Community Engagement Exchange Program
Frequently Asked Questions

1. **When are CEE Fellow applications due?**
   CEE Fellow Applications are due July 2nd, 2024 at 11:59pm Eastern Time.

2. **I do not fall within the 21-27 age range requirement that the CEE Program has determined in the eligibility requirements. Am I able to apply?**
   Unfortunately, not at this time. Given the program design around emerging civil society leaders, the CEE Program requires that all participants be between the ages of 21-27 at the time of application (by July 2, 2024). Should you have significant background and expertise in civil society and fall outside of this age range, we invite you to reach out to the CEE team to learn about ways to partner with CEE in the future.

3. **I am a university student, am I eligible to apply?**
   Yes. Since the CEE Program does not have a formal education requirement, applicants who are currently attending university are eligible to apply. However, it is important to note that applicants must meet all other eligibility requirements, including age, English proficiency, and the ability to participate on a three-month practicum hosted at a U.S. civil society organization March 11 - June 6, 2025.

4. **Am I required to have professional experience or to be currently employed to apply for the CEE Fellowship?**
   No. Though professional experience may not be required, applicants should have a minimum of two years working on a community project(s) in their home country- either in a professional **or** volunteer capacity- with a vision to pursue a career working to support civil society, at the time of application.

5. **My country is not listed on the list of eligible countries. Am I still able to apply?**
   Unfortunately, not at this time. Only applicants from the list of eligible countries will be considered for participation in the CEE Program.

6. **I have not taken the TOEFL or IELTS English Proficiency exam before the July 2, 2024 deadline. Am I eligible to apply?**
   Yes. TOEFL scores are not required at the time of application. However, please note that all participants will be required to take or submit previous scores from a TOEFL, IELTS, or Duolingo English language exam- and must receive or show proof of a minimum TOEFL score of 68 or IELTS score of 6.0 or Duolingo score of 95 before confirmation as a finalist or alternate.

7. **If I participate in the CEE Program, am I required to return to my home country for two years after the completion of the program?**

   Yes. J-1 visa regulation mandates that applicants who have participated in an exchange program sponsored by the U.S. Government must fulfill a two-year home residency after the program has completed. Therefore, CEE Program finalists will be required to return to their home country for 2 years after the completion of the program.

   If you have previously participated on a U.S. government sponsored exchange program in the past, you must have fulfilled the two-year home residency requirement by the time of application to the CEE Program (by July 2, 2024).

8. **I have started my application and have reached the essay section. Should I complete all 7 essays?**

   Yes. There is a 450-word limit on each essay. Be sure to answer each question thoroughly to represent yourself to the best of your ability. These essays will be an essential part of the CEE Participant Selection Committee's review of your application. The Committee is committed to reviewing all components of the application to ensure a holistic review of your candidacy.

9. **I applied for the CEE Program last year and was not accepted. Can I use the same application materials to apply again?**

   Yes. You may use your application materials to apply again; however, you should review your information to make sure it is up to date. Since your application was not successful previously, we recommend that you make any edits that you believe better represent your potential and strengthen your application to be included in the CEE Program.

10. **Can I use AI tools to draft or refine my responses in my application?**

    No. The use of AI tools to draft or refine any part of your responses will result in your application being disqualified. All application responses will be checked for AI generation. If an application shows reasonable signs of having been supplemented or drafted with the support of AI tools, that application will not be considered.

For additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact the CEE team at: Apply.Cee@IREX.org