

A HANDBOOK FOR
American Spaces Partners

★
MANAGING
AMERICAN
SPACES
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PREFACE

This handbook is for American Spaces partner leaders and staff—including American Corner coordinators and staff and Binational Center staff. It is a practical guide for American Spaces partners to manage successful American Spaces.

HOW TO USE THIS HANDBOOK

The first section gives an overview of American Spaces, including information about the key roles that Department of State offices in Washington, U.S. Embassies, and partners play. It also covers information on the five core programs that are essential to the success of an American Space: information about the U.S., English language learning, EducationUSA advising, cultural programs, and alumni engagement.

The second section of the handbook includes detailed information on managing American Spaces, including standards, programs, communication channels, reporting, funding, and training.

The final section includes sample policies and additional guidance.

INTRODUCTION FROM THE COORDINATOR

U.S. EMBASSIES HAVE a long history of reaching out to promote mutual understanding between the people of the U.S. and the people of their host countries. Whether inviting visitors into the embassies' Information Resource Centers (IRC) or American Centers, collaborating with independent Binational Centers, or forming partnerships with local institutions to establish American Corners, we have created more than 700 welcoming American Spaces around the globe. In FY 2013, over 16 million people visited American Spaces.

An American Space is an ideal place for an embassy and its partners to engage with diverse audiences in host countries. With the publication of *Managing American Spaces: A Handbook for American Spaces Partners*, IIP's Office of American Spaces and its Information Resource Officers (IROs) abroad demonstrate our continued commitment to helping embassies and our partners manage successful American Spaces.

Five key elements anchor a successful American Space. By offering access to a rich and diverse range of information resources, such as American books, magazines, films, online information systems, and speaker programs, American Spaces promote awareness and understanding of the history, culture, and values of the United States and its role in contemporary affairs. Through English language programs hosted at American Spaces, posts can help prepare young people, educators, entrepreneurs, and other professionals to use their English to participate in the global economy or to study in the United States. EducationUSA advising in American Spaces promotes awareness of the benefits of studying in the U.S. and contributes to the increased internationalization of U.S. campuses, thereby broadening American students' appreciation of other peoples and cultures. Cultural programs further mutual understanding and programs featuring the alumni of U.S. government-sponsored programs explain American values from a local perspective.

Recognizing the impact and potential of American Spaces in expanding and strengthening people-to-people relationships, in 2012 the Office of American Spaces launched a new set of standards to help Spaces develop their programs and track their progress. Funding for Spaces will be focused on those that are meeting, or working toward meeting, these standards.

I know that many of you are doing innovative things with your Spaces, and we encourage you to continue doing so. For example, "Maker Spaces," where youth learn through projects that use digital tools to promote entrepreneurship, connect art and design with social change, and build digital media skills, are beginning to take hold in Europe and Asia. Another Spaces innovation is the Mobile American Corner in Taipei at the Taipei Railway Station. The mobile Corner—more than just a bookmobile—provides books, cultural events, video conferencing, and a digital environment for students throughout the country.

The Office of American Spaces provides policy guidance, sets standards, and administers funding. But American Spaces are first and foremost a partnership between a local institution and an embassy. Clear, regular communication between our partners and your embassy contacts is the most effective way of maintaining a successful program. We hope you will use this handbook to effectively run your Spaces and get inspired by some of the ideas and practices described here.



Macon
Macon Phillips

OVERVIEW

AMERICAN SPACES OVERVIEW

Mission Statement

American Spaces are a worldwide network of publicly-accessible places that enable U.S. Embassies and Consulates to build and strengthen relationships with host country communities, showcase American culture and values, promote English language learning, encourage study in the United States, and foster goodwill and mutual understanding.

Goals

American Spaces exemplify the U.S. commitment to a core tenet of democracy: a citizen's right to free access to information. American Spaces provide access to authoritative information about the United States to connect American and host-country citizens, counteract negative perceptions about the United States, and build bridges of mutual respect and understanding. They should be places that do the following:

- Provide accurate, compelling, timely, and audience-appropriate *information about the United States*—its history, culture, society, and values.
- Facilitate *English language learning* through access to English language speakers, resources, computers, and the Internet.
- Promote U.S. higher education through *EducationalUSA advising* by providing international students with accurate, comprehensive, and current guidance on applying to U.S. colleges and universities.
- Foster people-to-people connections, increase understanding, and build respect with host-country audiences through *cultural programs*.
- Support continued engagement with U.S. government alumni, connecting them to local audiences through *alumni programs* where credible, local voices can share firsthand information about the United States and American values.

General Description

There are two main categories of American Spaces: 1) U.S. government-owned and operated Spaces, and 2) partnership Spaces.

U.S. GOVERNMENT-OWNED AND OPERATED SPACES that consist of American Centers and open-access Information Resource Centers.

- **AMERICAN CENTERS** are stand-alone facilities located outside of a U.S. Embassy's or Consulate's main building, staffed by embassy employees under the direction of the public affairs officer (PAO). American Centers may house a library or IRC. They conduct a broad range of public diplomacy (PD) activities. Most also have space to host PD events, such as embassy-sponsored speakers, film screenings, exhibits, and artistic performances.
- Open access **INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTERS (IRCS)** are physical spaces, where visitors find computers, books, magazines, etc. They meet the



standards for open-access U.S. government owned Spaces (see page 28), are doing the five core programs (English language learning, EducationUSA advising, cultural programs, alumni engagement, and information about the U.S.). They have regularly scheduled public hours (which in some cases may require an appointment). IRCs very often are the administrative link between the embassy and the network of American Spaces in country.

PARTNERSHIP SPACES are co-managed with the embassy's Public Affairs Section but are operated by local host institutions:

- **AMERICAN CORNERS** are partnerships between an embassy's Public Affairs Section and host-country institutions. The host-country partner provides the physical space and staff, while the embassy Public Affairs Section provides staff training, technical support, equipment, and multimedia materials about the United States. American Corners provide information about the United States and access to English language learning and resources, conduct educational and cultural programs, and promote interaction with alumni of U.S. universities and U.S. government exchange programs. Because of local sensitivities, some American Corners may use a different name in the field (e.g., Lincoln Corners, InfoUSA, Windows on America). Some American Corners have a specialized focus:
 - **Science Corners** are science-themed partnerships with host-country institutions. They are a type of American Corner in that the partnership is formalized through a memorandum of understanding (MOU), and the host-country partner provides a physical space and staff. PAS staff work closely and coordinate activities at the Science Corners with embassy Environment, Science, Technology, and Health (ESTH) officers to promote science diplomacy. Although the focus is on science, these Corners are still responsible for incorporating all five core programs (information about the U.S., English language learning, educational advising, cultural programs and alumni activities).
 - **Maker Spaces** are new types of American Spaces that represent partnerships with established institutions such as libraries or universities. They are important community centers and places for youth to use digital tools to explore entrepreneurship, learn English, connect art and design with social change, and learn digital artifact creation. Members apply what they learn by doing—working on projects like creating movies, blogging, and beyond. Sometimes called “Fab Labs” (short for Fabrication Laboratories) or “Digital Innovation Centers,” they promote media competencies in digital music and video, graphic design, game design, and application design. As with any Space, Maker Spaces must offer the five core programs and meet the bronze-level standards.
- **BINATIONAL CENTERS (BNCS)** are private, autonomous local institutions dedicated to promoting mutual understanding between the host country and the United States through the five core programs. Their primary financial support comes from revenues the institution generates

from student fees for English classes. Most BNCs are located in Latin America, although there are a few in other regions.

WASHINGTON OVERVIEW

The Office of the Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs

The Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs (R) oversees the three bureaus in the R family: Public Affairs (PA), Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and International Information Programs (IIP). R supports American Spaces by providing funding through IIP and the Office of American Spaces.

Bureau of International Information Programs

The Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) is the State Department's foreign-facing public diplomacy communications bureau. IIP supports both physical and virtual places, including more than 700 American Spaces around the world, as well as a growing social media community that numbers more than 22 million followers. IIP content includes publications, video, and U.S. expert speakers, who engage foreign audiences both in person and through virtual programs.

Office of American Spaces

The Office of American Spaces provides strategic guidance, leadership, support funding, and training for posts on the development and sustainability of American Spaces. The Office of American Spaces collects data on the 700+ American Spaces worldwide, including statistics such as number of programs, number of attendees, and number of visitors. The Office of American Spaces also advocates for our Spaces across the various bureaus in the Department and with other U.S. government agencies.

The Office of American Spaces is also the headquarters for the regional Information Resource Officers (IROs) corps of Foreign Service Specialists who provide guidance to posts in support of American Spaces.

IROs are instrumental in the establishment, management and evaluation of all types of spaces from Information Resource Centers (IRCs), American Corners (ACs), Binational Center libraries (BNCs), and American Centers, to a host of hybrid variations. They help posts access and use the broad range of public diplomacy tools to engage key audiences. Through regular visits and communications, the IRO is post's regional expert on all American Spaces issues.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) manages the Department of State's educational and cultural exchange programs to encourage mutual understanding as well as international educational and cultural exchange, and

leadership development. ECA supports four of the five core programs in American Spaces: English language learning, EducationUSA, cultural programs and alumni activities. The Office of English Language Programs designs and manages programs to promote language learning and support the teaching of English in countries around the world. EducationUSA is the Department's supported network of hundreds of advising centers in 170 countries, many of which are located in American Spaces, to provide international students with accurate, comprehensive, and current guidance on applying to U.S. colleges and universities. The Office of Alumni Affairs supports efforts to increase alumni links with the American Spaces and helps U.S. Embassies to maintain connections to exchange alumni after their program has ended. ECA also sponsors a wide variety of cultural, professional, and sports exchanges each year and provides expert advice and guidance to posts for programming in American Spaces.

ROLE OF THE U.S. EMBASSY

Public Affairs Staff

The **PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER (PAO)** at the U.S. Embassy is responsible for the success and ultimate oversight of American Spaces in the country. He or she ensures that Public Affairs Section (PAS) staff are involved with the Spaces, visit them on a regular basis, and that the rest of the Mission participates in programs. The PAO or his or her designate supervises the Information Resource Center (IRC). The PAS supports its Spaces by providing training and some post funding. The PAO is responsible for approving all requests submitted for American Spaces funding, ensuring that Spaces meet post's public diplomacy goals and the Standards for American Spaces (detailed information on standards is available on page 28).

The **CULTURAL AFFAIRS OFFICER (CAO)** is often the PAO's designate for overseeing post's American Spaces. Alternatively but less often, the PAO may designate the Information Officer (IO) as responsible for the American Spaces portfolio. He or she is assisted by one or more Locally Employed Staff (LES) who liaise directly with their Spaces. The CAO and LES work with them to coordinate public diplomacy programs and events.

LOCALLY EMPLOYED STAFF (LES) who hold the American Spaces portfolio maintain regular contact with their Spaces. They help build and nurture the relationship with the partner institution, and assist the PAO, CAO, or IO in evaluating and providing oversight for the Spaces. Embassy Information Resource Center (IRC) staff are often the LES responsible for the American Spaces portfolio. Open-access IRCs are also considered to be American Spaces.

The Rest of the Mission

The support of the Chief of Mission (COM) (the Ambassador or Chargé d'Affairs) is crucial to a successful relationship with the American Spaces in country. The COM may visit the Spaces for important events like anniversaries or other high-profile

programs. The COM also encourages a “whole of Mission” approach to participating in public diplomacy programs at American Spaces.

Outside Contacts

Vibrant American Spaces thrive on continued public diplomacy programming, and the embassy should leverage more than Mission personnel in such programming. Alumni of U.S. government programs, Peace Corps Volunteers, and even local American expats can be target of opportunity speakers. They can lead book club discussions, host film nights, chair English-practice sessions, or even facilitate study groups for those taking U.S. online college classes.

ROLE OF PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

FOR AN AMERICAN Space partnership to be successful, both the embassy and the host institution must play an active role. While the embassy provides materials, equipment, training, guidance, and special programming, the host institution is responsible for keeping the Space alive day-to-day. To do this, the host institution:

- Provides and maintains the physical space.
- Provides an English-speaking staff member to staff the Space during regular hours.
- Independently creates and presents programs on topics related to the U.S.
- Collaborates with the embassy to host embassy programs.
- Promotes the Space’s activities and resources internally and to the public.
- Ensures that the Space meets standards and reporting requirements.

FIVE CORE PROGRAMS

Overview

With sustained Embassy support and creative programming, American Spaces can be lively centers for community engagement and discovery. To accomplish this, American Spaces are expected to offer programs in five core areas:

- Information about the United States
- English language learning
- EducationUSA advising
- Cultural programs
- Alumni programs

American Spaces should be active in each of these areas, holding a minimum of 24 programs a year. You will find more details about each of these areas along with resources and programming ideas below.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNITED STATES

A MERICAN SPACES ARE gateways for audiences to learn about American society, culture, and values. Providing foreign audiences accurate, timely, and audience-appropriate information about the United States helps us to tell America's story including our values, beliefs, and policies. It allows us more effectively to combat misrepresentation and lack of knowledge about the United States. The Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) offers a variety of resources to support programs and facilitate discovery of the United States. These resources are available to help American Spaces meet and exceed the standards for programming on information about the United States. IIP's Office of American Spaces offers support funding each year to help posts implement the standards.

The **AMERICAN SPACES WEBSITE** (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/home>) is a resource available for American Spaces staff to help plan programs.

IIP DIGITAL (<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov>) is a publicly accessible website that features the latest audio, video, and written content from IIP. It includes a wealth of resources for programming including videos, publications, texts, transcripts, customizable pamphlets, articles, and photo galleries. The content is arranged according to six broad themes: All About America; Democracy, Civil Society, & Education; Economic Growth & Development; Environment, Science, Technology & Health; Peace & Security; and Events. Content is available in English, Spanish, French, Russian, Arabic, Persian, Chinese, and Portuguese.

IIP'S CONTENT CALENDAR is a public diplomacy planning tool to provide posts and American Spaces with quality and timely PD resources to engage in audience-driven outreach around the Department's priority issues. It is structured to give greater flexibility in using IIP's wealth of new and evergreen PD resources throughout the calendar year. These offerings are organized in two categories: an events calendar and regularly updated thematic collections on key issues. Each of the 12 monthly events provides public diplomacy officers pre-designed programs and à la carte resources for specific events, like Black History Month, 60 days before the start of the month for that event. Alternatively, the seven thematic pages provide IIP's best and most up-to-date pre-designed programs and à la carte resources on specific topics, like civil society, entrepreneurship and science. The IIP Content Calendar can be found on the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/home/calendar>).

CO.NX (pronounced connects) (<https://conx.state.gov/>), IIP's digital diplomacy team, connects people across the globe through live, interactive online video programs featuring subject-matter experts, opinion makers, community leaders, and U.S. government officials. These programs provide virtual spaces for the interactive

exchange of ideas on a variety of topics such as democracy, civil society, education, American culture, entrepreneurship, environment, science, technology, and more. Using connective technologies like streaming video, multimedia webchats, video conferencing, and social networks, CO.NX transcends geographic and cultural boundaries to engage foreign audiences—including visitors to American Spaces—in conversations that might otherwise never take place. CO.NX also provides training to posts and American Spaces staff in the use of platform technologies in support of public diplomacy. To learn about and participate in upcoming CO.NX programs, visit <https://conx.state.gov> and subscribe to the weekly IIP CO.NX e-newsletter at <http://bitly.com/CONXupdate>.

ELIBRARYUSA gives American Spaces visitors around the world access to information that Americans find at their public libraries. It offers a broad range of resources useful in learning English, American history and culture, health, science, business, and more. Access to eLibraryUSA is available onsite at American Spaces or remotely for members of Information Resource Centers. More information on eLibraryUSA can be found at <http://elibraryusa.state.gov/>.

ESHOP (<https://eshop.state.gov/>) is an online portal where posts can easily procure books, ebooks, DVDs, and other products to support American Spaces programs. American Spaces should have up-to-date collections tailored for their audiences along Mission priorities. American Space partners can create accounts and submit wish lists to the Mission Public Affairs Section for consideration and funding.

Internet connectivity is vital for American Spaces programming since it enables virtual IIP/CO.NX programs and allows visitors to access information about the United States through eLibraryUSA and other resources.

TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING: American Spaces staff are expected to be able to answer questions about the American Space and the United States. Posts are encouraged to work with their Information Resource Center directors and/or regional IROs, who can provide training and build capacity where necessary.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES in support of information about the United States can be found on the American English website (<http://americanenglish.state.gov/resources>) under the American Culture tab.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING

ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROGRAMS are a critical tool for engaging foreign audiences, strengthening long-term relationships, and offering desired skills to host country citizens. With more than 16 million visits per year, American Spaces offer a platform for the strategic use of English language programs to advance foreign policy goals. In-country English language programs can expand the pool of young people, educators, and other professionals who are qualified to participate in exchange programs to the United States, including youth, undergraduate, Fulbright, and teacher exchanges. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Bureau

of International Information Programs (IIP) offer a wide array of resources that can support English language programs in American Spaces.

Examples of English Language Programs in American Spaces

ENGLISH LANGUAGE CLUBS run by volunteers are often some of the most successful and most popular activities. They are effective, useful, and can be easy to run. Exchange alumni, English teachers, and other English speakers in the vicinity are an outstanding resource to facilitate regularly scheduled meetings of English language clubs. Along with discussion groups, creating a variety of interest-based clubs can allow posts to reach a broad audience with diverse language levels: board game clubs, debate clubs, drama clubs, Toastmasters, Model UN clubs, music clubs, and book clubs to name a few. Tips for hosting an English language club can be found on the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/home/resources/english>).

AMERICAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE FILM SERIES can be effective with English learners. Many posts hold film series at the American Spaces hosted by American Embassy officers or other English-speaking contacts followed with a discussion about the key issues in the film. ECA and IIP have renegotiated an enhanced public performance license agreement with the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC). For more information, ideas, and how to determine if a film is included in the MPLC agreement, contact the film program office at ECAFilm@state.gov, or consult the explanation in the cultural programs section (page 19) about how to determine if a film can be screened.

GUEST SPEAKERS provide a glimpse of American culture while giving visitors a chance to practice English listening and speaking skills with native, American English speakers. Embassy officers, Eligible Family Members, Peace Corps Volunteers, and other Americans in the area are perfect candidates for English language cultural presentations in Spaces. Successful presentations can range from leading a discussion about the democratic process to demonstrations on making chocolate chip cookies. IIP's expert speaker program can be a good resource for posts to identify and/or program speakers for American Spaces.

INTERACTIONS WITH U.S. GOVERNMENT EXCHANGE PARTICIPANTS offer a great opportunity for an afternoon of "language exchange" in which host-country nationals speak in English while their American counterparts speak in the host-country language. ECA has a variety of exchange programs that bring Americans to countries abroad, and posts are encouraged to have them visit the Spaces and participate in cultural and language exchanges. More information is available at <http://exchanges.state.gov/>.

COMPETITIONS are a great way to reach out to kids. Spelling bees, art, photography, and debates are just a few opportunities to consider for contests. Establishing a Trace Effects gaming club in the American Space (see description of Trace Effects under Resources on page 16) is a good way to engage youth as well. Hold a workshop on playing Trace Effects, and then have gaming competitions with students based on most points and divided into age categories. Take it one step further and organize interconnected gaming clubs, using virtual connections to have a club in Country X interacting/engaging in friendly competitions with a club in Country Y.

Resources for English Language Learning

Below is a list of the many English language learning resources offered by the Department of State. For more information about English language learning, check with your Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy.

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' Office of English Language Programs, (<http://eca.r.state.sbu/sites/A/L/default.aspx>) designs and manages programs to promote language learning and support the teaching of American English in countries around the world. These programs are administered through local American Embassies and Consulates and are overseen by Regional English Language Officers (RELOs). Visit the American English website (<http://www.americanenglish.state.gov/>) for portfolios and contact information for RELOs.

THE AMERICAN ENGLISH (AE) website at <http://www.americanenglish.state.gov/> is an extensive online resource center for teaching and learning the English language and U.S. culture. American Spaces could hold workshops on how to use the website as a learning tool and create connections with other programs (alumni, conferences, trainings, Access, English language book clubs and conversation clubs, libraries, etc.) to highlight American English and share ideas and best practices on how to use it. For more information, contact americanenglish@state.gov.

TRACE EFFECTS is an in-depth adventure video game. Gamers take a virtual journey with Trace, learning English and exploring U.S. locations such as New York, the Grand Canyon, and Washington, D.C. Trace Effects explores themes related to entrepreneurship, community activism, empowering women, science and innovation, environmental conservation, and conflict resolution. Trace Effects DVDs may be freely copied and/or installed on Spaces computers and can also be accessed at <http://americanenglish.state.gov/>. Trace Effects parties and/or contests make great activities.

MOBILE RESOURCES: ECA partnered with biNu and Worldreader to offer English language games and books through mobile technology. Trace Word Soup, a stand-alone game created as part of the Trace Effects suite, is available to mobile users via the award-winning biNu platform designed for feature phones and lower-end smartphones. Several ECA graded reader ebooks for learners are also available on feature phones through the Worldreader mobile library app on biNu. In addition, many English language learning titles are available in ebook format for mobile readers (Kindles and tablets) on <http://americanenglish.state.gov/>. For more information, contact americanenglish@state.gov.

ENGLISH TEACHING FORUM is a quarterly journal for professional English Language Teachers. Articles are free to download from the extensive collection online at <http://americanenglish.state.gov/english-teaching-forum>. Posts may provide print versions to American Spaces.

SHAPING THE WAY WE TEACH ENGLISH webinar courses offer top-quality teaching methods for instructors around the globe. Each 90-minute webinar is a live, interactive online seminar. Spaces are great venues for viewing sessions, with groups of teachers watching and participating together. Participants can receive a certificate for attending four of the six sessions in any course. Contact the Public Affairs Section for more details.

THE ENGLISH ACCESS MICROSCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM (<http://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/english-access-microscholarship-program>) provides a foundation of English language skills to talented 13–20 year-olds from disadvantaged sectors through after-school classes and intensive sessions. Some posts use an American Space to host the Access classes while others invite Access students and exchange alumni to participate in American Spaces programs.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE FELLOW PROGRAM (<http://exchanges.state.gov/us/program/english-language-fellow-program>) sends U.S. educators abroad to teach English or train English teachers on a 10-month fellowship at a host institution.

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE SPECIALIST PROGRAM (<http://exchanges.state.gov/us/program/english-language-specialist-program>) recruits U.S. academics to work on specific, well-defined projects for shorter periods of time. Fellows and Specialists may be available to conduct presentations or arrange clubs at American Spaces.

FULBRIGHT ENGLISH TEACHING ASSISTANTS (ETA) (<http://exchanges.state.gov/us/program/fulbright-english-teaching-assistant-program>) are recent U.S. college graduates placed in English classrooms overseas as resource persons, assisting teachers and conducting enhancement activities that support students' facility with the language and increase their understanding of U.S. society and culture. Some posts have placed ETAs at an American Space while others invite ETAs located at other institutions to participate in American Spaces programming.

ESHOP is an online portal where posts can easily procure books, ebooks, DVDs, and other products to support English programs in American Spaces. American Space partners can create accounts and submit wish lists to the Mission Public Affairs Section for consideration and funding. Posts may order pre-curated collections for their Spaces through eShop with post funds. ECA's American English resources are also located on eShop <https://eshop.state.gov/>.

IIP PUBLICATIONS (<http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/english/publication/>) are good resources for English language learners and foreign audiences to improve their English language reading abilities, while learning about U.S. culture and society. Current titles include: USA History in Brief, the Learner English Series; Pop Culture versus Real American—For English Learners; and Entrepreneurs: The Next Generation. Future editions of EJ USA will include an English language glossary that will reference key terms in articles throughout the publication.

ELIBRARYUSA (ELU) (<http://elibraryusa.state.gov/>) gives American Spaces visitors around the world access to information that Americans find at their public libraries. eLibraryUSA hosts the *English Language Learner (ELL) Reference Center* (http://elibraryusa.state.gov/pdf/ELL_Guide.pdf), a multipurpose information resource designed for middle/high school students and those that are new to the English language. Posts are encouraged to work with their Information Resource Officer (IRO) to provide eLibraryUSA training in their American Spaces.

VOICE OF AMERICA (VOA) hosts Learning English (<http://learningenglish.voanews.com/>), a website that provides a variety of topical materials designed for English language learners ranging from beginners to advanced speakers. The videos are accompanied by text and provide a great addition to the discussions in your English language clubs.

EDUCATIONUSA

E DUCATIONUSA IS THE State Department’s supported network of hundreds of advising centers in 170 countries, where qualified advisers provide international students with accurate, comprehensive, and up-to-date guidance on applying to U.S. colleges and universities. ECA works in partnership with the U.S. higher education sector consisting of more than 4,500 accredited colleges and universities. ECA assists these institutions in identifying and recruiting international students. Foreign students studying in the U.S. contribute almost \$23 billion per year to the U.S. economy. Many American Spaces already serve as EducationUSA Advising Centers.

Resources for Educational Advising

REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL ADVISING COORDINATORS (REACs): Public Affairs Sections and American Spaces coordinators are encouraged to create close relationships with their REACs, who are responsible for ensuring that EducationUSA advising operations meet Department standards. REACs can suggest appropriate reference materials, print as well as online, and develop training plans for American Spaces staff. A list of REACs can be found on the EducationUSA website at <http://www.educationusa.info/help/research.php>.

TRAINING: At a minimum, Spaces staff should have a basic understanding of advising materials available in the Space and how to direct students to the nearest EducationUSA adviser (<https://www.educationusa.info/centers.php>). Under the guidance of the REACs, Spaces staff may take two online EducationUSA adviser distance learning training courses with basic information needed to guide students: 1) the New Adviser Orientation (about an hour), and 2) the 12-part Fundamentals of Advising course (12–16 hours total). Please contact your REAC to access either of these courses for your American Spaces staff.

A BASIC ADVISING TOOLKIT: EducationUSA reaches youth and their families through a variety of platforms, both virtual and in person. Many of these are easily incorporated into American Spaces programs. The EducationUSA website (<https://www.educationusa.info>) contains an online self-advising guide for students, called “Your 5 Steps to U.S. Study” (https://www.educationusa.info/for_international_students.php). All American Spaces should provide access to the EducationUSA website and “5 Steps,” as well as information on how to contact the nearest EducationUSA adviser.

EDUCATIONUSA LOGO: The EducationUSA logo identifies an advising center’s affiliation with the Department of State-supported network, giving visibility to the Department’s support for educational exchange. Consistent use of the logo also develops the brand’s reliability in providing accurate, comprehensive, and current information on study in the United States. EducationUSA-branded materials can be requested from the nearest EducationUSA Advising Center.

WRITTEN MATERIALS: American Spaces are encouraged to include information about studying in the U.S. in their collections. Books, ebooks, DVDs, and other products are available through eShop (<https://eshop.state.gov/>). Bronze, Silver,



and Gold advising collections have been pre-curated for American Spaces. EducationUSA offers additional booklets, including If You Want to Study in the United States series (available in 11 languages) and a print version of “5 Steps” (currently being translated in six languages) at https://www.educationusa.info/5_steps_to_study/resources_documents.php#top.

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS: The EducationUSA Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/EducationUSA>) helps students connect with EducationUSA and is easy to feature in American Spaces. In addition, many advising centers have their own Facebook pages that provide country-specific information. EducationUSA is on Twitter at @EdUSAupdates. The EducationUSA YouTube channel (<http://www.youtube.com/user/EducationUSAtv>) allows students and their families to view videos from U.S. colleges and universities and from current international students. In countries where Facebook and Twitter are not the dominant platforms, advisers use local platforms, such as Sina and Weibo in China and Vkontakte (now VK) in countries where Russian is widely spoken.

SPEAKERS: Posts are encouraged to reach out to USG exchange-program alumni to share firsthand information about their experiences studying in the United States. Current students can provide a particularly credible perspective to young people considering study abroad; therefore, Gilman Scholars, American undergraduates studying abroad, and Department of State interns are ideal resources to speak on residential life, classroom styles, college athletics, social activities on campus, and the diversity of majors available at U.S. colleges and universities. Foreign Service Officers are often willing to make presentations about their own U.S. educational experiences and aspects of the U.S. higher education system. Fulbright scholars, Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETA), and Peace Corps Volunteers can also provide a firsthand view of studying in the U.S.

CULTURAL PROGRAMS IN AMERICAN SPACES

Cultural diplomacy fosters people-to-people connections, increases understanding, and builds mutual respect. Cultural programs can be based on visual arts, sports, film, performing arts, as well as cross-cultural discussions, presentations, and round tables. American Spaces are ideal locations to engage with a wide range of foreign audiences especially emerging leaders and youth and traditionally underrepresented communities, including women, racial and ethnic minorities, and people with disabilities. From culinary presentations to book clubs and discussions about American history, cultural programs build understanding and collaboration by sharing the rich and diverse traditions of the United States.

Examples of Cultural Programs in American Spaces

During a tour through Central Asia, the music group Della Mae, part of the American Music Abroad (<http://www.exchanges.state.gov/us/program/american-music-abroad>) program, included several stops at American Spaces. Personal interactions

among students seated with an American guitarist demonstrating her instrument, for example, can be just as effective—and not as resource intensive—as a full performance.

U.S. Embassies throughout the Western Hemisphere collaborate on regional interactive webchats. For Earth Day, 230 individuals from 16 countries participated in a Spanish-language webchat on environmental education that included a discussion of “Climate Change: U.S. Programs and Initiatives.”

Art, writing, and photography contests add a spark to strategic topics. Several American Spaces have held poster contests on such topics as cultural diversity, peace, and for Earth Day. They then displayed the artwork at their American Space and sponsored a winners’ exhibition at a local gallery or museum.

@America, the American Center in Indonesia, takes advantage of the vibrant music scene by hosting performances ranging from grunge to indie music. The musicians talk with the patrons about the U.S. influence in their music.

The Beijing American Center (BAC) has been hosting monthly film series to address key issues. During BAC’s series focused on the environment, an embassy officer highlighted relevant themes in *The Day After Tomorrow* before leading a discussion on the science behind climate change.

Resources for Cultural Programs

FILM: Popular Hollywood films, smaller independent films and documentaries covered by the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC) agreement allow American Spaces to build programming that will reach out to and engage diverse communities from youth groups to emerging filmmakers to nongovernmental organizations. Individual American Spaces can design their own film programs and ongoing series through an enhanced public performance license agreement with the MPLC, which now covers approximately 50,000 titles. For more information, ideas, and how to determine if a film is included in the MPLC agreement, you can contact the film program office at ECAFilm@state.gov, or read about showing films at American Spaces on page 48.

VIDEO PROGRAMS: The State Department develops, creates, and acquires innovative video products that further understanding and foster conversation about American foreign policy, culture, society, institutions, history, and values. American Spaces should contact the U.S. Embassy to learn more about the video program.

DOCUMENTARY FILMS: Online viewing rights to more than 1,000 full-length documentary films and print transcripts are available through two online collections, Filmakers Library Online (<http://flon.alexanderstreet.com/>) and Black Studies in Video (<http://blst.alexanderstreet.com/>). Both databases are accessible through eLibraryUSA (<http://elibraryusa.state.gov>). Films can be viewed by individual members of American Spaces or in an embassy-related performance setting as long as no admission is charged. eLibraryUSA patrons and staff at American Spaces can sign in to view the films using their eLibraryUSA login and password. For more information, contact the Office of American Spaces eLibraryUSA team at elibraryusa@state.gov.

POSTER SHOWS: Poster shows are dynamic visual tools for public diplomacy programs on a variety of topics. From *USA: The 50 States* to *Abraham Lincoln: Portrait of a President* and the *Metropolitan Museum of Art Islamic Art Poster Show*, poster shows offer attractive posters of a wide variety of cultural topics. Many sets also include individual posters, postcards, and handouts that make great gifts for schools and libraries or in any venue where American Spaces conduct their programs. American Spaces should contact the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy to order the poster shows.

CULTURAL EXCHANGES: The U.S. government sponsors a wide variety of cultural exchanges each year, including dance, art, music, and theater. Public Affairs Sections also create their own custom arts-based exchanges in the performing arts, film, visual arts, and arts management. Public Affairs Sections are encouraged to incorporate American Spaces in the itinerary. Many posts are able to host public performances and exhibits at BNCs, American Centers, and Corners with appropriate facilities. However, if an American Space doesn't have the capacity to host a performance, consider having a cultural program by inviting participants, including local alumni of cultural exchange programs to host a master class, presentation, or round-table discussion in the Space.

SPORTS EXCHANGES: American Spaces have recently been the location for Super Bowl and NCAA basketball tournament viewing parties, a round-table discussion about the Equal Opportunity in Education Act that bans sex discrimination in schools from athletics to academics, and an English Access Microscholarship Program team-building one-day immersion program that included sports.

WEBCHATS: The rise of tools like Skype, interactive webcasts, Google Hangouts, Adobe Connect, and a variety of social media platforms, present American Spaces with tools to increase the number, diversity, and experience of participants virtually. Online viewing parties and virtual discussions through webinars have proven to be an outstanding mechanism for cultural programs. American Spaces can expand the reach of their cultural exchanges by joining Department-sponsored webchats and connecting participants to discussion groups. Even in the most challenging Internet environments, new technologies and assistance from IIP can make even two-way video chats possible. The CO.NX weekly newsletter, published on Tuesdays, contains information on all publicly accessible programs and should be shared (subscribe at <http://bitly.com/CONXupdate> and also encourage the public to subscribe).

SPEAKERS: Embassy officers, Eligible Family Members, Peace Corps Volunteers, ECA academic exchange participants, and other Americans in the area are great resources to provide insights into American culture. They can be invited to talk about the United States or demonstrate their artistic talents. Successful cultural programs can range from talking about student life in the United States to demonstrations on making an apple pie.

ALUMNI

EACH YEAR, THOUSANDS of citizens from countries around the world take part in exchange programs—U.S. government sponsored as well as privately funded. For many of these exchange program alumni, having American Spaces in their areas serves to maintain their connection with the U.S. and gives them opportunities to share with the local community the insights and experiences they acquired during their exchange programs in the U.S. Alumni are a valuable resource for programming.

- Alumni speak with local, credible voices.
- They have an understanding of both American and local cultures that enables them to present American perspectives in a way that resonates with local audiences.
- They speak local languages, enabling them to participate in programs and reach broader audiences through American Spaces.
- Because alumni are experienced professionals and often experts in their fields, they can be leveraged in support of American Spaces programming.

Contact the Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy in your country to identify alumni near your American Space.

Suggested Approaches to Engage Alumni

American Spaces can foster interaction with alumni by:

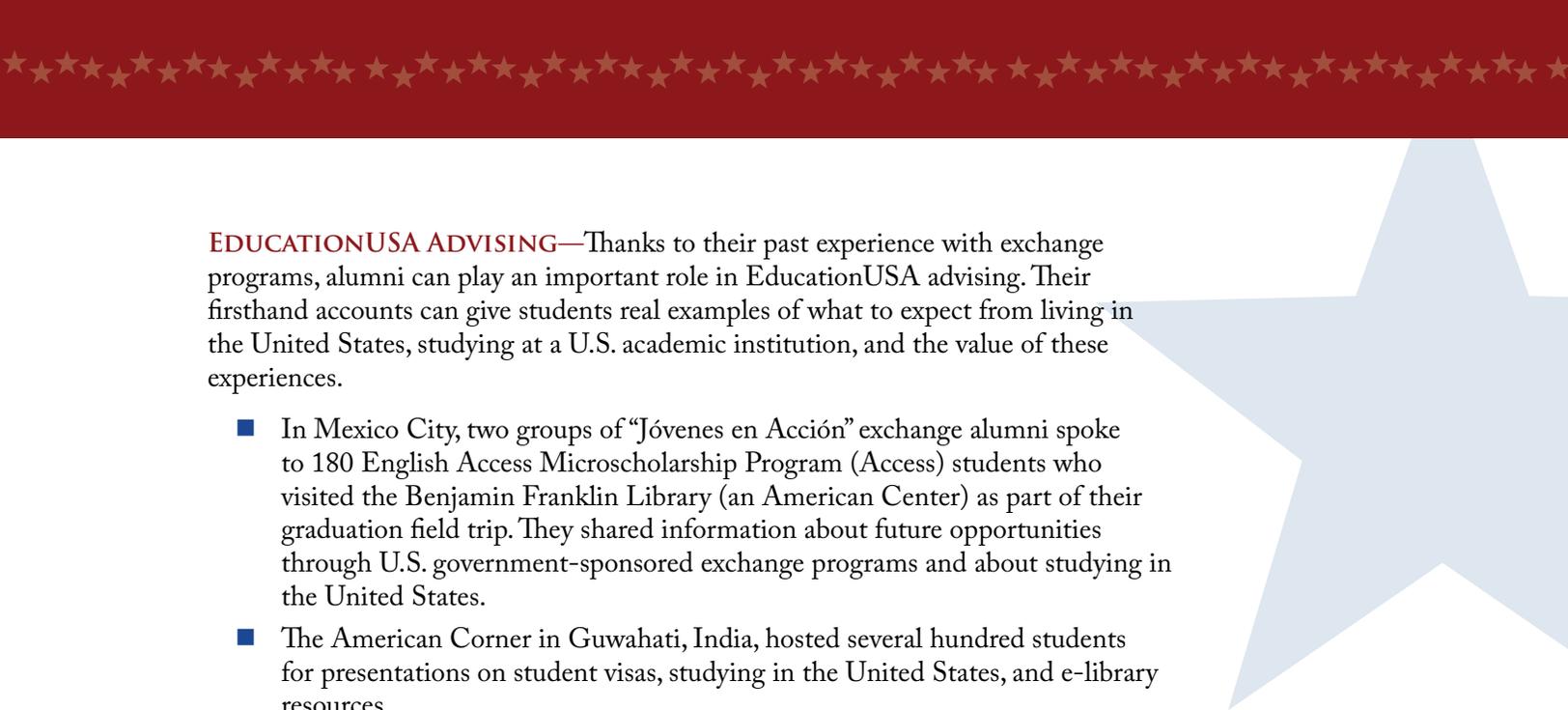
- Supporting and encouraging alumni to set up official alumni organizations.
- Designating a specific time each week for alumni to gather at American Spaces.
- Inviting alumni to speak at and organize events.
- Engaging alumni as a key audience.
- Acting as a partner organization on alumni grant proposals.

Alumni as a Resource

Working with alumni can significantly help American Spaces staff effectively address the five pillar programs of American Spaces. Alumni can highlight their cultural experiences, organize events and programs, discuss the benefits of exchange programs, or share other knowledge and insights acquired during their exchange experience.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING—Because many alumni have spent considerable time in the United States, they have excellent English language skills. Moreover, many welcome opportunities to teach English or lead conversation clubs as a means of keeping up their own English proficiency.

- In St. Petersburg, Russia, an alumna of a youth exchange (FLEX) organized the Bilingual Families Club at the American Corner to provide English lessons to children. Lessons consisted of games for beginners, as well as more formal classes for advanced students.



EDUCATIONUSA ADVISING—Thanks to their past experience with exchange programs, alumni can play an important role in EducationUSA advising. Their firsthand accounts can give students real examples of what to expect from living in the United States, studying at a U.S. academic institution, and the value of these experiences.

- In Mexico City, two groups of “Jóvenes en Acción” exchange alumni spoke to 180 English Access Microscholarship Program (Access) students who visited the Benjamin Franklin Library (an American Center) as part of their graduation field trip. They shared information about future opportunities through U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs and about studying in the United States.
- The American Corner in Guwahati, India, hosted several hundred students for presentations on student visas, studying in the United States, and e-library resources.

CULTURAL PROGRAMS—Alumni can help to create programs to spread knowledge and understanding of American culture. They can also use local language and customs to create connections between the two cultures.

- The American Corner in Luanda, Angola, hosted an educational presentation on the spirit of volunteerism in the United States and on opportunities for volunteering in Angola. The presentation was enhanced by a question-and-answer session with a professional exchange alumnus who participated in a program on volunteerism. The activity not only provided opportunities for English language exposure, but it also helped build relationships with young audiences and supported educational improvement and economic diversification.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE UNITED STATES—Alumni can provide information about the United States to increase understanding and strengthen relationships. They can serve as a bridge between their nation and the United States due to their experience in both countries.

- In Macedonia, alumni of the Summer Work and Travel program (SWT) are giving presentations at American Corners on SWT-related activities, as well as on broader topics relevant to youth, like entrepreneurship and applying U.S. customer service ideals in Macedonia.
- Embassy Yerevan, Armenia, invited the U.S. Alumni Association of Armenia to organize a speaker series called “We Share,” in which alumni speak at American Corners and universities. These activities provided a platform for alumni to share their exchange experiences with the Armenian public.

ALUMNI ACTIVITIES—American Spaces can also host alumni events that bring a wide range of activities and audiences together.

- In Rangoon, Burmese alumni of the Myanmar-United States Friendship Exchange launched a three-day workshop at the American Center on grant writing for staff and volunteer workers from community-based organizations and civil society groups.

- In Argentina, one group of Access alumni used a grant to help start a local baseball team in a regional community. The inspiration of five Access graduates has expanded to teach 35 local participants the sport of baseball. The project organizers prepared a photography exhibit of the players practicing and displayed it at the Binational Center.

Alumni as an Audience

An alumni engagement strategy provides opportunities for alumni to network and connect with each other, with other members of society, as well as with the Mission. This, in turn, encourages alumni to support the activities offered by American Spaces.

- Alumni were able to interact virtually with Salman Khan, founder of the Khan Academy, during a November 2012 online webchat in which he discussed his online library of free educational videos, the shift the academy is making in the paradigm of education, and ways to increase access to education. Though anyone could view the chat, Mr. Khan took questions exclusively from alumni of U.S. government exchange programs, many of whom were participating in the discussion from American Spaces.
- The American Corner at the Nizhny Novgorod State Linguistic University in Russia engaged in culinary diplomacy by celebrating a traditional American Thanksgiving dinner that brought together 25 students, their Russian host families, and other exchange program alumni. The group watched the *Live! From America: A Taste of Thanksgiving* program featuring award-winning American chefs preparing classic American dishes for Thanksgiving.
- The American Center in Kolkata, India, hosted a two-day event called “Experience America Blitz.” The event in Kolkata brought the Ambassador together with leading alumni from the northeast to discuss their work in fields including anti-trafficking, AIDS prevention, and youth volunteerism.

American Spaces as Partners on Alumni Proposals

Many American Spaces support the grant proposals of U.S. exchange program alumni. The State Department sponsors an annual Alumni Engagement Innovation Fund (AEIF) (<https://alumni.state.gov/aeif>) competition to support alumni initiatives that promote shared values and innovative solutions to global challenges. The competition provides small grants to teams of former and current participants of U.S. government-funded exchange programs to carry out public service projects that utilize experience and knowledge they have gained through their exchange experiences.

American Spaces may want to consider supporting grants in the following ways:

- Offer free use of space, access to a computer, or a telephone for the duration of the project.
- Write a letter of support that shows the American Space commitment of support for the grant or grant proposal.

The International Exchange Alumni Website

American Space Coordinators are eligible for guest accounts on the International Exchange Alumni website (<https://alumni.state.gov/>), an online community of alumni of U.S. government-sponsored exchange programs. It provides opportunities for alumni to network with each other, develop their careers, and stay in touch with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and posts, thus helping to extend their exchange experience.

To sign up for a guest account, please email the following to webmaster@alumni.state.gov:

- Full name
- Official title and name of American Space
- Email address
- Name and contact information for the Public Affairs Officer at the U.S. Embassy

Upon submitting the registration information, registrants will receive an email stating that their registration has been received. However, applicants will not have full access to the website until the information they have submitted has been verified.



MANAGEMENT

STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES

THE OFFICE OF American Spaces has developed standards to provide embassies, consulates, and American Spaces a tool to evaluate individual American Spaces and assess them against a common model. A unified set of standards allows for a consistent approach to funding support for Spaces and for monitoring and evaluation of Spaces' progress and needs. Unified standards are important because they allow us to make a strong case to the U.S. Congress for continued support for these valuable outreach platforms.

The standards were developed in consultation with American Spaces around the world and taking into account the programming and physical attributes typical to American Spaces. Additionally, the Office of American Spaces coordinated closely with the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and Department stakeholders, including regional Public Diplomacy offices, to ensure the standards represented input from the entire Public Diplomacy family. These standards encompass criteria for programming, content, and physical space, and provide performance measures to inform resource allocation decisions.

Objective of the Standards

The standards are a tool for embassies and consulates to evaluate the elements of their American Spaces, such as programming, content, and the physical space. The standards also identify aspirations for expanded programs or facilities—or conversely, to identify areas where Spaces are exceeding expectations and inform funding and support decisions. Embassies and consulates are then able to use these evaluations as the basis for funding requests to support their Spaces. The specific standards provide consistency and objectivity to make monitoring and evaluation easier. They are intended to provide a baseline from which Spaces can measure their success and identify areas for improvement.

How the Standards Work

There are three different sets of standards: one for U.S. government-owned, publicly accessible American Centers and IRCs; one for Corners; and one for BNCs. Standards fall into three categories: program, management, and physical. Each broad category provides criteria that help embassies and consulates rank their Spaces according to three levels—bronze, silver, and gold. In each matrix, the left column defines the broad categories, the next column identifies the specific elements, and the following three columns capture the progressive demonstration of the elements from left to right. The elements are cumulative, assuming the Space has mastered those at previous levels.

The standards are meant to be aspirational—not punitive. Spaces eligible for funding need to meet the bronze-level standards overall, but there is no expectation that all Spaces should be on their way to meeting the silver- or gold-level standards if a bronze-level Space sufficiently meets the embassy's and partner's needs. If a Space generally is at the bronze or higher level on almost all of the standards elements, but local conditions make it impossible to meet the bronze level on one or two elements,

the Space will be considered as meeting standards. Please contact your Information Resource Officer (IRO) to discuss if this is an issue for your Space.

For those Spaces that do aspire to improve and do more, the standards are designed to give Spaces officials an idea of areas where they can expand their effectiveness.

Program Standards

Spaces will be asked to include programs in five broad areas: English language learning, EducationUSA advising, alumni programs, cultural programs, and information about the United States.

Management Standards

Management standards address a variety of topics including the capacity of American Spaces staff, embassy oversight and support, IRO involvement, funding, reporting, evaluation, communications, and partnerships.

Physical Standards

To further develop physical standards for Spaces, IIP partnered with the Smithsonian Institution to visit representative American Spaces and provide design recommendations. As a result, the Smithsonian published an *Idea Book* that includes recommendations for improving the design of American Spaces. The *Idea Book* can be found at <https://americanspaces.state.gov/ideabook>.

The complete standards matrices for Corners, BNCs, and U.S. government-owned American Spaces can be found in the appendix on page 65. Matrices and assessment templates for BNCs (including a Spanish translation) and Corners (including Arabic, French, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish translations) can also be found on the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/guidance>).

Implementing the Standards

Public Affairs Section staff, Spaces staff, and IROs should meet in person or virtually to assess American Spaces according to each standards element, identifying further objectives for each space, and determining whether to seek funding to realize those objectives.

The Office of American Spaces has created templates for embassies and consulates to use when conducting their assessments. Each of the three standards matrices (one for U.S. government-owned, publicly accessible Centers and IRCs; one for Corners, and one for BNCs) has been expanded to include a column to the right where posts can make notes identifying plans for improvement on various elements, including whether funding is needed to realize the objective. Not all elements will require notes. In addition, embassies and consulates are asked to highlight the level (bronze, silver, gold) at which the Spaces are performing. A mix across bronze, silver, and gold is expected. If local conditions make meeting the bronze level impractical or impossible, please explain this in the notes section. After each

element has been assessed, posts should look at the matrix and determine the overall level of the Space: bronze, silver, or gold.

A sample of a completed template can be found on the following pages. Downloadable templates can also be found on the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/guidance>).



SAMPLE COMPLETED STANDARDS ASSESSMENT

Standards Matrix for American Corners		Bronze	Silver	Gold	Assessment/Plans for 2014	
Categories	Sub-Categories					
Programs*	English Language Learning	The space makes English Language material available to visitors and holds a minimum of 4 programs per year related to English language learning independent of programs supported by the RELO. Examples of these programs include conversation clubs, English film clubs, Peace Corps Volunteer English programs, presentation of English related resources available at the space, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.	The space makes English Language material available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) supported by the RELO. Examples of these programs include conversation clubs, English film clubs, Peace Corps Volunteer English programs, presentation of English related resources available at the space, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.	The space makes English Language material available to visitors and holds over 12 programs per year related to English language learning independent of programs supported by the RELO. Examples of these programs include conversation clubs, English film clubs, Peace Corps Volunteer English programs, presentation of English related resources available at the space, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.	start holding bi-weekly conversation clubs	
	EducationUSA	The space makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) and has an e-Shop Bronze (\$500) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years.	The space makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) and has an e-Shop Silver (\$750) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years. At least one space staff member has completed online New Adviser Orientation training for new advisers and/or received training from a senior EducationUSA adviser or REAC. The space maintains contact with a senior EducationUSA adviser in country.	The space is a designated EducationUSA advising center, makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures), and has an e-Shop Gold (\$1000) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years. A trained EducationUSA adviser has an office in the space and hosts regular group information sessions. The adviser is also available to assist individual students and as time permits, receive U.S. higher education visitors.	register coordinator for online EducationUSA advising course; request support funds to expand collectio (purchase eShop silver collection)	
	Alumni Activities	The space invites alumni to participate in events and speak at 2-4 programs.	The space provides a meeting room for alumni associations and invites alumni to speak at 5-7 events.	The space provides a meeting room for alumni associations and invites alumni to speak at 8 or more events per year. The space also acts as a partner organization on alumni grant proposals.	reach out to alumni and invite them to programs and see if they will be speakers	
	Cultural Programs	The Space organizes and promotes 6-12 cultural programs and exhibitions per year.	The Space organizes and promotes 13-26 cultural programs and exhibitions per year.	The Space organizes and promotes over 26 cultural programs and exhibitions per year. Partnerships with other cultural institutions in the community are formed and maintained.		
	Information About the U.S.		The space holds 6-12 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP/target of opportunity/Mission speakers, Internet training, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	The space holds 13-26 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP, target of opportunity or Mission speakers, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	The space holds over 26 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP, target of opportunity or Mission speakers, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	start holding weekly film showings; request funding to increase DVD collection
			Virtual Programs: The space participates in Co.Nx, Skype, or DVC videoconferences.	Virtual Programs: The space participates in 3-4 Co.Nx, Skype, or DVC videoconferences per year.	Virtual Programs: The space organizes live audiences to participate in, or originates, 6-12 Co.Nx, Skype, webchats, or DVC videoconferences per year. The space also produces at least one videoconference per year.	
		Information Inquiries: Staff conducts at least 10-25 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.	Information Inquiries: Staff conducts between 25-50 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.	Information Inquiries: Staff conducts over 50 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.		



Standards Matrix for American Corners				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Programs*	Information About the U.S.	<p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space has a collection of 1200 books about the U.S. as well as up to 75 DVD titles. The collection includes reference books about learning English and studying in the U.S. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog accessible to visitors on a dedicated computer terminal.</p> <p>IIP Publications: The space has IIP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p>	<p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space has a collection of 1200 – 2000 books about the U.S. and less than 150 DVD titles. There is a core collection of books about learning English and studying in the U.S. Reference books are updated on a regular basis. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog and on the Space's public internet site. The collection reflects user needs and is weeded annually.</p> <p>IIP Publications: The space has IIP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p>	<p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space provides a lending library of more than 2000 books about the U.S. and over 150 DVD titles and other multi-media products (board and electronic games, production labs). There is a substantial collection of books about learning and teaching English and studying in the U.S. A collection development plan is in place. Collections are actively promoted to students and the community through outreach programs and presentations. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog and on the Space's public internet site. The collection reflects user needs and is weeded annually.</p> <p>IIP Publications: The space has IIP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p>
		<p>elibraryUSA: The space makes elibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures.</p> <p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has 2 available to visitors upon request.</p> <p>Internet Connection: The space has less than a 2Mbit/s internet connection.</p>	<p>elibraryUSA: The space makes elibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in elibraryUSA.</p> <p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has 2 available to visitors. The space has implemented a lending program and organizes activities using the eReaders.</p> <p>Internet Connection: The space has at least a 2Mbit/s internet connection with WiFi available to visitors. WiFi connection reaches to all corners of the public access space with no limitations.</p>	<p>elibraryUSA: The space makes elibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in elibraryUSA. The space further promotes elibraryUSA by developing video tutorials and other outreach materials for their audiences and for the benefit of their colleagues.</p> <p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has more than 2 available to visitors. The space has implemented a robust lending program and organizes activities and training programs using the eReaders.</p> <p>Internet Connection: The space has the best available connection with unlimited bandwidth and WiFi available to visitors. WiFi connection reaches to all corners of the public access space with no limitations.</p>
Management	Staff	<p>English Proficiency: Staff has basic English communication skills.</p> <p>Programming Capacity: Staff organizes basic programs. Staff can handle Embassy speaker programs, but needs some assistance from Embassy.</p> <p>Understanding of America: Staff has basic understanding of America.</p>	<p>English Proficiency: Staff has intermediate English communication skills.</p> <p>Programming Capacity: Staff is capable of organizing a variety of events with little to no assistance from Embassy staff.</p> <p>Understanding of America: Staff has visited the United States and has intermediate understanding of life in America.</p>	<p>English Proficiency: Staff is fluent in English.</p> <p>Programming Capacity: Staff is innovative and initiates complex programs for large audiences on their own.</p> <p>Understanding of America: Staff has spent significant time in the United States and has in-depth knowledge of America.</p>
		<p>Technology Proficiency: Staff has a basic understanding of Microsoft Office, the internet, and rudimentary knowledge of social media. Staff needs outside help troubleshooting anything but basic problems.</p> <p>Training: Staff has been trained by the Embassy or consulate and the IRO. Staff has also participated in one country-wide or regional workshop.</p>	<p>Technology Proficiency: Staff is adept at using Microsoft Office suite, the internet, and social media networks. Staff can troubleshoot many technology problems.</p> <p>Training: Staff has been trained by the U.S. Embassy or consulate and the IRO. Staff also participates in annual country-wide or regional workshops and has participated in a Department organized training program in the U.S.</p>	<p>Technology Proficiency: Staff is skilled at Microsoft Office, internet, social media, elibraryUSA, OER/MOOCs (Open Educational Resources/Massive Open Online Courses). Staff can troubleshoot most technology problems. Staff is able to mentor patrons on technology skills.</p> <p>Training: Staff participates as a trainer in annual country-wide or regional workshops and has participated in one or more Department organized training program in the U.S.</p>

request funding to expand English language learning collections.

IRC staff to work with Corner staff to build capacity for elibraryUSA training

request funding for additional eReaders, start a book club



Standards Matrix for American Corners				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
				Assessment/Plans for 2014
	Tech Support	Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc.	Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms. Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms. Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc.	Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms and to train other staff and the public on the use of modern technology.
	Embassy Oversight	The Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE (IRO) staff time to support the space. There is at least one Embassy oversight visit to space per year and evidence of regular email communications.	Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE (IRO) staff time to support of space. FSO is significantly involved in oversight of space. The Embassy visits the space quarterly.	Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE (IRO) staff time to support of space. FSO is significantly involved in oversight of space. Embassy visits space at least quarterly and provides regular Embassy speakers to the space.
	IRO Involvement	IRO advises post on the American Space, including reviewing MOU and support funds request.	IRO advises post on the American Space, including reviewing MOU and support funds request, and visits at least once each year. Space staff has interaction with IRO at single country and/or regional training workshops.	IRO advises post on the American Space, including reviewing MOU and support funds request, and visits at least twice each year. Space staff has interaction with IRO at single country and/or regional training workshops. Space hosts IRO as a program speaker.
	Funding**	Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the Corner. Funding is adequate to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs to meet the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner each contribute funds and resources.	Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the Corner. Funding to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs exceeds the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner contribute funds and resources. Space augments its resources through the use of volunteers or interns.	Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the Corner. Funding to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs exceeds the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner contribute funds and resources. Space augments its resources through the use of volunteers or interns and contributions from third-party institutions.
	Copyright & Intellectual Property	Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.	Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.	Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.
Management	Planning	Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals.	Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly.	Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly and includes periodical (monthly or quarterly) implementation plans.
	Reporting	Staff maintain monthly reports on the number of visitors to the Space, the number of programs, and attendees. Staff share this data with the U.S. Embassy or consulate at the end of every month. Corner has an entry in the ACCD.	In addition to the basic statistics, staff keep track of reference requests and are careful to ensure that data is reasonable and accurate. Corner has an entry in the ACCD.	Staff maintain monthly reports on the number of visitors to the space, the number of programs, attendees, and reference requests. Reports are always submitted on time with no delays or errors in the data. Corner has an entry in the ACCD.
	Evaluation	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines.	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines. Space seeks informal feedback from audiences (and partners) on program and resources.	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines. Space designs and uses tools to solicit feedback from audiences (and partners) on programs and resources. E.g., space develops programs and/or acquires collection materials based on audience interests and response. Feedback results are regularly reported.
	Number of hours per week that the Corner is staffed and open to the public.	20-30	31-40	More than 40
	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	current signed MOU on file	current signed MOU on file	current signed MOU on file
Website	The U.S. Embassy or consulate mentions the Space and has contact information on its website.	The U.S. Embassy or consulate describes the Space's purpose, activities, and resources and has contact information on its website.	The space has a dedicated website that the U.S. Embassy or consulate links to. Links are checked and updated regularly.	

Standards Matrix for American Corners					
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Assessment/Plans for 2014
Management	Social Media	The U.S. Embassy or consulate promotes the space on its social media channels.	Staff at this space actively manage a social media account.	The space is active on multiple social media platforms, promotes IP products, Embassy activities, USG initiatives, and other information about the U.S. The space has a lively community and curates their own content.	<i>Train Corner staff, encourage them to promote IP products and curate content for social media site.</i>
	Lists/servs/facebook group email address	Staff at the Corner monitor the AC Staff listserv. Staff has joined Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff at the Corner monitor and actively engage on the AC Staff listserv. Staff has joined and is actively engaged on Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff at the Corner monitor and actively engage on the AC Staff listserv. Staff has joined and is actively engaged on Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	
	Email	American Corner has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	American Corner has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	American Corner has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	
	Marketing	Space markets its programs and services to users.	Space regularly markets its programs and services to users and the broader community.	Space regularly markets its programs and services. Space utilizes multiple channels, including social media and the press, to market its programs and services.	
	Local Media		Space name & branding appear on all products from the Space (website, social media, print products, email signatures, etc.)	Corner has established productive relationships with local media outlets.	
Physical Space***	Appearance: Branding	Name of space established and branding adopted that fits standards.	Space name & branding appear on all products from the Space (website, social media, print products, email signatures, etc.)	Brand recognition is recognized in the wider (non-space) community. People on the street recognize the name & branding.	
	Appearance: Signage	A clearly visible sign in the space depicts the name of the space and its relationship with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. A U.S. flag is present.	A clearly visible sign in the space and in the larger building or complex housing the space depicts the name of the space and its relationship with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. A U.S. flag is present. The name of the space is visible from the street.	There are clearly visible signs in the space and in the larger building or complex housing the space depicting the name and its relationship with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. A U.S. flag is present and highly visible. The space has experimented with creative branding techniques (digital signboards, exhibits, etc.). The name of the space is visible from the street.	
	Appearance: Décor	The space is attractive and welcoming with elements of American design that are distinct from local design norms.	The space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. public library or community center. Walls are adorned with posters or framed art depicting the U.S.	The space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. public library or community center. The space includes delineated zones for individual use of technology or resources and for group interaction. Permanent or temporary artworks exhibiting American art adorn the walls.	
	Physical Space	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of 10-20 visitors and has access to programming space. The space has seating for 20 or fewer people. The Space is maintained & cleaned regularly. There are no facility hazards, security, or safety issues. There is adequate and reliable lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation.	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of 21-40 visitors and hold programs. The Space is maintained & cleaned regularly and there are regular facility/safety inspections. Lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation are up to U.S. overseas building standards. The space includes clearly delineated zones, content, or staff for learning about America, the English language, or educational advising. The space has seating for 21-40 people.	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of more than 40 visitors and hold programs. The Space is maintained & cleaned regularly and meets all U.S. overseas facility standards for safety. Lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation are up to U.S. overseas building standards. There is flexibility to hold small and large programs in different formats. There are prominent zones, content, or staff for learning about America, the English language, and educational advising. The space has seating for more than 40 people.	
	Furnishings	The space has adequate and functional shelving, a table, chairs, and desks for computer equipment.	The space has adequate and modern shelving, a table, chairs, and desks for computer equipment. Furnishings accommodate the maximum number of visitors without overcrowding.	The space has ample and modern shelving, tables, comfortable chairs, and desks for computer equipment. Furnishings facilitate flexible arrangements for large and small programs as well as individual use of technology or resources.	

Standards Matrix for American Corners					
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Assessment/Plans for 2014
Physical Space***	Accessibility	Space is located within 10 miles of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. The space has made accommodations for those with disabilities.	Space is located within 5 miles of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. Parking is available to visitors at minimum cost. The space strives to be accessible to all. The space is wheelchair accessible.	Space is located in the heart of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. Parking is available to visitors at minimum cost. The space strives to be accessible to all. The space is in compliance with ADA standards.	
	Equipment	<p>Computers: The space offers at least 3 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software -including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.</p> <p>Mobile Devices (Pads): The space is planning to acquire one tablet or other mobile device for programs.</p> <p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam.</p> <p>TV and DVD Player: The space has a television and multisystem DVD player available for visitors to view DVDs.</p> <p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a compact digital camera to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and submit them in regular reports.</p> <p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has an adequate and well-maintained printer and photocopier available to visitors.</p>	<p>Computers: The space offers at least 6 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software -including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.</p> <p>Mobile Devices (Pads): The space makes one mobile device available to visitors and also uses it for programs.</p> <p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co.NX programs.</p> <p>TV and DVD Player: The space has two televisions (including one large enough for group viewing) and multisystem DVD players and headsets available for visitors to view DVDs.</p> <p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a compact digital camera to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and submit them in regular reports and post them to their social media platforms.</p> <p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has two well-maintained printers and photocopiers available to visitors.</p>	<p>Computers: The space offers more than 6 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software -including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.</p> <p>Mobile Devices (Pads): The space makes more than one mobile device available to visitors and also uses them for programs.</p> <p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co.NX programs. Has state of the art DVC equipment and capability to produce their own videoconferences and programs.</p> <p>TV and DVD Player: The space has three televisions (including one large enough for group viewing) and multisystem DVD players and headsets available for visitors to view DVDs.</p> <p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a high quality SLR digital camera with video capabilities (or a video camera) to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and videos and submit them in regular reports and post them to their social media platforms.</p> <p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has both black and white and color printers and photocopiers that are well-maintained and available to visitors.</p>	

*Note: minimum number of TOTAL programs is 24 per year (this can be a combination of the various types of programs). It is possible that a program will incorporate 2 or more of the 5 core programs. For instance, an alumna could lead a cultural program or English conversation club.

**Note: USG funding for staffing is only for USG employed staff.

***Note: appearance and physical space standards are interim standards until completion of the Model Spaces project.

PROGRAMMING IN AMERICAN SPACES

PLANNING PROGRAMS IS a very important duty for American Spaces coordinators. Creative programming is what brings American Spaces alive, and interesting, engaging programs are a key to the success of American Spaces. Visitors are drawn to American Spaces by events ranging from small discussion groups and live music performances to lectures, seminars, film showings, exhibits, round-table discussions, holiday celebrations, and English language learning and educational advising opportunities.

It's important to plan programs in advance and be strategic about what programs you want to have in the coming year. According to the standards, American Spaces should offer a minimum of 24 programs a year, and very active spaces do many more. Although the size of the audience will vary by the kind of program and the physical limitations of each Space, Spaces staff should strive to increase the size of program audiences when possible to maximize the number of people reached. IIP's yearly Content Calendar not only is a helpful guide for posts and Spaces for planning events with important themes, it also offers links to useful content for programming. The IIP Content Calendar can be found on the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/home/calendar>). A sample strategic planning calendar can be found on the next page.

In addition to planning your programs for the coming year, it's helpful to have a checklist for each program planned. A detailed checklist can be found on page 38.

SAMPLE STRATEGIC PLANNING CALENDAR

Month	Theme/Topic	Title	Date	Description	Format	Program Type*	Status	Expenses	Next Steps
January	Democracy & Civil Society	"Raise Your Voice"		3--hour workshop on citizen journalism/ panelists from US Embassy and NGOs	Workshop	Cultural/ Informa1on/ Alumni Program	In Progress	\$0	Students want another workshop on this topic.
February									
March									
April									
May									
June									
July									
August									
September									
October									
November									
December									

*English language learning, Educa1onUSA advising, cultural program, alumni, informa1on about the U.S.

PROGRAM CHECKLIST

✓	Program Checklist	
	Name of program	
	Point of Contact/Program planner	
	Type of program	
	Presenter/Leader	
	Invited	
	Confirmed	
	Budget	
	Date	
	Location	
	Time	
	Who will you invite?	
	How announced	
	RSVP? (if so, who will keep track)	
	Supplemental handouts, give-aways—what, to whom	
	Location	
	Reserve space/confirmed	
	Set up - who will do it?	
	Equipment needed	
	Laptop, internet connection	
	Microphone	
	Projector, screen	
	Other—water, pencils, notepads	
	Camera?	
	Refreshments?	
	Who sets up, cleans up, serves	
	Program	
	Master of ceremonies (introductions, wrap up, thank you)	
	Translator	
	Evaluations	
	Day Before Program	
	Reconfirm space	
	Reconfirm speaker	
	Reconfirm refreshments (if necessary)	
	Day of Program	
	Set up room and check electronics	
	Bring freebies, handouts	
	Greet speaker	
	Remember to count the number of attendees at the program	
	After Program	
	Send thank you notes to speakers and volunteers	
	PanamPartners listserv	

COMMUNICATION TOOLS: WEBSITES AND LISTSERVS

THE OFFICE OF American Spaces maintains online resources for American Spaces staff and posts.

- The American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/home>) was created especially for American Spaces. It includes information on managing American Spaces and programming ideas.

The Office of American Spaces also maintains several electronic mailing lists (listservs) to facilitate communication among American Spaces staff worldwide. American Spaces staff and embassy personnel subscribe to the listservs to share best practices and receive current information about resources and news for American Spaces. Spaces staff are encouraged to sign up for one of the following listservs. Sign up information is available on <https://americanspaces.state.gov/home>.

- ACSTAFF-L: American Corners Coordinators and Staff
- PanAm Partners: specifically for those American Spaces (including Binational Centers) in Latin America.

AMERICAN SPACES REPORTING

STATISTICS AND HIGHLIGHTS are critical tools in reporting on the value of American Spaces to the State Department and to the U.S. Congress, which funds the program. All American Spaces are asked to keep track of statistics on the number of visitors, number of programs, and number of attendees at programs and report these numbers to the embassy or consulate each month. In addition, American Spaces are encouraged to share program highlights on the ACStaff-L listserv—ACSTAFF-L@statelists.state.gov. Sign up information is available on <https://americanspaces.state.gov/home>.

The American Spaces Highlights Newsletter pulls highlights from the ACStaff listserv. Submissions can also be sent directly to americanspaces@state.gov. American Spaces partners should copy their embassy or consulate contacts on any messages to americanspaces@state.gov.

FAQS—COLLECTING STATISTICS FOR AMERICAN SPACES

Q How do I count visitors?

Visitors are the number of people who walk through the door of your American Space each month. If the same person visits two times, that would count as two visitors.

FOR BNCS, count visitors to the entire BNC, not just the library. Visitors are defined as anyone who walks through the door who is not an employee.

Q How do I count programs?

Programs are the number of individual programs you do each month. If you do the same program three times for three different audiences, that counts as three separate programs.

FOR BNCS, please count classes as individual programs.

Q How do I count the number of program attendees?

Program attendees are the number of people that attend the program. People may end up being counted twice—as a visitor and as an attendee. That’s fine—these are two different data points that are being tracked.

FOR BNCS, attendees are the number of people enrolled in each class. BNCS should also count attendees at other programs, such as library programs, cultural events, and exhibitions.

Q How do I count the number of program attendees for off-site programs that are not held in enclosed spaces?

Please count anyone that you engage with at the booth or table as a program attendee (rather than counting them as visitors).

Q What if my BNC has branches? How do I count statistics?

If the branch is doing the five core programs (English language, EducationUSA advising, cultural programs, alumni engagement, and information about the U.S.) please treat the branch as a unique Space and submit their statistics separately from headquarters.

If the branch is not doing the five core programs, please include their statistics as a part of headquarters, as one single Space.

Q What if my IRC is located in the American Center?

For IRCs that are collocated with American Centers, please submit only one data collection form for the Space.

Q How are the statistics used?

The Office of American Spaces routinely gets questions about statistics relating to American Spaces. These statistics are used to answer questions from other offices within the Department of State, U.S. Congress, and others. The information on specific Spaces is also shared in briefings with Foreign Service Officers going out to posts.

FUNDING AMERICAN SPACES

IIP’s OFFICE OF American Spaces provides funding for American Spaces worldwide. Each year, IIP sends information on support funds to embassies and consulates worldwide. American Spaces staff should work with their contacts at the embassy or consulate to identify needs that could be addressed with funding. The

embassy or consulate will submit a support funds proposal to Washington on the behalf of its American Spaces.

In-Kind Support

In-kind support is a way for American Spaces or volunteers at American Spaces to seek resources other than monetary donation—things such as services, supplies, or free help. You can look for in-kind support from your members and within your local community.

WHY SOLICIT IN-KIND SUPPORT?

- Many groups and individuals can't donate cash or do not feel comfortable doing so, but, if asked, would be happy to give supplies, space, or time.
- In-kind support helps build community support for your American Space. When people donate a computer or some staff time, their connection to your Space grows stronger. They have more of a stake in seeing you succeed. So, it's not only goods and services you are receiving; you are getting some goodwill in the bargain, building credibility and respect in the community, and developing new allies too.
- In-kind supporters can also steer you to other sources of in-kind support, sources you might not have known about before.
- In some jurisdictions, outright donations of cash to an American Space could raise attention from the local tax authorities.

TYPES OF IN-KIND DONATIONS

- Goods are tangible items including equipment, furniture, books, DVDs, space (including maintenance and utilities), and food that people bring to regular meetings or events.
- Services including construction and renovation, printing, public relations or promotional activities.
- Volunteers—people who give their time free of charge.

PLANNING FOR SOLICITATION OF IN-KIND SUPPORT

As you approach potential contributors, it is important to remember that you not only seek something from them, but you are also offering them an opportunity to put their organization in a positive light to a large audience. When communicating with potential donors do your homework and be prepared.

Plan how you will approach various members of your community to ask for non-cash resources. Do your members have good contact with particular businesses, companies, institutions, or individuals? Think positively and creatively. In some ways, seeking in-kind support is less intimidating than asking for money. Some businesses are looking for ways to show their involvement and generosity toward their host community.

AFTER SOLICITING IN-KIND SUPPORT

Keep a careful accounting of the monetary values of your in-kind solicitations. This will be important for your American Space when you work with the embassy/consulate and request support funds. See sample tracking worksheet below.

Also, be sure to write thank you notes to your donors for their contributions.

Sample worksheet for tracking in-kind support

In-Kind Support for the month of: _____				
Donor	In-Kind Support	Monetary Value	Contact Person	Thank you note sent?

TRAINING

IRO sponsored/endorsed training

A key component for the success of American Spaces is staff training. The standards for American Spaces emphasize the necessity of regular training for American Spaces staff, and posts are encouraged to consider hosting training programs in their region, if practical.

Through American Spaces support funds, IIP's Office of American Spaces provides funding (travel, per diem, and meals & incidental expenses (M&IE)) for training participants—American Spaces partner staff, Locally Employed Staff, and Foreign Service Officers. These costs must be requested at the same time that American Spaces support funds proposals are submitted (see page 40 for more details on American Spaces support funding).

Non-IRO Training

If additional, external training is desired, embassies and consulates are encouraged to work with their IRO to identify appropriate training to build the capacity of American Spaces staff and request funding through the American Spaces support funds process. The Office of American Spaces may fund online courses or webinars offered by the American Library Association (<http://www.ala.org/>) or other professional U.S. library organizations. These costs also must be requested at the same time that American Spaces support funds proposals are submitted (see page 40 for more details on American Spaces support funding).

Additional Library Training Resources

The American Library Association also offers a series of fact sheets on a variety of topics, including setting up a library (<http://www.ala.org/tools/libfactsheets>).



Additionally, posts seeking practical step-by-step instructions for creating and managing a successful library may refer to outside resources such as the *Peace Corps guide: Libraries for All!: How to Start and Run a Basic Library* (<http://files.peacecorps.gov/library/RE035.pdf>). The Peace Corps has also created the *Sustainable Library Development: Training Package* (http://files.peacecorps.gov/library/Sustainable_Library_Development_Training_Package.pdf) designed to provide guidance to Peace Corps Volunteers engaged in library projects.

WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

VOLUNTEERS MAKE VALUABLE contributions to American Spaces. Some Spaces invite volunteers to assist them on a short-term basis, while others have long-term volunteers who volunteer at the American Space on a regular basis. Volunteers come from all walks of life. They may be students who need some work experience, professionals hoping to share their knowledge with others, retirees looking for a place to use their energy and experience, or alumni of U.S. government exchange programs looking to inspire others. Volunteers might be from your local community or they may be Americans visiting or residing in your city.

Because these relationships can be beneficial for both the volunteer and the American Space, American Spaces are encouraged to seek volunteer involvement when and where possible. The Space gets much-needed help in carrying out programming and other activities and the volunteer receives work experience, training, a letter of recommendation, the opportunity to practice English, or simply the satisfaction of having freely given their time.

The first step in working with volunteers is to assess your American Space and determine how you would like to use volunteers and what you hope to accomplish. Will volunteers help you expand your programs and outreach? Do you need volunteers with a specific skill set?

Volunteers can assist in nearly every aspect of running an American Space.

Sample Volunteer Positions:

RECEPTIONIST: Greet American Space visitors, introduce and direct visitors to correct resources, answer questions, tidy and maintain the reception area, and provide general administrative and clerical supports as needed.

PROGRAM SUPPORT AND OUTREACH: Participate in all American Space programs and activities before, during, and after events. Develop and lead innovative programming, depending upon interest and expertise.

LIBRARY SUPPORT: Assist with library operations, including shelving, cataloging, and helping users find the information they need.

TECH SUPPORT: Assist with monitoring and maintaining American Space hardware and software.

ARTIST/DESIGNER: Create and design artwork for American Space events, including invitations, website advertisements, event decorations, American Space bulletin board, etc.

Recruiting Volunteers

Recruiting volunteers means attracting and inviting people to work in your American Space without pay. You can recruit them formally (asking them to fill out application forms, offering them a job title, etc.) or informally (by asking a friend or family member to help set up chairs for an event, for instance), or anything in between.

DEFINE TARGET GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS IN YOUR COMMUNITY WHO MAY BE POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS.

Are there Americans living in your community? Are there students interested in gaining job experience? Are there retired people looking to give some of their time freely? Are there individuals that would be willing to share their expertise in an area that would benefit your American Space (technology, art, public relations)?

CONVINCE POTENTIAL VOLUNTEERS TO BECOME ACTIVE VOLUNTEERS.

Once you've made contact with potential volunteers, and they've shown some interest, the next step is to convince them that volunteering at your American Space will be a good decision for them. Show that volunteering with your American Space has both tangible and intangible rewards. Some things you can do for volunteers:

- Invite volunteers to observe and/or try out the job they're interested in, with help from a staff member or experienced volunteer.
- Write a letter to potential volunteers, explaining what your American Space does, why you need help, and why you need their help in particular.
- Be flexible in scheduling so that volunteers can work the hours that are most convenient for them, can work when their friends are working, and/or can work with particular staff members or visitors.
- Show that you take volunteers seriously. Ask volunteers to sign a contract to work for a specified amount of time and to find replacements for themselves if they can't make a scheduled volunteer commitment. Provide coordination and supervision for volunteers so that they can improve their skills and performance. Emphasize how important their contribution is to your American Space.
- Offer volunteers their choice of jobs, or let the volunteers create their own job descriptions.
- Offer both initial and ongoing training and supervision.
- Provide opportunities for volunteers to assume leadership roles in particular projects or situations, and encourage and help them to expand their skills.



Thanking Volunteers

Volunteers give of their time freely and should be thanked for their contributions. This can be done in a variety of ways including by:

- Providing volunteer training as an incentive.
- Providing letters of appreciation and/or certificates from the embassy.
- Holding volunteer appreciation celebrations and giving volunteers small gifts for completion of a specified period of service (for instance, one year).
- Writing letters of recommendation.



SAMPLE
POLICIES AND
ADDITIONAL
GUIDANCE

SHOWING FILMS IN AMERICAN SPACES

MPLC Agreement

The U.S. Department of State encourages the use of American feature films, documentaries, and television programs in American Spaces to enhance mutual cultural understanding. Film/television screenings and discussions are a great way to begin a dialogue on topics of shared interest.

Through the Department’s American Film Program, U.S. Embassies and Consulates can acquire the rights to show a wide selection of films and television programs that reflect American society and values in American Spaces. These rights are negotiated by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs’ Cultural Programs Division on behalf of posts through an agreement with the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC). The MPLC license permits public performance screenings of feature films and television programs in American Spaces—Information Resource Centers, American Centers, American Corners, and Binational Centers. This agreement protects the intellectual property rights of American film/television creators and producers, and makes tens of thousands of titles available via DVD, streaming, or legal download.

How to determine if a film can be screened

A film/television program can only be screened if the producer or distributor of the film/television program is covered under the MPLC agreement established with the Department of State, and the film/television program will be used in connection with a public diplomacy program.

The MPLC’s studios and producers include tens of thousands of titles which are all available via DVD, streaming, or legal download. If a film/television program is produced by a MPLC studio/producer, posts may screen the film/television program publicly. To see if a film/television program is eligible for screening, posts need to identify the producer and then check if that producer is on the MPLC producer list. The link to this list can be found on <https://americanspaces.state.gov/guidance>.

How to find a film’s producer or distributor

Go to Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com) and enter the film/television program’s title. Click on the title.

- Scroll down the page to Company Credits to find the producer and/or distributor.
- Check to see which company distributes the title in the United States (U.S. distributor). If the U.S. distributor is listed on the MPLC producer list, the title is covered by the MPLC license. If it is not listed within the “produced by” lists, the title is not covered. You can also search by typing the name of the producer/distributor and IMDB will list all of the titles that company has

produced or distributed. You can also check a film's U.S. theatrical release date by clicking on Release Dates on the left-hand side of the screen.

NOTE: The Internet Movie Database (IMDB) is a comprehensive database of films/television programs, NOT a list of films/television programs recommended for programming. Not every title listed on the IMDB will be suitable for screening in American Spaces. Please work with U.S. Embassy Officers to identify films/television programs that advance mutual understanding between the United States and your country.

Guidelines for Screenings

- All films/television programs must be legally obtained. DVDs must be purchased from legal vendors. Films/television programs must be streamed or downloaded through legally recognized sources.
- Films/television programs must either be available in home video or DVD release in the country in which exhibition will occur. For certain producers, however, at least six months or nine months must have passed since the U.S. theatrical release. These exceptions are noted on the MPLC Producers list. The U.S. theatrical release date can be confirmed on www.imdb.com under the film/television programs' listed details.
- Films/television programs that have been legally distributed and subtitled or dubbed in the local language may be used for screening purposes.
- Films/television programs may not be duplicated, edited or modified in any way without the explicit permission of the film's producer. This includes subtitling or dubbing of the film/television program.

Use of this license is granted exclusively to the State Department and American Spaces and use of this license cannot be extended to third parties.

Screening Venues

- Screenings may be held in American Spaces: Information Resource Centers, American Centers, American Corners, and Binational Centers. If an American Corner is in a university, screenings may only occur in the designated American Corner.
- If an American Corner is in a library, screenings may occur outside of the designated space; such as in an adjacent multipurpose room.
- For Binational Centers, screenings are not meant for classroom use, but are specifically intended for public diplomacy programs co-sponsored with the U.S. Embassy.
- If held outside of an American Space, a screening must be U.S. Embassy-sponsored, directly supervised and attended by a U.S. Embassy Officer.

Admissions and Advertising

- No admission fee may be charged for screening of films/television programs available through the MPLC agreement.

- The films/television programs may be screened for unlimited numbers of persons per screening.
- Handouts about film/television programs, including the title, actors, characters and film art, may be posted and distributed only on American Spaces premises.
- No specific titles, any characters from films/television programs, or names of producers or directors can be advertized or publicized to the general public via newspaper, radio, and television promotions.
- However, you may communicate film/television program titles, actors, characters, and film/television program art for upcoming programs via official American Spaces and U.S. Embassy social media networks (including Facebook and Twitter), official websites, newsletters, and official email mailing lists. Promotion is restricted to U.S. Embassy and American Spaces websites and social media platforms.

For questions about the American Film program or MPLC regulations, please contact the U.S. Embassy.

SOCIAL MEDIA

SOCIAL MEDIA SITES such as Facebook, Flickr, Twitter, YouTube, etc., are excellent platforms for expanding outreach, promoting programs, and engaging with American Spaces audiences virtually. The Bureau of International Information Program's Office of Innovative Engagement has developed several practical training manuals on various social media platforms that are available on <http://wordpress.state.gov/socialmedia/>.

COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT IN AMERICAN SPACES

AMERICAN SPACES ARE platforms for providing information, and teaching key literacy skills. They provide access to the latest, in-depth information about the United States, connecting Americans and foreign publics in engaging discussions on U.S. policy, society, and values. By providing access to balanced, reliable, and up-to-date information about the U.S. they underscore our commitment to free access to information in a democratic society. Collections support the five core pillars of American Spaces: alumni, cultural programs, EducationUSA, English teaching, and information about the United States and include books, magazines, multimedia collections, and online databases.

Audience

American Spaces provide information about the U.S. to a variety of target audiences depending on the strategic goals of the partnering embassy and the Department of State. Target audiences typically include students, civil society leaders, educators, entrepreneurs, parents, children, and young professionals. At the local level,

American Spaces match their collection development priorities to the needs of their target audiences and seek to engage with a diverse range of people on issues that are of shared interest.

Resource Selection

Resources for American Spaces collections are selected at U.S. Embassies, based on local understanding of what is appropriate for the target audience. The American officers at post, in partnership with local staff, decide what information will address current U.S. policy goals and what will resonate with local audiences. Regional Information Resource Officers (IROs) frequently suggest collections to embassy staffs on specific topics based on their experience in the region as well as their professional skills.

American Spaces Collections

All American Spaces include a variety of print and non-print resources, reference books and circulating book collections. Non-print resources include online databases, audiobooks, ebooks (Kindles or other e-devices), documentaries, commercial films, periodicals, educational games, and music.

Subjects Covered

American Spaces collections typically cover a broad range of subjects in support of their five core pillars. Subjects may include: English teaching, student advising, arts, award-winning books and films, biography, business and careers, classics, contemporary affairs, democracy, diversity and tolerance, education, entertainment, environment, health, immigration issues, literature and fiction, politics, religion, science, social science, sports, technology, travel, or U.S. history. Resources are intended primarily for young adults and children.

Procurement

Embassies and consulates may use the American Spaces eShop (<https://eshop.state.gov/>) to select and purchase materials. The American Spaces eShop includes carefully crafted collections of resources covering books by topic or function, such as American history, entrepreneurship, or dictionaries. The Office of American Spaces has created these collections and recommends them for new and existing American Spaces, and to simplify the acquisitions of books and materials. The eShop staff have developed a low-cost method that uses eight booksellers to procure titles at the lowest price possible, and procures and ships books to post based on its orders.

Donations

American Spaces may accept donations and gifts. However, American Spaces, in consultation with posts, regional IROs, and the host institution (if applicable), reserve the right to add donations to the collection or to dispose of the material in an appropriate manner.

De-selection (Weeding)

On an annual basis, American Spaces should “weed” their print collections to maintain high standards in providing current, balanced, and relevant materials about the United States. Staff, in consultation with post, regional IROs, and host institutions (if applicable), should use the following criteria to de-select print materials and dispose of them in an appropriate manner:

- Appearance (item is in need of repair)
- Scope (item does not support one of the five core pillars of American Spaces)
- Content (item is not factual or current or has been superseded by another edition)
- Usage (item has not circulated or been used to support a program in the last four years)
- Duplications (multiple copies of items that are not in active use)

Intellectual Freedom

By providing unfettered access to the Internet and electronic resources, American Spaces support the Secretary of State’s commitment to Internet freedom as a human rights issue. Former Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton addressed the issue in a speech December 6, 2012, in Dublin: “The rights of individuals to express their views, petition their leaders, freely associate with others are universal, whether they are exercised on a university campus or a university’s Facebook page. Freedom is freedom, online or off... Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is 64 years old, but it seems remarkably prophetic in protecting the right to—and I quote—‘seek, receive, and impart information by any medium, regardless of frontiers.’”

American Spaces subscribe to the American Library Association’s Library Bill of Rights that states that “books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.”

GUIDELINES FOR CIRCULATING MATERIALS IN AMERICAN SPACES

THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES are intended to assist American Spaces staff members in developing procedures for circulating print and multimedia materials in their collections. American Corner and Binational Center partners are encouraged to consider these recommendations along with the policies and practices in their host institutions, keeping in mind that an *open-access, circulating collection is a key component of American Spaces*.



Membership and Registration

American Spaces are encouraged to register visitors as *members* in order to benefit from the many available services and resources. The term *member* is used to evoke participation and a sense of belonging. While anyone can visit the American Space, attend programs, and view the materials, *members* are engaged users who may borrow materials and access databases. Membership is free and available to anyone who visits the American Space.

Borrowing Privileges

It is recommend that individuals interested in borrowing materials become registered members of the American Space and/or host institution. Individuals can become members by filling out a registration form (either in an online system or on paper). American Spaces may choose the type of information collected on registration forms based on local practices.

Below is a sample agreement of responsibility:

I certify that the information about me is correct, and I agree to be responsible for all the items I borrow from [Name of American Space]. I agree to comply with all rules and policies, return materials on time, report lost or stolen materials, and update my contact information pending any changes to my address and/or phone number.

Signature _____

Members under the age of 18 must have a parent or guardian give their consent on the registration form before they may borrow materials.

Membership Cards and Registration Systems

Issuing a membership or library card to registered members is recommended.

There are several different types of registration systems American Spaces staff can choose to deploy, from a basic handwritten card system to a patron management module in an integrated library system (ILS) like Library World or Voyager. American Corners and Binational Centers should defer to existing registration and circulation systems present in their host institutions, if possible. For those Spaces beginning this process, a spreadsheet system using Excel or Google Docs or a full-fledged ILS to manage membership and circulation is recommended.

Loan Periods for Materials

Use the following table as a guide for establishing loan periods for circulating materials.

Materials	Loan Period	Limit	Renewals
Books designated for circulation (including last copy books)	Two weeks	2	Renewable for an additional two weeks
Magazines	One week	1 issue	Nonrenewable
DVDs	One week	1	Nonrenewable
Games	One week	1	Nonrenewable
E-reader (Kindles, etc.)	Two hours (if in-house only)	1	Nonrenewable
E-reader (Kindles, etc.)	One week (if device circulates)	1	Nonrenewable

Guidelines for Lending E-readers

American Spaces may lend e-readers using the following options: (1) in-house reserve loan, (2) classroom loan, and/or (3) longer-term loan—one to two weeks. Borrowers should sign an agreement form and be briefly trained on how to use the device by an American Space staff member.

Suggested language for an in-house agreement form

The following guidelines must be adhered to while using an e-reader:

- E-readers can be used only in the [name of American Space] for two hours at a time.
- Proof of identification/age and a signed release form are required for borrowing an e-reader.
- E-reader devices cannot leave the building under any circumstances.
- The e-reader must be in your care at all times and cannot be left unattended.
- You may not delete or download new content onto the e-reader. Please see a staff member if you have a specific content request.
- You may not de-register the e-reader or change the account settings.
- The e-reader must be returned directly to a staff member to check back in. It may not be left at the desk if no staff member is present.
- Device will be inspected for condition and content before and after use. Any changes in condition or content while in your care will be noted and may lead to the suspension of borrowing privileges.
- [Name of American Space] reserves the right to refuse service to anyone who abuses equipment or is repeatedly late in returning materials and/or electronic devices.

I agree to the terms of using the [name of American Space] e-reader:

Print Name

Phone #

Signature

Date

Staff inspection (please initial) before use after use Date: _____

Additional considerations for e-readers loaned outside the American Space

- E-readers are loaned on a first-come, first-served basis.
- E-readers may be borrowed for one week at a time and cannot be renewed.

Collateral or Deposits:

Members are not required to leave government-issued identification at the desk in order to borrow materials with the exception of in-house e-reader loans.

Overdue Items:

There are no fines for overdue materials, but delinquent members will lose their borrowing privileges. If an item is overdue, a notice is sent to the email address on file. Members who have overdue materials will be denied borrowing privileges until the materials are returned or accounted for.

Lost or Damaged Items

Print materials and e-readers are subject to normal wear and tear with use. However, if an item is damaged beyond further use when it is returned to the American Space, the staff member should discuss the consequences with the borrower. At this time, borrowing privileges may be suspended for a period of time. The same applies to materials that are lost.

Replacement of Lost or Damaged Items

The replacement of lost items is not the responsibility of the [name of American Space] staff. The staff member will maintain a list of lost and damaged items and will request replacement of the item from the U.S. Embassy.

PHOTOGRAPHS AT AMERICAN SPACES EVENTS

Taking photos at programs and activities held at American Spaces is a great way to share information with the embassy, Washington DC, partner institutions, potential visitors, and future program attendees. Good photographs can:

- Tell everyone that your American Corner is an attractive and welcoming place full of friendly, happy people involved in interesting and fun activities.
- Instantly convey the size and makeup of the audience that was reached by an event.
- Inspire other Spaces to try similar exhibits, events, and activities.
- Enhance your reporting (see page 39).

Try to take a variety of photos, not just posed group shots and speakers in front of audiences. Get some close-up and action shots. See more photo tips for American Spaces coordinators, sample photo release forms, and information on how to crop and compress photos on the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/guidance>).

DISABILITIES GUIDANCE

THE UNITED STATES of America is a world leader in recognizing and upholding the rights of people with disabilities. Supported by landmark laws, including Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, America strives to create an inclusive society in which all its citizens—including people with disabilities—are able to access, participate in, and enjoy public programs, resources and activities. As places representing American values and culture abroad, American Spaces where possible should endeavor to do the same.

What is a disability?

Disability is an evolving concept that encompasses the interaction between people with physical, sensory, mental, intellectual, or other conditions and various barriers that may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others. Disability intersects with all other population groups—anyone can acquire a disability at any stage of life.

Disabilities can be either visible or invisible. Examples of invisible disabilities include learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorders, attention deficits, behavioral syndromes, and seizure conditions. By their very nature, invisible disabilities almost always require the person with the disability to self-disclose his/her condition. It is estimated by the World Bank and the World Health Organization that there are more than 1 billion disabled people in the world, at least 15 percent of any given population.

What American Spaces can do

The standards for American Spaces specify the goal of establishing accessibility in American Spaces worldwide. Accessibility appears as a subcategory under the heading of Physical Space; however, making American Spaces accessible requires much more than modification of physical space. Making American Spaces accessible to people with disabilities requires three things: access to great service, access to physical spaces, and access to information.

Access to great service

The easiest way to ensure that your American Space is accessible to people with disabilities is to provide great service. Providing great service to people with disabilities requires respect, good communication, and active outreach.

Respect for the needs of people with disabilities

- Treat people with disabilities with respect and consideration, as you would others.
- Focus on what the individual needs, not what the individual “is”. Refer to a disability only if it is pertinent to the conversation or provision of services, and respect individuals’ preferences regarding how they self identify.
- Educate yourself and your staff about people with disabilities and how to ensure that all users, including people with disabilities, can use your services, spaces and resources. Include respect for diversity and difference, as well as the ability of individuals with disabilities, as part of new employees’ orientation, and ensure that staff members receive refresher trainings.
- The best way to become aware of the needs of people with disabilities is to invite people with disabilities to visit your Space and hold a discussion. Talk about what types of services, human support, resources, and accessibility aids they use or would like to use in your American Space. Take a tour of the Space with them, asking them for feedback on their experience and how it could be improved. Great service requires that people with disabilities and their representative organizations be involved in the planning process.
- Accessibility is a group effort, but identifying one staff member and/ or a committee to coordinate services to people with disabilities, monitor developments in adaptive technology, respond to requests for accommodation, and develop policies related to accessibility is a great practice.

Good communication

When working with a person who has a disability, remember that you are working with a person, not with a disability. Beyond this, there are no strict rules for communication. There are, however, helpful hints:

- See the person first, not the disability and always direct your questions and communication to the individual with a disability, not their attendant, caregiver or interpreter.

- Don't assume. Ask a person with a disability if he/she needs help before helping.
- Refer to a disability only if it is relevant to the conversation.
- Respect individuals' preferences regarding how they wish to self identify.
- Some advice when you are working with people with:
 - Visual Disabilities—Be descriptive. Say, “The book you are looking for is on a 5-foot-high shelf that is 3 feet to your left,” rather than, “The book is over there.” If guiding a person with a visual disability, offer him/her your arm rather than grabbing or pushing. If a person uses a guide dog/animal, ask before touching or petting it.
 - Mobility Disabilities—Position yourself to make level eye contact with people using wheelchairs or other mobility devices. Always ask the individual if he or she requires assistance and then listen to the response before pushing a wheelchair or touching someone or their mobility device.
 - Hearing Disabilities—Directly face people with hearing disabilities, speak clearly when you talk to them, and never speak through a person's companion unless the disabled person requests that you do so (for instance, if the companion is acting as a sign language interpreter).

Active outreach

Great service starts with making the community aware of your services. As such, you must be active in reaching out to people with disabilities—making them aware that you exist and that they are welcome to use your services, spaces, and resources. Things you can consider:

- Contact people with disabilities, NGOs, and networks that support people with disabilities to raise awareness of your Space and its accessibility.
- Provide guided tours and handouts that illustrate how people with disabilities can use and get involved with your American Space.
- Develop a handout or webpage explaining alternative format materials and type of services available to people with disabilities.
- When advertising programs, include information on what accommodations will be provided (e.g., location of accessible entrances, sign language interpreters) and information on who to contact to request specific accommodations and how far in advance such requests must be made.
- When possible, ensure that sign language interpreters, Computer Aided Realtime Translation (CART) providers, and assistive listening devices are available to facilitate participation of people who are deaf or have hearing disabilities, and that seating is arranged to facilitate line of sight access to those services.
- Conduct programming related to the rights and abilities of people with disabilities. Ensure that your American Space celebrates people with

disabilities, includes them in all programming opportunities, and advocates for their inclusion in exciting opportunities offered by the U.S. Department of State (exchange programs, speaker visits, micro-grants, etc.) and its affiliates.

- Go above and beyond. Establish off-site hours, where representatives of the Space go into the community, and provide services and resources for people unable to attend the American Space in person. This will be advantageous to people with disabilities, as well as to older persons and other users who may experience marginalization in society.

Access to physical spaces

The most apparent way to make your American Space accessible is by making it physically accessible—meaning that people with disabilities are able to enter, access and utilize all sections of the American Space independently, safely and with dignity.

In America, the right of people with disabilities to physically access public services is codified in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (http://www.ada.gov/2010_regs.htm). The ADA explains in detail aspects of accessibility, as well as related dimensions. A list of physical access considerations that respect the variety of American Spaces that exist, as well as budgetary restraints that make altering Spaces difficult, include:

ACCESSIBLE PARKING AND PATHWAY: Designate and design reserved parking for people with disabilities, as close to the American Space's entrance as possible. Ensure there is an unobstructed pedestrian route from the lot to the entrance.

ENTRANCE: Clearly identify the entrance of the American Space, and offer a step-free route for people with mobility disabilities to enter. Doorway openings should be at least 32 inches (81.28cm) wide and have thresholds no higher than 1/4 inch or .6 centimeters. Ramps with slopes no steeper than 1.12 inches or 2.8 centimeters and/or elevators should be provided as alternatives to stairs.

INTERNAL MOVEMENT: Design clear pathways (36 to 48 inches or 91 to 122 centimeters wide) for people to follow within the American Space, allowing them to enter all public sections of the Space.

SIGNAGE: Identify, in large, bold sans serif print with high color contrast (such as black and white) different sections of the Space, as well as paths to enter them. Thoughtful signage goes a long way in making people independent in their interaction and use of facilities and resources within the premises. Signage should be posted from the entrance gate to the entrance of the American Space, and throughout its interiors.

FURNITURE: Where possible, use accessible, adjustable furniture. For people with mobility disabilities, options in furniture are important. Chairs, sofas and benches should have a seat that is 17 to 18 inches (43.1 to 45.7 centimeters) from the ground and have a back and arms. Offer high and low options for tables: tables should be high enough for a wheelchair user to get their legs under, or low enough for an easy reach when seated.

BATHROOM FACILITIES: It's advised that every American Space have at least one bathroom facility adapted to the needs of people with disabilities. The designated bathroom facility must offer adequately sized doors, ample space to accommodate wheelchairs, and properly placed sanitary fixtures (toilet, handlebars, sink).

INFORMATION AND CIRCULATION DESKS: Ensure that staff desks can facilitate easy sightlines and face-to-face interactions between employees and people in wheelchairs. An assistive listening device will enhance communication with some people with hearing disabilities. Do not forget to offer book returns at accessible heights, as well.

EMERGENCIES AND EVACUATIONS: Use alarm systems that are both audible and visual, and ensure that evacuation routes are accessible. Designate a staff member to assist people with disabilities in the event of an evacuation.

Access to information sources

American Spaces are information clearinghouses; however, not all the information they contain is readily available to people with disabilities. Spaces must endeavor to make both physical and electronic collections available to all people. Making collections accessible is particularly important for people who are blind, have low vision, dyslexia or other print-related disabilities, and for the elderly. Ensure that staff members are aware of the needs of persons with disabilities, familiar with available resources, and able to operate the adaptive technologies in your American Space.

Making physical collections accessible

- Provide materials in a variety of formats. Easy to access formats include Braille, large print, audio recordings and electronic resources, including digital publications whose text can be converted to speech.
- Offer magnification tools. From handheld to large closed-circuit television (CCTV) magnifiers, magnification tools make a wide variety of physical resources accessible.
- Develop alternative formats in-house as allowed by local copyright law and the Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published Works for Persons Who Are Blind, Visually Impaired, or Otherwise Print Disabled (http://www.wipo.int/meetings/en/doc_details.jsp?doc_id=245323). Many countries have developed copyright laws that permit information centers to convert books into accessible formats free of cost and without the burden of securing permission from publishers. These laws are often designed specifically to guarantee services to people with disabilities, and should be used.
- Establish a corps of volunteers who will read and provide research assistance to people requiring it.

Making electronic resources accessible

With the rapid growth of the Internet and ever-increasing migration of journals, periodicals, information resources and tools to digital media, providing access to electronic resources is more vital than ever.

- Practice the principles of universal design. Universal design guarantees that electronic resources can be accessed by people with a broad range of abilities and disabilities, without the need for adaptive technologies or tools.
 - Get active in the creation and maintenance of web resources related to your American Space, and ensure that universal design is incorporated into their design and/or updates.
 - Invest in technologies and resources that practice universal design. This will increase accessibility, while decreasing the need for modification.
 - Develop, support and provide trainings on accessible websites, e-resources and digital collections. The leading resource on web content accessibility, providing the most up-to-date guidelines and instructions, is the World Wide Web Consortium (<http://www.w3.org/>).
- Provide assistive technologies to enhance access to existing resources. Your American Space will not have specialized equipment to support every type of disability, but you can anticipate commonly requested adaptive technologies and acquire additional technologies as requested. Common adaptive technologies include:
 - Large monitors of at least 17 inches (43.18cm).
 - Wrist rests and keyguards for people with mobility disabilities.
 - Screen readers and screen magnification supports.
 - Alternative input devices (adaptive keyboards, adaptive mouse or switches).
 - Speech output systems.
 - Speech synthesis software.
 - Assistive listening system for communication.

Additional Resources

USG LINKS

- U.S. Department of State, International Disability Rights:
<http://www.state.gov/j/drl/sadr/>
- United States Access Board Guidelines and Standards:
<http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards>
- Information and Technical Assistance on the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): <http://www.ada.gov/>

UNIVERSAL DESIGN

- W3C—Standards of Accessibility for Web Design and Applications:
<http://www.w3.org/standards/webdesign/accessibility>
- Universal Design: Principles, Process, and Applications
<http://www.washington.edu/doi/Brochures/Programs/ud.html>

LIBRARY ACCESSIBILITY—WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

<http://www.ala.org/ascla/asclaprotocols/accessibilitytipsheets/>

This is a series of 15 tip sheets developed to help librarians understand and manage issues of accessibility.

MEETING ROOM USAGE

IF YOUR AMERICAN Space has a meeting room, you should establish a policy governing its use. A meeting room usage policy helps establish expectations for both users and staff and helps prevent misunderstandings. It should address issues such as the reservation process, acceptable uses of the room, and equitable access. Your reservation form should ask users to specify: the meeting time, the specific room, the purpose of the meeting, and the group requesting the room. It should also identify who is responsible for the room's reservation, preparation, maintenance, and cleanup. For more guidance on meeting room usage policies and a sample form, see the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/guidance>).

EQUIPMENT USAGE

IF YOUR AMERICAN Space has equipment available for loan, your American Space should have a policy governing the process in order to preserve and maintain the equipment and make it available to everyone. An equipment usage policy provides guidelines regarding use of an American Space's equipment: what, by whom, for what purposes, for how long, under what circumstances, and identifies who is responsible for the equipment's care, maintenance, safe return, and cleanup. For more guidance on equipment usage policies and a sample form, see the American Spaces website (<https://americanspaces.state.gov/guidance>).

HOSTING VIP VISITORS AND HIGH-LEVEL EVENTS IN AMERICAN SPACES

AMERICAN SPACES PLAY an important role in an embassy's public diplomacy efforts. Consequently, high-level visitors from the United States, e.g., U.S. officials from the Department of State and other government offices and

agencies, or high-profile cultural celebrities, often like to see—and be seen—at American Spaces. Often they enjoy taking part in an activity.

Here are some tips for hosting important visitors at your Space:

- Communicate with the designated Public Affairs liaison for American Spaces at the embassy. They will help plan the visit and assist with any special requirements to make the visitors comfortable and to facilitate a positive experience at the Space.
- Plan to have the Space and other places the visitors will visit (e.g., exhibit space, lecture hall, bathrooms) cleaned just before the visit.
- Display examples of artwork, essays, photography, poetry, or other items created by Space members to demonstrate the type of activities that take place in the Space.
- Prepare a short list of things to share about the Space and community, focusing on the positive impacts the Space has brought to the partnership and in the community. Consider:
 - Who uses the Space and why?
 - How does the Space promote mutual understanding between the U.S. and its community?
 - What are some of the most popular programs that are held at the Space?
 - What are the professional and personal benefits to working in the Space?

On the day of the visit:

- The Space should be neat and tidy, easy to navigate, and showcase books, magazines, posters, or information technology equipment, products from Space activities; items not in use should be put away.
- Display flags (U.S. and host country) or American Space banners or signage.
- Expect media coverage and dress appropriately—lots of photos or video may be taken.
- Shake hands—Americans greet new people they meet with big smiles and firm handshakes.
- Be honest about challenges the Space faces; focus on the big picture but don't complain. Routine or operational problems are best resolved with the designated embassy PAS liaison or American supervisor.

APPENDIX

STANDARDS MATRIX FOR AMERICAN CORNERS

Standards Matrix for American Corners		Bronze	Silver	Gold
Categories	Sub-Categories			
Programs*	English Language Learning	The space makes English Language material available to visitors and holds a minimum of 4 programs per year related to English language learning independent of programs supported by the RELO. Examples of these programs include conversation clubs, English film clubs, Peace Corps Volunteer English programs, presentation of English related resources available at the space, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.	The space makes English Language material available to visitors and holds 5-12 programs per year related to English language learning independent of programs supported by the RELO. Examples of these programs include conversation clubs, English film clubs, Peace Corps Volunteer English programs, presentation of English related resources available at the space, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.	The space makes English Language material available to visitors and holds over 12 programs per year related to English language learning independent of programs supported by the RELO. Examples of these programs include conversation clubs, English film clubs, Peace Corps Volunteer English programs, presentation of English related resources available at the space, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.
	EducationUSA	The space makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e., books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) and has an e-Shop Bronze (\$500) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years.	The space makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) and has an e-Shop Silver (\$750) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years. At least one space staff member has completed online New Adviser Orientation training for new advisers and/or received training from a senior EducationUSA adviser or REAC. The space maintains contact with a senior EducationUSA adviser in country.	The space is a designated EducationUSA advising center, makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures), and has an e-Shop Gold (\$1000) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years. A trained EducationUSA adviser has an office in the space and hosts regular group information sessions. The adviser is also available to assist individual students and as time permits, receive U.S. higher education visitors.
	Alumni Activities	The space invites alumni to participate in events and speak at 2-4 programs.	The space provides a meeting room for alumni associations and invites alumni to speak at 5-7 events.	The space provides a meeting room for alumni associations and invites alumni to speak at 8 or more events per year. The space also acts as a partner organization on alumni grant proposals.
	Cultural Programs	The Space organizes and promotes 6-12 cultural programs and exhibitions per year.	The Space organizes and promotes 13-26 cultural programs and exhibitions per year.	The Space organizes and promotes over 26 cultural programs and exhibitions per year. Partnerships with other cultural institutions in the community are formed and maintained.
	Information About the U.S.	The space holds 6-12 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP/target of opportunity/Mission speakers, internet training, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	The space holds 13-26 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP, target of opportunity or Mission speakers, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	The space holds over 26 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP, target of opportunity or Mission speakers, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.
		Virtual Programs: The space participates in Co.Nx, Skype, or DVC videoconferences.	Virtual Programs: The space participates in 3-4 Co.Nx, Skype, or DVC videoconferences per year.	Virtual Programs: The space organizes live audiences to participate in, or originates, 6-12 Co.Nx, Skype, webchats, or DVC videoconferences per year. The space also produces at least one videoconference per year.

Standards Matrix for American Corners

Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Programs*	Information About the U.S.	<p>Information Inquiries: Staff conducts at least 10-25 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.</p> <p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space has a collection of 1200 books about the U.S. as well as up to 75 DVD titles. The collection includes reference books about learning English and studying in the U.S. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog accessible to visitors on a dedicated computer terminal.</p>	<p>Information Inquiries: Staff conducts between 25-50 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.</p> <p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space has a collection of 1200 – 2000 books about the U.S. and less than 150 DVD titles. There is a core collection of books about learning English and studying in the U.S. Reference books are updated on a regular basis. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog and on the Space's public internet site. The collection reflects user needs and is weeded annually.</p>	<p>Information Inquiries: Staff conducts over 50 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.</p> <p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space provides a lending library of more than 2000 books about the U.S. and over 150 DVD titles and other multi-media products (board and electronic games, production labs). There is a substantial collection of books about learning and teaching English and studying in the U.S. A collection development plan is in place. Collections are actively promoted to students and the community through outreach programs and presentations. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog and on the Space's public internet site. The collection reflects user needs and is weeded annually.</p>
		<p>IP Publications: The space has IP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p> <p>eLibraryUSA: The space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in eLibraryUSA.</p>	<p>IP Publications: The space has IP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p> <p>eLibraryUSA: The space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in eLibraryUSA. The space further promotes eLibraryUSA by developing video tutorials and other outreach materials for their audiences and for the benefit of their colleagues.</p>	<p>IP Publications: The space has IP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p> <p>eLibraryUSA: The space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in eLibraryUSA. The space further promotes eLibraryUSA by developing video tutorials and other outreach materials for their audiences and for the benefit of their colleagues.</p>
		<p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has 2 available to visitors upon request.</p>	<p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has 2 available to visitors. The space has implemented a lending program and organizes activities using the eReaders.</p>	<p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has more than 2 available to visitors. The space has implemented a robust lending program and organizes activities and training programs using the eReaders.</p>
		<p>Internet Connection: The space has less than a 2Mbit/s internet connection.</p>	<p>Internet Connection: The space has at least a 2Mbit/s internet connection with WiFi available to visitors. WiFi connection reaches to all corners of the public access space with no limitations.</p>	<p>Internet Connection: The space has the best available connection with unlimited bandwidth and WiFi available to visitors. WiFi connection reaches to all corners of the public access space with no limitations.</p>
Management	Staff	<p>English Proficiency: Staff has basic English communication skills.</p> <p>Programming Capacity: Staff organizes basic programs. Staff can handle Embassy speaker programs, but needs some assistance from Embassy.</p>	<p>English Proficiency: Staff has intermediate English communication skills.</p> <p>Programming Capacity: Staff is capable of organizing a variety of events with little to no assistance from Embassy staff.</p>	<p>English Proficiency: Staff is fluent in English.</p> <p>Programming Capacity: Staff is innovative and initiates complex programs for large audiences on their own.</p>

Standards Matrix for American Corners				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Management	Staff	<p>Understanding of America: Staff has basic understanding of America.</p> <p>Technology Proficiency: Staff has a basic understanding of Microsoft Office, the internet, and rudimentary knowledge of social media. Staff needs outside help troubleshooting anything but basic problems.</p> <p>Training: Staff has been trained by the Embassy or consulate and the IRO. Staff has also participated in one country-wide or regional workshop.</p>	<p>Understanding of America: Staff has visited the United States and has intermediate understanding of life in America.</p> <p>Technology Proficiency: Staff is adept at using Microsoft Office suite, the internet, and social media networks. Staff can troubleshoot many technology problems.</p> <p>Training: Staff has been trained by the U.S. Embassy or consulate and the IRO. Staff also participates in annual country-wide or regional workshops and has participated in a Department organized training program in the U.S.</p>	<p>Understanding of America: Staff has spent significant time in the United States and has in-depth knowledge of America.</p> <p>Technology Proficiency: Staff is skilled at Microsoft Office, internet, social media, eLibraryUSA, OER/MOOCs (Open Educational Resources/Massive Open Online Courses). Staff can troubleshoot most technology problems. Staff is able to mentor patrons on technology skills.</p> <p>Training: Staff participates as a trainer in annual country-wide or regional workshops and has participated in one or more Department organized training program in the U.S.</p>
		<p>Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc.</p>	<p>Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms and to train other staff and the public on the use of modern technology.</p>	<p>Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms and to train other staff and the public on the use of modern technology.</p>
		<p>The Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE (IRC) staff time to support the space. There is at least one Embassy oversight visit to space per year and evidence of regular email communications.</p>	<p>Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE (IRC) staff time to support of space, FSO is significantly involved in oversight of space. Their Embassy visits the space quarterly.</p>	<p>Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE (IRC) staff time to support of space, FSO is significantly involved in oversight of space. Embassy visits space at least quarterly and provides regular Embassy speakers to the space.</p>
	<p>IRO involvement reviewing MOU and support funds request.</p>	<p>IRO advises post on the American Space, including reviewing MOU and support funds request, and visits at least once each year. Space staff has interaction with IRO at single country and/or regional training workshops.</p>	<p>IRO advises post on the American Space, including reviewing MOU and support funds request, and visits at least twice each year. Space staff has interaction with IRO at single country and/or regional training workshops. Space hosts IRO as a program speaker.</p>	
	<p>Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the Corner. Funding is adequate to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs to meet the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner each contribute funds and resources.</p>	<p>Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the Corner. Funding to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs exceeds the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner contribute funds and resources. Space augments its resources through the use of volunteers or interns.</p>	<p>Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the Corner. Funding to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs exceeds the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner contribute funds and resources. Space augments its resources through the use of volunteers or interns and contributions from third-party institutions.</p>	
	<p>Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	<p>Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	<p>Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	
	<p>Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals.</p>	<p>Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly.</p>	<p>Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly and includes periodical (monthly or quarterly) implementation plans.</p>	
	<p>Copyright & Intellectual Property</p>	<p>Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	<p>Corner adheres to intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	
	<p>Planning</p>	<p>Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals.</p>	<p>Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly.</p>	

Standards Matrix for American Corners				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Management	Reporting	Staff maintain monthly reports on the number of visitors to the space, the number of programs, and attendees. Staff share this data with the U.S. Embassy or consulate at the end of every month. Corner has an entry in the ACCD.	In addition to the basic statistics, staff keep track of reference requests and are careful to ensure that data is reasonable and accurate. Corner has an entry in the ACCD.	Staff maintain monthly reports on the number of visitors to the space, the number of programs, attendees, and reference requests. Reports are always submitted on time with no delays or errors in the data. Corner has an entry in the ACCD.
	Evaluation	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines.	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines. Space seeks informal feedback from audiences (and partners) on program and resources.	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines. Space designs and uses tools to solicit feedback from audiences (and partners) on programs and resources. E.g., space develops programs and/or acquires collection materials based on audience interests and response. Feedback results are regularly reported.
	Number of hours per week that the Corner is staffed and open to the public.	20-30	31-40	More than 40
	Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)	current signed MOU on file	current signed MOU on file	current signed MOU on file
	Website	The U.S. Embassy or consulate mentions the Space and has contact information on its website.	The U.S. Embassy or consulate describes the Space's purpose, activities, and resources and has contact information on its website.	The space has a dedicated website that the U.S. Embassy or consulate links to. Links are checked and updated regularly.
	Social Media	The U.S. Embassy or consulate promotes the space on its social media channels.	Staff at the space actively manage a social media account.	The space is active on multiple social media platforms, promotes IIP products, Embassy activities, USG initiatives, and other information about the U.S. The space has a lively community and curates their own content.
	Listserve/Facebook group email address	Staff at the Corner monitor the AC Staff listserv. Staff has joined Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff at the Corner monitor and actively engage on the AC Staff listserv. Staff has joined and is actively engaged on Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff at the Corner monitor and actively engage on the AC Staff listserv. Staff has joined and is actively engaged on Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.
	Email	American Corner has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	American Corner has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	American Corner has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.
	Marketing	Space markets its programs and services to users.	Space regularly markets its programs and services to users and the broader community.	Space regularly markets its programs and services. Space utilizes multiple channels, including social media and the press, to market its programs and services.
	Local Media			Corner has established productive relationships with local media outlets.
Physical Space***	Appearance: Branding	Name of space established and branding adopted that fits standards.	Space name & branding appear on all products from the Space (website, social media, print products, email signatures, etc.)	Brand recognition is recognized in the wider (non-space) community. People on the street recognize the name & branding.

Standards Matrix for American Corners				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Physical Space***	Appearance: Signage	A clearly visible sign in the space depicts the name of the space and its relationship with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. A U.S. flag is present.	A clearly visible sign in the space and in the larger building or complex housing the space depicts the name of the space and its relationship with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. A U.S. flag is present. The name of the space is visible from the street.	There are clearly visible signs in the space and in the larger building or complex housing the space depicting the name and its relationship with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate. A U.S. flag is present and highly visible. The space has experimented with creative branding techniques (digital signboards, exhibits, etc.). The name of the space is visible from the street.
	Appearance: Décor	The space is attractive and welcoming with elements of American design that are distinct from local design norms.	The space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. public library or community center. Walls are adorned with posters or framed art depicting the U.S.	The space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. public library or community center. The space includes delineated zones for individual use of technology or resources and for group interaction. Permanent or temporary artworks exhibiting American art adorn the walls.
	Physical Space	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of 10-20 visitors and has access to programming space. The space has seating for 20 or fewer people. The space is maintained & cleaned regularly. There are no facility hazards, security, or safety issues. There is adequate and reliable lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation.	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of 21-40 visitors and hold programs. The space is maintained & cleaned regularly and there are regular facility/safety inspections. Lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation are up to U.S. overseas building standards. The space includes clearly delineated zones, content, or staff for learning about America, the English language, or educational advising. The space has seating for 21-40 people.	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of more than 40 visitors and hold programs. The space is maintained & cleaned regularly and meets all U.S. overseas facility standards for safety. Lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation are up to U.S. overseas building standards. There is flexibility to hold small and large programs in different formats. There are prominent zones, content, or staff for learning about America, the English language, and educational advising. The space has seating for more than 40 people.
	Furnishings	The space has adequate and functional shelving, a table, chairs, and desks for computer equipment.	The space has adequate and modern shelving, a table, chairs, and desks for computer equipment. Furnishings accommodate the maximum number of visitors without overcrowding.	The space has ample and modern shelving, tables, comfortable chairs, and desks for computer equipment. Furnishings facilitate flexible arrangements for large and small programs as well as individual use of technology or resources.
	Accessibility	Space is located within 10 miles of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. The space has made accommodations for those with disabilities.	Space is located within 5 miles of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. Parking is available to visitors at minimum cost. The space strives to be accessible to all. The space is wheelchair accessible.	Space is located in the heart of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. Parking is available to visitors at minimum cost. The space strives to be accessible to all. The space is in compliance with ADA standards.
	Equipment	Computers: The space offers at least 3 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software - including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.	Computers: The space offers at least 6 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software - including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.	Computers: The space offers more than 6 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software - including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.

Standards Matrix for American Corners		Sub-Categories		
Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold	
Physical Space***	<p>Mobile Devices (iPads): The space is planning to acquire one tablet or other mobile device for programs.</p>	<p>Mobile Devices (iPads): The space makes one mobile device available to visitors and also uses it for programs.</p>	<p>Mobile Devices (iPads): The space makes more than one mobile device available to visitors and also uses them for programs.</p>	
	<p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co-NX programs. Has state of the art DVC equipment and capability to produce their own videoconferences and programs.</p>	<p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co-NX programs.</p>	<p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co-NX programs. Has state of the art DVC equipment and capability to produce their own videoconferences and programs.</p>	
	<p>TV and DVD Player: The space has a television and multisystem DVD player available for visitors to view DVDs.</p>	<p>TV and DVD Player: The space has two televisions (including one large enough for group viewing) and multisystem DVD players and headsets available for visitors to view DVDs.</p>	<p>TV and DVD Player: The space has three televisions (including one large enough for group viewing) and multisystem DVD players and headsets available for visitors to view DVDs.</p>	
	<p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a compact digital camera to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and submit them in regular reports.</p>	<p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a compact digital camera to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and submit them in regular reports and post them to their social media platforms.</p>	<p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a high quality SLR digital camera with video capabilities (or a video camera) to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and videos and submit them in regular reports and post them to their social media platforms.</p>	
	<p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has an adequate and well-maintained printer and photocopier available to visitors.</p>	<p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has two well-maintained printers and photocopiers available to visitors.</p>	<p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has both black and white and color printers and photocopiers that are well-maintained and available to visitors.</p>	

*Note: minimum number of TOTAL programs is 24 per year (this can be a combination of the various types of programs). It is possible that a program will incorporate 2 or more of the 5 core programs. For instance, an alumna could lead a cultural program or English conversation club.

**Note: USG funding for staffing is only for USG employed staff.

***Note: appearance and physical space standards are interim standards until completion of the Model Spaces project.

STANDARDS MATRIX FOR BINATIONAL CENTERS

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Programs*	English Language Learning	The BNC has formal English language classes and holds 6-12 programs per year related to English language learning (e.g. conversation clubs, English film clubs, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.)	The BNC has formal English language classes and holds 13-26 programs per year related to English language learning (e.g. conversation clubs, English film clubs, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.)	The BNC has formal English language classes and holds over 26 programs per year related to English language learning (e.g. conversation clubs, English film clubs, teacher viewing parties for teacher training webinars, etc.)
	EducationUSA	The space makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e., books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) and has an e-Shop Bronze (\$500) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years.	The space makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures) and has an e-Shop Silver (\$750) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years. At least one space staff member has completed online New Adviser Orientation training for new advisers and/or received training from a senior EducationUSA adviser or REAC. The space maintains contact with a senior EducationUSA adviser in country.	The space is a designated EducationUSA advising center, makes EducationUSA materials available to visitors (i.e. books, links to EdUSA website, brochures), and has an e-Shop Gold (\$1000) educational advising collection, updated at least every 3 years. A trained EducationUSA adviser has an office in the space and hosts regular group information sessions. The adviser is also available to assist individual students and as time permits, receive U.S. higher education visitors.
	Alumni Activities	--	--	BNC provides fee-based testing for TOEFL and other standardized tests required for admission to U.S. colleges and universities.
	Cultural Programs	The space invites alumni to participate in events and speak at 2-4 programs.	The space provides a meeting room for alumni associations and invites alumni to speak at 5-7 events.	The space provides a meeting room for alumni associations and invites alumni to speak at 8 or more events per year. The space also acts as a partner organization on alumni grant proposals.
	Information About the U.S.	BNC organizes and promotes 6-12 cultural programs and exhibitions per year.	BNC organizes and promotes 13-26 cultural programs and exhibitions per year.	BNC organizes and promotes over 26 cultural programs and exhibitions per year. Partnerships with other cultural institutions in the community are formed and maintained.
		The space holds 6-12 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP/target of opportunity/Mission speakers, Internet training, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	The space holds 13-26 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP, target of opportunity or Mission speakers, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.	The space holds over 26 programs about the U.S. per year featuring IIP, target of opportunity or Mission speakers, Co.Nx webchats, film screenings, eLibraryUSA briefings, and programs on US bilateral issues.
	Virtual Programs: The space participates in Co.Nx, Skype, or DVC videoconferences.	Virtual Programs: The space participates in 3-4 Co.Nx, Skype, or DVC videoconferences per year.	Virtual Programs: The space organizes live audiences to participate in, or originates, 6-12 Co.Nx, Skype, webchats, or DVC videoconferences per year. The space also produces at least one videoconference per year.	
	Information Inquiries: Staff conducts at least 10-25 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.	Information Inquiries: Staff conducts between 25-50 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.	Information Inquiries: Staff conducts over 50 interactions per month. This can include answering telephone and email inquiries about the space, programs, as well as responding to questions about the U.S.	

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Programs*	Information About the U.S.	<p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space has a collection of 1,200 books about the U.S. as well as up to 75 DVD titles. The collection includes reference books about learning English and studying in the U.S. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog accessible to visitors on a dedicated computer terminal.</p>	<p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space has a collection of 1200 – 2000 books about the U.S. and less than 150 DVD titles. There is a core collection of books about learning English and studying in the U.S. Reference books are updated on a regular basis. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog and on the Space’s public internet site. The collection reflects user needs and is needed annually.</p>	<p>Books, DVDs, and Other Media: The space provides a lending library of more than 2000 books about the U.S. and over 150 DVD titles and other multi-media products (board and electronic games, production labs). There is a substantial collection of books about learning and teaching English and studying in the U.S. A collection development plan is in place. Collections are actively promoted to students and the community through outreach programs and presentations. The collection is accessible via an online public access catalog and on the Space’s public internet site. The collection reflects user needs and is needed annually.</p>
		<p>IIP Publications: The space has IIP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p>	<p>IIP Publications: The space has IIP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p>	<p>IIP Publications: The space has IIP publications prominently displayed and available to the public.</p>
		<p>eLibraryUSA: The space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures.</p>	<p>eLibraryUSA: The space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in eLibraryUSA.</p>	<p>eLibraryUSA: The space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. The space conducts training sessions with target audiences on the resources available in eLibraryUSA. The space further promotes eLibraryUSA by developing video tutorials and other outreach materials for their audiences and for the benefit of their colleagues.</p>
Management	Staff	<p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has 2 available to visitors upon request.</p>	<p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has 2 available to visitors. The space has implemented a lending program and organizes activities using the eReaders.</p>	<p>eReaders: The space offers eReaders and has more than 2 available to visitors. The space has implemented a robust lending program and organizes activities and training programs using the eReaders.</p>
		<p>Internet Connection: The space has less than a 2Mbit/s Internet connection.</p>	<p>Internet Connection: The space has at least a 2Mbit/s internet connection with WiFi available to visitors. WiFi connection reaches to all corners of the public access space with no limitations.</p>	<p>Internet Connection: The space has the best available connection with unlimited bandwidth and WiFi available to visitors. WiFi connection reaches to all corners of the public access space with no limitations.</p>
		<p>English Proficiency: Staff has basic English communication skills.</p>	<p>English Proficiency: Staff has intermediate English communication skills.</p>	<p>English Proficiency: Staff is fluent in English.</p>
		<p>Programming Capacity: Staff organizes basic programs. Staff can handle Embassy speaker programs, but needs some assistance from Embassy.</p>	<p>Programming Capacity: Staff is capable of organizing a variety of events with little to no assistance from Embassy staff.</p>	<p>Programming Capacity: Staff is innovative and initiates complex programs for large audiences on their own.</p>
		<p>Understanding of America: Staff has basic understanding of America.</p>	<p>Understanding of America: Staff has visited the United States and has intermediate understanding of life in America.</p>	<p>Understanding of America: Staff has spent significant time in the United States and has in-depth knowledge of America.</p>

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers		Bronze	Silver	Gold
Categories	Sub-Categories			
Management	Staff	<p>Technology Proficiency: Staff has a basic understanding of Microsoft Office, the internet, and rudimentary knowledge of social media. Staff needs outside help troubleshooting anything but basic problems.</p> <p>Training: Staff has been trained by the U.S. Embassy and the IRO. Staff has also participated in one country-wide or regional workshop.</p>	<p>Technology Proficiency: Staff is adept at using Microsoft Office suite, the internet, and social media networks. Staff can troubleshoot many technology problems.</p> <p>Training: Staff has been trained by the U.S. Embassy and the IRO. Staff also participates in annual country-wide or regional workshops.</p>	<p>Technology Proficiency: Staff is skilled at Microsoft Office, internet, social media, eLibraryUSA, OER/MOOCs (Open Educational Resources/Massive Open Online Courses). Staff can troubleshoot most technology problems. Staff is able to mentor patrons on technology skills.</p> <p>Training: Staff participates as a trainer in annual country-wide or regional workshops and has attended an NLP or other exchange program.</p>
	Tech Support	<p>Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc.</p>	<p>Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms.</p>	<p>Space has access to a qualified person who provides routine tech support and runs updates, etc. Space has a staff person with advanced skills who recommends solutions to improve the Space's technology platforms and to train other staff and the public on the use of modern technology.</p>
	Embassy Oversight	<p>The Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE staff time to support of space. There is at least one Embassy oversight visit to space per year and evidence of regular email communications.</p>	<p>Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE staff time to support of space. FSO is significantly involved in oversight of space. Their Embassy visits the space quarterly.</p>	<p>Embassy dedicates 20% LES FTE staff time to support of space. FSO is significantly involved in oversight of space. Embassy visits space at least quarterly and provides regular Embassy speakers to the space.</p>
	IRO Involvement	<p>IRO advises post on the BNC, including reviewing support funds request.</p>	<p>IRO advises post on the BNC, including reviewing support funds request, and visits at least once each year. Space staff has interaction with IRO at single country and/or regional training workshops.</p>	<p>IRO advises post on the BNC, including reviewing support funds request, and visits at least twice each year. Space staff has interaction with IRO at single country and/or regional training workshops. Space hosts IRO as a program speaker.</p>
	Funding**	<p>Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the BNC. Funding is adequate to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs to meet the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner each contribute funds and resources.</p>	<p>Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the BNC. Funding to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs exceeds the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner contribute funds and resources. Space augments its resources through the use of volunteers or interns.</p>	<p>Budget is tied to the mission and goals of the BNC. Funding to support operations, staffing, staff development, and programming needs exceeds the basic goals of the Space. Post and partner contribute funds and resources. Space augments its resources through the use of volunteers or interns and contributions from third-party institutions.</p>
	Copyright & Intellectual Property	<p>BNC adheres to intellectual property rights regarding textbooks and proprietary instructional materials. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	<p>BNC adheres to intellectual property rights regarding textbooks and proprietary instructional materials. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>	<p>BNC adheres to intellectual property rights regarding textbooks and proprietary instructional materials. Database license terms are followed and communicated to all user groups.</p>

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Management	Planning	Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly and includes periodical (monthly or quarterly) implementation plans.	Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly.	Space staff, in collaboration with post and host institution, write an annual plan that guides program activities and resource development. Planning incorporates 5 core programs and supports Mission Strategic goals. Plan is reviewed quarterly and includes periodical (monthly or quarterly) implementation plans.
	Reporting	Staff maintain monthly reports on the number of visitors to the space, the number of programs, and attendees. Staff share this data with the U.S. Embassy or consulate at the end of every month.	In addition to the basic statistics, staff keep track of reference requests and are careful to ensure that data is reasonable and accurate.	Staff maintain monthly reports on the number of visitors to the space, the number of programs, attendees, and reference requests. Reports are always submitted on time with no delays or errors in the data.
	Evaluation	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines.	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines. Space seeks informal feedback from audiences (and partners) on program and resources.	Space responds to surveys and requests for information related to evaluation within stated deadlines. Space designs and uses tools to solicit feedback from audiences (and partners) on programs and resources. E.g., space develops programs and/or acquires collection materials based on audience interests and response. Feedback results are regularly reported.
	Number of hours per week that the BNC is staffed and open to the public.	20-30	31-40	More than 40
	BNC Finances	BNC bank account is in the institution's name (not a personal name). And BNC is financially solvent and stable. BNC provides merit-based scholarships for low-income students when financially feasible.	BNC bank account is in the institution's name (not a personal name). And BNC is financially solvent and stable. BNC provides merit-based scholarships for low-income students when financially feasible.	BNC bank account is in the institution's name (not a personal name). And BNC is financially solvent and stable. BNC provides merit-based scholarships for low-income students when financially feasible.
	Governance	Board of Directors/Executive Board has been established and bylaws published/made available. Board elections are transparent with defined terms of service for each member and regular turnover. PAS representative is a non-voting member of the Board in capital cities or where practicable.	Board of Directors/Executive Board has been established and bylaws published/made available. Board elections are transparent with defined terms of service for each member and regular turnover. PAS representative is a non-voting member of the Board in capital cities or where practicable.	Board of Directors/Executive Board has been established and bylaws published/made available. Board elections are transparent with defined terms of service for each member and regular turnover. PAS representative is a non-voting member of the Board in capital cities or where practicable. BNC is an active member of ABLA (Association of Binational Centers of Latin America).
	Website	The U.S. Embassy or consulate mentions the Space and has contact information on its website.	The U.S. Embassy or consulate describes the Space's purpose, activities, and resources and has contact information on its website.	The space has a dedicated website that the U.S. Embassy or consulate links to. Links are checked and updated regularly.

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Management	Social Media	The U.S. Embassy or consulate promotes the space on its social media channels.	Staff at the space actively manage a social media account.	The space is active on multiple social media platforms, promotes IIP products, Embassy activities, USG initiatives, and other information about the U.S. The space has a lively community and curates their own content.
	Listservs/Facebook group email address	BNC staff monitor the Panam Partners listserv. Staff has joined Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff at the BNC monitor and actively engage on the Panam Partners listserv. Staff has joined and is actively engaged on Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff at the Corner monitor and actively engage on the Panam Partners listserv. Staff has joined and is actively engaged on Department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.
	Email	BNC has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	BNC has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.	BNC has a generic email address for the space (not an individual account) with a name that identifies and helps market the Space.
	Marketing	Space markets its programs and services to users.	Space regularly markets its programs and services to users and the broader community.	Space regularly markets its programs and services. Space utilizes multiple channels, including social media and the press, to market its programs and services.
	Local Media	-	-	BNC has established productive relationships with local media outlets.
	Appearance: Branding	Name of space established and branding adopted that fits standards.	Space name & branding appear on all products from the Space (website, social media, print products, email signatures, etc.)	Brand recognition is recognized in the wider (non-space) community. People on the street recognize the name & branding.
Physical Space***	Appearance: Signage	A clearly visible sign in the space depicts the partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the host institution. A U.S. flag is present.	A clearly visible sign in the space and in the host institution depicts the partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the host institution. A U.S. flag is present and highly visible. The name of the space is visible from the street.	There are clearly visible signs in the space and in the host institution depicting the partnership between the U.S. Embassy and the host institution. A U.S. flag is present and highly visible. The space has experimented with creative branding techniques (digital signboards, exhibits, etc.). The name of the space is visible from the street.
	Appearance: Decor	The space is attractive and welcoming with elements of American design that are distinct from local design norms.	The space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. public library or community center. Walls are adorned with posters or framed art depicting the U.S.	The space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. public library or community center. The space includes delineated zones for individual use of technology or resources and for group interaction. Permanent or temporary artworks exhibiting American art adorn the walls.

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Physical Space***	Physical Space	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of 10-20 visitors and has access to programming space. The space has seating for 20 or fewer people. The Space is maintained & cleaned regularly. There are no facility hazards, security, or safety issues. There is adequate and reliable lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation.	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of 21-40 visitors and hold programs. The Space is maintained & cleaned regularly and there are regular facility/safety inspections. Lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation are up to U.S. overseas building standards. The space includes clearly delineated zones; content, or staff for learning about America, the English language, or educational advising. The space has seating for 21-40 people.	The space has adequate square footage to accommodate a daily flow of more than 40 visitors and hold programs. The Space is maintained & cleaned regularly and meets all U.S. overseas facility standards for safety. Lighting, electricity, heating, and ventilation are up to U.S. overseas building standards. There is flexibility to hold small and large programs in different formats. There are prominent zones, content, or staff for learning about America, the English language, and educational advising. The space has seating for more than 40 people.
	Property	BNC is up-to-date on rent payments of leased space.	BNC owns and maintains its own Space.	BNC owns and maintains its own Space and has established viable, financially stable branches.
	Library	The BNC provides a small-scale open-access lending library. A part-time staff member has been designated to oversee library and information services. Computers with Internet access are easily accessible by both users and staff. Librarian maintains regular contact with the IRC and has received IRC training.	A full-time staff member provides library and information services. Library is actively promoted to faculty, students and community through outreach programs and presentations. Library collection is accessible via a print or online public access catalog, reflects user needs and is weeded annually.	A full-time librarian has formed partnerships with local schools and community libraries. A collection development plan is in place. BNC supports professional development through attendance at ABLA and regional workshops.
	Furnishings	The space has adequate and functional shelving, a table, chairs, and desks for computer equipment.	The space has adequate and modern shelving, a table, chairs, and desks for computer equipment. Furnishings accommodate the maximum number of visitors without overcrowding.	The space has ample and modern shelving, tables, comfortable chairs, and desks for computer equipment. Furnishings facilitate flexible arrangements for large and small programs as well as individual use of technology or resources.
	Accessibility	Space is located within 10 miles of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. The space has made accommodations for those with disabilities.	Space is located within 5 miles of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. Parking is available to visitors at minimum cost. The space strives to be accessible to all. The space is wheelchair accessible.	Space is located in the heart of a business, government, or university center and is easily accessible by public transportation. Parking is available to visitors at minimum cost. The space strives to be accessible to all. The space is in compliance with ADA standards.
	Equipment	Computers: The space offers at least 3 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software - including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.	Computers: The space offers at least 6 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software - including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.	Computers: The space offers more than 6 well-maintained computer workstations or laptops. The computers have adequate software - including antivirus software - and memory to enable visitors to access various media, including online resources. The computers are updated at least every 3-4 years.
	Mobile Devices (iPads): The space is planning to acquire one tablet or other mobile device for programs.	Mobile Devices (iPads): The space makes one mobile device available to visitors and also uses it for programs.	Mobile Devices (iPads): The space makes more than one mobile device available to visitors and also uses them for programs.	

Standards Matrix for Binational Centers				
Categories	Sub-Categories	Bronze	Silver	Gold
Physical Space*** Equipment		<p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam.</p>	<p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co.NX programs.</p>	<p>Videoconferencing equipment + projector and screen: The space has a computer with an internet connection and a projector, speakers, microphone, and webcam. Skype is downloaded and they have the capability to run Co.NX programs. Has state of the art DVC equipment and capability to produce their own videoconferences and programs.</p>
		<p>TV and DVD Player: The space has a television and multisystem DVD player available for visitors to view DVDs.</p>	<p>TV and DVD Player: The space has two televisions (including one large enough for group viewing) and multisystem DVD players and headsets available for visitors to view DVDs.</p>	<p>TV and DVD Player: The space has three televisions (including one large enough for group viewing) and multisystem DVD players and headsets available for visitors to view DVDs.</p>
		<p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a compact digital camera to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and submit them in regular reports.</p>	<p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a compact digital camera to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and submit them in regular reports and post them to their social media platforms.</p>	<p>Digital Camera and Video Camera: The space has a high quality SLR digital camera with video capabilities (or a video camera) to document events and activities. Staff are trained to take quality photos and videos and submit them in regular reports and post them to their social media platforms.</p>
		<p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has an adequate and well-maintained printer and photocopier available to visitors.</p>	<p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has two well-maintained printers and photocopiers available to visitors.</p>	<p>Printer and Photocopier: The space has both black and white and color printers and photocopiers that are well-maintained and available to visitors.</p>

**Note: minimum number of TOTAL programs is 24 per year (this can be a combination of the various types of programs). It is possible that a program will incorporate 2 or more of the 5 core programs. For instance, an alumna could lead a cultural program or English conversation club.

***Note: USG funding for staffing is only for USG employed staff.

***Note: appearance and physical space standards are interim standards until completion of the Model Spaces project.

Note: Academic standards for English teaching in BNCs are not addressed in this framework and are beyond the scope of this exercise.



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