that have been advanced but are unspent at the end of the grant period must be returned to COIL. **Grantees must make every effort to avoid requesting advance payment of funds that then are not used.**
- b. **Interest on Grant Funds.** All grantees, except states (see glossary), are required to maintain advances of federal funds in interest-bearing accounts unless the grantee receives less than \$120,000 per year in advances of grant funds or the most reasonably available interest-bearing account would not earn more than \$250 per year on the federal cash balance, or would entail bank services charges in excess of the interest earned. Interest that is earned on advanced payments shall be remitted to COIL.
- c. **Requesting Reimbursement or Advance.** When requesting reimbursement or advance of funds, the Request for Advance or Reimbursement of Funds (Form 270) must be used. Grantees must clearly mark in their documentation for requesting funds whether the request is for a **partial** advance payment, **reimbursement**, or the **final close-out payment of the grant**. **NOTE: If the request is for an advance of funds, the “period covered” must state a time period subsequent to the request. If the request is for a reimbursement of funds, the “period covered” must state a time period prior to the request. It is also possible to request both a partial reimbursement and an advance, and in this case the beginning date must be in the past and the ending date in the future.**

## VI. Budget Revisions

The project budget is the schedule of anticipated project expenditures that is approved by COIL for carrying out the purposes of the grant. When grantees or third parties support a portion of the project costs, the project budget includes the nonfederal as well as the federal share of project expenses. All requests for budget revisions must be signed by the recipient organization’s grant administrator and submitted to COIL.

Within 14 calendar days from the date of receipt of the request for budget revision, COIL will review the request and notify the grantee whether or not the budget revision has been approved. NOTE: Budget categories are firm, and any overage in expenditure in a particular category of more than 10 percent must be approved by COIL in advance. **Under no circumstances does obtaining COIL’s written approval for an overage in a given category permit a grantee to exceed the total amount awarded by COIL.**

Grantees must obtain prior written approval from COIL whenever a budget revision is necessary because of:

- the transfer to a third party (by sub-granting, contracting, or other means) of any work under a grant (COIL approval is not required for third-party transfers that were described in the approved project plan, or for the purchase of supplies, materials, or general support services);
- the addition of costs that are specifically disallowed by the terms and conditions of the grant award;
- the transfer of funds from one budget category to another in excess of 10 percent of each category; or
- changes in the scope or objectives of the project.

## **VII. Organizational Prior Approval System**

The recipient organization is required to have written procedures in place for reviewing and approving in advance proposed administrative changes such as:

- a. the expenditure of project funds for items that, under the applicable cost principles, normally require prior agency approval;
- b. the one-time extension of a grant period;
- c. the incurring of project costs prior to the beginning date of an award; and
- d. budget revisions that involve the transfer of funds among budget categories.

**1. Purpose.** The procedures for approving such changes are sometimes referred to as an “organizational prior approval system.” The purpose of such a system is to ensure that:

- all grant actions and expenditures are consistent with the terms and conditions of the award, as well as with the policies of COIL and the recipient organization;
- any changes that may be made do NOT constitute a change in the scope of the project; and
- any deviation from the budget approved by COIL is necessary and reasonable for the accomplishment of project objectives and is allowable under the applicable federal cost principles.

**2. Requirements.** Although grantees are free to design a prior approval system that suits their particular needs and circumstances, an acceptable system must at a minimum include the following:

- the procedure for review of proposed changes must be in writing;
- proposed changes must be reviewed at a level beyond the project director;

- whenever changes are approved, the grantee institution has to retain documentation of the approval for three years following the submission of the final financial report.

### **VIII. Cost Sharing and Cost-Sharing Records**

While COIL tries to fund as many of the project activities as is fiscally possible, a grantee is expected to share in project expenses as much as possible and at the level indicated in its approved project budget. Grantees must maintain auditable records of all project costs whether they are charged to grant funds or supported by cost-sharing contributions. All cash and in-kind contributions to a project that are provided by a grantee or a third party are acceptable as cost sharing when such contributions meet the following criteria:

- Are verifiable from the grantee’s records;
- Are not included as contributions for any other federally assisted program;
- Are necessary and reasonable for the proper and efficient accomplishment of project objectives;
- Are types of charges that would be allowable under the applicable cost principles;
- Are used to support activities that are included in the approved project work plan;
- Are incurred during the grant period.

Contributions such as property, space, or services that a grantee donates to a project are to be valued in accordance with the applicable federal cost principles and not on the basis of what would normally be charged for the use of these items or services. When cost sharing includes third-party in-kind contributions, the basis for determining the valuation of volunteer services and donated property or space must be documented and must conform to federal principles. Appendix 3 illustrates the cost-share report form [with instructions] that COIL will provide to grantees and local hosts to aid them in estimating cost-share totals. The form/s are due to COIL by April 10, 2024.

### **IX. Suspension and Termination**

#### **a. Grants may be terminated in whole or in part:**

- by COIL if the grantee materially fails to comply with the terms and conditions of an award;
- by COIL with the grantee’s consent, in which case the two parties shall agree upon the termination conditions, including the effective date and, in the case of partial termination, the portion of the project to be terminated; or
- by the grantee, upon sending to COIL via fax or e-mail written notification—followed by signed documents sent via overnight or express delivery PER ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY CONTACTING OPEN WORLD EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JANE SARGUS AT (202) 707-8943—setting forth the reasons for such termination, the effective date, and, in the case of partial termination, the

portion of the project to be terminated. However, if COIL determines that the reduced or modified portion of the grant will not accomplish the purposes for which the grant was made, it may terminate the grant in its entirety either unilaterally or with the grantee's consent.

- b. Suspension or Termination for Cause.** When COIL determines that a grantee has failed to comply with the terms of the grant award, COIL may suspend or terminate the grant for cause. Normally, this action will be taken only after the grantee has been notified of the deficiency and given sufficient time to correct it, but this does not preclude immediate suspension or termination when such action is required to protect the interests of COIL. In the event that a grant is suspended and corrective action is not taken within 90 days of the effective date, COIL may issue a notice of termination.
- c. Allowable Costs.** No costs that are incurred during the suspension period or after the effective date of termination will be allowable except those that are specifically authorized by the suspension or termination notice or those that, in the opinion of COIL, could not have been reasonably avoided.
- d. Report and Accounting.** Within 30 days of the termination date, the grantee shall furnish to COIL a summary of progress achieved under the grant, an itemized accounting of charges incurred against grant funds and cost sharing prior to the effective date of the suspension or termination, and a separate accounting and justification for any costs that may have been incurred after this date.
- e. Termination Review Procedures.** If the grantee has received a notice of termination, the grantee may request review of the termination action. The grantee request for review must be sent via overnight or express delivery [PER ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY CONTACTING COIL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JANE SARGUS AT (202) 707-8943] no later than 30 days after the date of the termination notice and should be addressed to the Chairman of the Board, Congressional Office for International Leadership, Library of Congress, 101 Independence Ave., S.E., Washington, DC 20540-9980.

A request for review must contain a full statement of the grantee's position and the pertinent facts and reasons supporting it. The grantee's request will be acknowledged promptly, and a review committee of at least three individuals will be appointed. Pending the resolution of the review, the notice of termination will remain in effect.

None of the review-committee members will be among those individuals who recommended termination or were responsible for monitoring the programmatic or administrative aspects of the awarded grant. The committee will have full access to all relevant COIL background materials. The committee may also request the submission of additional information from the recipient organization or from COIL staff and, at its discretion, may meet with representatives of both groups to discuss the pertinent issues. All review activities will be fully documented by the committee. Based on its review, the committee will present its written recommendation to the Chairman of the Board of COIL, who will advise the parties concerned of the final decision.

## **X. Financial Management Standards**

Grantee financial management systems must meet the following standards:

- a. **Accounting System.** Grantees must have an accounting system that provides accurate, current, and complete disclosure of all financial transactions related to each federally sponsored project. Accounting records must contain information pertaining to federal awards, authorizations, obligations, unobligated balances, assets, outlays, and income. These records must be maintained on a current basis and balanced at least quarterly.
- b. **Source Documentation.** Accounting records must be supported by such source documentation as canceled checks, bank statements, invoices, paid bills, donor letters, time and attendance records, activity reports, travel reports, contractual and consultant agreements, and subaward documentation. All supporting documentation should be clearly identified with the grant and general ledger accounts that are to be charged or credited.
  - (1) The documentation required for salary charges to grants is prescribed by the cost principles applicable to the grantee organization. If an applicant organization anticipates salary changes during the course of the grant, those charges must be included in the budget request.
  - (2) Formal agreements with independent contractors, such as consultants, must include a description of the services to be performed, the period of performance, the fee and method of payment, an itemization of travel and other costs that are chargeable to the agreement, and the signatures of both the contractor and an appropriate official of the grantee organization.
- c. **Third-Party Contributions.** Cash contributions to the project from third parties must be accounted for in the general ledger with other grant funds. Third-party in-kind (non-cash) contributions are not required to be recorded in the general ledger, but must be under accounting control, possibly through the use of a memorandum ledger. If third-party in-kind (non-cash) contributions are used on a project, the valuation of these contributions must be supported with adequate documentation.
- d. **Internal Control.** Grantees must maintain effective control and accountability for all cash, real and personal property, and other assets. Grantees must adequately safeguard all such property and must provide assurance that it is used solely for authorized purposes. Grantees must also have systems in place that ensure compliance with the terms and conditions of each grant award.
- e. **Budget Control.** Records of expenditures must be maintained for each grant project by the cost categories of the approved budget (including indirect costs that are charged to the project), and actual expenditures are to be compared with budgeted amounts no less frequently than quarterly. COIL approval is required for certain budget revisions.



- f. Cash Management. Grantees must also have written procedures to minimize the time elapsing between the receipt and the disbursement of grant funds to avoid having excessive federal funds on hand. Requests for advance payment shall be limited to immediate cash needs and are not to exceed anticipated expenditures for a 30-day period. Grantees must ensure that all grant funds are obligated during the grant period and spent no later than 60 days after the end of the grant period.

## **XI. Record Retention and Audits**

Grantees must retain financial records, supporting documentation, statistical records, and all other records pertinent to the grant for three years from the date of submission of the final expenditure report. If the three-year retention period is extended because of audits, appeals, litigation, or the settlement of claims arising out of the performance of the project, the records shall be retained until such audits, appeals, litigation, or claims are resolved. Unless court action or audit proceedings have been initiated, grantees may substitute digital or scanned copies of original records.

COIL, the Comptroller General of the United States, the Inspector General of the Library of Congress (on behalf of COIL), and any of their duly authorized representatives shall have access to any pertinent books, documents, papers, and records of a grantee organization to make audits, examinations, excerpts, transcripts, and copies. Further, any contract in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000) that grantees negotiate for the purposes of carrying out the grant project shall include a provision to the effect that the grantee, COIL, the Comptroller General, the Inspector General of the Library of Congress, or any of their duly authorized representatives shall have access for similar purposes to any records of the contractor that are directly pertinent to the project.

# Appendix 1

## Procurement Guidelines

### I. Procurement Responsibility

The standards contained in this section do not relieve the grantee of the contractual responsibilities arising under its contracts. The grantee is the responsible authority, without recourse to COIL regarding the settlement and satisfaction of all contractual and administrative issues arising out of procurements entered into in support of a grant project. Matters concerning the violation of a statute are to be referred to such federal, state, or local authority as may have proper jurisdiction.

The grantee may determine the type of procurement instrument used, e.g., fixed price contracts, cost reimbursable contracts, incentive contracts, or purchase orders. The contract type must be appropriate for the particular procurement and for promoting the best interest of the program involved. The “cost-plus-a-percentage-of-cost” or “percentage of construction cost” methods shall not be used.

### II. Procurement Standards

When grantees procure property or services under a grant, their procurement policies must adhere to the standards set forth below. Subrecipients of grant funds are subject to the same policies and procedures as the grantee.

- a. Contract Administration.** Grantees shall maintain a system for contract administration that ensures that contractors perform in accordance with the terms, conditions, and specifications of their contracts or purchase orders. Grantees shall evaluate contractor performance and document, as appropriate, whether or not contractors have met the terms, conditions, and specifications of the contract. Should performance be found unacceptable, compensation under the contract purchase order should reflect the deficiencies.
- b. Ethical Standards of Conduct.** Grantees shall maintain a written standard of conduct for awarding and administering contracts. No employee, officer, or agent of the recipient organization shall participate in the selection, or in the awarding or administration, of a contract supported by federal funds if a real or apparent conflict of interest would be involved. Such a conflict would arise when any of the following have a financial or other interest in the firm selected for a contract: the employee, officer, or agent; any member of his or her immediate family; his or her partner; or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the preceding.

Grantee officers, employees, and agents will neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from contractors, or parties to sub-agreements. However, grantees may set standards governing when the financial interest is not substantial or the gift is an unsolicited item of nominal value. The standards of conduct shall provide for disciplinary actions to be applied for violations of such standards by grantee officers, employees, or agents.

- c. Open and Free Competition.** All procurement transactions will be conducted in a manner to provide, to the maximum extent practical, open and free competition. Grantees should be

alert to organizational conflicts of interest or noncompetitive practices among contractors that may restrict or eliminate competition or otherwise restrain trade. In order to ensure objective contractor performance and eliminate unfair competitive advantage, contractors that develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids and/or requests for proposals should be excluded from competing for such procurements. Awards shall be made to the bidder/offeror whose bid/offer is responsive to the solicitation and is most advantageous to the grantee, price, quality, and other factors considered. Solicitations shall clearly set forth all requirements that the bidder/offeror must fulfill in order for the bid/offer to be evaluated by the grantee. When it is in the grantee's interest to do so, any bid/offer may be rejected.

**d. Small, Minority-Owned, and Women's Business Enterprises.** The grantee shall make positive efforts to assure that small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises are used whenever possible. Organizations receiving federal awards shall take all the steps outlined below to further this goal. This shall include:

1. Placing qualified small, minority and women's business enterprises on solicitation lists;
2. Assuring that these businesses are solicited whenever they are potential sources;
3. Contracting with consortiums of small, minority-owned, or women's business enterprises, when a contract is too large for one of these firms to handle individually;
4. Using the services and assistance, as appropriate, of such organizations as the Small Business Administration and the Department of Commerce's Minority Business Development Agency; and
5. Considering in the contract process whether firms competing for larger contracts intend to subcontract with small businesses, minority-owned firms, and women's business enterprises.

### **III. Procurement Procedures**

Grantees must have formal procurement procedures. Proposed procurements are to be reviewed to avoid the purchase of unnecessary or duplicative items.

**a. Solicitations.** Solicitations for goods and services shall provide the following:

1. A clear and accurate description of the technical requirements for the material, product, or service to be procured. In competitive procurements, such a description shall not contain features that unduly restrict competition.
2. Requirements that the bidder/offeror must fulfill and all other factors to be used in evaluating bids or proposals.

3. Whenever practicable, a description of technical requirements in terms of the functions to be performed or the performance required, including the range of acceptable characteristics or minimum acceptable standards.
4. The specific features of “brand name or equal” descriptions that bidders are required to meet when such items are included in the solicitation.
5. Preference, to the extent practical and economically feasible, for products and services that conserve natural resources, protect the environment, and are energy efficient.

**b. Selecting Contractors.** Contracts will be made only with responsible contractors who possess the potential ability to perform successfully under the terms and conditions of a proposed procurement. Consideration should be given to such matters as contractor integrity, the record of past performance, financial and technical resources or accessibility to other necessary resources.

1. Some form of price or cost analysis should be made in connection with every procurement action. Price analysis may be accomplished in various ways, including the comparison of price quotations submitted, market prices and similar indicia, together with discounts. Cost analysis is the review and evaluation of each element of cost to determine reasonableness, allocability, and allowability.
2. Procurement records and files for purchases in excess of the simplified acquisition threshold (currently \$250,000) shall include the basis for contractor selection, justification for lack of competition when competitive bids or offers are not obtained, and the basis for award cost or price.

#### **IV. Contract Provisions**

**a. Contracts in Excess of \$250,000.** All contracts in excess of \$250,000 established under the grant award from COIL must provide for:

1. Administrative, contractual, or legal remedies in instances where contractors violate or breach contract terms, and such remedial actions as may be appropriate.
2. Termination for cause and for convenience by the grantee, including the manner by which it will be effected and the basis for settlement. In addition, these contracts shall also contain a description of the conditions under which the contract may be terminated for default as well as conditions where the contract may be terminated because of circumstances beyond the control of the contractor.
3. Access by the recipient organization, COIL, the Comptroller General of the United States, or any other duly authorized representatives to any books, documents, papers, and records of the contractor that are directly pertinent to that specific contract for the purpose of making audit, examination, excerpts, and transcriptions.

**b. Standard Clauses.** All contracts, including small purchases, shall contain the following provisions as applicable:

1. **Equal Employment Opportunity.** All contracts awarded by the grantee and the grantee's contractors and subrecipients having a value of more than \$10,000 must contain a provision requiring compliance with Department of Labor regulations (41 CFR, Part 60).
2. **Byrd Anti-Lobbying Amendment (31 U.S.C. 1352).** Contractors who apply or bid for an award of \$250,000 or more must file a certification with the grantee stating that they will not and have not used federal appropriated funds to pay any person or organization for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with obtaining any federal contract, grant, cooperative agreement, loan, or any other award covered by 31 U.S.C. 1352. Such contractors must also disclose to the grantee any lobbying that takes place in connection with obtaining any federal award.
3. **Debarment and Suspension.** No contracts shall be made to parties listed on the General Services Administration's Lists of Parties Excluded From Federal Procurement or Nonprocurement Programs. These lists contain the names of contractors debarred, suspended, or proposed for debarment by agencies, and contractors declared ineligible under other statutory or regulatory authority. Grantees must obtain a certification regarding debarment and suspension from all subrecipients and from all parties with whom they contract for goods or services when (a) the amount of the contract is \$250,000 or more, or (b) when, regardless of the amount of the contract, the contractor will have a critical influence or substantive control over the covered transaction. Such persons would be project directors and providers of federally required audit services. Prohibition on Contracting for Hardware, Software, and Services Developed or Provided by Kaspersky Lab and Other Covered Entities. Contractors shall adhere to FAR Clause 52.204-23 and shall include the clause in all subrecipients agreements, contracts or purchase orders.

## **V. Other Federal Guidance**

- a. Buy American Act.** Consistent with the Buy American Act, 41 U.S.C. 10a-c and Public Law 105-277, grantees and subrecipients who purchase products with grant funds should purchase only American-made equipment and products.
- b. Welfare-to-Work Initiative.** To supplement the welfare-to-work initiative, grantees are encouraged, whenever possible, to hire welfare recipients and to provide additional needed training and/or mentoring.

## APPENDIX 2

### Cost Principles

#### I. Introduction

2 CFR 200 contains a comprehensive explanation of which costs are allowable under a government grant, how to determine whether a cost is reasonable, and how direct and indirect costs should be allocated. Applicant organizations may obtain a paper copy from COIL or read the full text online by going to <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2014-title2-vol1/pdf/CFR-2014-title2-vol1-part200.pdf>.

#### II. Basic Definitions

2 CFR 200 describes:

**a. Allowable Costs.** To be allowable under an award, costs must meet the following general criteria:

1. Be reasonable for the performance of the award and be allocable thereto under these principles.
2. Conform to any limitations or exclusions set forth in these principles or in the award as to types or amount of cost items.
3. Be consistent with policies and procedures that apply uniformly to both federally financed and other activities of the organization.
4. Be accorded consistent treatment.
5. Be determined in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles.
6. Not be included as a cost or used to meet cost sharing or matching requirements of any other federally financed program in either the current or a prior period.
7. Be adequately documented.

**b. Reasonable Costs.** A cost is reasonable if, in its nature or amount, it does not exceed that which would be incurred by a prudent person under the circumstances prevailing at the time the decision was made to incur the costs. In determining the reasonableness of a given cost, consideration shall be given to:

1. Whether the cost is of a type generally recognized as ordinary and necessary for the operation of the organization or the performance of the award.

2. The restraints or requirements imposed by such factors as generally accepted sound business practices, arms-length bargaining, federal and state laws and regulations, and terms and conditions of the award.
  3. Whether the individuals concerned acted with prudence in the circumstances, considering their responsibilities to the organization, its members, employees, and clients, the public at large, and the federal government.
  4. Significant deviations from the established practices of the organization that may unjustifiably increase the award costs.
- c. **Allocable Costs.** A cost may be allocated to the recipient organization's grant in accordance with the relative benefits received. A cost is allocable to a federal award if it is treated consistently with other costs incurred for the same purpose in like circumstances and if it:
- Is incurred specifically for the award.
  - Benefits both the award and other work and can be distributed in reasonable proportion to the benefits received, or
  - Is necessary to the overall operation of the organization, although a direct relationship to any particular cost objective cannot be shown.
  - Any cost allocable to a particular award or other cost objective under these principles may not be shifted to other federal awards to overcome funding deficiencies, or to avoid restrictions imposed by law or by the terms of the award.

### III. Potential Costs

2 CFR 200.420 describes 55 types of costs and explains when they are allowable and when they are not. Some of the potential costs covered by the CFR are not relevant to COIL projects. Please note that costs marked with an "X" in the list below are **never** allowable and must not be included in an applicant organization's budget for COIL activities or in a grantee's requests for payment. Other costs on the list may be unallowable in certain circumstances. Please refer to the CFR for explanations and contact COIL with any questions.

Failure to mention a particular item of cost is not intended to imply that it is unallowable; rather, determination as to allowability in each case should be based on the treatment or principles provided for similar or related items of cost.

1. Advertising and public relations
2. Advisory councils
- X 3. Alcoholic beverages

4. Alumni/ae activities
5. Audit services
- X 6. Bad debts
7. Bonding costs
8. Collections of improper payments
9. Commencement and convocation costs
10. Compensation – personal services
11. Compensation – fringe benefits
12. Conferences
- X 13. Contingency provisions
14. Contributions and donations
15. Defense and prosecution of criminal and civil proceedings, claims, appeals and patent infringements
16. Depreciation
17. Employee health and welfare costs
18. Entertainment costs
- X 19. Equipment and other capital expenditures
20. Exchange rates
- X 21. Fines, penalties, damages and other settlements
- X 22. Fund raising and investment management costs
- X 23. Gains and losses on disposition of depreciable assets
24. General costs of government
- X 25. Goods or services for personal use
26. Idle facilities and idle capacity
27. Insurance and indemnification
28. Intellectual property
- X 29. Interest
- X 30. Lobbying
- X 31. Losses on other awards or contracts
32. Maintenance and repair costs
33. Materials and supplies costs, including costs of computing devices
34. Memberships, subscriptions, and professional activity costs
- X 35. Organization costs
36. Participant support costs
37. Plant and security costs
38. Pre-award costs
39. Professional service costs
40. Proposal costs
41. Publication and printing costs
42. Rearrangement and reconversion costs
43. Recruiting costs
44. Relocation costs of employees
45. Rental costs of real property and equipment
46. Scholarships and student aid costs
47. Selling and marketing costs
48. Specialized service facilities
- X 49. Student activity costs
50. Taxes (including Value Added Tax)
51. Termination costs
52. Training and education costs



- 53. Transportation costs
- 54. Travel costs
- 55. Trustees

## APPENDIX 3

### Cost-Share Report Form and Instruction Sheet

Below are illustrations of the form and instruction sheet that COIL will provide to grantees to aid them and local host coordinators (sub grantees) in reporting cost share. The actual form is a spreadsheet that calculates totals automatically.



CONGRESSIONAL OFFICE FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
LEADERSHIP

Tel 202.707.8943

Congressional Office for International Leadership

Fax 202.252.3464

<b>I. Identifying Information:</b>	
Grantee:	
Grant Number:	
Program Theme:	
Program Dates:	Date Form Completed:

<b>II. REQUIRED COST SHARE:</b>						
	Column 1		Column 2		Column 3	Column 4
<b>Homestay value:</b>						
	# of Nights	X	# of Participants	X	Unit Value	Cost Share
Number of nights with home hosts:	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		\$100.00	\$0.00
<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem">www.gsa.gov/perdiem</a>						
<b>Donated meals:</b>						
	# of Meals	X	# of Participants	X	Unit Value	Cost Share
Breakfasts:	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		\$10.00	\$0.00
Lunches:	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		\$15.00	\$0.00
Dinners:	<input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/>		\$30.00	\$0.00
<a href="http://www.gsa.gov/perdiem">www.gsa.gov/perdiem</a>						
					<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Volunteer/host driving in their own cars:</b>						
	Miles	X	Price per mile		=	Cost Share
Total miles all drivers:	<input type="text"/>		\$0.51			\$0.00
<a href="https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates/">https://www.irs.gov/tax-professionals/standard-mileage-rates/</a>						
<b>Volunteer time:</b>						
	Hours	X	Cost per hour		=	Cost Share
Other unpaid hours (staff, presenter, etc.):	<input type="text"/>		\$8.00			\$0.00
<a href="http://https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state">http:// https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/minimum-wage/state</a>						
					<b>SUBTOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL REQUIRED COST SHARE:</b>						<b>\$0.00</b>

<b>III. OPTIONAL SECTION</b>	
Items received for free or at a discount, or that you are not claiming reimbursement for:	
<b>Item Description</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>SUBTOTAL OPTIONAL COST SHARE:</b>	
<b>\$0.00</b>	

**Grand Total Cost Share:** **\$0.00**

## COIL Cost Share Report Form Instruction Sheet

The COIL Cost-Share Report Form is designed to be a quick electronic tool for calculating in-kind contributions. Although the form can be printed and filled out by hand, COIL recommends using it on-screen, as the Excel file has all of the formulas loaded into it. If you are a local host coordinator, you may either e-mail or fax the completed form to your grantee, along with all other final financial documentation, or you may mail a printout of it along with hard copies of final financial documentation to your grantee. Sending this documentation via e-mail is preferred. All cost share estimation forms are due to COIL by April 10, 2024.

Note that the form has three sections. The “Identifying Information” and “Required Cost Share” sections must be filled out in their entirety. The default amounts provided in Columns 2 and 3 are only estimates—please use the web links provided to find the amounts that apply to your state. There is no need to provide official documentation supporting the dollar amounts entered. The “Optional Section” is provided for you to list any other relevant in-kind contributions you choose. If you have any questions about these instructions, please contact Grants Manager Nina Latterell at 202-707-8943 or [nlat@coil.gov](mailto:nlat@coil.gov).

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### ***IDENTIFYING INFORMATION:***

1. List your organization’s name. If a sub grantee is completing the form, please list first the primary grantee organization followed by the sub grantee organization.
2. Fill in the Open World Grant Number (e.g., COIL—1976).
3. List the theme and dates of your program.
4. Note the form’s completion date.

#### ***REQUIRED COST SHARE:***

##### ***Homestay value:***

1. Complete Column 1 with the number of nights of homestay provided to participants (delegates plus facilitator[s]).
2. Complete Column 2 with the number of participants to whom homestays were provided.
3. Column 3: Use the provided web link to check whether you may claim a higher unit value than the default value in Column 3 (based on your state). If you can, enter the higher value into the box titled “Unit Value.”
4. Column 4 will automatically populate.

##### ***Donated meals:***

1. Complete Column 1 with the number of meals donated to the participants. (NOTE: This may include meals provided by homestay hosts, banquets, group breakfasts, etc.)

2. Complete Column 2 with the number of participants for each different type of donated meal (delegates plus facilitator[s]).
3. Column 3: Use the provided web link to check whether you may claim a higher unit value than the default value in Column 3 (based on your state). If you can, enter the higher value into the box titled “Unit Value.”
4. Column 4 will automatically populate, as will the “Subtotal” amount.

***Volunteer/hosts driving in their own cars:***

1. Complete Column 1 with the total number of miles donated in the process of transporting participants.
2. Column 2: Use the provided web link to check whether you may claim a higher unit value than the default value in Column 2 (based on your state). If you can, enter the higher value into the box titled “Price per mile.”
3. Column 4 will automatically populate.

***Volunteer time:***

1. Complete Column 1 with the number of volunteer hours donated in the appropriate category.
2. Column 2: Use the provided web link to check whether you may claim a higher unit value than the default value in Column 2 (based on your state). If you can, enter the higher value into the box titled “Cost per hour.”
3. Column 4 will automatically populate.

“Subtotal Required Cost Share” will automatically populate.

***OPTIONAL SECTION:***

**Examples of items that might be noted in this section include donated gifts for delegates, discounts or free tickets for entertainment, donated overhead or administrative fees, and receptions.**

1. Provide a brief but complete description of each in-kind contribution.
2. Enter the appropriate value amount for each contribution.
3. The “Subtotal Optional Cost Share” amount and the “Grand Total Cost Share” amount will automatically populate.

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **Glossary of Terms**

**Cash Contributions** - The cash outlay for budgeted project activities, including the outlay of money contributed to the grantee by third parties.

**Cost Sharing** - The portion of the costs of a project not charged to COIL funds. This would include cash contributions (as defined above) as well as the value of third-party in-kind contributions.

**Debarment** - The ineligibility of a grantee to receive any assistance or benefits from the federal government, either indefinitely or for a specified period of time, based on legal proceedings taken pursuant to agency regulations.

**Equipment** - Tangible, non-expendable personal property having a useful life of more than one year and an acquisition cost of \$5,000 or more per unit.

**Federally Recognized Tribal Government** - The governing body or a governmental agency of any Indian tribe, Indian band, nation, or other organized group or community certified by the Secretary of the Interior as eligible for the special programs and services provided through the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**Grant** - A legal instrument that provides financial assistance in the form of money or property to an eligible recipient. The term includes cooperative agreements but it does not apply to technical assistance, which provides services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of revenue sharing, loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations. The term does not include fellowships or other lump sum awards for which the recipient is not required to provide a financial accounting.

**Grant Administrator** - The member of the grantee organization who has the official responsibility for administering the grant, e.g., for negotiating budget revisions, overseeing the submission of required reports, and ensuring compliance with the terms and conditions of the grant.

**Grant Period** - The period established in the grant award during which COIL activities and expenditures are to occur.

**Grantee** - The organization to which a grant is awarded and which is accountable for the use of the funds provided.

**Grants Officer** - COIL staff member so designated by the Executive Director.

**In-Kind Contributions** - The value of noncash contributions provided by third parties. In-kind contributions may be in the form of charges for real property and equipment or the value of goods and services directly benefitting and specifically identifiable to the project.

**Intangible Property** - Includes, but is not limited to, trademarks; copyrights; patents and patent applications.

Local Government - A county, municipality, city, town, township, local public authority, school district, special district, intrastate district, council of government, any other regional or interstate government entity, or any agency or instrumentality of a local government.

Obligation - The amounts of orders placed, contracts and grants awarded, goods and services received, and similar transactions during the grant period that will require payment.

Program Income - Money that is earned or received by a grantee or a subrecipient from the activities supported by grant funds or from products resulting from grant activities. It includes, but is not limited to, income from fees for services performed and from the sale of items fabricated under a grant; admission fees; broadcast or distribution rights; and royalties on patents and copyrights.

Project Funds - Both the federal and nonfederal funds that are used to cover the cost of budgeted project activities.

Simplified Acquisition Threshold - This term replaces “small purchase threshold,” and the threshold is currently set at \$250,000 [41 U.S.C. 1908].

State - Any of the several states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, any territory or possession of the United States, or any agency or instrumentality of a state exclusive of local governments, institutions of higher education, and hospitals.

Sub grant - An award of financial assistance in the form of money or property, made under a grant by a grantee to an eligible sub recipient or by a sub recipient to a lower-tier sub recipient. The term includes financial assistance, which is provided by any legal agreement, even if the agreement is called a contract, but it does not include the procurement of goods and services nor does it include any form of assistance that is excluded from the definition of a “grant.”

Sub recipient (Sub grantee) - The legal entity to which a sub grant is awarded and which is accountable to the grantee for the use of the funds provided.

Supplies - All personal property excluding equipment and intangible property, as defined in this glossary.

Suspension -

(1) The suspension of a grant is the temporary withdrawal of COIL sponsorship page This includes the withdrawal of authority to incur expenditures against grant funds, pending corrective action, or a decision to terminate the grant.

(2) The suspension of an individual or organization that causes that party to be temporarily ineligible to receive any assistance and benefits from the federal government pending the completion of investigation and legal proceedings as prescribed under agency regulations. Such actions may lead to debarment of the grantee.

Termination - Cancellation of COIL sponsorship of a project, including the withdrawal of authority to incur expenditures against previously awarded grant funds before that authority would otherwise expire.

# APPENDIX 5 Host Organization Profile Form



## Host Organization Profile Form

**Instructions:** The information provided in this form will be used by the Open World Leadership Center and its logistical contractor to finalize your hosting dates and identify program delegates who will be best suited to the program you are planning. Please complete this form and return it **as soon as possible** to your grantee organization, which will forward it to the staff at the Center.

### ***SECTION I: Host Information***

<b>Host Organization Name:</b>		<b>Primary Contact Name:</b>	
<b>Address (Cannot be a PO Box):</b>		<b>City:</b>	<b>State:</b>
		<b>Zip (9 digit):</b>	
<b>Tel.:</b>	<b>Mobile:</b>	<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Grantee Organization:</b>	<b>Congressional District:</b>	<b>Are you providing nominations (Y/N?):*</b>	
<b>Preferred Local Airport:</b>			

### ***SECTION II: Program Information***

<b>Hosting Date:</b>	<b>Theme/Subtheme:</b>
<b>Preferred Home Region(s) of Delegates (if applicable):</b>	<b>Preferred Type of Delegates:</b>
<b>Please provide a description of the proposed program:</b>	

\* Grantees/Local Host Organizations that have been approved by the Congressional Office for International Leadership to provide nominations will be asked to complete a Grantee Nominator Form to provide additional information on the nominated delegation, the proposed program, and anticipated results. This form will be given to members of the selection committee to use in determining finalists for participation in the Open World program.

**Please provide a list of at least 4 meetings/activities that will be part of the program, including for each one the name and/or organization to be visited and the purpose of the meeting:**