2024 Community Solutions Program Application
Frequently Asked Questions

What are the eligibility requirements of the program?
- You are between the ages of 26 and 39 as of January 1, 2024
- You are a **citizen of one of the eligible countries** listed below
- You are living and working in your home country
    - Individuals with refugee status working on behalf of their home community may be given special consideration
- You have **at least two years of experience** working on community development, either as a full-time or part-time employee or volunteer
- You are **not** currently participating in an academic, training, or research program in the U.S.
- You have a **high level of proficiency in spoken and written English** at the time of application
- Finalists and alternates will be required to take an English language exam or submit recent passing scores for TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo scores.
- You are available to **travel to the U.S. for four months** from August to December 2024
- You are **not** a citizen or permanent resident of the U.S. and have **not** applied for U.S. permanent residency within the past three years
- You are eligible to receive a U.S. J-1 visa
- You are committed to returning to your home country for a **minimum of two years** after completing the program and
- You are **not** a current IREX employee or consultant, or their immediate family member

How do I apply?
Check the Community Solutions application website for a link to the online application.

Can I submit my application via email?
No, we do not accept applications via email. Applications submitted via email will not be considered.

I wanted to learn what kind of person makes a successful candidate for the program?
CSP looks at certain criteria for candidates when reviewing applications. Strong applicants are established community leaders who have a clear idea of the impact that they want to continue to make and build upon in their communities and are able to articulate that vision clearly in their application. Strong applicants also demonstrate a commitment to community development and to re-investing the knowledge and skills gained during the program back into their home community. The program also aims to be a unique opportunity for candidates to ensure that programs like CSP reach a wide range of community leaders, prioritizing those strong candidates without prior international development program experience.

Who are the host organizations and how are they paired?

While CSP has a community of host organizations as partners, each year we tailor our host organization outreach to our applicants and their expertise and specialties. A team of advisers assist in matching each fellow with a unique U.S. host organization that closely matches their community work or desired area of professional growth and development.

I don't see my country on the list of eligible countries for CSP. Can I still apply for the program?
The United States Department of State determine the list of eligible countries for the Community Solutions Program. If your country is not listed, it is not an eligible country this year.

I am younger than 26 or older than 39. Can I still apply for the program?
CSP applicants must be between the ages of 26 and 39 as of January 1, 2024. The eligible age range was determined by the U.S. Department of State, and exceptions cannot be made. If you are younger than 26, we encourage you to apply for the program once you have reached the eligible age.

I've previously applied to CSP. Do I need to submit a new application?
Yes, you will still need to submit a new application.

Who do I email if I have questions about the application?
You can send an email to apply.csp@irex.org.

How does IREX/CSP plan to handle the COVID-19 situation?
IREX intends to implement the Community Solutions Program in-person in the United States from August to December 2024. IREX, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, will continue to monitor the COVID-19 pandemic and will adjust program implementation accordingly. Ensuring the safety and well-being of CSP participants, partners, and communities is and will continue to be IREX's highest priority.

Questions regarding the application, selection, and program timeline:

October 5, 2023	Application opens
November 1, 2023 by 11:59 p.m. EST	Application deadline
November 10, 2023	**Identified 2nd round applicants notified to complete interview recording; Rejections sent**
November 10 – December 4, 2023	2nd round applicants complete interview recording
By December 18, 2023	**2nd round applicants notified of status**
December 18, 2023 – January 15, 2024	CSP semifinalists submit CV
February 9, 2024	**CSP semi-finalists notified of selection status**
February 23, 2024	Deadline to accept finalist or alternate status (pending English exam)
March – April 2024	CSP finalists and alternates take English language tests (if required)

May 24, 2024	Remaining alternates notified they have not been selected as a finalist
June 2024	Online pre-departure orientation for CSP fellows
August 2024	CSP fellows travel to the U.S. and participate in the Welcome Orientation
August - December 2024	CSP fellows complete a four-month practicum at a U.S.-based host organization
December 2024	CSP fellows participate in the End of Program Workshop and then return to their home countries
January - June 2025	CSP fellows complete their community-based initiatives

Eligible countries by region

- **Africa:** Botswana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
- **East Asia and the Pacific:** Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Singapore, Solomon Islands, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Vanuatu, and Vietnam
- **Europe:** Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kosovo, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Moldova, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Turkey, and Ukraine
- **Middle East and North Africa:** Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, United Arab Emirates, and West Bank/Palestinian Territories
- **South and Central Asia:** Bangladesh, Bhutan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan
- **Western Hemisphere:** Argentina, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Bolivia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, Uruguay, and Venezuela