ENVISIONING AN American Space

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Introduction

Many questions come to mind for anyone looking at a new location for an American Space:

- What constitutes an ideal American Space?
- How can you determine whether a space is the right fit for your current and future needs?
- How many programs do you need to run simultaneously?
- How many people can/should fit in your space?
- How do you know when a space is too small?
- What other design features are important for running your diverse programmatic calendar?

This document is intended to provide U.S. Government (USG) Public Diplomacy staff in the field, Bureau of Overseas Building Operations (OBO), institutional partners, or anyone tasked with identifying an effective venue for public diplomacy with a **framework of suggestions and considerations** for assessing its suitability as a potential American Space. To support this assessment process, the Office of American Spaces has created a table to help quickly identify general key characteristics of **small**, **medium**, and **large** American Spaces. This document will fully explore each of these types of spaces and identify important facility, design, and programming capability considerations.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS
AMERICAN SPACES
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Opening Message

MODEL TEMPLATE FOR AMERICAN SPACES

	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE
Size	<1000 square feet / 93 square meters	1000–3000 square feet / 93–280 square meters	>3000 square feet / 280 square meters
Number of Program Spaces/Rooms	1–2	3–5	>5
Programs/month	<10	10 to 20	>20
Visitor Attendance/month	<1000	1000–5000	>5000
Capacity for Single Event	20–50	51–100	>100
EducationUSA	flexible meeting space with shelving for materials	office plus a meeting area with shelving for materials	dedicated office and meeting area plus dedicated lounge space with shelving for materials
Community Engagement/ Alumni Programming	portable sound system	fixed wiring for sound and lights	fixed wiring for theater-grade sound and lights; portable or fixed stage; dedicated audio/visual booth
English Language Learning	use main space, portable whiteboards, projection screen	fixed for wired sound/lights when needed, 1 separate classroom/meeting square, dedicated alcove and not fully enclosed storage 10–15 pax	60 pax and stage area, lighting/sound/projection, 2+ classrooms
Makerspaces	5–10 pax and mobile, locking storage	10–15 pax	dedicated space for 10–20 pax, ideally separated from main programming area with a glass or transparent wall
Digital Resources, Media Production, and Connectivity	2–3 fixed computers and portable devices, drop down screen and digital projector, printer/scanner/copier, WiFi, camera/one light/one mic kit	2–3 fixed computers, storage and charging for 40 devices, iPad bar, patron charging devices, video wall or large drop-down screen, additional display in classroom, printer/scanner/copier, WiFi, 2–3 cameras with 3-light kit, mic kit with handheld and lapel wireless mic, backdrop with Embassy or State Department seal	10–15 pax, instructors' equipment workspace, IT lending/storage area and charging for 40 devices, printer/graphics area, WiFi, two areas with 2–3 fixed computers, SMART Boards/displays in classrooms, video wall, media production equipment with movable sound stage, lighting grid, multi-camera system tied to a switcher, special effects generator, printer/scanner/copier
Lounge/Reading/Research	along a wall	20–30% of main space	>30% of main space
Collections (Books and Multimedia)	circulating collections of 1000 to 2000 items	2000 to 3000 items	>3000 items
Storage (in meters)	3x5 meters	3x5 meters	2 spaces of 3x5 meters
Staff/Hours	2–3; 56 hours; minimum 20 hours/week	5–10; 56 hours	10–15; 56–60 hours
Staff/Core Positions	Coordinator Assistant Technical Assistant	Project Administrator Program Specialist Visitor/Assistance Staff IT/AV Technician Marketing/Social Media Manager	Project Administrator — ACAO Deputy Administrator Program Specialist — Educational Programs Program Specialist — Cultural Programs Program Specialist — STEAM Programs Visitor/Assistance Staff Collection/Circulation Specialist IT/AV Technician Marketing Manager Social Media Assistant
Other Staff Positions	Separate Site	Separate site for staff offices, but use this space for consultations with drop-in visitors	EducationUSA Coordinator English Language Specialist English Language Teachers Alumni Coordinator

ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL FEATURES

- Gallery/Exhibit Space
- Café/Catering Kitchen
- Press specific equipment
- Outdoor/Garden Area
- Dedicated Media Studio
- Air Conditioning Units
- Storage for chairs
- Server Room
- Dance floor
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Model Template for American Spaces

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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A modern American Space is an advanced physical platform for effective public diplomacy engagement with foreign target audiences in support of United States foreign policy objectives.

A successful, modern American Space should be:

- Welcoming and inspiring
- Collaborative and engaging
- Digitally relevant and capable
- A flexible and dynamic programmatic venue
- Staffed by engaging, informed and diverse individuals
- A place to attract and meet the needs of foreign audiences
- A platform for furthering and supporting foreign policy goals

American Spaces are evolving into collaborative laboratories where U.S. and host-country citizens, alumni, all mission agencies, private and public partners and others can collaborate on new projects, share current ideas and solve old problems, all while advancing U.S. and mission foreign policy goals. In addition to providing access to new technologies, hands-on creative opportunities and virtual learning platforms, it is imperative that spaces look and feel engaging, facilitate and promote dialogue and are open, welcoming, and vibrant. They should look inherently American and be places that the U.S. takes pride in, and to the extent possible, visually reflect the essence of policies they are communicating, such as innovation or tolerance.

Ideally, a modern American Space should conform to Open Access Principles, including:

- **Open Public Access.** Visitors need to be allowed to come into the American Space without an appointment or advance security access request, and visitors should not be badged.
- **Personal electronic devices allowed.** Visitors may bring in their own devices and use them.
- **Wireless Internet access.** A dedicated, free, and unfiltered Wi-Fi network in the Space that provides visitors with the best available bandwidth.

What Is A Modern American Space?

Compliance with Open Access Principles should not be a problem at partner spaces (American Corners and Binational Centers). Achieving full compliance at American Spaces in USG facilities can be more challenging. Posts should consult with the Office of American Spaces, which can facilitate discussions with OBO and Diplomatic Security to define possibilities.

Recognizing that no two American Spaces are identical, the Office of American Spaces has **created a list of Standards** to provide embassies and consulates with guidelines for **evaluating the performance** of their American Spaces, especially when applying for American Spaces support funding. The Standards provide a helpful framework that enables Posts to gain information and insight about the capabilities of their American Spaces in areas that are most relevant to advancing policy goals and assessing needs for improvement in the areas of Programming, Management, Digital Tools and Skills, and Physical Space and Access. You can find more information and the complete table of Standards in the Appendix or online through the American Spaces module of the American Spaces dashboard: (https://americanspaces.state.gov/home/sites/default/files/documents/RevisedStandardsforAmericanSpaces_2016.pdf)

Thoughtful design choices allow spaces to be dynamic, flexible, and impactful programmatic platforms. To provide you with additional guidance and ideas for space design and renovations, the Bureau of International Information Programs (IIP) and the Smithsonian Institution (SI) have collaborated on *Idea Book 2.0*, a broad branding and design resource for all American Spaces. Use this digital book for inspiration and recommendations for space design, furniture and finishes, and graphics that you can implement in your own space. *Idea Book 2.0* can be accessed via the Smithsonian Portal of the American Spaces Dashboard (https://americanspaces.state.gov/smithsonian/design-resources/idea-book).

Considerations for U.S. Government versus non-USG Spaces

There are variations in requirements and standards for USG American Spaces (American Centers) and non-USG partner American Spaces (American Corners and Binational Centers). For example, USG Spaces may have different security requirements and open access policies than partner Spaces.

American Spaces (USG and non-USG) are venues for whole-of-mission public diplomacy programming, such as activities of the ambassador and the political, economic and consular sections, in addition to public affairs programming. American Spaces represent the mission and the greater United States and should reflect this in the technology, staffing, and overall look and feel of the space. A good working relationship between the Public Affairs Section and Bureau of Information Resource

Management (IRM)—and General Services Officer (GSO) and Regional Security Officer (RSO)—will maximize the skill sets needed to enhance and operate the range of spaces supported by Post, the regional bureaus and IIP—spaces that effectively meet the mission's goals.

Procurement of furniture and equipment, as well as funding for construction and renovation projects, will require different procedures depending on your type of space. USG Spaces will need support from your RSO, IRM, OBO, and Management Sections. Funding for partner Spaces will need a Grants Officer to oversee grants and cooperative agreements.

What Is A Modern American Space? *(continued)*

Programming Needs Drive Facility Needs

Thinking about what kinds of programming you need to implement to achieve mission objectives (size of the largest audience for a lecture, speaker, or cultural event) and what programming needs to happen simultaneously within the context of delivering on the **Five Core Programs***—will help to define and drive the needs of your physical space.

Consider these questions:

- How many people do we need to seat for a speaker/discussion/cultural/film event?
- Do we need to have multiple English language classes going on at the same time?
- Do we need to have a dedicated Makerspace? If so, is the focus of Maker activities on topics like 3D printing, electronics, creation of physical things (requires more table surfaces and seating) or on video/audio production (more open space, a green screen, perhaps an enclosed audio booth), or a combination?
- Do we want to dedicate an area for USG alumni or other groups or activities?
- Do we need books, magazines, other printed materials, and/or DVDs to achieve our objectives?
- What is the demand for computer/Internet access? Are the computers going to be fixed, or ideally, mobile and flexible? How much space should we allot for this?

The Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) provides implementation assistance. Each of these programs has a dedicated website and are further defined in the American Spaces Standards. Please see the Appendix for American Spaces Standards, or visit https://americanspaces.state.gov/home/sites/default/files/documents/RevisedStandards-forAmericanSpaces_2016.pdf. You can also find information about all programs in the Smithsonian *Idea Book 2.0* in section 2.3 on Defining Identity (https://americanspaces.state.gov/smithsonian/docs/IdeaBook20/Chapters/AS_IdeaBook_02-DefiningIdentity.pdf).

** For more information about the Five Core Programs, please see The American Spaces Handbook (https://americanspaces.state.gov/home/sites/default/files/images/AmericanSpaces-Partners-Handbook.pdf) and ECA's website (https://eca.state.gov).*

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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Bold and dynamic programs should be innovative, fun, thought-provoking, creative, exciting, unique, and above all, **mission-driven**.

Any American Space, regardless of size, will plan a full roster of "bold and dynamic" programs each year with a strong focus on digital programming. These programs may be a mix of participant-driven programs, such as weekly conversation clubs, film clubs, or debate clubs, more formal Post-led programs that align with the local integrated country strategy (ICS) and public diplomacy goals, or partner-led programs that capitalize on a particular expertise or skill set, such as digital literacy.

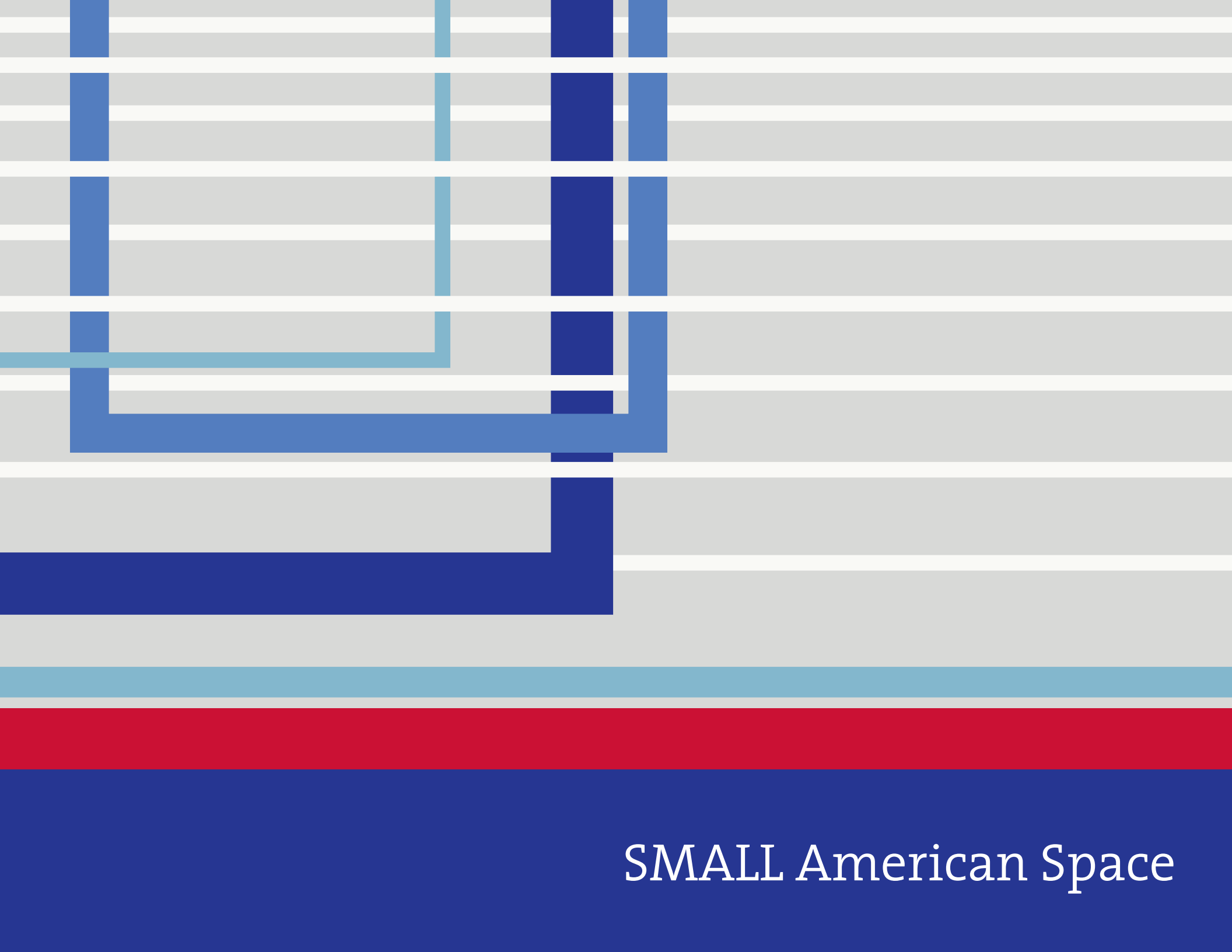
Ideally, a regularly occurring popular event or a series (weekly or monthly) will help Post build stronger relationships and trust with audiences.

Active programming can exemplify policy themes and could include:

- A debate event or series to facilitate learning about and speaking persuasively about two sides of a policy-related issue, strengthening research skills, and promoting English language learning.
- An art or photography exhibition/competition on themes relevant to the mission's ICS goals.
- A Maker Faire to showcase local makers, tech enthusiasts, educators, tinkerers, engineers, science clubs, artists, or students.
- Courses on prototyping, computer programming, or 3D printing to promote skill building and digital skill literacy.
- Soft skills courses, such as resumé writing or public speaking, that foster self-reliance and confidence in individuals.
- Entrepreneurial-themed events and programs to coincide with a 'Start-Up Week'.
- Hosting a community clean-up to promote participation in a civil society and relay issues of human impact to climate change and the environment.

American Spaces are unique because they offer distinctly American experiences for visitors, whether through in-person diplomacy activities or digital platforms. The Five Core Programs provide the basis for annual program planning and differentiate American Spaces programs from other non-academic and non-professional opportunities that audiences may have access to.

What Is Bold and Dynamic Programming?


SMALL American Space

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Makerspaces	5–10 pax and mobile, locking storage	10–15 pax	dedicated space for 10–20 pax, ideally separated from main programming area with a glass or transparent wall
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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **SMALL** American Space

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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An American Space can be small, yet still effective as a public diplomacy platform. Even so, it is possible for a space to be too small to be worth pursuing. The smallest American Space should offer:

- Approximately 1,000 square feet / 93 square meters
- 1–2 program spaces/rooms
- Event Space/Auditorium that can accommodate 20–50 people
- Space for multiple types of programming (including area for reading materials, flexible table space, fixed computers, screen for digital presentations)
- Ability to hold more than one type of program at the same time
- Storage space measuring approximately 3 x 5 meters

The key consideration on size is whether the space has sufficient room to be a programmatic platform as described in the definition of a modern American Space (section 1.3). In the past, many American Corners were static point-of-access information resources. As long as there was room for a selection of books and perhaps DVDs and a computer or two, that was sufficient. An active programmatic platform generally requires more space and commitment of time and energy by Post and the partner institution. Posts should carefully consider their public diplomacy engagement needs in determining whether active programming space is necessary and feasible, or whether an alternate partner relationship, not branded as an American Space, is more appropriate.

A **small space** should be able to support the Five Core Programs and offer a variety of physical and digital programming, hosting at least **8–10 programs per month**.

With 1–2 rooms or programming areas, a small space can accommodate simultaneous programs or one program while allowing others to use computers or materials within the space. Flexible, modular seating, and tables on wheels (casters) will allow the rooms to be rearranged to maximize programmatic variety. If deemed necessary to support the mission's objectives, a library of reading materials and periodicals, composed of no more than 1,000–2,000 items, should contain up-to-date materials on subjects relevant to key issues of focus for the mission.

EducationUSA: There should be a flexible meeting space with shelving that contains a library of materials. Within this meeting space, an advisor can meet with students one-on-one or present to a group. When not in use for EducationUSA, the meeting space can be used for other small-group meetings and discussions.

Community Engagement/Alumni Programming: The space should be configurable to host small musical performances, film screenings, or other events. A portable sound system and stage are useful to support such events. Additionally, the space should be appealing and available for USG alumni events during open hours or special after-hours events.

English Language Learning: Utilize the main programming space or adjacent room for conversation clubs and courses that promote language skills and proficiency. Incorporate portable whiteboards and a projection screen to facilitate collaborative learning.

Makerspace: Mobile, locking storage provides the greatest flexibility to host maker activities that promote skill-building either in the main programming space or adjacent room. When makerspace programming is not taking place, expensive or portable equipment and materials can be secured in a lockable cabinet.

Digital Resources, Media Production, and Connectivity: Access to the Internet and digital devices (i.e. computers, tablets) is essential. Ideally, the space should have public access Wi-Fi that allows patrons to connect their own devices. Small spaces should consider having a number of Chromebooks, tablets and/or laptops, rather than fixed computers, to maximize the flexible use of the space and the number of people who can use digital resources. A drop-down screen and digital projector also can support a variety of virtual and in-person programming.

What size is too small to be an American Space?

The Office of American Spaces generally will not support or consider a venue smaller than the definition above as an American Space. If there are public diplomacy needs that can be supported by library bookshelves, EducationUSA reading materials or other small areas to promote U.S. foreign policy interests, these should be viewed as important outreach platforms, but not eligible for funding or branded as an American Space.

What are some additional options to consider for your small space?

- Flexibility is key for maximizing programming and space in one-room facilities. Introducing modular furniture or tables and chairs on casters provides you with the greatest level of versatility.
- Look for host institutions that have auditoriums, adjacent classrooms or outdoor spaces that can extend your programming space footprint.
- Use auditoriums for larger cultural events.
- Consider outdoor areas for conversation clubs, alumni events or cultural events, such as movie nights or performances.

What are the elements that go into small spaces?

Flexibility of furniture is the key along with strategic use of color blocking, graphics and other high impact imagery. We highly suggest finding furniture that has multiple uses, is stackable, or can be easily rearranged. Examples include seating with storage, tables on casters, rolling carts, partitions with whiteboard or tackable surfaces *(see sample images on this page)*.

For more furniture inspiration, please see Section 5 of *Idea Book 2.0*: https://americanspaces.state.gov/smithsonian/docs/IdeaBook20/Chapters/AS_IdeaBook_05-Furniture.pdf

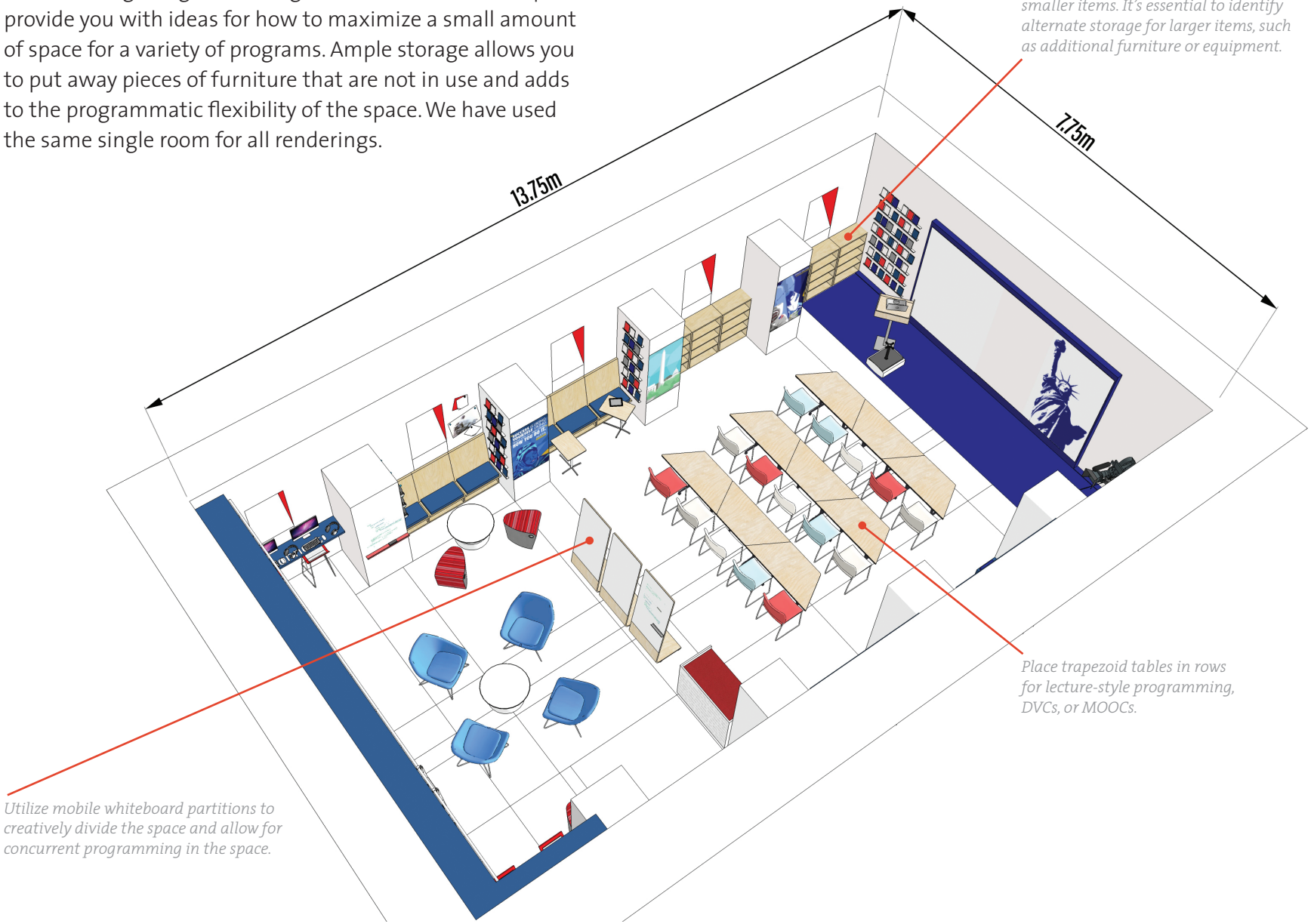
Nimble Stacking Chair
Allsteel

Aware Trapezoid Work Table
Allsteel

Meridian Mobile Vertical Locking Storage Tower
Herman Miller

Mobile Whiteboard and/or Tackboard
KI

The following design renderings of a **SMALL** American Space provide you with ideas for how to maximize a small amount of space for a variety of programs. Ample storage allows you to put away pieces of furniture that are not in use and adds to the programmatic flexibility of the space. We have used the same single room for all renderings.

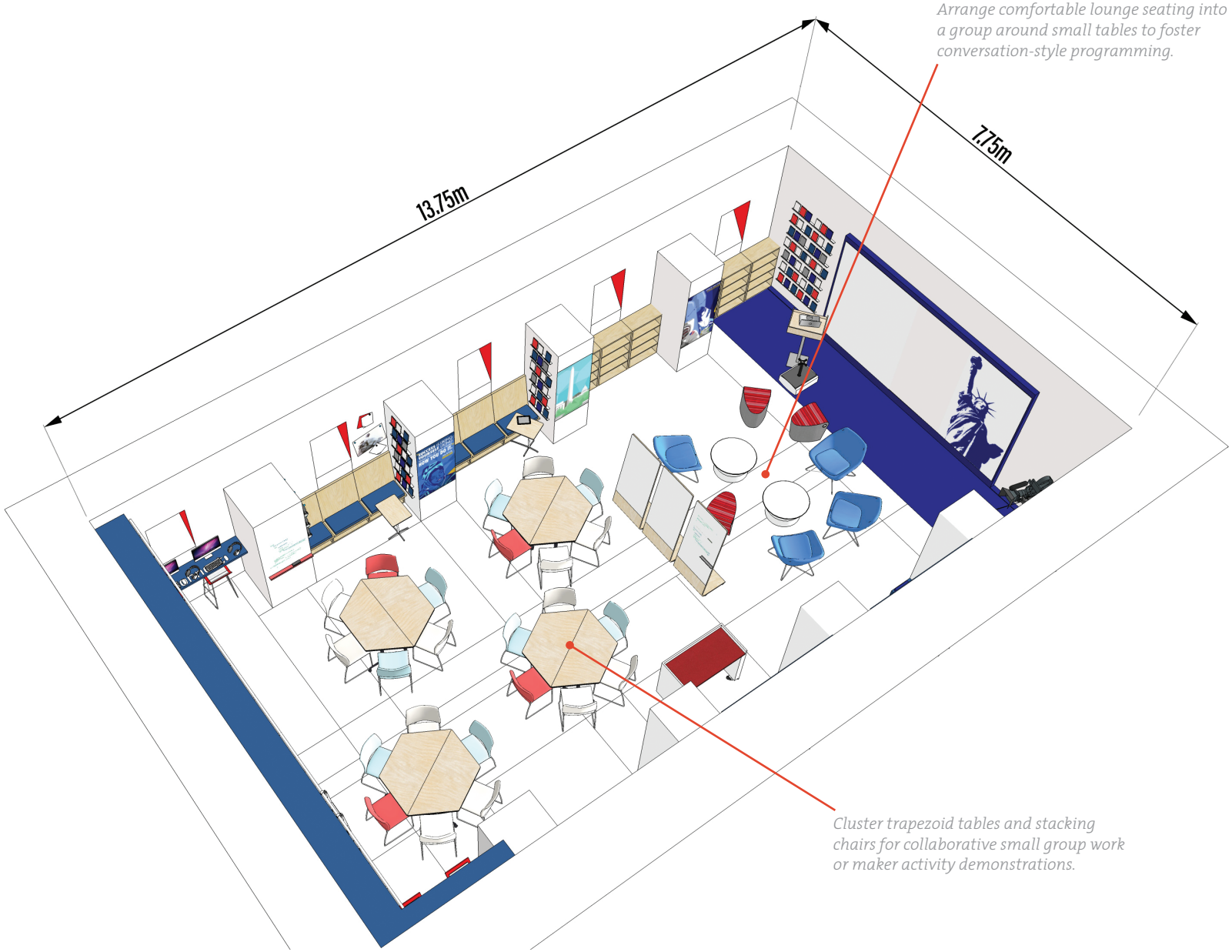


Simple shelving provides storage for smaller items. It's essential to identify alternate storage for larger items, such as additional furniture or equipment.

Place trapezoid tables in rows for lecture-style programming, DVCs, or MOOCs.

Utilize mobile whiteboard partitions to creatively divide the space and allow for concurrent programming in the space.

DESIGN BASICS FOR A **SMALL** American Space *(continued)*



INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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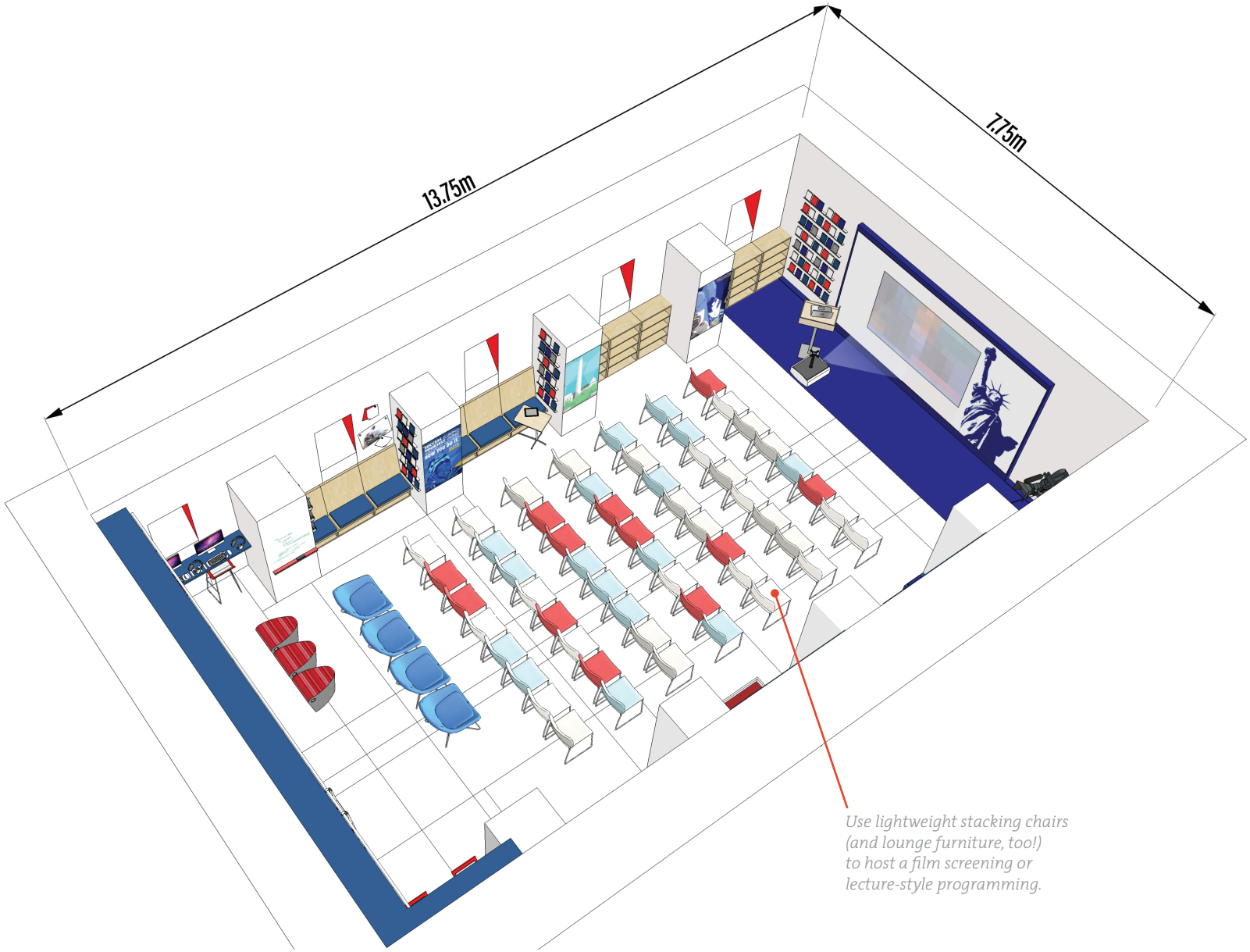
DESIGN BASICS FOR A **SMALL** American Space *(continued)*



Use lightweight stacking chairs (and lounge furniture, too!) to host a film screening or lecture-style programming.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **SMALL** American Space *(continued)*

American Corner Mostar is approximately 870 square feet / 80 square meters and consists of one room in the Mostar Gymnasium Complex.

Before: *Large, heavy furniture in the middle of the room made it difficult to reconfigure the space to meet the diverse programming needs of a modern American Space.*

After: *Updated furniture, new lighting, a culled book collection, a fresh coat of paint and high-resolution graphics transform this space into one that is able to support a varied programmatic calendar. Different seating types in the space give visitors options for working together, reading independently, or building digital skills with available technologies. By reducing the book collection and removing bookshelves, the space could accommodate additional seating along the perimeter of the room.*

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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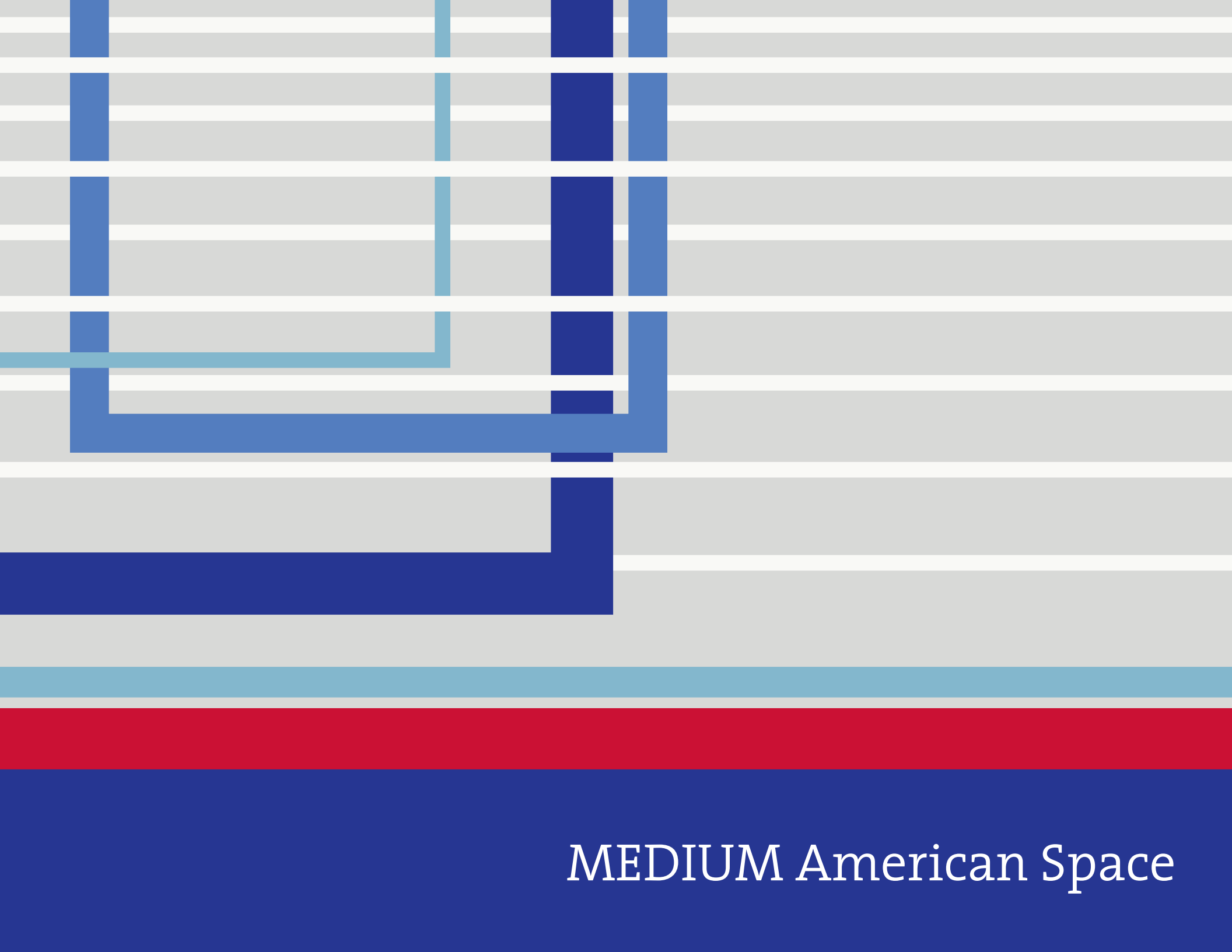
SMALL SPACE SPOTLIGHT American Corner Mostar


MEDIUM American Space

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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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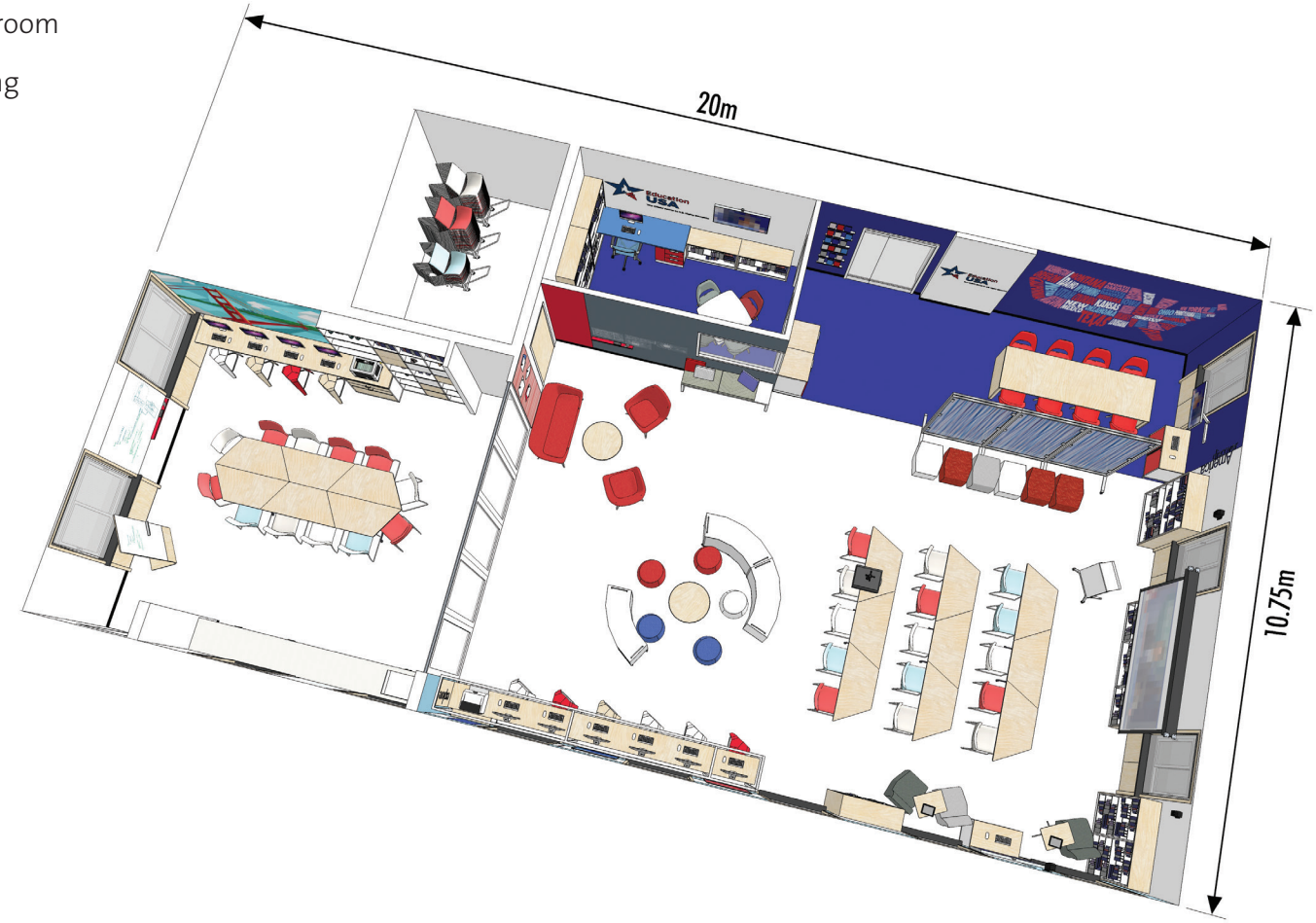
A medium American Space should offer:

- 1,000–3,000 square feet / 93 – 280 square meters
- 3–5 program spaces/rooms
- An auditorium or lecture hall with capacity of 51–100
- At least one dedicated classroom
- Space for reading, conducting research, or casual lounging (20–30% of the main space)
- Storage space measuring approximately 3 x 5 meters



INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*

A **medium space** should be able to support the Five Core Programs and an array of digital programs, hosting at least **10–20 programs per month**.

With 3–5 rooms or programming areas, a medium space can accommodate multiple simultaneous programs. An assortment of lightweight and flexible furniture can be used throughout the space, including mobile tables on casters, stacking chairs, and rolling partitions. If deemed necessary to support mission objectives, a moderately-sized library (2,000–3,000 books and periodicals in the collection) should contain up-to-date reading materials on a variety of subjects.

EducationUSA: There should be an office, plus a meeting room—at least one of them with shelves that offer a library of materials. Within these two spaces, an advisor can meet with students one-on-one or present to a group. When not in use for EducationUSA advising, the meeting room can be used for other small-group meetings or discussions.

Community Engagement/Alumni Programming: Fixed wiring for sound and lights should be in place throughout the space. These programs can take place in the main space(s), auditorium/lecture hall, or classroom. Consider branding some areas specifically for alumni.

English Language Learning: A minimum of one classroom holding 10–15 students will provide ample room for seating and display. Conversation clubs can also take place in this room.

Makerspace: An area appropriate for 10–15 people to work on clean surfaces should be available, though need not be a separate room. A variety of equipment for maker programming and media production should be made available.

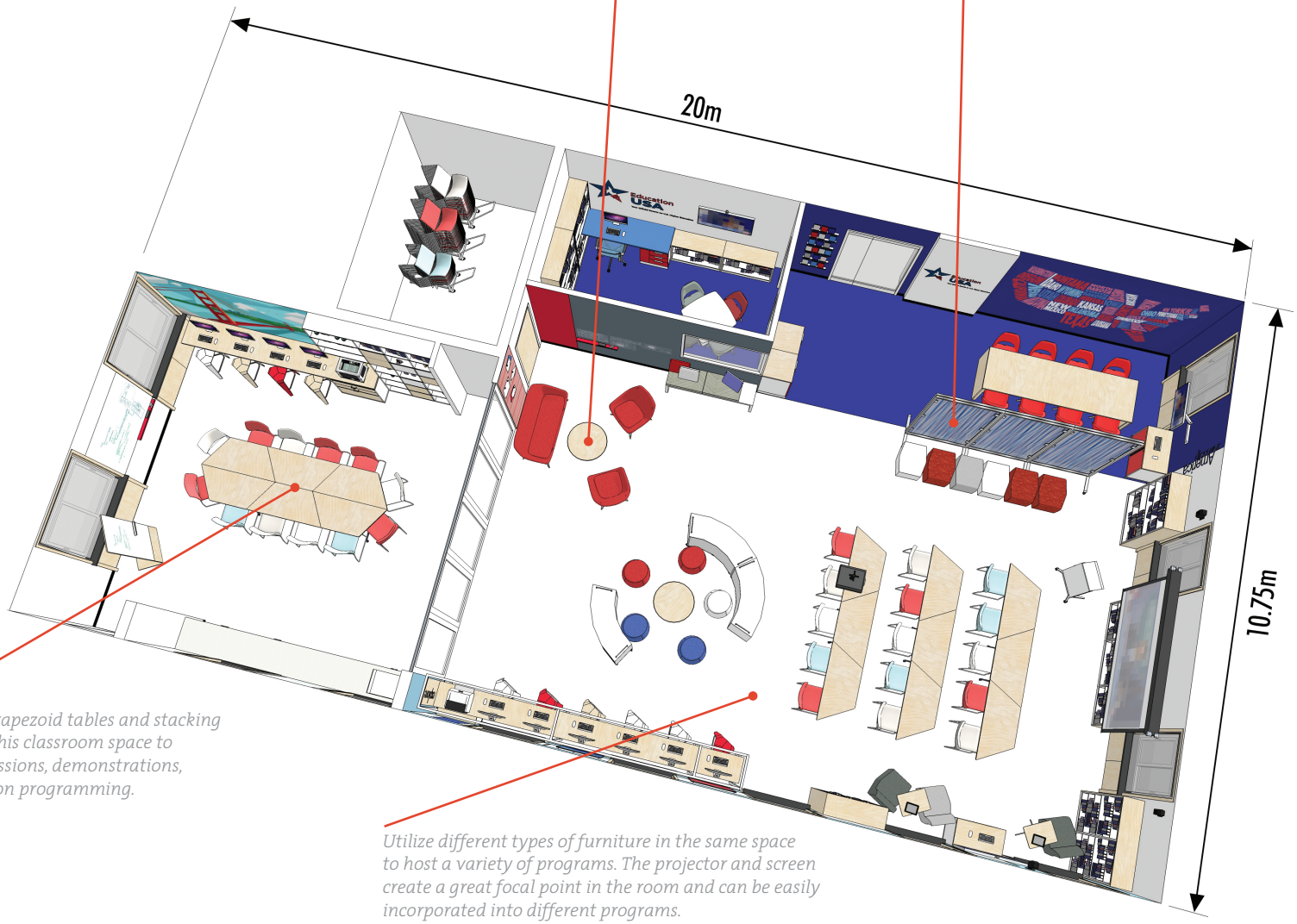
Digital Resources, Media Production, and Connectivity: The space should offer 2–3 fixed computers, as well as storage and charging for 40 devices. 2–3 cameras with a 3-light kit, as well as a mic kit with handheld and lapel wireless mic can be used for media production. A backdrop with Embassy or State Department seal is a great addition for official interviews. A video wall or large drop-down screen will also support a variety of virtual programming. Consider incorporating SMART Board Technology or a touchscreen monitor.

DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*

What are some additional options to consider for your medium space?

- Introduce plenty of informal settings that can be re-arranged for collaborative activities, conversation clubs, discussion groups, virtual programs, EducationUSA advising, or English language learning activities.
- Use your makerspace as an overall technology and collaboration zone. A large screen can provide a presentation space to showcase and promote digital skills. When not in use as a makerspace, use the large screen for presentations, film screenings, or demonstrations.
- Consider a fixed area for computers that can run software that promotes digital skill building, such as photo or video editing.
- Utilize blank wall space by installing gallery railing to transform it into an exhibit or gallery space for local artists or patrons.
- Store extra tables and chairs in a separate storage area to free up valuable floor space and promote programmatic flexibility.
- Consider moveable or retractable partitions to control sound of simultaneous events (**glass is ideal** to maintain a feeling of openness and activity in the space).

The following design renderings of a **MEDIUM** American Space provide you with ideas for how to maximize space for a variety of programs and events. We have used the same series of rooms for all renderings.



Lounge furniture creates a comfortable spot for a conversation club or for visitors to wait for an upcoming programming or advising appointment.

Mobile partitions create definition between programming spaces. A simple central table and chairs make this a great spot for visitors to gather for a program or independent use of technology.

Arrange trapezoid tables and stacking chairs in this classroom space to host discussions, demonstrations, or hands-on programming.

Utilize different types of furniture in the same space to host a variety of programs. The projector and screen create a great focal point in the room and can be easily incorporated into different programs.

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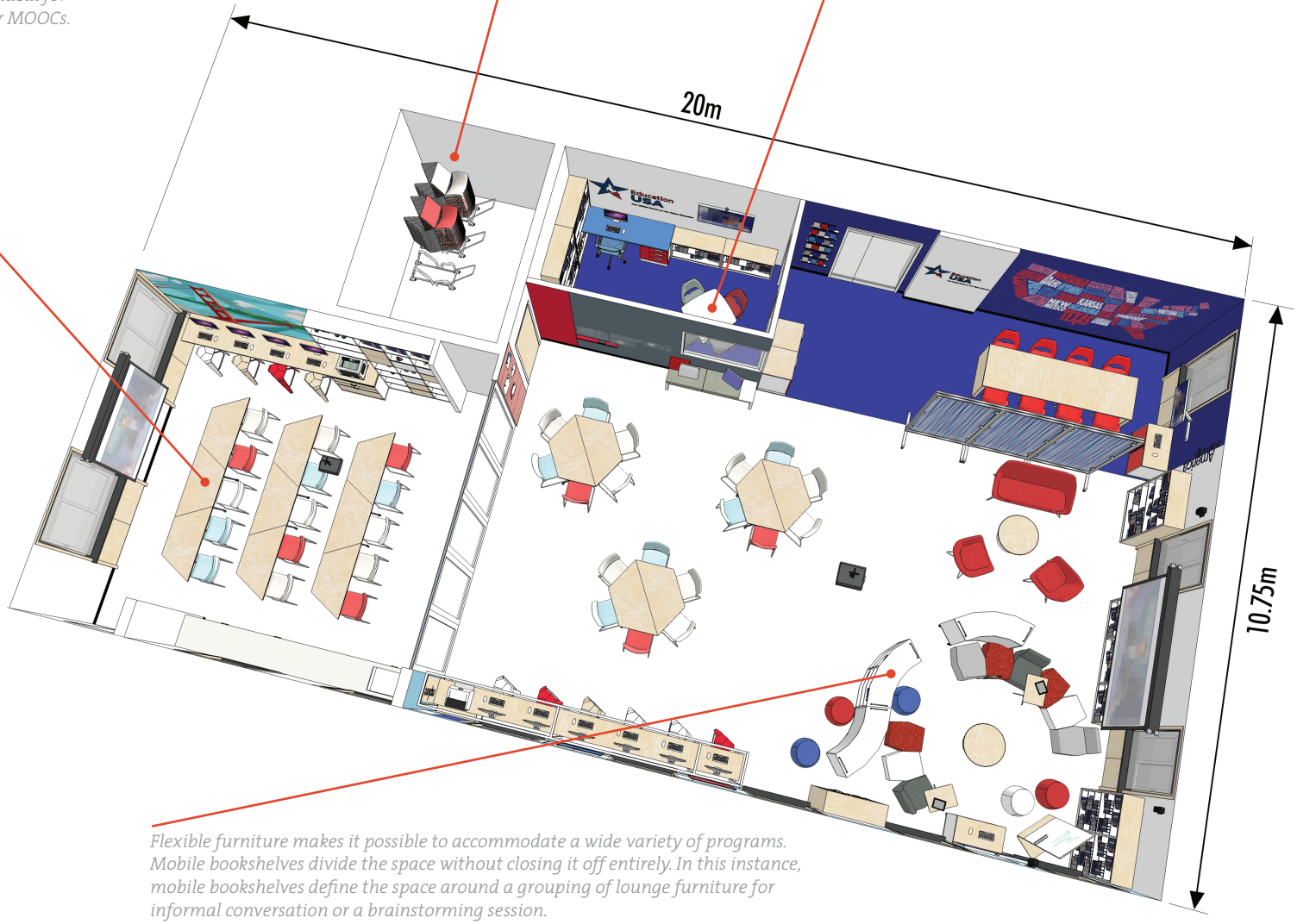
DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*

A designated meeting and advising space gives visitors the opportunity to have one-on-one conversations. When not in use for formal advising, offer this space to alumni or clubs to host meetings.

Storage provides space to store unused furniture, promoting flexibility throughout the space.

Rearrange trapezoid tables and stacking chairs into rows for a more traditional classroom configuration ideal for presentations, lectures, or MOOCs.



Flexible furniture makes it possible to accommodate a wide variety of programs. Mobile bookshelves divide the space without closing it off entirely. In this instance, mobile bookshelves define the space around a grouping of lounge furniture for informal conversation or a brainstorming session.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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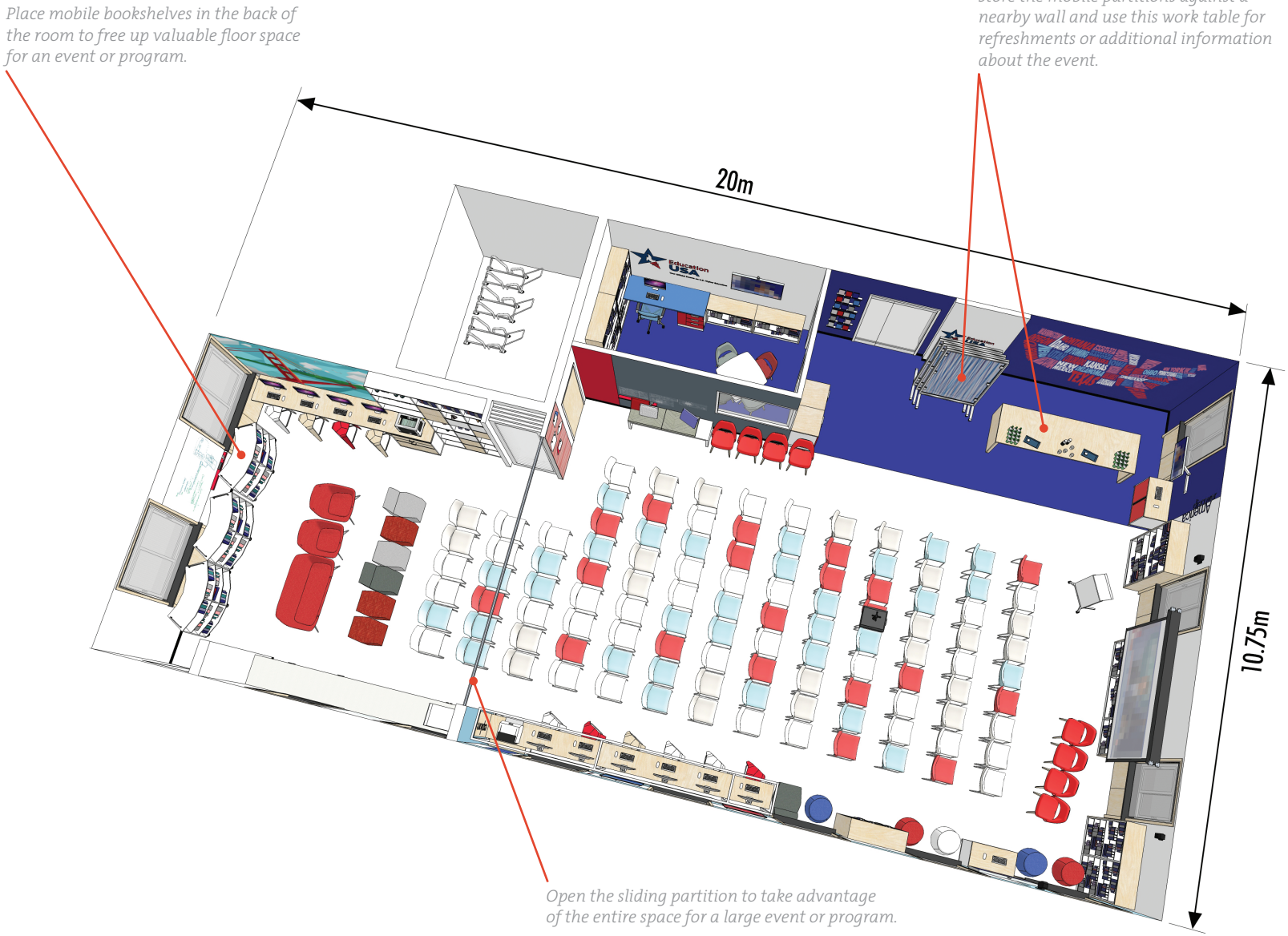
DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*



DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*

Before: *Cluttered workspaces and shelves and large, heavy furniture in the middle of the room made it difficult to reconfigure rooms for different programs.*

American Corner Kandy is approximately 3655 square feet / 39342 square meters and consists of both indoor and outdoor programming spaces located in the D.S. Senanayake Public Library.

After: *Comfortable lounge furniture is a great way to introduce color accents and creates a perfect space for visitors to gather informally for conversation or independently browsing reading materials from the nearby shelving. The trapezoid tables and lightweight stacking chairs make this programming space one that is easy to rearrange for lecture-style programming, DVCs, or MOOCs. The pull-down projection screen at the front of the room supports a wide variety of programs and can be stowed when not in use.*

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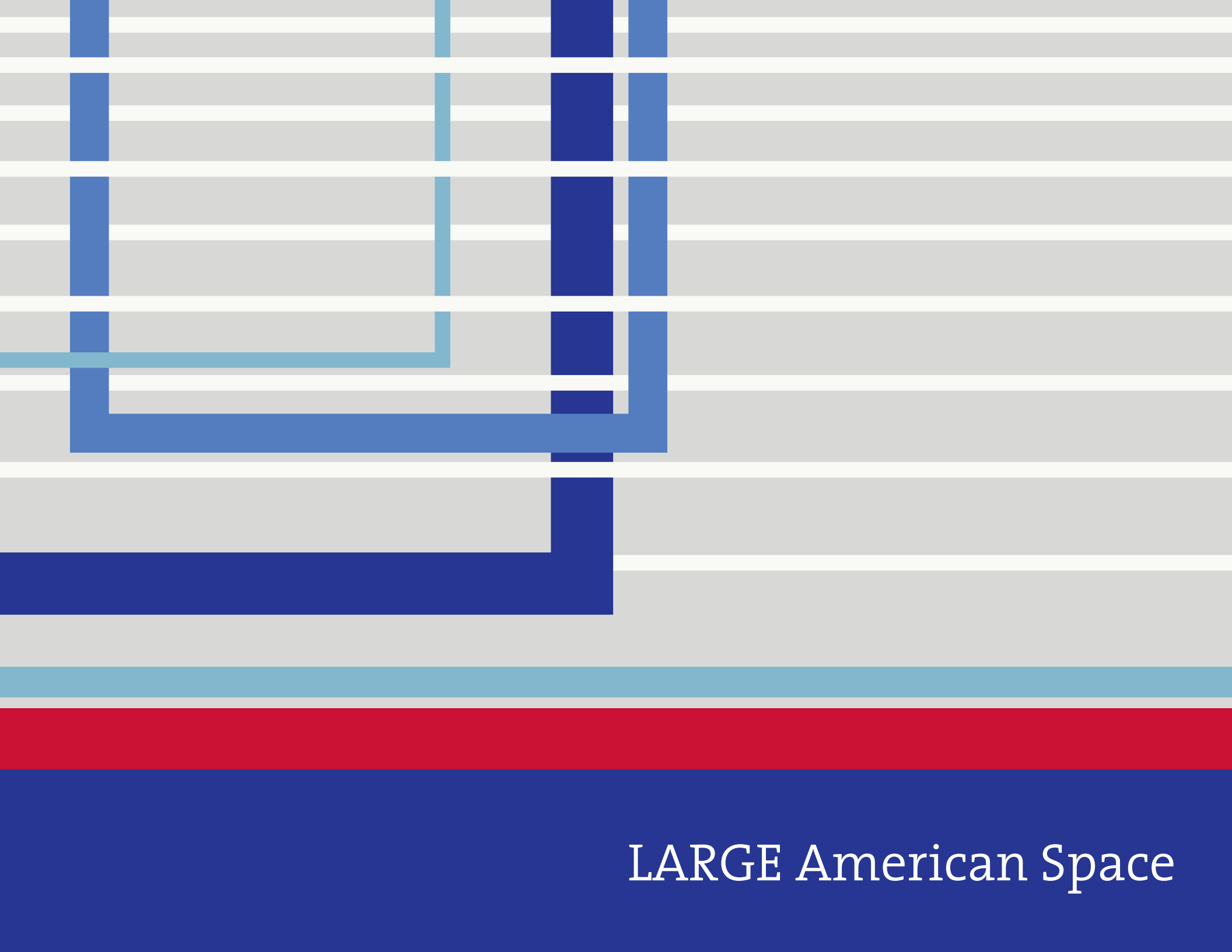
MEDIUM SPACE SPOTLIGHT American Corner Kandy


LARGE American Space

MODEL TEMPLATE FOR AMERICAN SPACES

	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE
Size	<1000 square feet / 93 square meters	1000–3000 square feet / 93–280 square meters	>3000 square feet / 280 square meters
Number of Program Spaces/Rooms	1–2	3–5	>5
Programs/month	<10	10 to 20	>20
Visitor Attendance/month	<1000	1000–5000	>5000
Capacity for Single Event	20–50	51–100	>100
EducationUSA	flexible meeting space with shelving for materials	office plus a meeting area with shelving for materials	dedicated office and meeting area plus dedicated lounge space with shelving for materials
Community Engagement/ Alumni Programming	portable sound system	fixed wiring for sound and lights	fixed wiring for theater-grade sound and lights; portable or fixed stage; dedicated audio/visual booth
English Language Learning	use main space, portable whiteboards, projection screen	fixed for wired sound/lights when needed, 1 separate classroom/meeting square, dedicated alcove and not fully enclosed storage 10–15 pax	60 pax and stage area, lighting/sound/projection, 2+ classrooms
Makerspaces	5–10 pax and mobile, locking storage	10–15 pax	dedicated space for 10–20 pax, ideally separated from main programming area with a glass or transparent wall
Digital Resources, Media Production, and Connectivity	2–3 fixed computers and portable devices, drop down screen and digital projector, printer/scanner/copier, WiFi, camera/one light/one mic kit	2–3 fixed computers, storage and charging for 40 devices, iPad bar, patron charging devices, video wall or large drop-down screen, additional display in classroom, printer/scanner/copier, WiFi, 2–3 cameras with 3-light kit, mic kit with handheld and lapel wireless mic, backdrop with Embassy or State Department seal	10–15 pax, instructors' equipment workspace, IT lending/storage area and charging for 40 devices, printer/graphics area, WiFi, two areas with 2–3 fixed computers, SMART Boards/displays in classrooms, video wall, media production equipment with movable sound stage, lighting grid, multi-camera system tied to a switcher, special effects generator, printer/scanner/copier
Lounge/Reading/Research	along a wall	20–30% of main space	>30% of main space
Collections (Books and Multimedia)	circulating collections of 1000 to 2000 items	2000 to 3000 items	>3000 items
Storage (in meters)	3x5 meters	3x5 meters	2 spaces of 3x5 meters
Staff/Hours	2–3; 56 hours; minimum 20 hours/week	5–10; 56 hours	10–15; 56–60 hours
Staff/Core Positions	Coordinator Assistant Technical Assistant	Project Administrator Program Specialist Visitor/Assistance Staff IT/AV Technician Marketing/Social Media Manager	Project Administrator — ACAO Deputy Administrator Program Specialist — Educational Programs Program Specialist — Cultural Programs Program Specialist — STEAM Programs Visitor/Assistance Staff Collection/Circulation Specialist IT/AV Technician Marketing Manager Social Media Assistant
Other Staff Positions	Separate Site	Separate site for staff offices, but use this space for consultations with drop-in visitors	EducationUSA Coordinator English Language Specialist English Language Teachers Alumni Coordinator

ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL FEATURES

- Gallery/Exhibit Space
- Café/Catering Kitchen
- Press specific equipment
- Outdoor/Garden Area
- Dedicated Media Studio
- Air Conditioning Units
- Storage for chairs
- Server Room
- Dance floor
- Bathrooms
- Coat Closet
- Janitor Closet
- Lockers
- Generators

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS
AMERICAN SPACES
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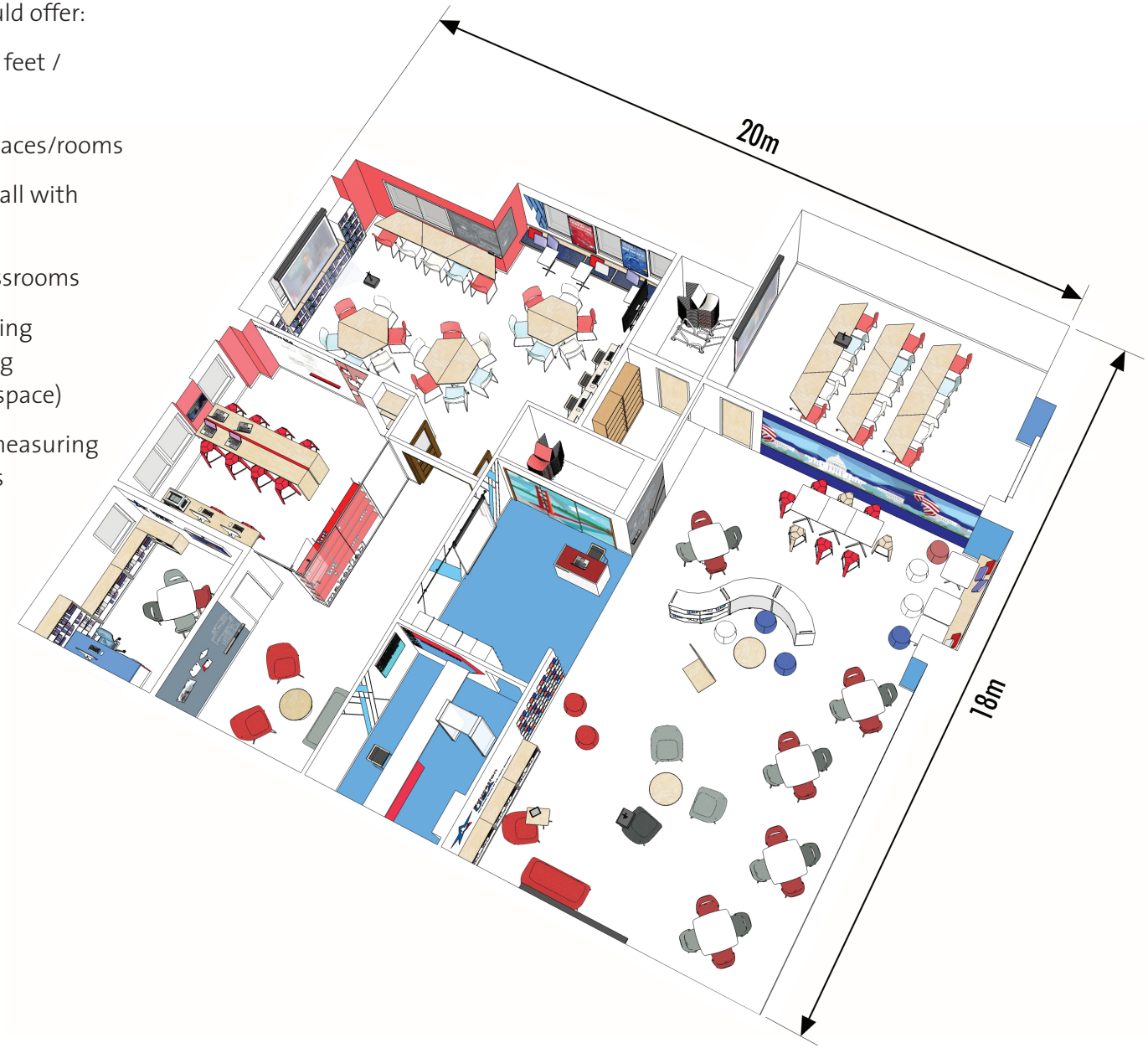
A large American Space should offer:

- Greater than 3,000 square feet / 280 square meters
- More than five program spaces/rooms
- An auditorium or lecture hall with capacity of more than 100
- At least two dedicated classrooms
- Space for reading, conducting research, or casual lounging (30% or more of the main space)
- Two storage spaces each measuring approximately 3 x 5 meters



INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **LARGE** American Space *(continued)*

A **large space** should be able to support a robust programming calendar, integrating a wide variety of digital programs and platforms and hosting at least **20 programs per month**.

If deemed necessary to support mission objectives, a library of more than 3,000 items provides a variety of reading materials, but is likely to require active, professional management.

EducationUSA: There should be a dedicated office, plus a separate meeting room and additional lounge or waiting area—at least one of them with shelves that contain a library of materials. Within these three spaces, an advisor can meet with students one-on-one or present to a group. When not in use for EducationUSA advising, the meeting room can be used for other small-group meetings or discussions.

Community Engagement/Alumni Programming: Fixed wiring for theater-grade sound, light, and additional media equipment should be in place throughout the space, in addition to a dedicated audio/visual booth. A portable or fixed stage provides ample presentation or performance space. These programs can take place in the main space(s), auditorium/lecture hall, or classroom. Consider dedicating an area for use by alumni.

English Language Learning: A minimum of two classrooms holding 15–20 students per classroom will provide ample room for seating and display. Conversation clubs and presentations can also take place in these rooms.

Makerspace: A dedicated room appropriate for 10–20 people to work on clean surfaces should be available. A variety of equipment for maker programming and media production should be made available. A glass or transparent wall that divides this room from the main programming area in addition to isolated acoustic paneling will provide sound management while allowing patrons to see programming in progress.

Digital Resources, Media Production, and Connectivity: The space should offer 5–8 fixed computers, as well as storage and charging for 40 devices. A digital monitor or large drop-down screen will also support a variety of virtual programming. Media production equipment with a movable sound stage, lighting grid, and multi-camera system are great additions to enhance digital capacity. Consider incorporating SMART Board Technology or a touchscreen monitor in the classrooms and makerspace.

What are some additional options to consider for your large space?

- Having a large and attractive representational space can allow you to host cultural or Embassy events and programs. Equip your representational space with furniture that will support press conference needs, such as lecterns, flags, and a backdrop. Gallery rails are another way to add visual interest to a representational space.
- Consider the inclusion of a dedicated café or food preparation area to support representational events or provide additional, informal collaborative space for patrons.
- Transform underutilized outdoor space and consider this space as an extension of the interior programming areas. Outdoor space can be used for cultural programs or performances or even as a place for patrons to wait for an upcoming program or stay after a program has concluded.
- Use media production equipment from the makerspace to accommodate press conferences, VIP interviews, or even Ambassador statements in your space.
- Promote conversation and collaboration with a variety of lounge seating options. This could include banquette seating along the perimeter of the room, modular couches that can be re-configured in a variety of ways, or bar-height tables and chairs with areas to charge personal devices.

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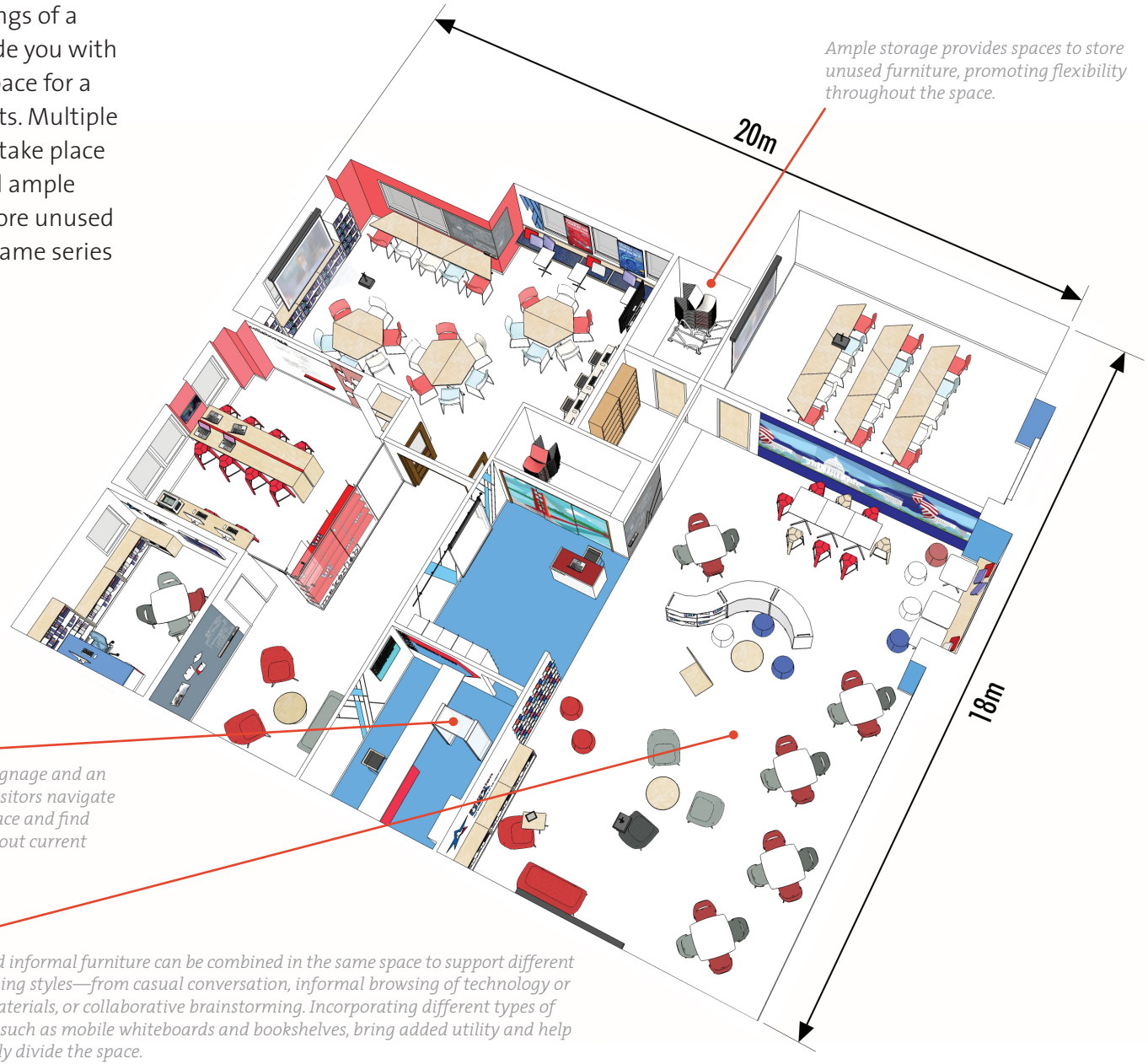
The following design renderings of a **LARGE** American Space provide you with ideas for how to maximize space for a variety of programs and events. Multiple rooms allow for programs to take place concurrently in the space and ample storage provides spaces to store unused furniture. We have used the same series of rooms for all renderings.



Ample storage provides spaces to store unused furniture, promoting flexibility throughout the space.

An entryway with clear signage and an information desk helps visitors navigate their way through the space and find out more information about current or upcoming programs.

Formal and informal furniture can be combined in the same space to support different programming styles—from casual conversation, informal browsing of technology or reading materials, or collaborative brainstorming. Incorporating different types of partitions, such as mobile whiteboards and bookshelves, bring added utility and help to creatively divide the space.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

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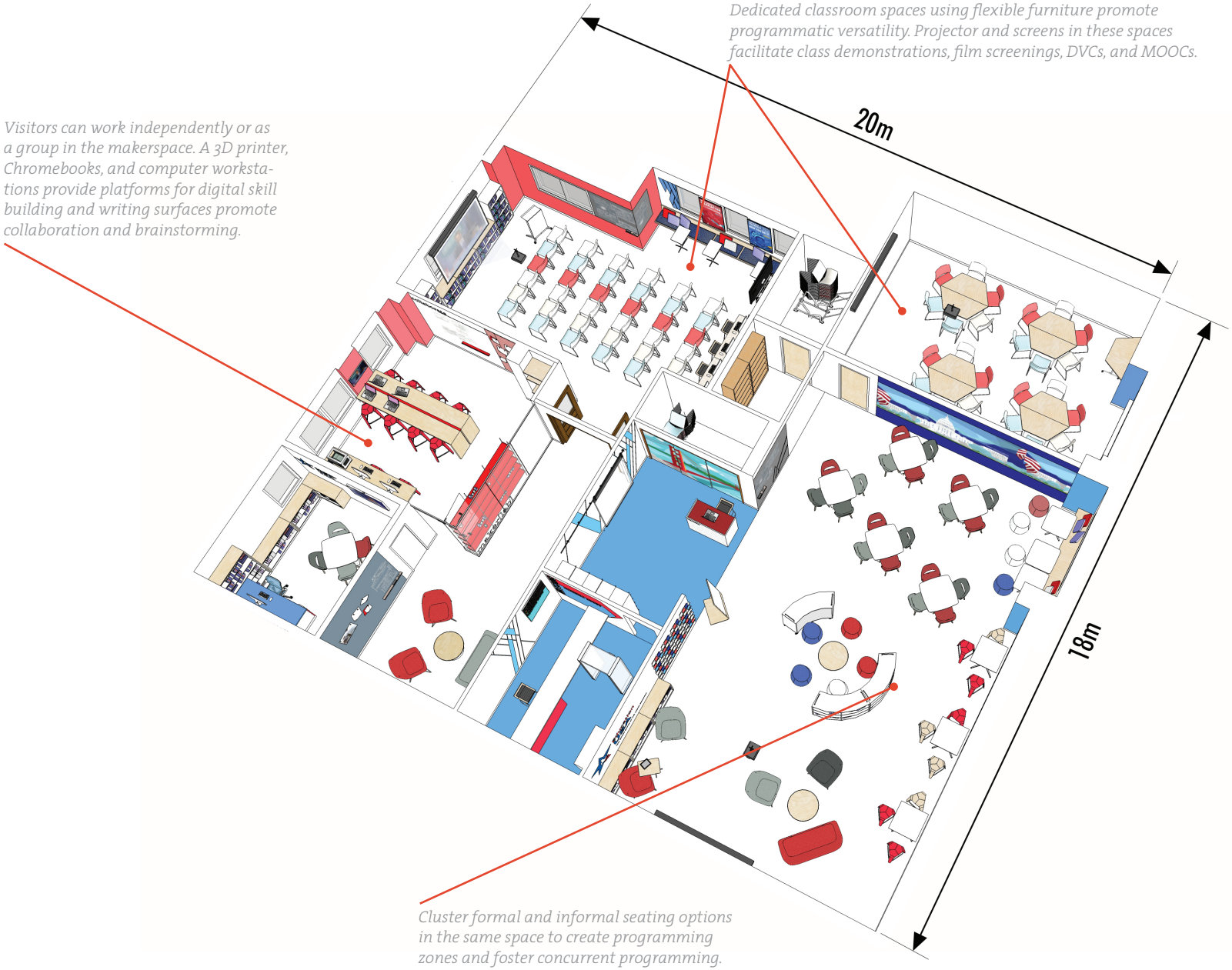
DESIGN BASICS FOR A **LARGE** American Space *(continued)*



INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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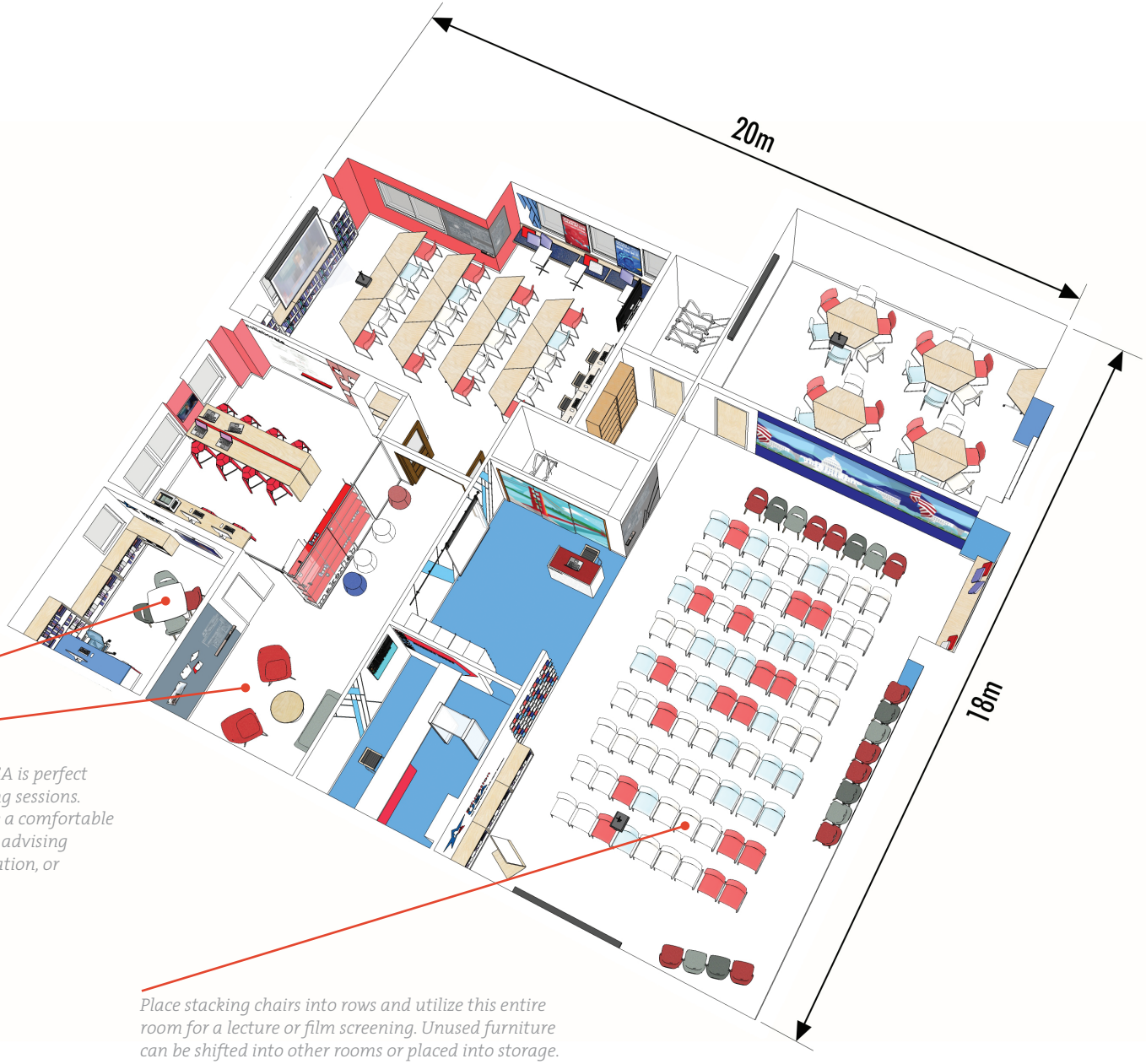
DESIGN BASICS FOR A **LARGE** American Space *(continued)*



A dedicated office space for EducationUSA is perfect for one-on-one conversation and advising sessions. Place lounge furniture nearby to provide a comfortable spot for visitors to wait for an upcoming advising appointment, have an informal conversation, or independently browse technology.

Place stacking chairs into rows and utilize this entire room for a lecture or film screening. Unused furniture can be shifted into other rooms or placed into storage.

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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **LARGE** American Space *(continued)*

Before: *Multiple rooms with blank white walls made this space difficult to navigate and uninspiring.*

America House Kyiv is approximately 5200 square feet / 55972 square meters and is located in a USG-owned facility that formerly housed the Consular Section of the Embassy.

After: *With a combination of formal and informal furniture types, the multiple rooms in this space play host to a variety of program types. Wayfinding signage, a fresh coat of paint, and bold graphics instantly transform this space into one that is vibrant and easy to navigate. Simple gallery railing makes it easy to display the work of local artists or your visitors.*

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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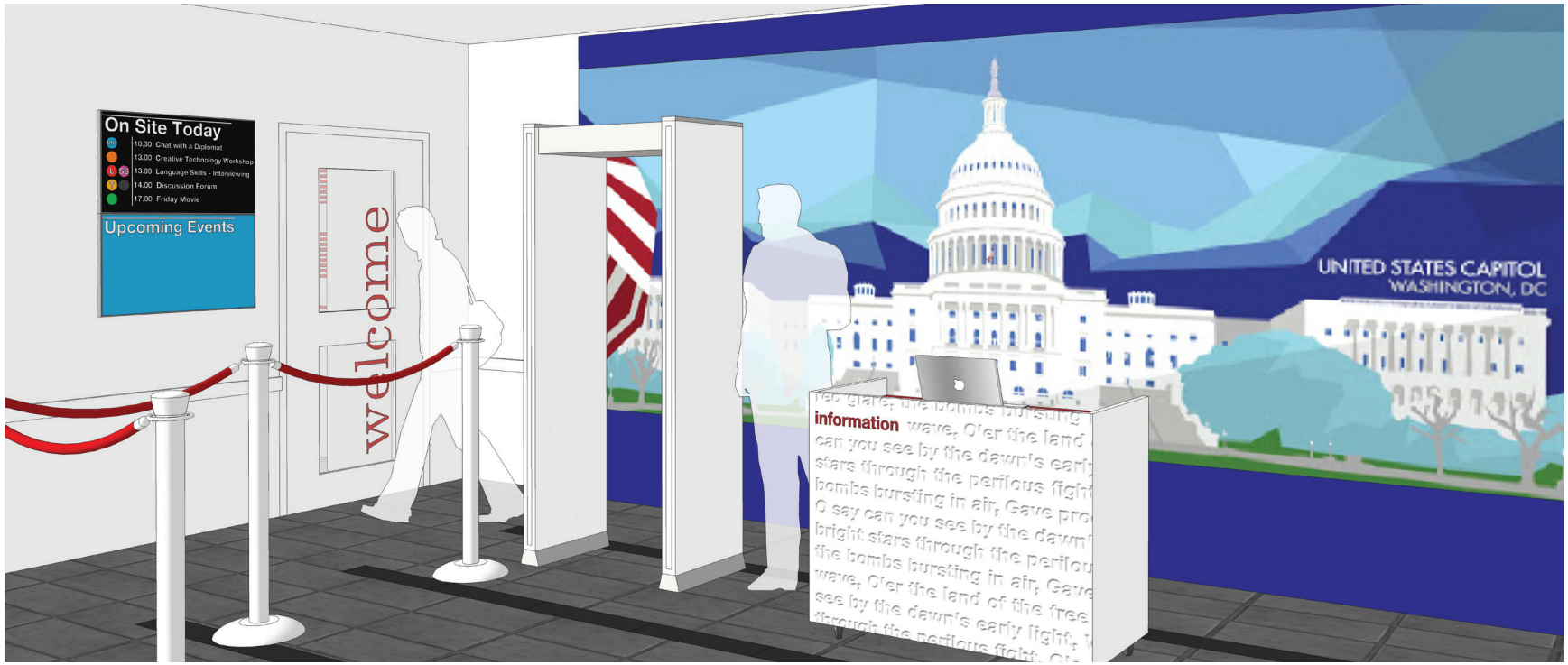
LARGE SPACE SPOTLIGHT America House Kyiv

Additional Features For Your Consideration



Without compromising the security elements that your space requires (x-ray machine, magnetometer, or other elements deemed necessary by your RSO), you can make the security entry feel cheerful and welcoming. Bright colors and graphics are an easy way to animate a space that can otherwise feel imposing or intimidating. Good lighting can also help to brighten the room. If patrons are required to leave their belongings at the entrance, you should provide sufficient cubbies or locker spaces to demonstrate that their belongings and electronic devices will have a clean, dedicated place to remain while they are inside. Maintaining clear sightlines at security (and within the programming spaces) will help to ensure the safety of patrons and keep track of both fixed and portable technology and equipment.

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Security Area

As venues that represent the core values of the United States, American Spaces can set a strong precedent by maximizing accessibility. The space should be wheelchair accessible—either at ground or via a compliant ramp—and ideally, if the space is more than one floor, there will be an elevator. Without an elevator, the first floor should be able to host the maximum types of programs (discussions, lectures, films, EducationUSA advising, etc.). At least one bathroom stall should be wheelchair accessible.

It's sometimes difficult to identify accessible spaces abroad, but here are a few general rules of thumb to keep in mind:

- **Doors and Hallways:** For a wheelchair, the clear width of a single door needs to be 32 inches / 81 centimeters wide. Ideally, hallways that are 5 feet / 1.5 meters wide provide room for maneuvering in the space.
- **Ramp Accessibility:** Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires a clear width of 36 inches / 91 centimeters between handrails. Typically, the maximum slope for a ramp is 1 foot : 12 inches (.3 meter : 3.6 meters)—for each foot of rise, 12 feet of horizontal run is required. Landings are required if the rise is greater than 30 inches / .7 meter. Depending on the amount of space available, a chair lift may be the best option to provide access to the space.
- **Bathrooms:** Bathrooms have a number of regulations regarding grab bars, how toilets are mounted, and clearances; however, it's most important to provide enough space for a wheelchair to maneuver. Generally, 60 inches / 1.5 meter diameter of open space is a good rule of thumb to allow someone to turn around comfortably in the space.

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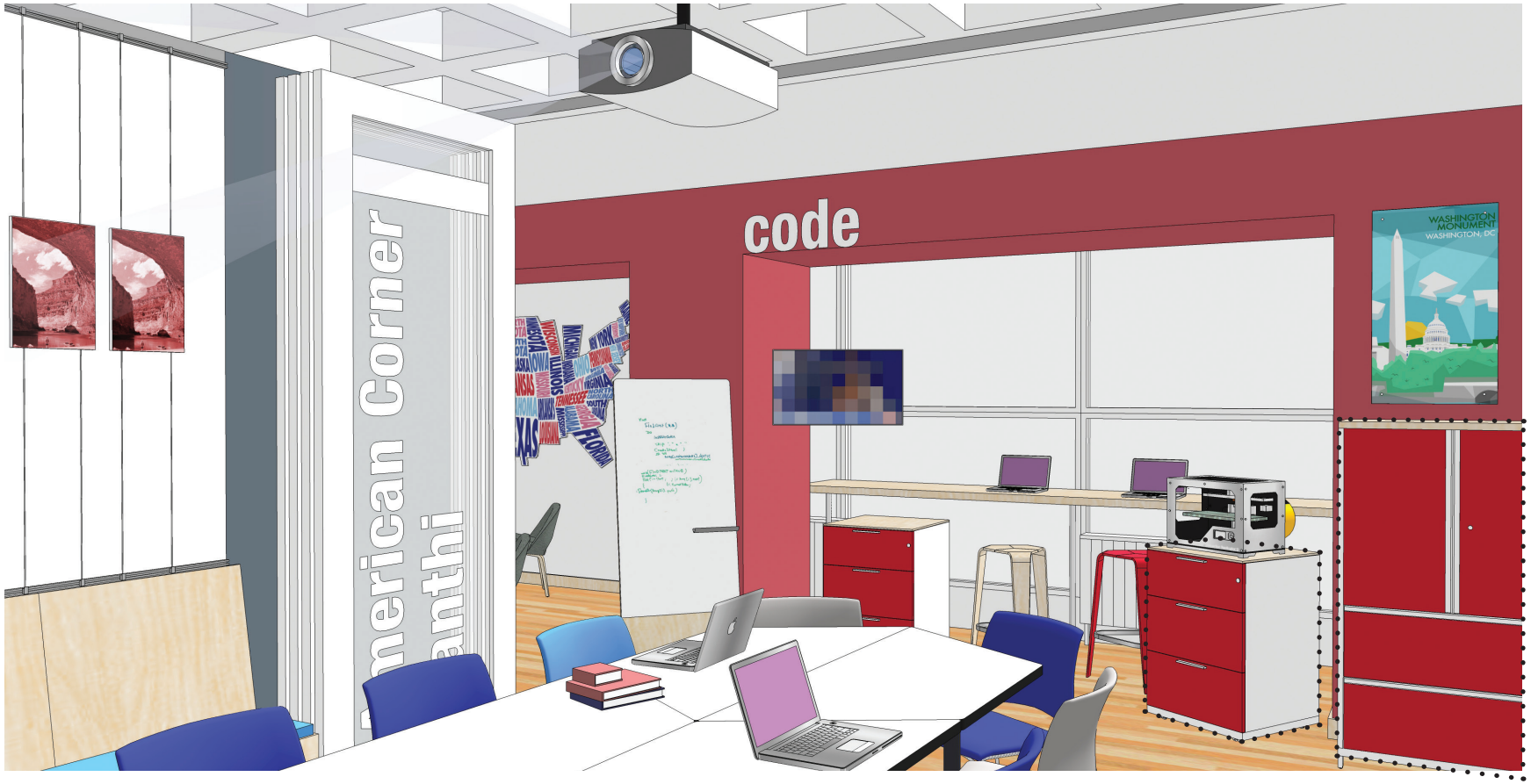
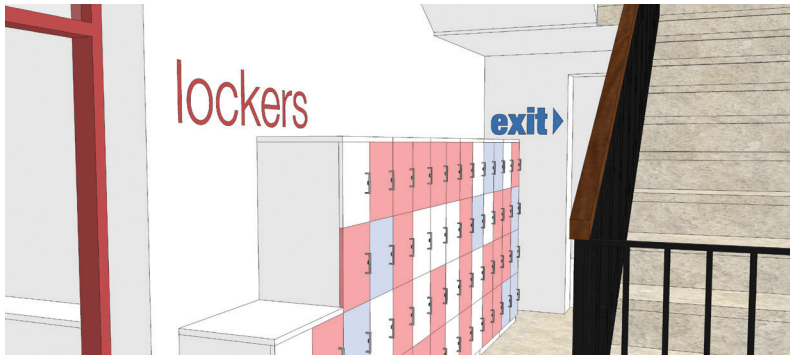
Accommodating People with Disabilities





Since programming and event space is at a premium, it's important to carve out designated storage spaces to promote the multi-functional use of your space. A room or space of approximately 3 x 5 meters should provide ample storage for unused stacking chairs and folding/nesting tables. Invest in a chair cart to make moving those stacked chairs even easier! For more expensive pieces of equipment, a lockable storage area or mobile locking storage unit provides an added level of security.

Furniture and Equipment Storage

Not all spaces are able to accommodate explicitly American signage outside. When possible, a vibrant and simple greeting—whether through use of color, lighting, or signage—is inviting to visitors, including to passersby who may not have been aware of the space. This signage may be in the form of colored Plexiglas, a wash of colored light, vinyl banners, flags, or signage that can be taken down when necessary. It's important to consult with the building owner and local zoning regulations for specific guidelines or modifications to the exterior of the building.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS
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Exterior Signage

The Smithsonian designed a suite of more than 30 high-resolution, colorful "super-graphics" that represent America through iconic images, monuments, notable Americans and inspiring quotations, and collages. These graphics can be used to enliven walls, doors, pillars, windows, hallways, or posters. Graphics can be enlarged to cover an entire wall or brighten a corner or smaller area. For additional guidance and inspiration for applying graphics to your space, please see the Graphics Guide in the Appendix.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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Use of Graphics

If you are lucky enough to be somewhere with ample sunshine and temperate weather (even if just for part of the year!), consider how valuable outdoor space can be. With weather-resistant furniture—tables with or without an umbrella and seating—you can host many programs outside. A stage or platform could be dedicated to concerts, talent shows, cultural demonstrations, or speakers, while a portable screen can be used for evening film screenings.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS
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Outdoor Space

Final Thoughts

Many people have gone through this process before you, and though every site has unique qualities and peculiarities, you should use your colleagues and existing resources as helpful references. The Office of American Spaces **SharePoint site** (http://iip.r.state.sbu/sites/rca/AS/Pages/ModelAmericanSpaces.aspx) has sample scopes of work, information about engaging architecture and engineering firms, and more.* You can also reach out to OBO and the Office of American Spaces for guidance. As you begin envisioning your ideal American Space, please check out the Smithsonian's *Idea Book 2.0* for inspiration; it is a great starting point for thinking about different room configurations and design challenges. Visit the American Spaces website to keep us posted on how you've incorporated these ideas and overcome your own design challenges!

** This internal website is currently available to USG staff. Non-USG partners should contact their Embassy liaison for more information on accessing these resources.*

Conclusion

Appendix

ABLA – Association of Binational Centers of Latin America

AC – American Corner or American Center

ACAO – Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer

ADA – Americans with Disabilities Act

BNC – Binational Center

DVC – Digital Video Conference

ECA – Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs

FSO – Foreign Service Officer

GSO – General Services Officer

ICS – Integrated Country Strategy

IIP – Bureau of International Information Programs

IRC – Information Resource Center

IRM – Bureau of Information Resource Management

IRO – Information Resource Officer

LE – Locally Employed

MOOC – Massive Open Online Course

MOU – Memorandum of Understanding

OBO – Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

OER – Open Educational Resources

PDIP – Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan

REAC – Regional Educational Advising Coordinator

RELO – Regional English Language Officer

RSO – Regional Security Officer

SI – Smithsonian Institution

STEAM – Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math

USG – United States Government

WHA – Western Hemisphere Affairs

YALI – Young African Leaders Initiative

YSEALI – Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative

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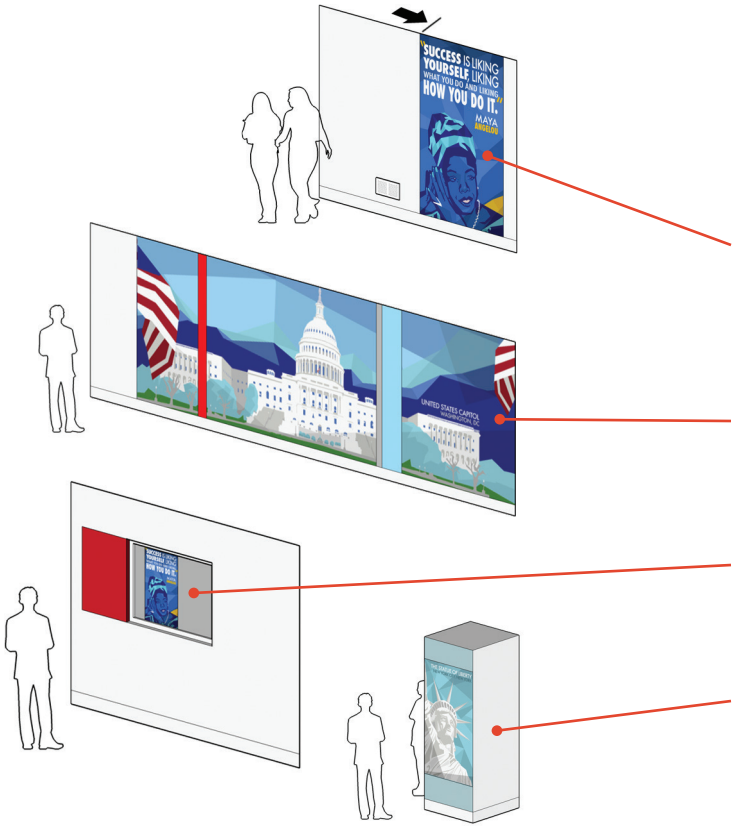
List of Acronyms

How should you apply graphics to your space? When it comes to wall graphics, a little planning goes a long way! Follow these pointers to make your space look incredible and bold.



1 **Measure Twice, Print Once.**
Measuring your wall space is crucial when deciding where to put graphics. Figure out the size of the area you want the graphic to occupy (Is it floor to ceiling? Is it the side of a column?) and measure the surface. If you scale the images to fit a wall, maintain the proportions by using a common factor: if you double the width, double the height so the image doesn't appear warped when printed.

2 **Don't go it alone!**
It's best to involve a local print shop and experienced installer when printing and hanging graphics. If one isn't available, ask a friend with steady hands and a keen eye to help make sure the graphics look their best. A level and a tape measure will come in handy to ensure graphics are displayed evenly.

3 **Smooth Surfaces are Superior.**
Be careful of light switches and outlets when figuring out where to place your graphics. Nothing ruins an image like an air conditioner through the center.

4 **Long wall? No problem.**
Long wall surfaces can become bold murals that help define a room.

5 **Windows: A Clear Solution.**
Graphics can be printed on translucent window clings for a fun light effect or in place of heavy window coverings.

6 **Look to the architecture.**
Sometimes the building's features can provide the perfect spaces for graphics. Look for opportunities like large columns or alcoves to bring in some color!

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS
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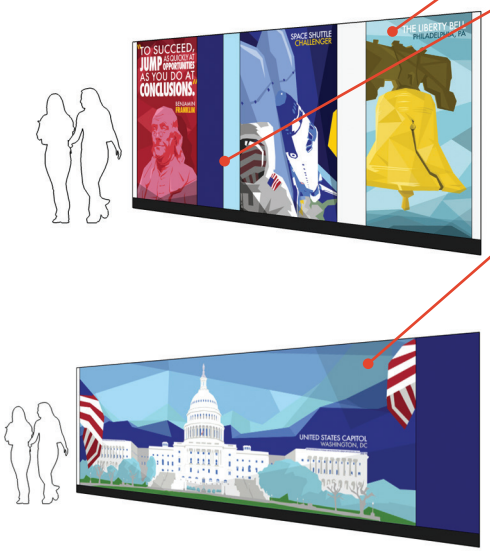
All of these graphics are free to use and free of restrictions, so browse through eShop to find the perfect graphics to bring color and excitement to your space!



7 **Big, Bold, and Beautiful!**
Size matters, and these graphics are intended to be big and bold! Filling the wall with large-scale images can have a huge impact and transform the space.

8 **Plays well with others.**
The graphics were designed as a group to work together in your space. Mix and match images to create a graphic gallery wall!

9 **Extra space? One word: Color.**
When applying your graphics, you might have some extra space left over between the images in your layout. Use paint stripes in a compatible color to finish up the wall and make it look great.

10 **Leave it to the professionals.**
It's always best to work with a local printer to produce the graphics you've chosen for your space. Keep in mind that materials vary by country so working with a local printer will provide you the most useful advice on which materials and adhesives will work best in your space. Sample materials include: vinyl, Perspex, and low-texture canvas.

11 **Color Test.**
Printed colors can vary based on the type of material you choose. Ask your local printer to show you material samples and request samples of small printed segments of the graphics you've selected so you can ensure that colors are correct before printing is finalized.

12 **Where to go.**
Download the graphics via the Smithsonian page of the American Spaces website: https://americanspaces.state.gov/smithsonian/graphics

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Public Affairs staff, American Spaces staff and Information Resources Officers should work together to assess the American Spaces.

The Office of American Spaces sets standards that enable posts to gain information and insight about the capabilities of their American Spaces in areas that are most relevant to advancing their policy goals and to assess needs for improvement. Posts conduct *their own* assessments of their American Spaces by choosing the level (labeled bronze, silver or gold) that *they* believe best describes how their American Spaces meet each of the elements. Posts report their ratings when applying for American Spaces Support Funds.

Public Affairs staff, American Spaces staff and Information Resources Officers should work together to assess the American Spaces. Posts should make notes identifying plans for improvement on target elements if needed, including whether funding is needed to realize the objectives. If local conditions make the bronze level impractical or impossible to meet on some of the elements, posts should explain this in the notes. Support funds requests should be tied to developing American Spaces along the guidelines set out in the standards. *Note: These standards apply to all USG- and partner-operated American Spaces. Standards were last updated January 1, 2016.*

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

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The Standards for American Spaces

STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: PROGRAMS

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Information about the USA: *Strategic Programming*	Programs are linked to the Integrated Country Strategy (ICS) goals and Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP). For non-USG American Spaces, post collaborates closely with partner.	Programs are linked to the ICS goals and PDIP. For non-USG American Spaces, post collaborates closely with partner.	Programs are linked to the ICS goals and PDIP. For non-USG American Spaces, post collaborates closely with partner as needed.
Information about the USA: *IIP Products*	Space uses IIP products (ShareAmerica, publications, speakers, posters, etc.) as part of program development.	Space uses IIP products (ShareAmerica, publications, speakers, posters, etc.) as part of program development. Space uses at least 2 IIP products relevant to mission goals or the 5 core programs per month.	Space uses IIP products (ShareAmerica, publications, speakers, posters, etc.) as part of program development. Space uses at least 2 IIP products relevant to mission goals or the 5 core programs per month.
Information about the USA: *Onsite Programs*	Space holds 12 in-person policy-related programs about the United States per year. These include target-of-opportunity or mission speakers, presentations highlighting U.S. bilateral issues, eLibraryUSA briefings and programs demonstrating concepts such as civil society, entrepreneurship, human rights, etc. Emphasis is on series or regular programming, than one-off programs.	Space holds 13–26 in-person policy-related programs about the United States per year. These include target-of-opportunity or mission speakers, presentations highlighting U.S. bilateral issues, eLibraryUSA briefings and programs demonstrating concepts such as civil society, entrepreneurship, human rights, etc. Emphasis is on series or regular programming.	Space holds more than 26 in-person policy-related programs about the United States per year. These include target-of-opportunity or mission speakers, presentations highlighting U.S. bilateral issues, eLibraryUSA briefings and programs demonstrating concepts such as civil society, entrepreneurship, human rights, etc. Emphasis is on series or regular programming.
Information about the USA: *Virtual Programs*	Space participates in virtual programs—digital video conferences, IIP webchats/viewing parties or other types of digital programs, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). Space connects to programming produced or provided by American Spaces that serve as the country/regional hubs.	Space participates in 3–4 virtual programs—digital video conferences, IIP webchats/viewing parties or other types of digital programs, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), per year. Space connects to programming produced or provided by the American Spaces that serve as country/regional hubs and occasionally leads or sponsors a virtual program.	Space organizes live audiences to participate in or originates 6–12 virtual programs—digital video conferences, IIP webchats/viewing parties or other types of digital programs, such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), per year. Space serves as country or regional hub for producing and marketing virtual programming.
Information about the USA: *eLibraryUSA*	Space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. Space provides information to users about requesting personal access.	Space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. Space conducts training sessions with target audiences on eLibraryUSA resources and provides information to users about requesting personal access.	Space makes eLibraryUSA available on its computers and promotes this resource with signs and brochures. Space conducts training sessions with target audiences on eLibraryUSA resources. Space integrates eLibraryUSA resources into its programming and provides information to users about requesting personal access.
English Language Learning	Space provides opportunity for self-study to improve English through access to current high-quality English-language materials and online resources.	Space offers activities in English and access to English-language speakers and high-quality materials. Resources are available for improving English at a self-managed pace with guidance from or interaction with staff.	Space provides consistent, progressive programming and access to high-quality English resources that enable English learning through training or usage. Space has a strategic plan for English-language learning. Space includes critical thinking skills and U.S. foreign policy objectives in English-language learning activities. Space offers access to trained teachers. Programs in English are designed and implemented by qualified English-teaching professionals.

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STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: PROGRAMS

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
EducationUSA	Space makes EducationUSA materials (books, links to EducationUSA website, brochures, etc.) available to visitors and has an eShop Bronze ($500) educational advising collection that is updated at least every three years. Staff refers students to an EducationUSA advisor in country for in-depth advising.	Space makes EducationUSA materials (books, links to EducationUSA website, brochures, etc.) available to visitors and has an eShop Silver ($750) educational advising collection that is updated at least every three years. At least one staff member has completed the New Adviser Orientation training online and/or has received training from a senior EducationUSA adviser or REAC. Space maintains contact with a senior EducationUSA adviser in country.	Space is designated as an EducationUSA advising center, makes EducationUSA materials (books, links to EducationUSA website, brochures, etc.) available to visitors and has an eShop Gold ($1,000) educational advising collection that is updated at least every three years. A trained EducationUSA adviser has an office/area on site, hosts group information sessions and is part of the global EducationUSA network. The adviser assists students, receives U.S. higher education visitors, participates in outreach to local institutions and conducts virtual consultations.**
Alumni Activities	Space invites alumni to participate in events and to speak 2–4 times per year.	Space provides a meeting area for alumni associations (YALI, YSEALI or other country- or region-specific groups) and invites alumni to speak 5–7 times per year.	Space provides a meeting area for alumni associations (YALI, YSEALI or other country- or region-specific groups) and invites alumni to speak 8 or more times per year. Space serves as a partner for alumni projects.
Community Engagement	Space organizes and promotes 6-12 engagement programs per year. Examples include activities involving food, sports, visual arts, music, makerspaces, traveling speakers, IIP's themed poster/art exhibits, Smithsonian materials, etc.	Space organizes and promotes 13–26 engagement programs per year. Examples include activities involving food, sports, visual arts, music, makerspaces, traveling speakers, IIP's themed poster/art exhibits, Smithsonian materials, etc.	Space organizes and promotes more than 26 engagement programs per year. Examples include activities involving food, sports, visual arts, music, makerspaces, traveling speakers, IIP's themed poster/art exhibits, Smithsonian materials, etc. Space forms and maintains partnerships with local ministries or government offices in the community.

** It is possible that a program will incorporate two or more of the five core program elements. For instance, an alumna could lead a cultural program or English conversation club.*

*** In some countries, there are fee-based Educational Advisors at our partner institutions. In those spaces, we are not competing.*

STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: MANAGEMENT

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Staff: *English Proficiency*	Staff has 2/2 or higher English language skills.	Staff has 3/3 or higher English language skills and education equivalent to a two-year university degree.	Staff has 4/4 or higher English language skills and education equivalent to a 4-year or advanced university degree.
Staff: *Programming Capacity*	Staff organizes the 5 core programs incorporating basic policy themes. Partners may need some embassy assistance.	Staff organizes the 5 core programs incorporating foreign policy objectives. Partners need little or no embassy assistance.	Staff independently implements the 5 core programs incorporating foreign policy objectives in line with guidance provided from post.
Staff: *Training*	Staff has been trained by the embassy or consulate. Staff has participated in at least one workshop.	Staff has been trained by the embassy or consulate and/or the IRO/RELO/REAC. Staff also participates in organized workshops either in country or abroad and has participated in a partner-organized training program.	Staff has been trained by the embassy or consulate and/or the IRO/RELO/REAC. One or more staff members serve as trainers in organized workshops and have participated in one or more partner-organized training programs.
Staff: *Embassy and Host Institution Oversight*	Embassy/consulate or host institution dedicates the equivalent of at least 20% of one locally employed (LE) or non-U.S. government (non-USG) staff to the American Space. One permanent American direct-hire Foreign Service officer (FSO) provides regular oversight and guidance. FSO has management oversight written into work requirements. Embassy takes a "whole of mission" approach to the American Space.	Embassy/consulate or host institution dedicates the equivalent of 40% LE or non-USG full-time staff to the American Space. One permanent American direct-hire FSO supervises staff or is significantly involved in oversight. Other embassy or consulate staff visits quarterly. Embassy takes a "whole of mission" approach to the American Space.	Embassy/consulate or host institution dedicates the equivalent of 50% or more full-time LE or non-USG staff to the American Space. One permanent American direct-hire FSO supervises staff or is significantly involved in oversight. Other embassy or consulate staff visits weekly or monthly and regularly provides speakers. Embassy takes a "whole of mission" approach to the American Space.
IRO Involvement	IRO advises posts on their American Spaces, including reviewing support funds requests.	IRO advises posts on their American Spaces, including reviewing support funds requests.	IRO advises posts on their American Spaces, including reviewing support funds requests.
Funding	Budget is tied to mission and public diplomacy goals. If the American Space is hosted, post and partner contribute funds and resources.	Budget is tied to mission and public diplomacy goals. If the American Space is hosted, post and partner contribute funds and resources.	Budget is tied to mission and public diplomacy goals. If the American Space is hosted, post and partner contribute funds and resources.
Copyright and Intellectual Property	Space honors intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to user groups.	Space honors intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to user groups.	Space honors intellectual property rights. Database license terms are followed and communicated to user groups.
Planning	Staff, with collaboration between post and partner if applicable, writes annual plan for resource development and programming. Space uses 5 core programs to plan initiatives and activities noted in the Mission Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP) at least annually.	Staff, with collaboration between post and partner if applicable, writes annual plan for resource development and programming. Space uses 5 core programs to plan initiatives and activities noted in the Mission Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP). Post reviews plan at least annually.	Staff, with collaboration between post and partner if applicable, writes annual plan for resource development and programming. Space uses 5 core programs to plan initiatives and activities noted in the Mission Public Diplomacy Implementation Plan (PDIP). Post reviews plan at least annually. Plan specifies quarterly implementations.
Reporting	Staff submits monthly reports on numbers of visitors, programs and attendees on time with no errors. Public Affairs updates appropriate databases monthly.	Staff submits monthly reports on numbers of visitors, programs and attendees on time with no errors. Public Affairs updates appropriate databases monthly.	Staff submits monthly reports on numbers of visitors, programs and attendees on time with no errors. Public Affairs updates appropriate databases monthly.

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STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: MANAGEMENT

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Evaluation	Staff responds to evaluation surveys and requests from post or Washington by stated deadline.	Staff responds to evaluation surveys and requests from post or Washington by stated deadline. Staff seeks informal feedback from audiences on programs and resources.	Staff responds to evaluation surveys and requests from post or Washington by stated deadline. Staff designs and uses evaluations to formally solicit feedback from audiences on programs and resources. Responses are used to develop future programs and resources. Feedback results are regularly reported.
Internal Communication	Staff monitors relevant listservs (e.g. AC Staff, Regional-IRC, PANAM-PARTNERS). Staff has joined department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff monitors relevant listservs (e.g. AC Staff, Regional-IRC, PANAM-PARTNERS). Staff has joined department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group.	Staff monitors and contributes to relevant listservs (e.g. AC Staff, Regional-IRC, PANAM-PARTNERS). Staff has joined department-managed social media groups, including the American Spaces Facebook group and Makers in American Spaces Google+ group.
Hours per week American Spaces are staffed and open to the public	20–30	31–40	More than 40

STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: PARTNER MANAGEMENT

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
American Corners Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)	Current signed MOU on file in the appropriate database.	Current signed MOU on file in the appropriate database.	Current signed MOU on file in the appropriate database.
Binational Center Governance and Finances	**Board of directors** or executive board is established and bylaws published or made available.	**Board of directors** or executive board is established and bylaws published or made available.	**Board of directors** or executive board is established and bylaws published or made available.
	Board elections are transparent. Terms of service are defined for each member, and turnover is regular.	**Board elections** are transparent. Terms of service are defined for each member, and turnover is regular.	**Board elections** are transparent. Terms of service are defined for each member, and turnover is regular.
			In WHA, BNC is an active member of the **Association of Binational Centers of Latin America (ABLA)**.
	BNC provides **merit-based scholarships** for low-income students when financially feasible, including work-study.	BNC provides **merit-based scholarships** for low-income students when financially feasible, including work-study.	BNC provides **merit-based scholarships** for low-income students when financially feasible, including work-study.
	BNC bank account is in the institution's (not a person's) name. BNC is financially solvent and stable.	**BNC bank account** is in the institution's (not a person's) name. BNC is financially solvent and stable.	**BNC bank account** is in the institution's (not a person's) name. BNC is financially solvent and stable.

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION PROGRAMS

AMERICAN SPACES

Smithsonian Institution

STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: DIGITAL TOOLS AND SKILLS

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Social Media	Space is promoted on post's social media channels.	Space staff actively manages one or more social media accounts.	Space is active on multiple social media platforms and promotes IIP products, post activities, USG initiatives or other information about the United States. Space has a lively community, manages its own content and monitors metrics.
Direct Marketing	Space has a generic email address (not an individual account) that identifies and helps market it.	Space has a generic email address (not an individual account) that identifies and helps market it. Space has a comprehensive digital strategy to reach target audiences.	Space has a generic email address (not an individual account) that identifies and helps market it. Space has a comprehensive digital strategy to reach target audiences, evaluates metrics and adjusts campaigns accordingly.
Technology Proficiency	Staff has basic understanding of word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software and the Internet, and has knowledge of social media. For troubleshooting other than basic technology problems, staff needs outside help.	Staff is adept in word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software, the Internet and social media. Staff can troubleshoot many technology problems.	Staff is highly skilled in word-processing, spreadsheet and presentation software, the Internet, social media, eLibraryUSA, Open Educational Resources/Massive Open Online Courses (OERs/MOOCs), multimedia and fabrication (makerspace) technology. Staff can troubleshoot most technology problems. Staff can mentor patrons in technology skills.
Internet Connection	Connection is less than 2 Mbit/s.	Connection is at least 2 Mbit/s.	Connection is best available with unlimited bandwidth.
Wi-Fi		Wi-Fi reaches all public access areas with few limitations.	Wi-Fi reaches all public access areas with no limitations.
Tech Support	Space has access to qualified routine tech support; service can be contracted.	Space has access to qualified routine tech support; service can be contracted. A staff person has skill level to recommend technology improvements.	Space has access to qualified routine tech support; service can be contracted. A staff person has skill level to recommend technology improvements and train or assist other staff and visitors in using technology.

STANDARDS FOR AMERICAN SPACES: PHYSICAL SPACE AND ACCESS

ELEMENTS	RATING LEVELS		
	BRONZE	SILVER	GOLD
Appearance: *Branding*	Name and branding are visible to the public.	Name and branding appear on all products (website, social media, print products, email signatures, etc.).	Name and branding appear on all products (website, social media, print products, email signatures, etc.) and are recognized by and known among the general public.
Appearance: *Signage*	Space has a clearly visible sign depicting name and relationship with embassy or consulate. U.S. flag or image is present.	Space and the building or complex that houses it have clearly visible signs depicting name and relationship with embassy or consulate. U.S. flag or image is present. Name is visible from the street.	Space and the building or complex that houses it have clearly visible signs depicting name and relationship with embassy or consulate. U.S. flag or image is highly visible. Name is visible from the street. Space has experimented with creative branding techniques (digital signboards, exhibits, etc.).
Appearance: *Décor*	Space is attractive and welcoming with elements reflecting the United States.	Space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. community center. Graphics, posters or framed art representing the United States adorn the walls.	Space is attractive and welcoming. Furniture and décor are modern and modeled after a U.S. community center. Permanent or temporary artwork representing the United States adorns the walls.
Physical Space	Space can accommodate daily flow of 20–30 visitors, and an area for programming is available. Space is maintained, cleaned regularly and has no safety issues. Lighting, electricity, heating and ventilation are adequate and reliable. Space can seat 30 people.	Space can accommodate daily flow of 40–50 visitors and hold programs. Space is maintained and regularly cleaned and inspected for safety. Lighting, electricity, heating and ventilation meet local standards. Separate areas, content or staff are provided for learning about the United States, English language and educational advising. Space can seat 50 or more people.	Space can accommodate daily flow of more than 60 visitors and hold programs. Space is maintained and regularly cleaned and inspected for safety. Lighting, electricity, heating and ventilation meet local standards. Separate areas, content or staff are provided for learning about the United States, English language and educational advising. Space can hold small and large programs in different formats. Space can seat 75 or more people.
Furnishings	Furniture meets basic needs for programming.	Furniture is modern and accommodates maximum number of visitors without overcrowding.	Furniture is modern and ample to easily accommodate maximum number of visitors.
Accessibility	Space is within commuting distance of business, government or university centers and is accessible by public transportation. Location, whether within or outside an embassy/consulate compound, allows physical public access. Accommodations are made for visitors with disabilities.	Space is within commuting distance of business, government or university centers and is accessible by public transportation. Location, whether within or outside an embassy/consulate compound, allows physical public access and is convenient to embassy/consulate staff. Visitor parking is available at minimum cost. Space accommodates wheelchairs and strives to be fully accessible.	Space is within commuting distance of business, government or university centers and is accessible by public transportation. Location, whether within or outside an embassy/consulate compound, allows physical public access, is convenient to embassy/consulate staff and is easily accessed by foot. Visitor parking is available at minimum cost. Space complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
Appointments	Security meets RSO requirements (local requirements for host institutions) without discouraging the public from seeking access. Admission requests made less than 24 hours in advance are accommodated.	Security meets RSO requirements (local requirements for host institutions). Staff collaborates with RSO (local equivalent for host institutions) to minimize barriers and streamline access procedures. Appointments are not required.	Security meets RSO requirements (local requirements for host institutions). Staff consistently and proactively collaborates with RSO (or local equivalent for host institutions) to minimize barriers and streamline access procedures. Appointments are not required.