

ENVISIONING AN

# American Space



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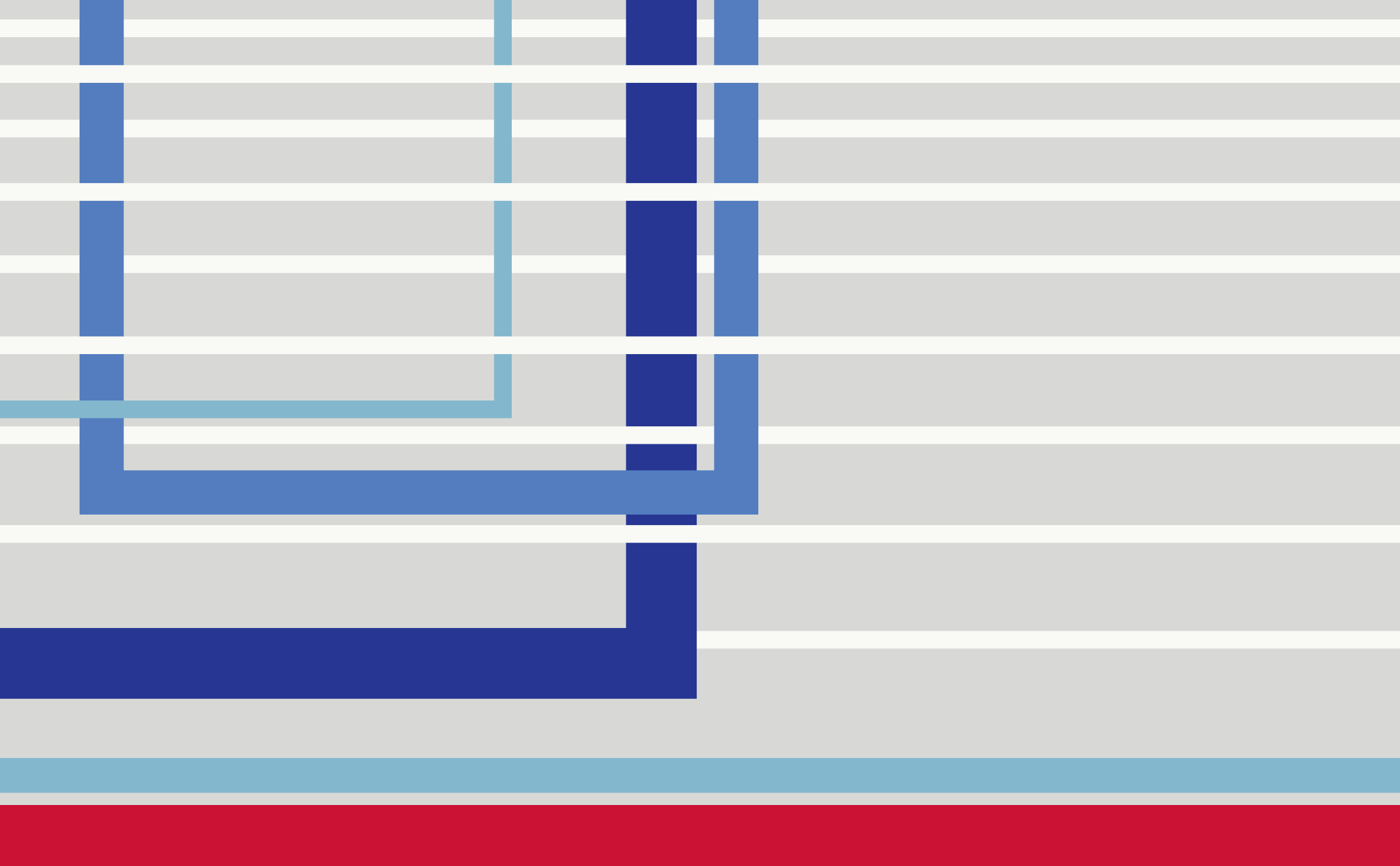


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# Contents



Introduction

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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.



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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
  - Bathrooms
  - Coat Closet
  - Janitor Closet
  - Lockers
  - Generators

# Model Template for American Spaces



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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.

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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, and
  - 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.** During regular business hours, visitors should be allowed in without an appointment or prior security access request, and visitors should not have to be badged.
- **Separate Security Screening.** Separate screening should be provided, so visitors do not have to wait in long lines.
- **Unescorted Access.** After appropriate screening, visitors should be allowed to access the American Space without an escort.
- **Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) Allowed.** Visitors may bring in their own devices and use them.
- **Wireless Internet Access.** Visitors should be able to connect their PEDs to a dedicated, free, and unfiltered Wi-Fi network in the Space at the best available bandwidth.



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# 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 in the [American Spaces Standards](#).

Thoughtful design choices allow spaces to be dynamic, flexible, and impactful programmatic platforms. For additional guidance and ideas for space design and renovations, please see the

Design ideas section and the Floor Plans section of the [American Spaces Collections website](#).

### **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 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 diplomacy 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 among the Public Diplomacy Section, Bureau of Diplomatic Technology (DT), General Services Office (GSO) and the Regional Security Officer (RSO) will maximize the skillsets needed to enhance and operate the range of Spaces supported by posts, the regional bureaus, and the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)—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, DT, OBO, and Management Sections.

Funding for partner Spaces will need a Grants Officer and Contracting Officer to oversee grants, cooperative agreements, and procurements.



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What is a Modern American Space? *(continued)*



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 **Six Pillars\***—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 Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) provides implementation assistance.

*\*For more information about the Six Pillars, please visit the Managing American Spaces website: <https://americanspaces.state.gov/six-pillars-american-spaces/>.*



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# Programming Needs Drive Facility Needs

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.

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

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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 Six Pillars 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.

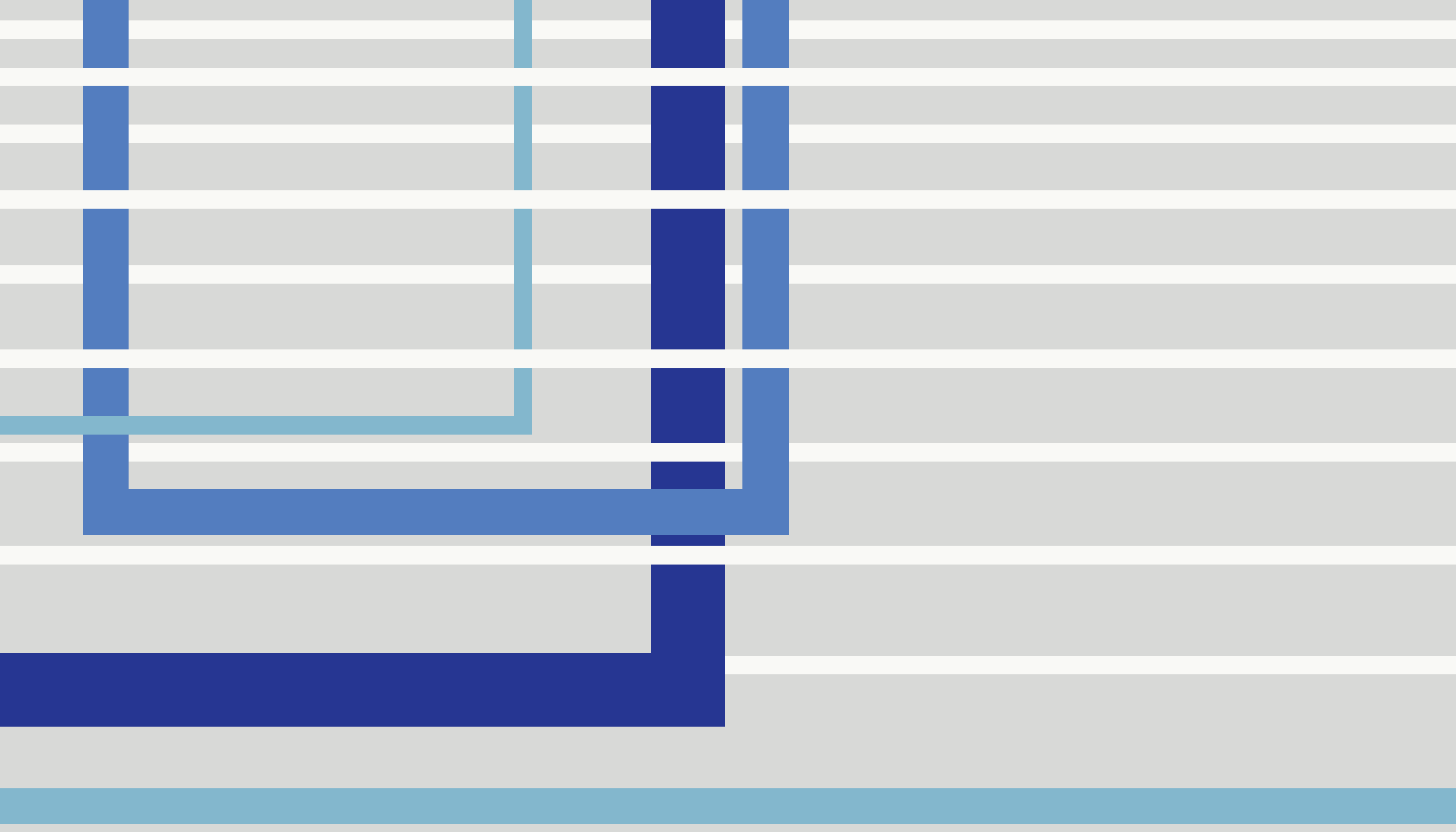


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# What is Bold and Dynamic Programming?



SMALL American Space

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## ADDITIONAL POTENTIAL FEATURES

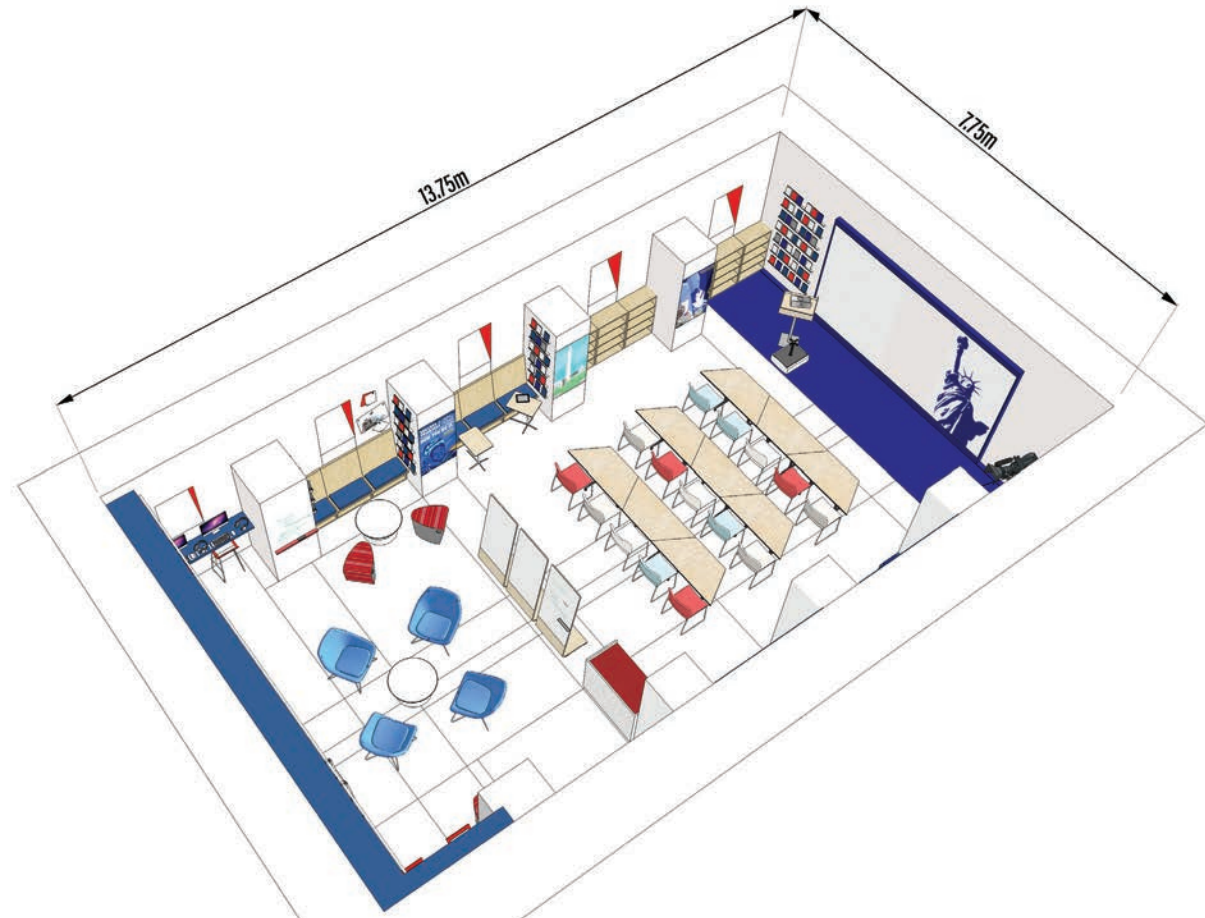
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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **SMALL** American SpaceAmerican  
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An American Space can be small, yet still effective as a public diplomacy platform. Even so, it is possible for a space to be too small to be 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 a larger 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.



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

A **small space** should be able to support programs associated with the Six Pillars and offer a variety of physical and digital programming, hosting at least **4 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 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 can also support a variety of virtual and in-person programming.



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### 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.



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## 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 the [Ideas Gallery](#) at the [American Spaces Collections](#) website.



Stacking Chair



Trapezoid Table



Mobile Whiteboard and/or Tackboard



Meridian Mobile Vertical Locking Storage Tower  
Herman Miller

KI



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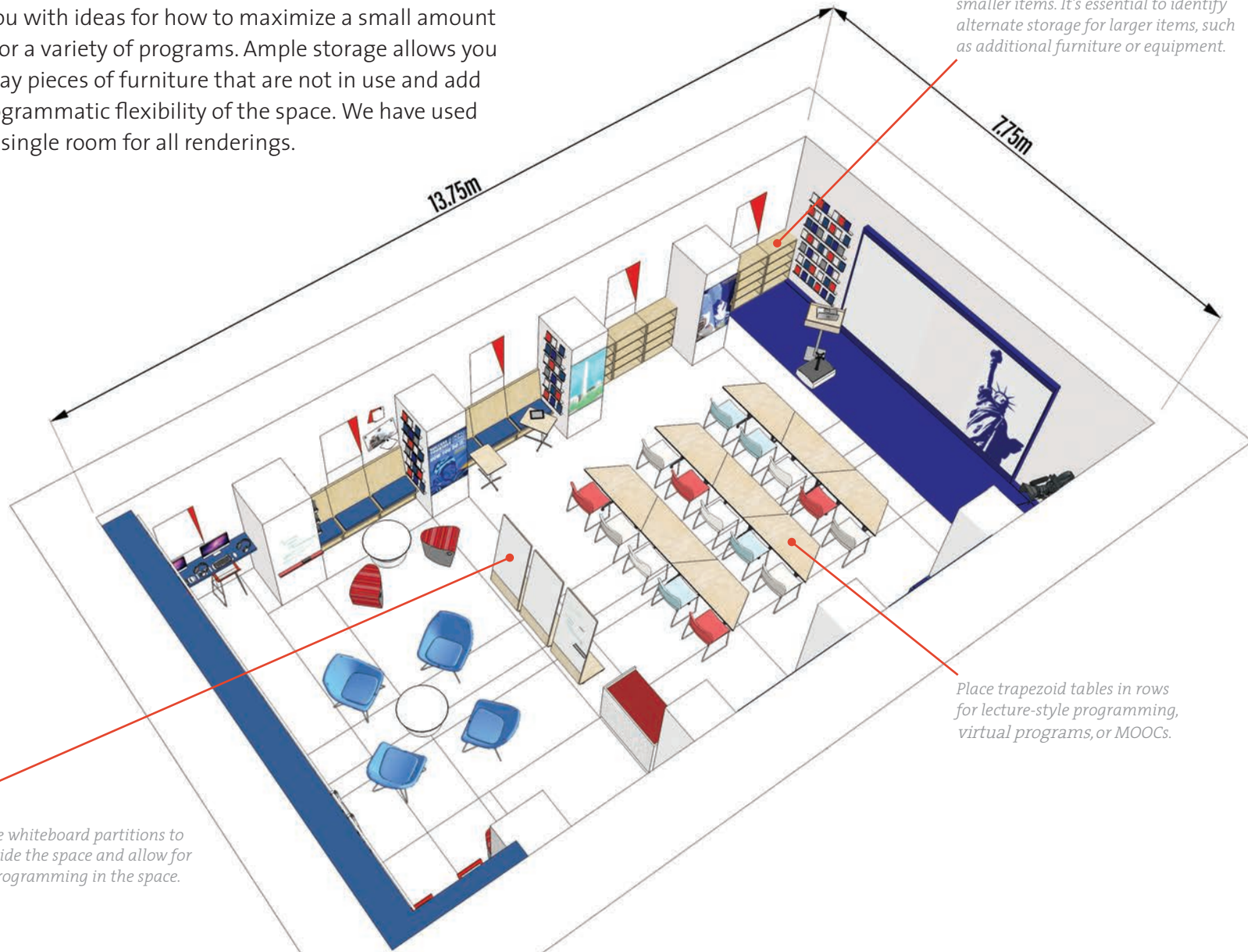


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The following design renderings of a **SMALL** American Space provide you with ideas for how to maximize a small amount of space for a variety of programs. Ample storage allows you to put away pieces of furniture that are not in use and add to the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

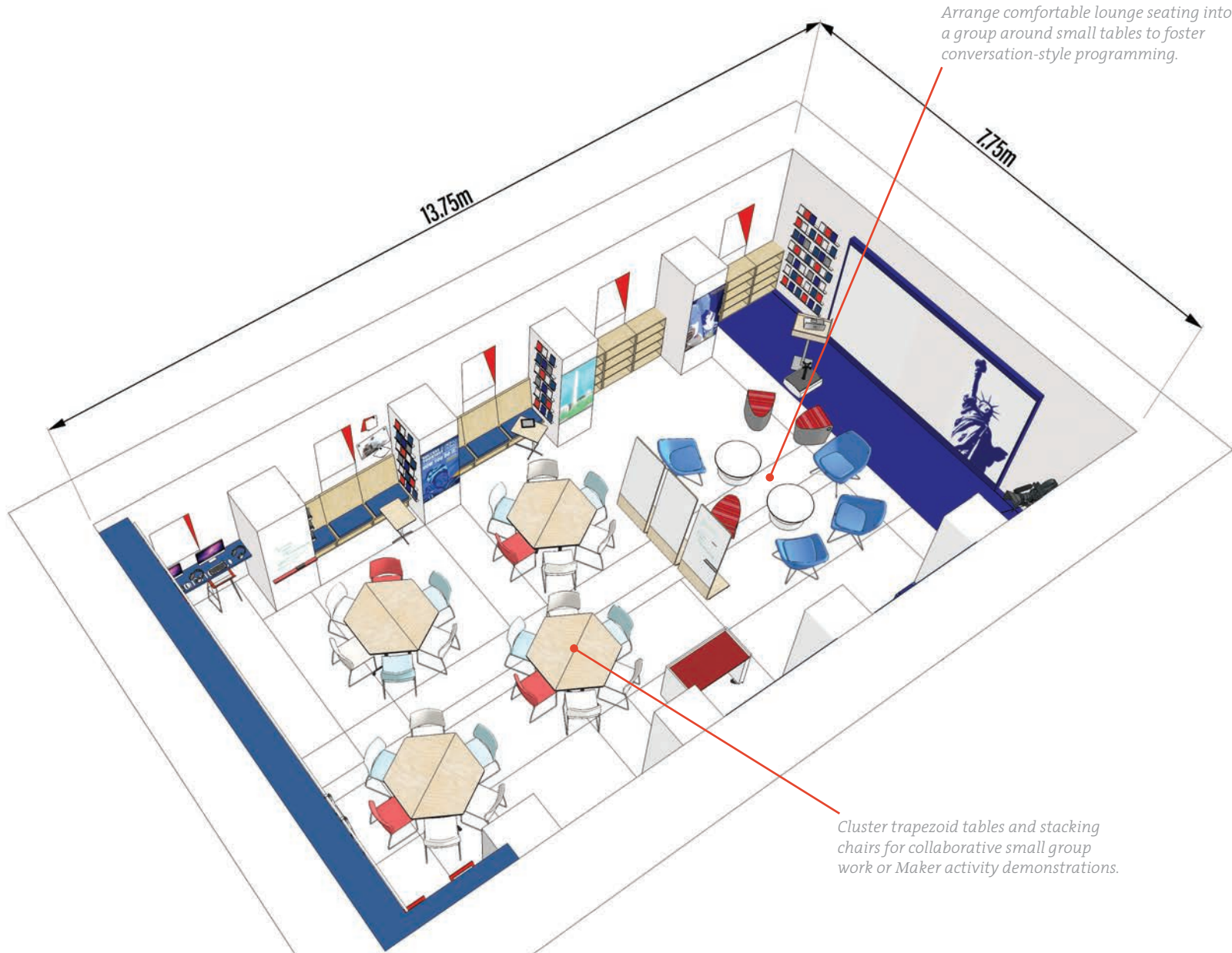
Simple shelving provides storage for smaller items. It's essential to identify alternate storage for larger items, such as additional furniture or equipment.



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

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

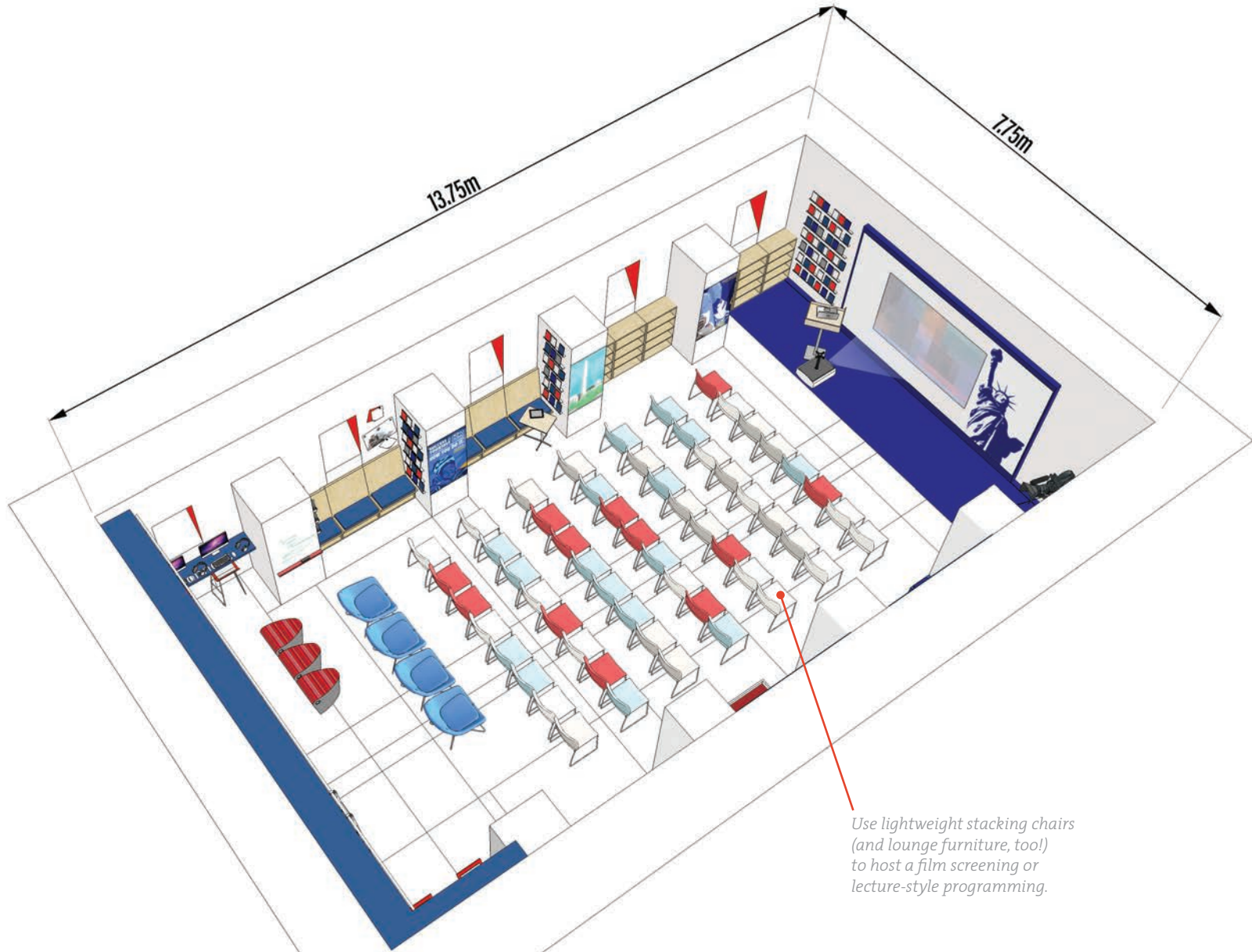




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American Corner Mostar is approximately 870 square feet / 80 square meters and consists of one room in the Mostar Gymnasium Complex.



**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.

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SMALL AMERICAN SPACE

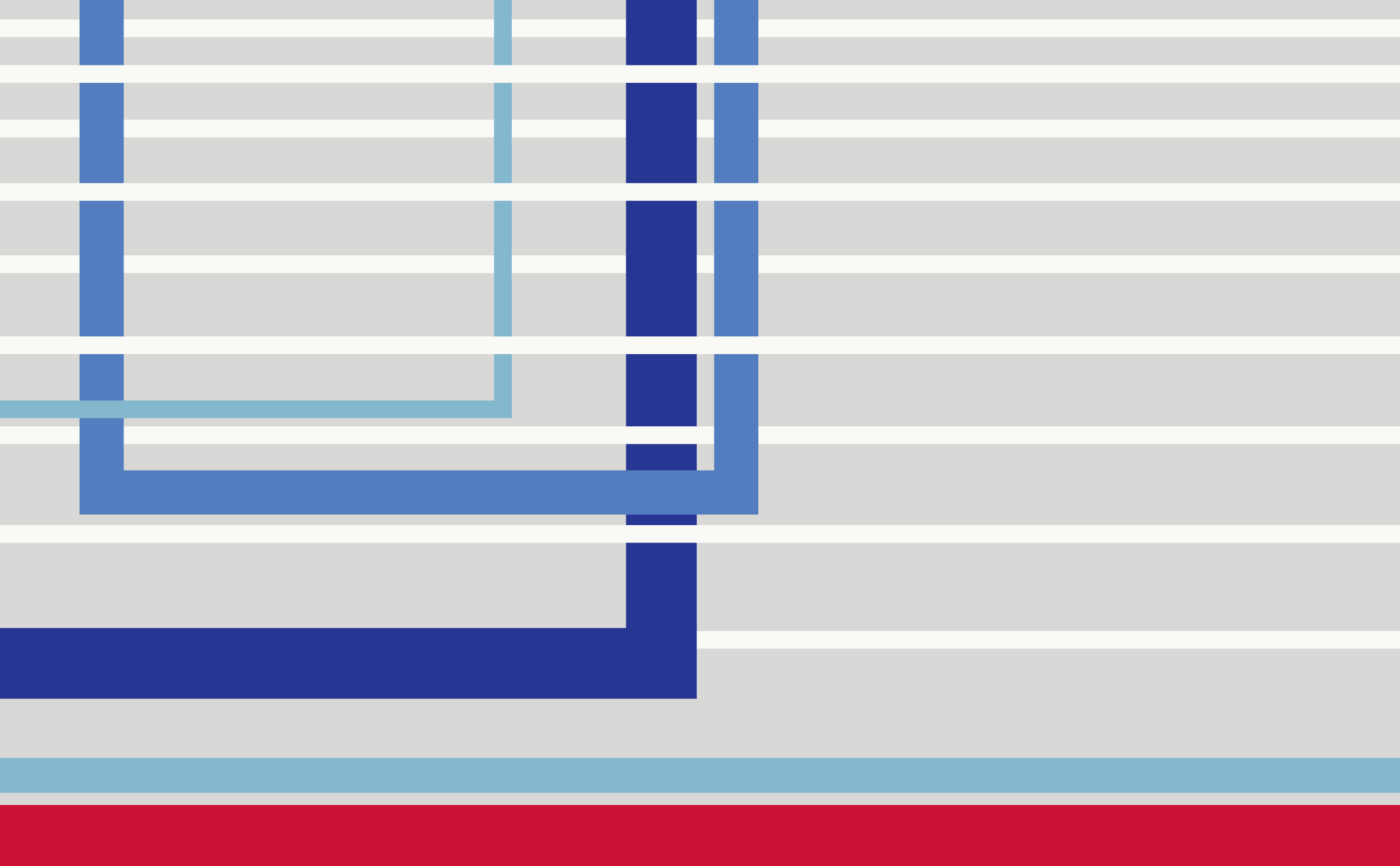


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## SMALL SPACE SPOTLIGHT American Corner Mostar



MEDIUM American Space



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# MODEL TEMPLATE FOR AMERICAN SPACES

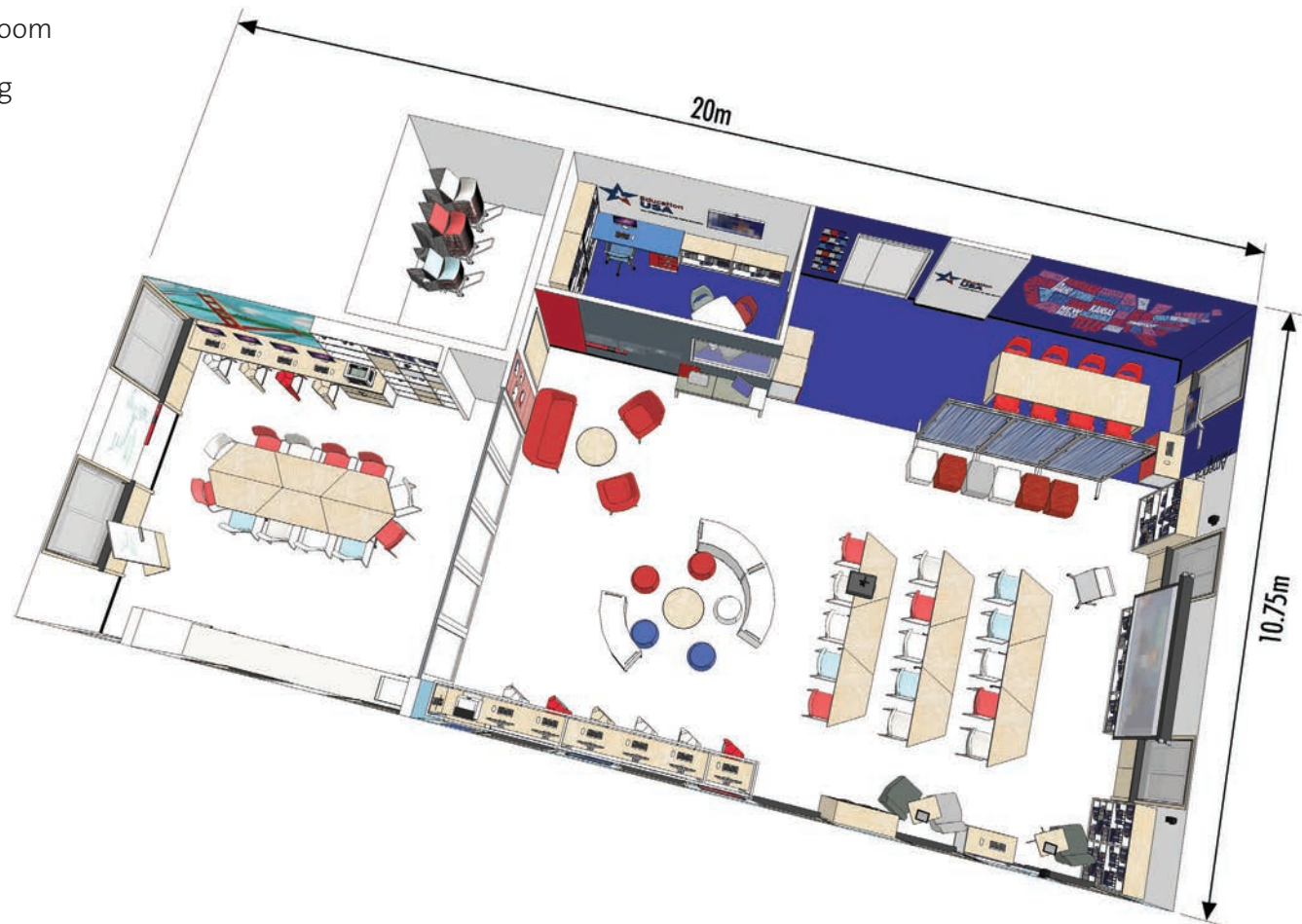
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	Assistant	Program Specialist	Deputy Administrator
	Technical Assistant	Visitor/Assistance Staff	Program Specialist — Educational Programs
		IT/AV Technician	Program Specialist — Cultural Programs
		Marketing/Social Media Manager	Program Specialist — STEAM Programs
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  - Bathrooms
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  - Janitor Closet
  - Lockers
  - Generators

## DESIGN BASICS FOR A MEDIUM American Space

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



A **medium space** should be able to support the programs in the Six Pillars 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.



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

- Introduce plenty of informal settings that can be rearranged 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 skills 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).



American  
Spaces



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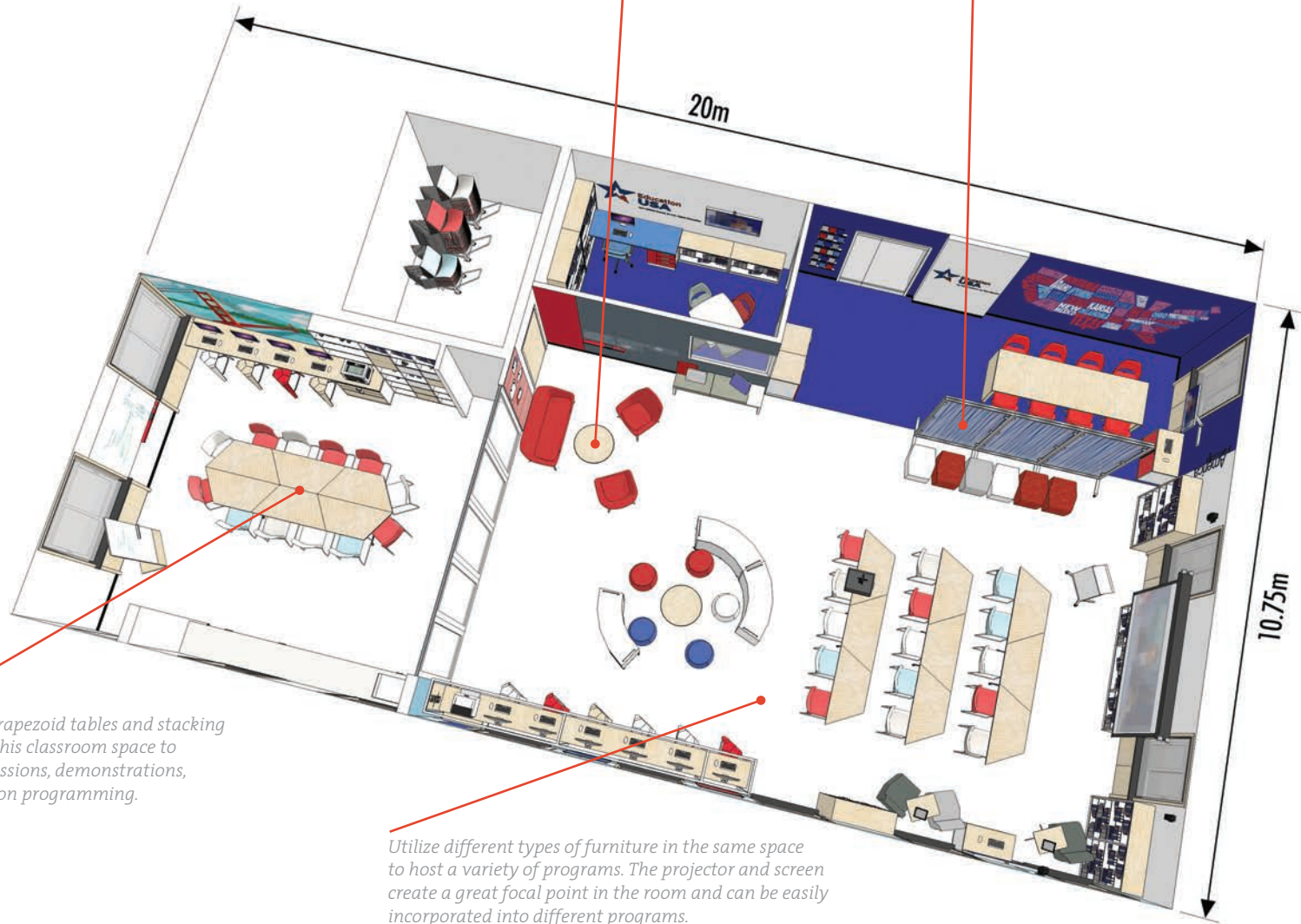
The following design renderings of a **MEDIUM** American Space provide you with ideas for how to maximize space for a variety of programs and events. We have used the same series of rooms for all renderings.

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.

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

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.



American Spaces



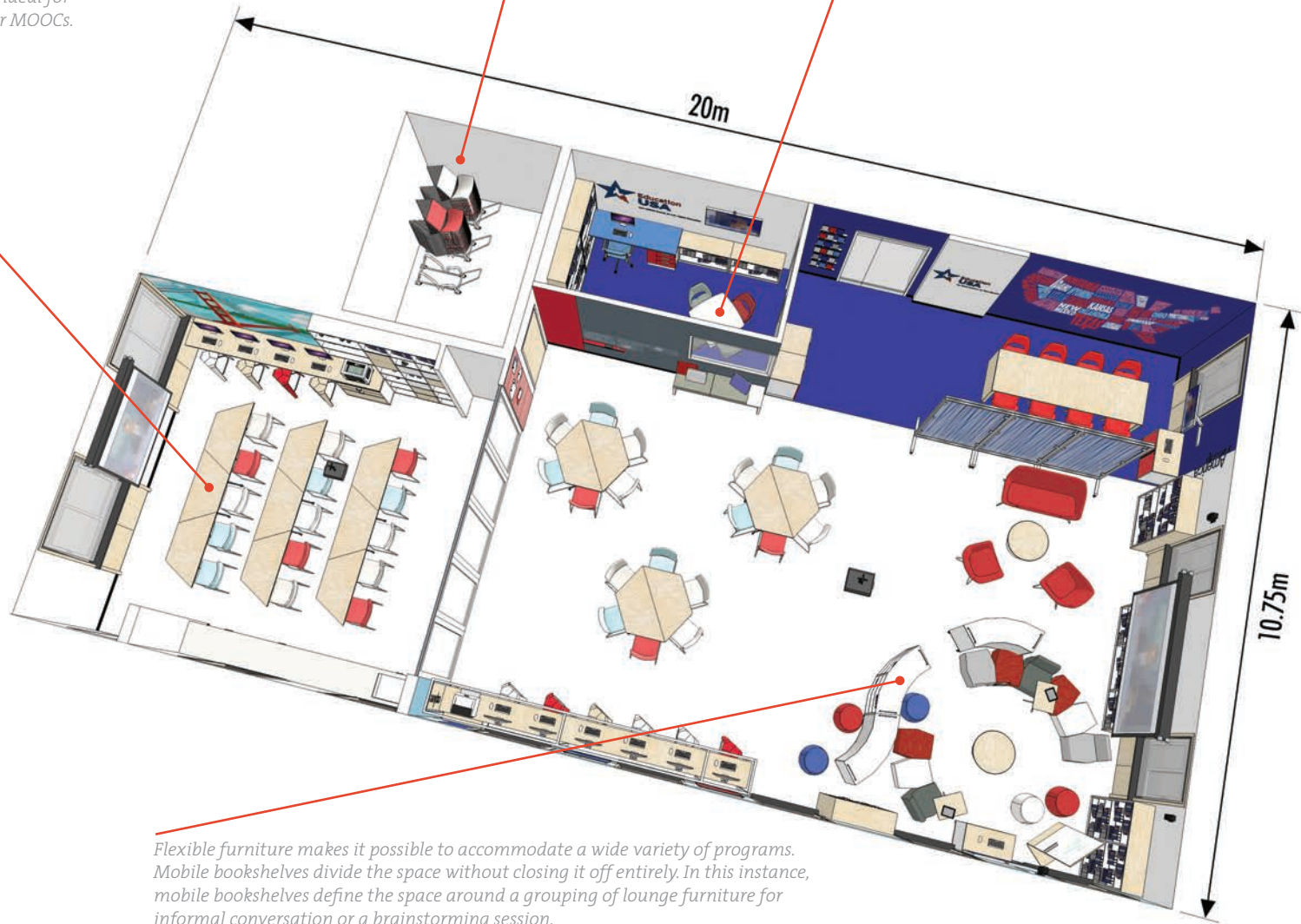
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## DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*

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

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

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.



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.



American Spaces

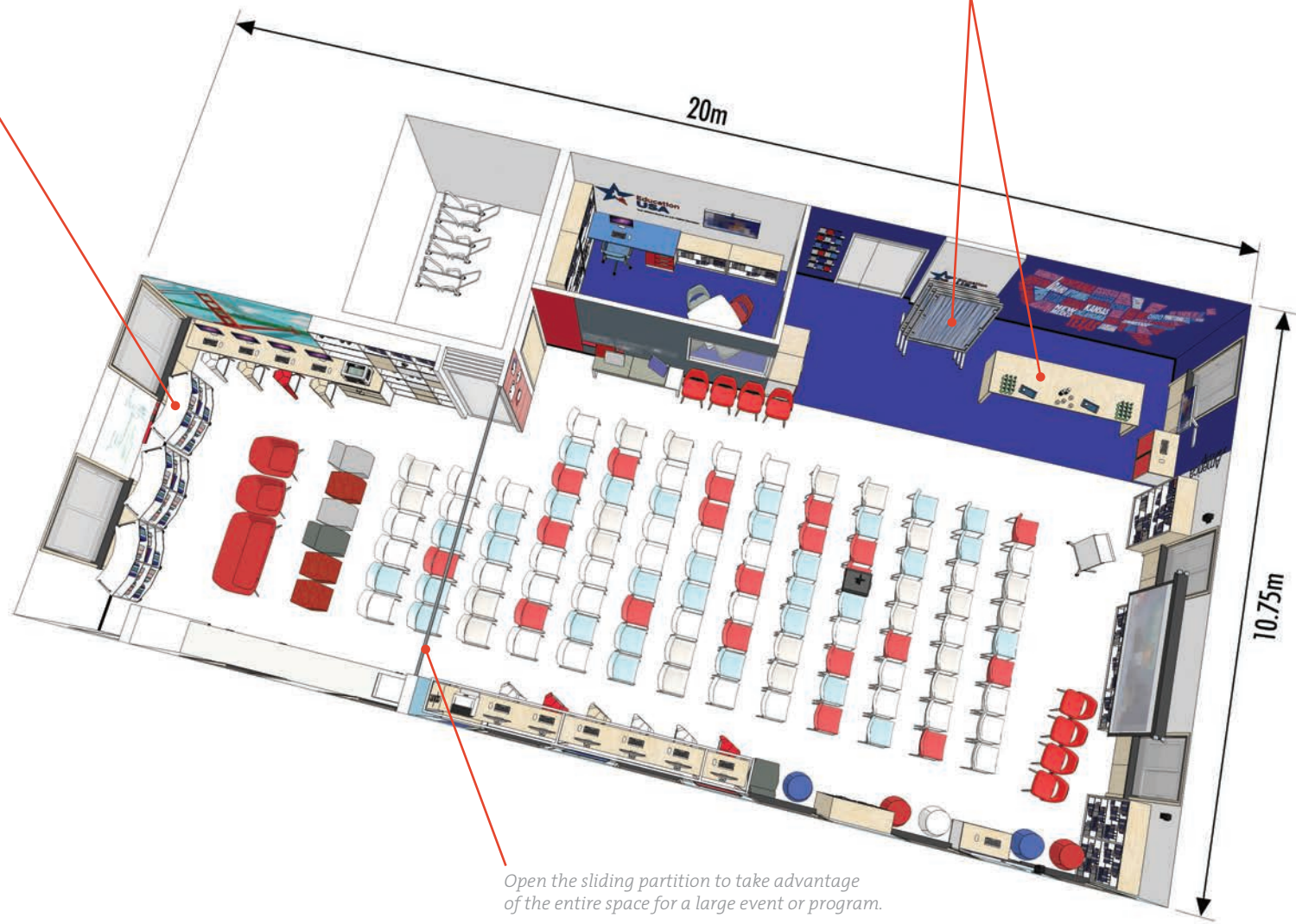


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DESIGN BASICS FOR A **MEDIUM** American Space *(continued)*

Place mobile bookshelves in the back of the room to free up valuable floor space for an event or program.

Store the mobile partitions against a nearby wall and use this worktable for refreshments or additional information about the event.



Open the sliding partition to take advantage of the entire space for a large event or program.



American Spaces



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# 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 / 339.60 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 trapezoidal tables and lightweight stacking chairs make this programming space one that is easy to rearrange for lecture-style programming, virtual programs, and 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.

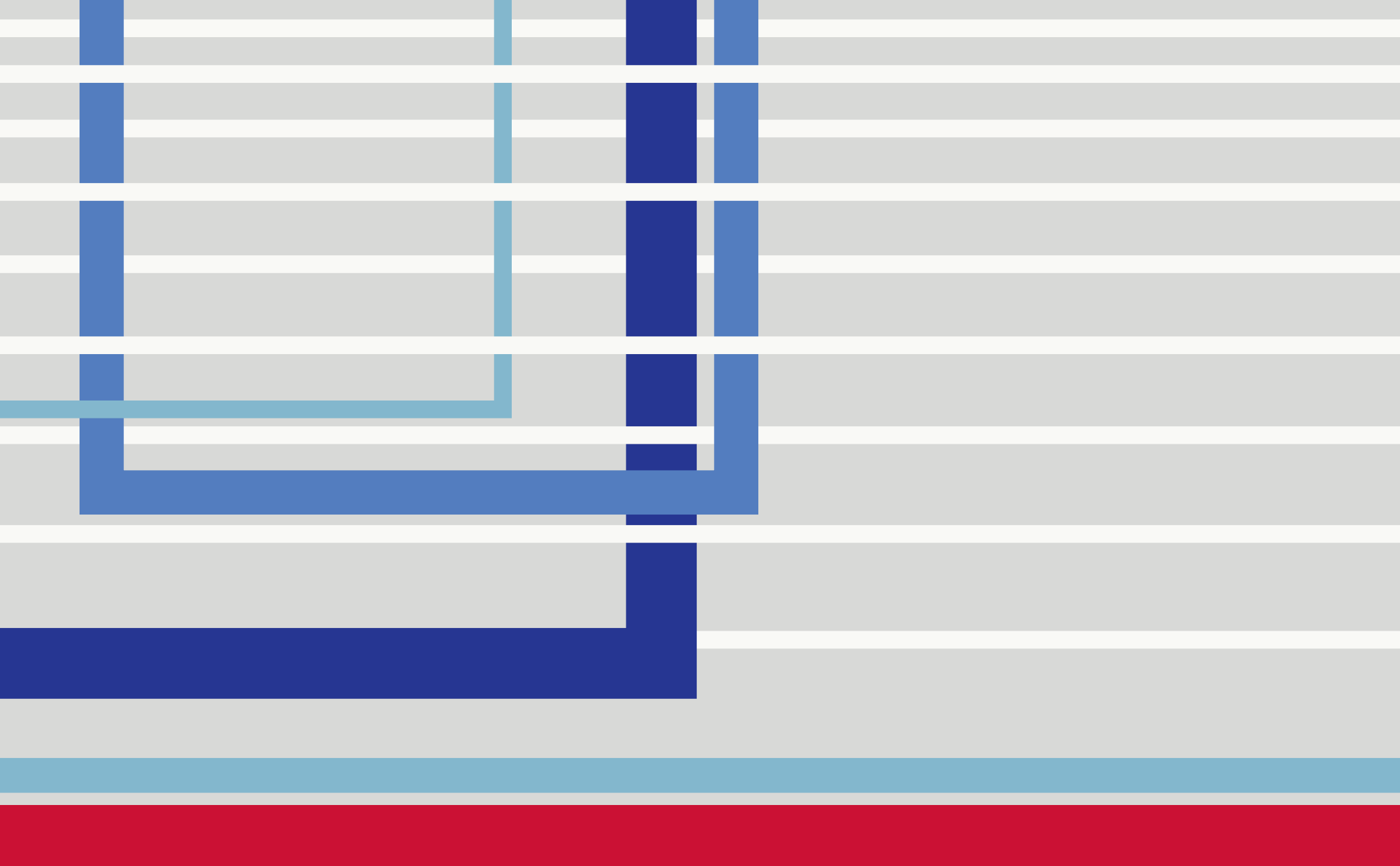


American  
Spaces



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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 mov- able 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



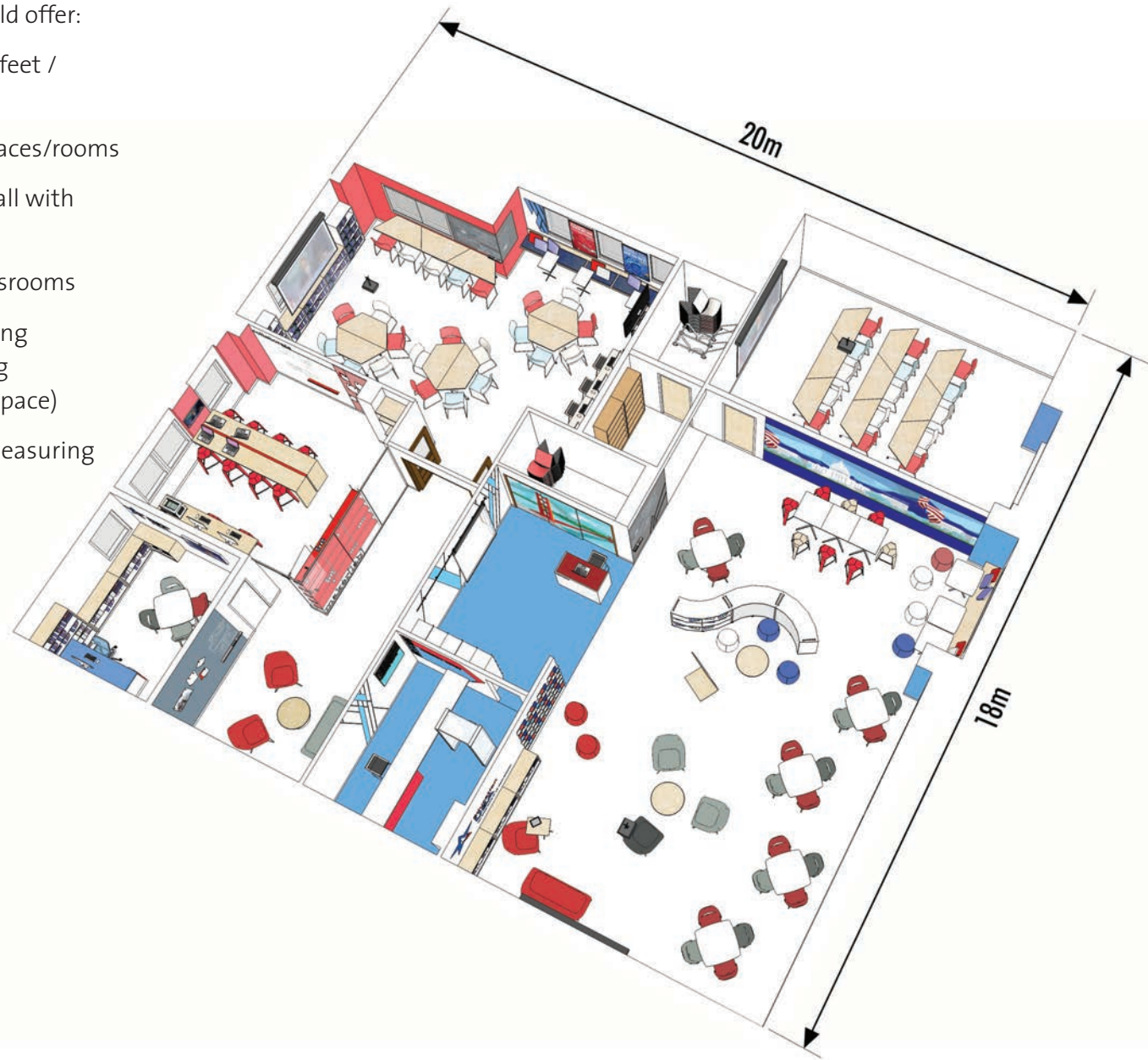
American Spaces



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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



American  
Spaces



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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.



American  
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### 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 reconfigured in a variety of ways, or bar-height tables and chairs with areas to charge personal devices.

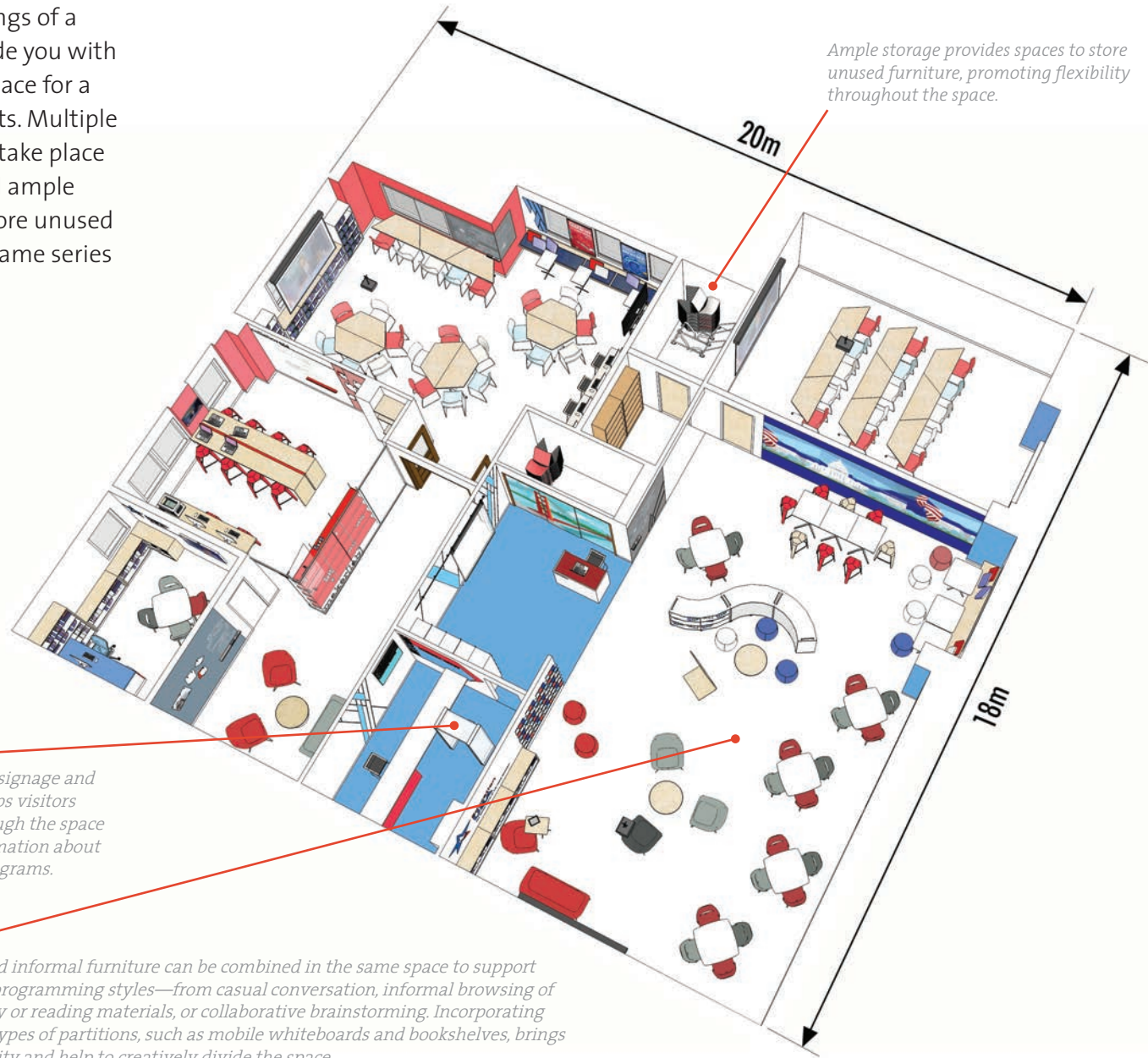


American  
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Ample storage provides spaces to store unused furniture, promoting flexibility throughout the space.



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.

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, brings added utility and help to creatively divide the space.



American Spaces

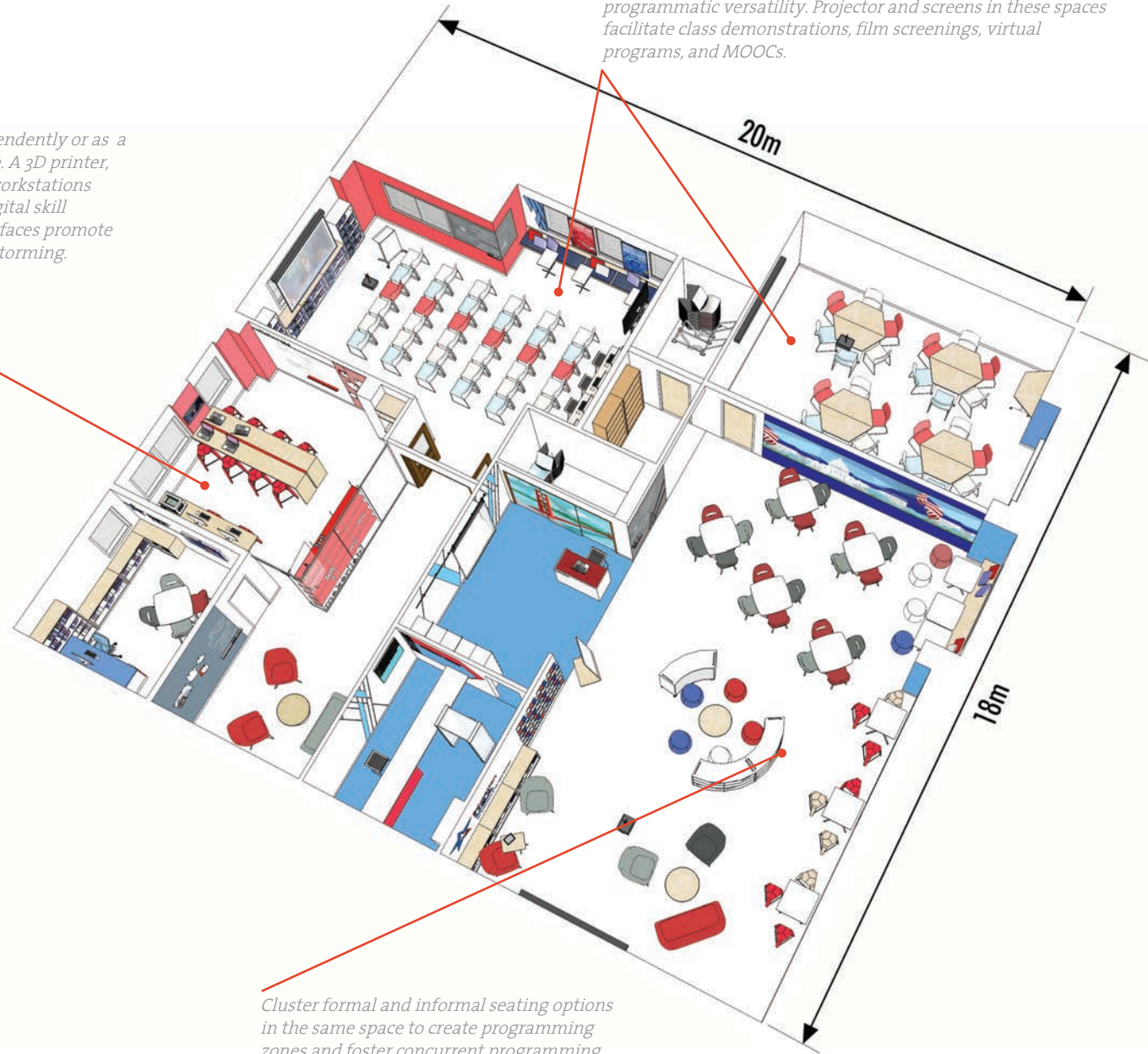


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## DESIGN BASICS FOR A **LARGE** American Space *(continued)*

Visitors can work independently or as a group in the makerspace. A 3D printer, laptops, and computer workstations provide platforms for digital skill building and writing surfaces promote collaboration and brainstorming.

Dedicated classroom spaces using flexible furniture promote programmatic versatility. Projector and screens in these spaces facilitate class demonstrations, film screenings, virtual programs, and MOOCs.



Cluster formal and informal seating options in the same space to create programming zones and foster concurrent programming.

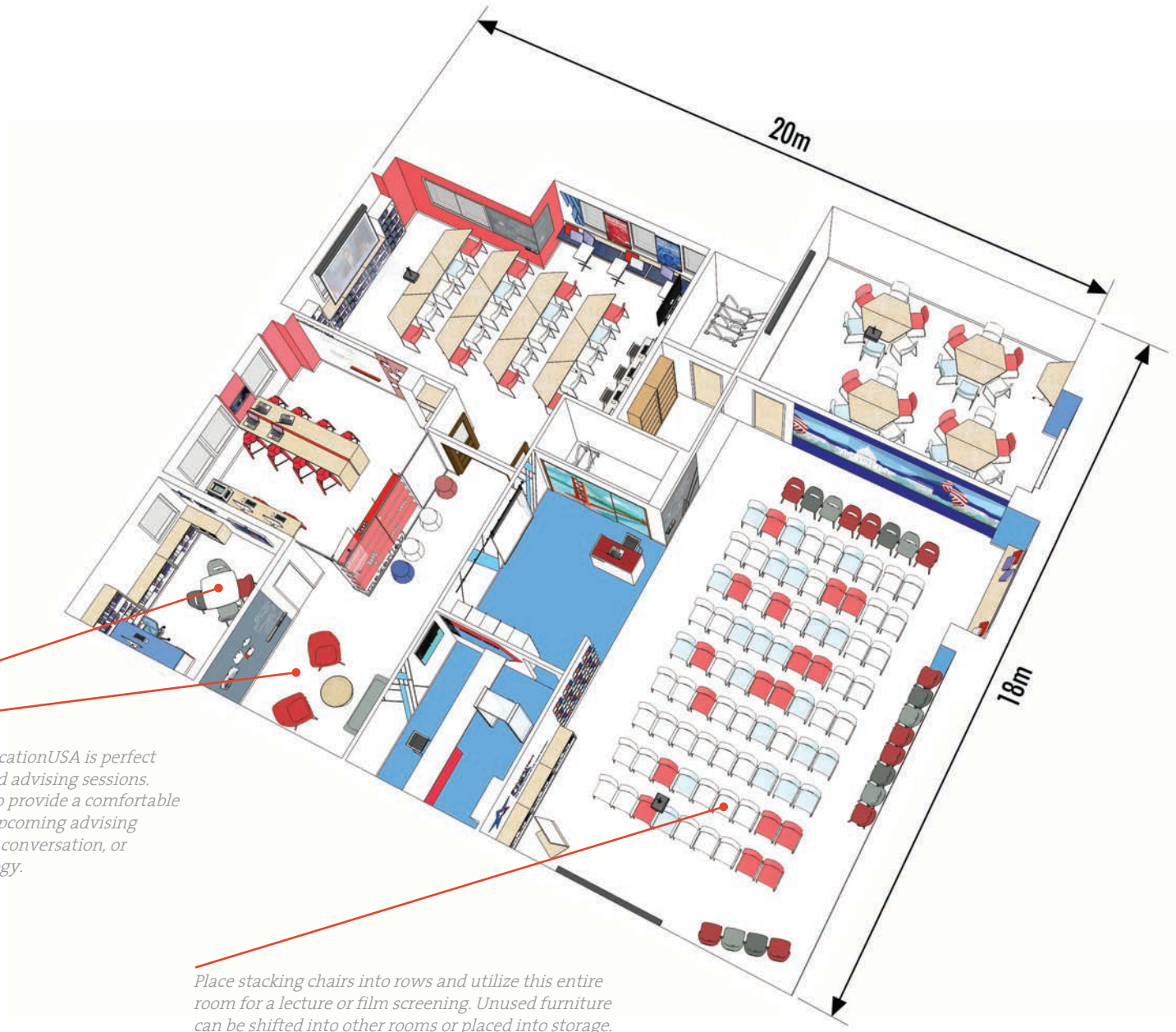


American Spaces



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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.*



American Spaces



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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 (483.10 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.

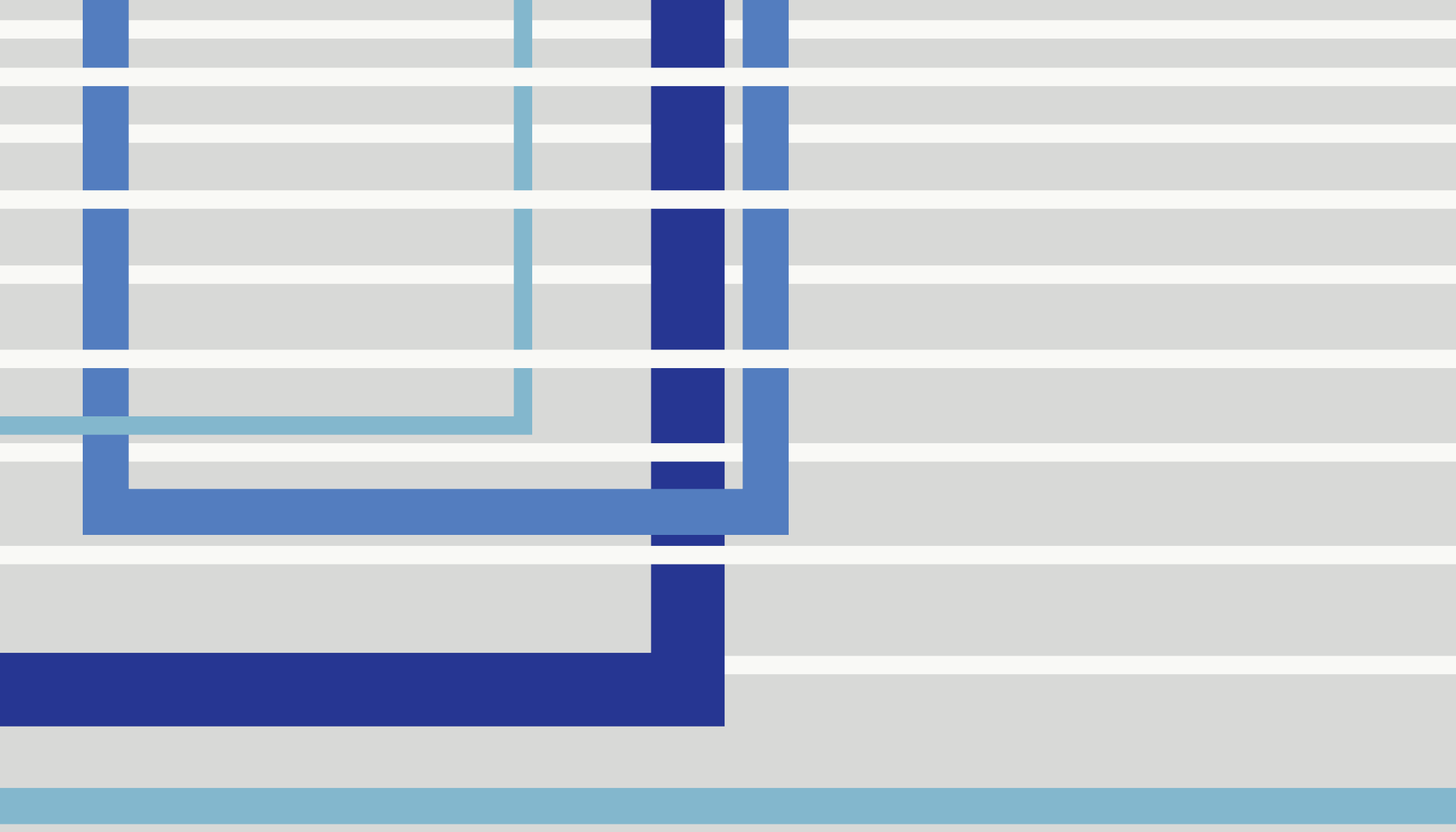


American Spaces

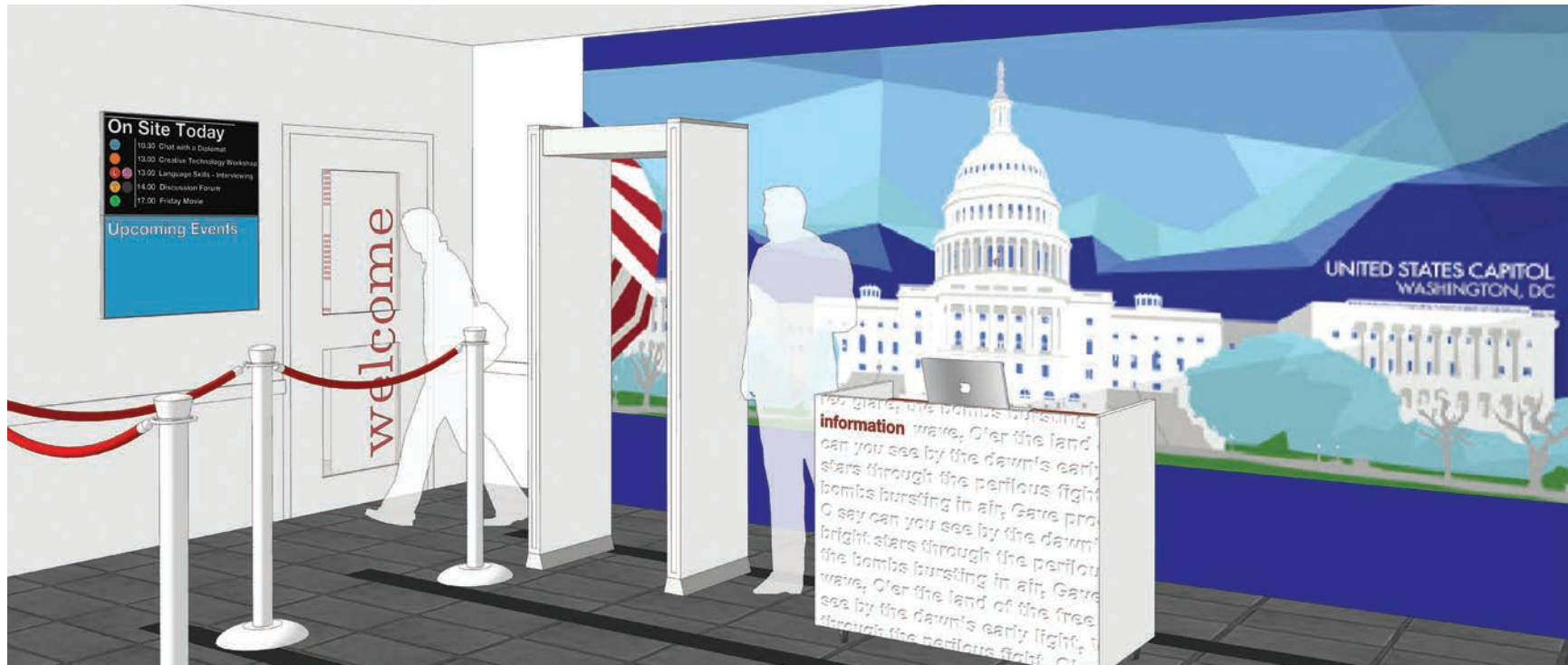


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# LARGE SPACE SPOTLIGHT America House Kyiv



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.

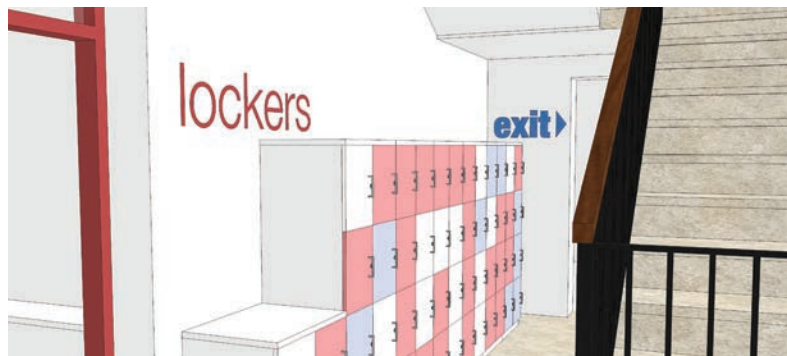
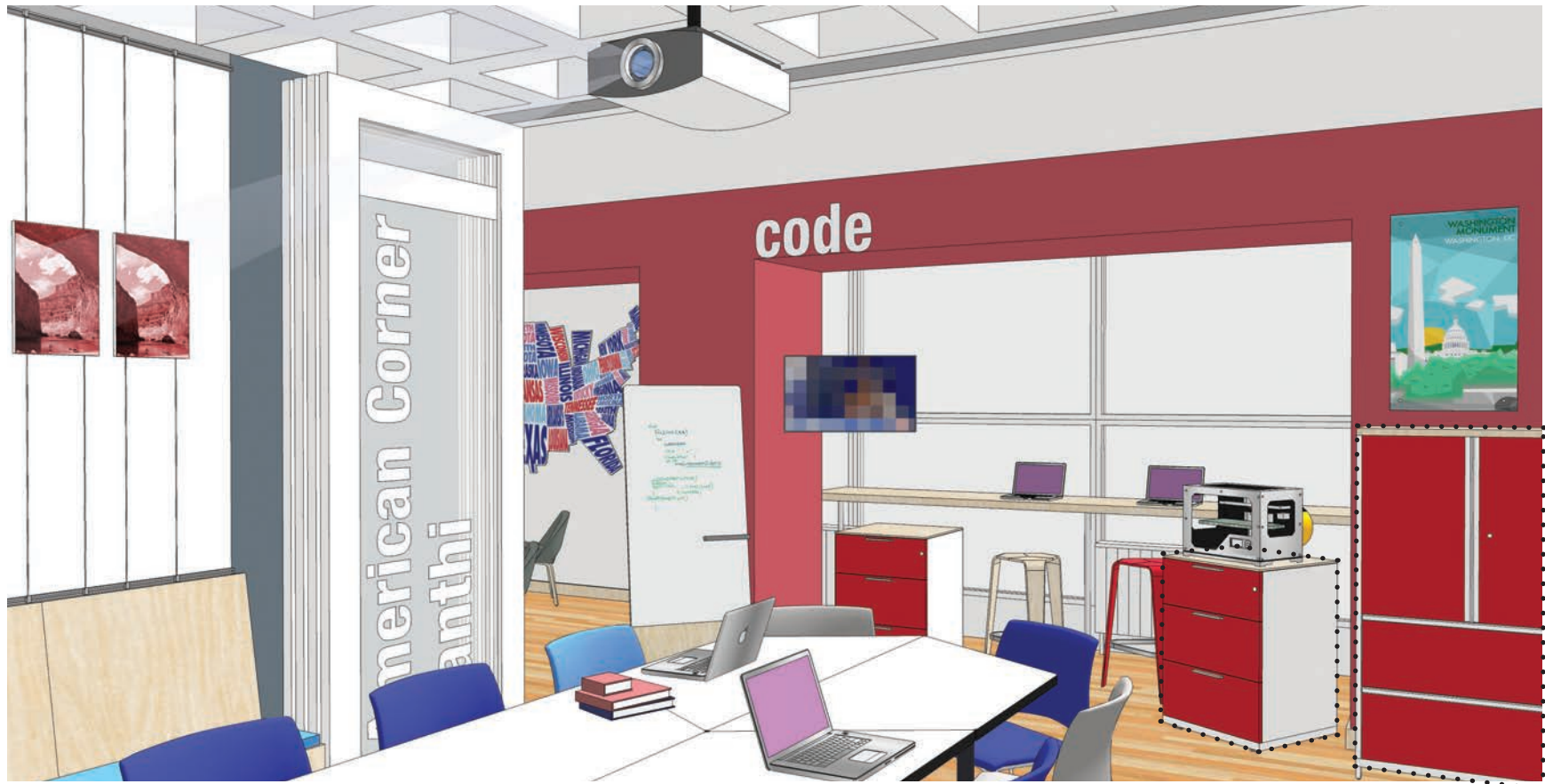


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# Accommodating People with Disabilities



Since programming and event space is at a premium, it's important to carve out designated storage spaces to promote the multifunctional 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.



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## 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.



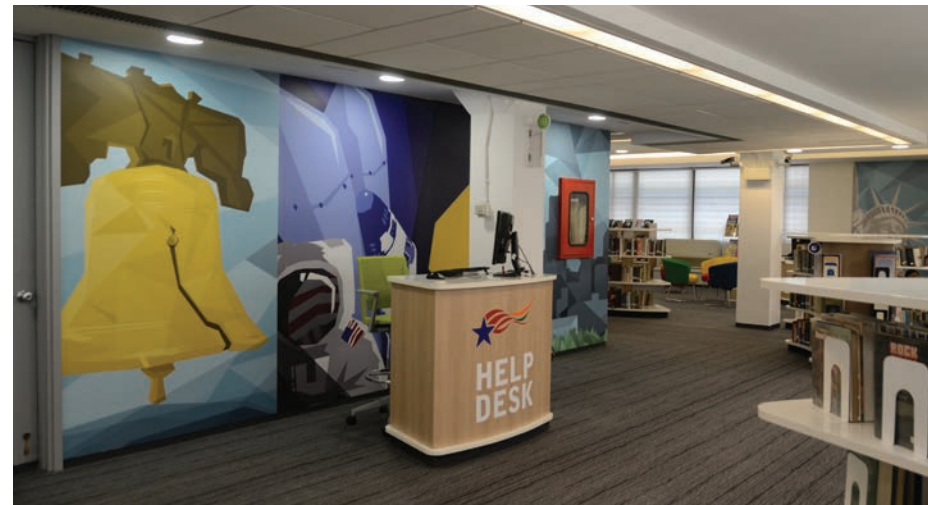
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## Exterior Signage

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](#).



American Spaces



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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.

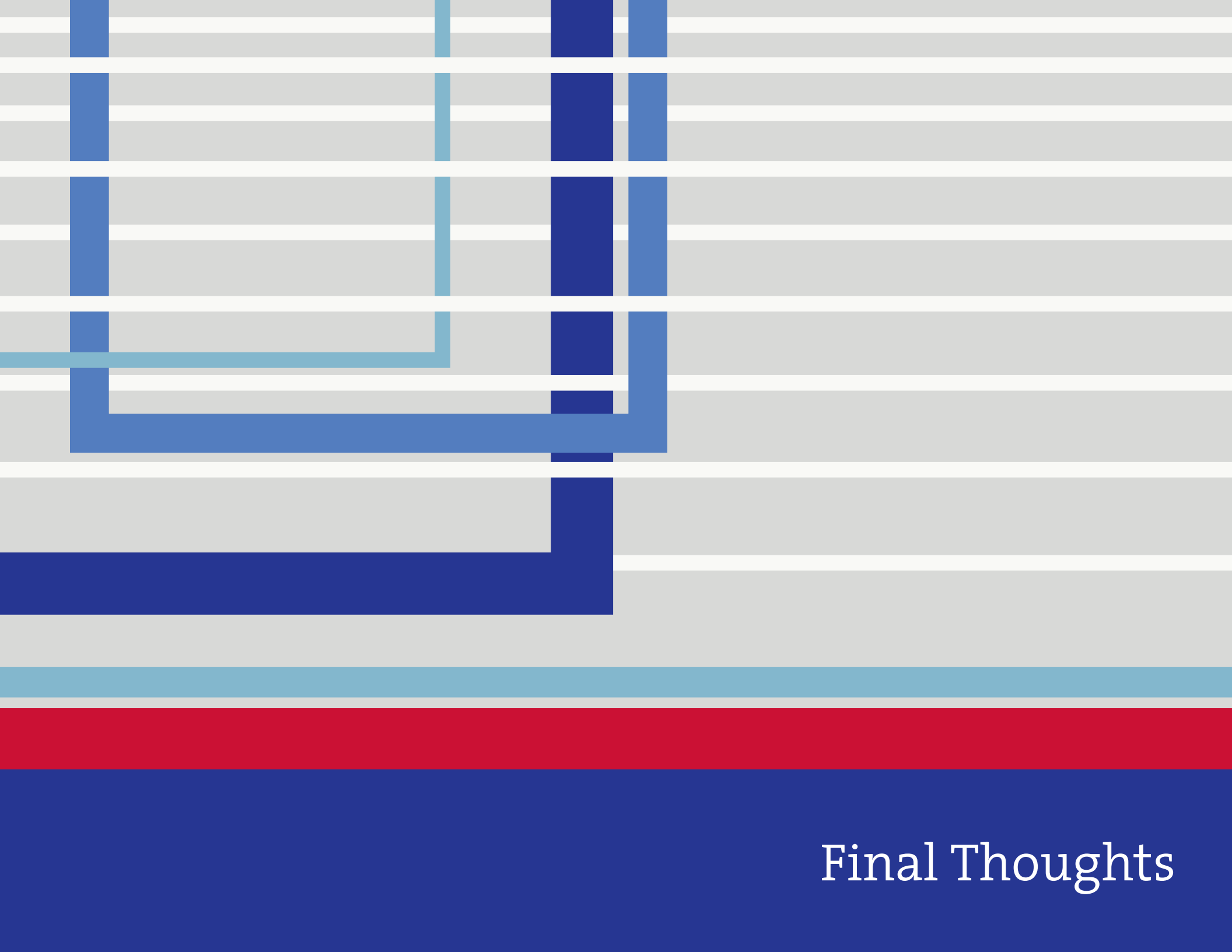


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## Outdoor Space



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. You can also reach out to your Regional Public Engagement Specialist (REPS), OBO, and the Office of American Spaces for guidance. As you begin envisioning your ideal American Space, please check out the [American Spaces Ideas Gallery](#); it is a great starting point for thinking about different room configurations and design challenges. Keep us posted on how you've incorporated these ideas and overcome your own design challenges!

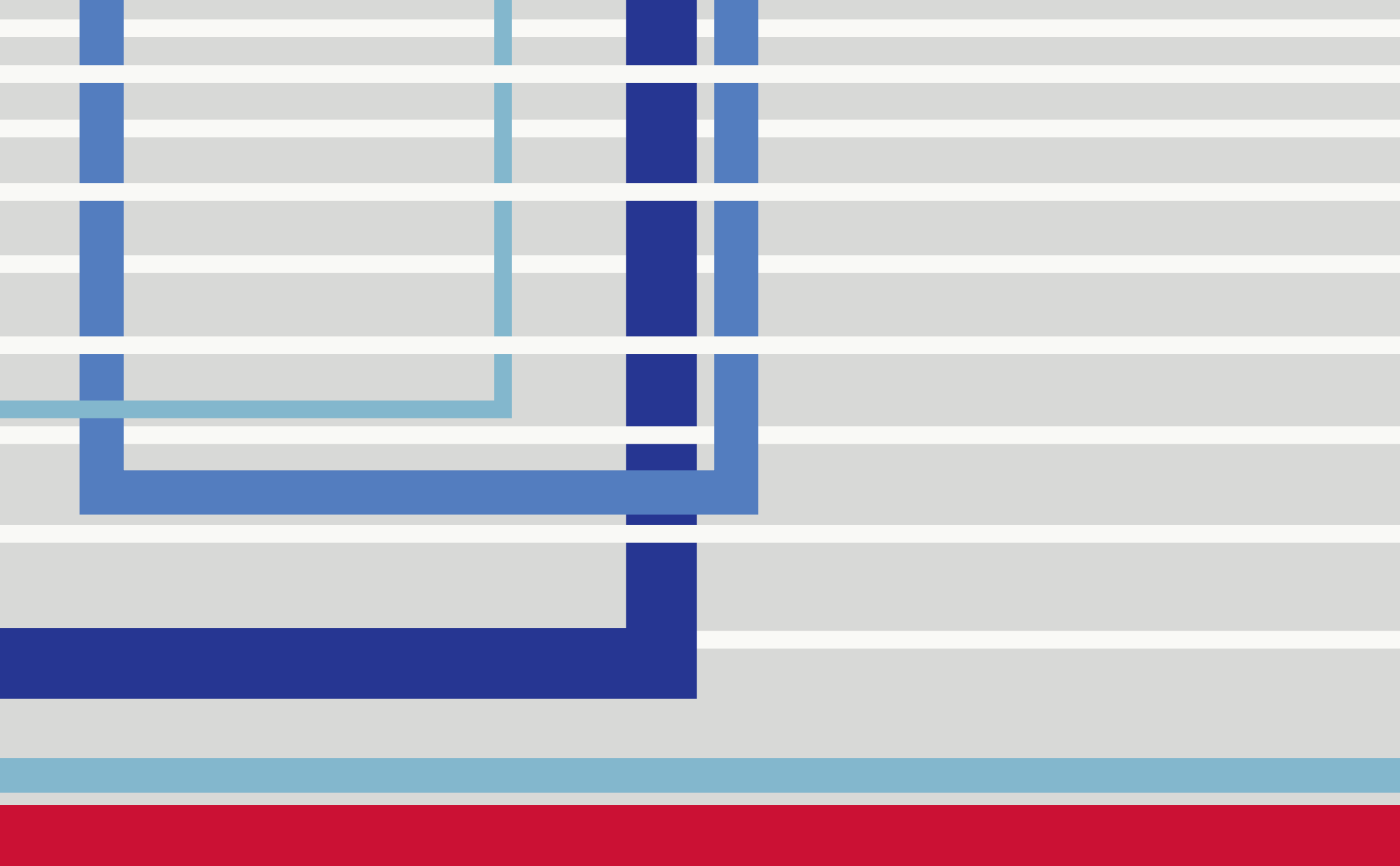


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# Conclusion



Appendix



**ACAO** – Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer

**ADA** – Americans with Disabilities Act

**DT** – Bureau of Digital Technology

**ECA** – Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

**FSO** – Foreign Service Officer

**GSO** – General Services Officer

**ICS** – Integrated Country Strategy

**MOOC** – Massive Open Online Course

**OBO** – Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations

**REPS** – Regional Public Engagement Specialist

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

**USG** – United States Government



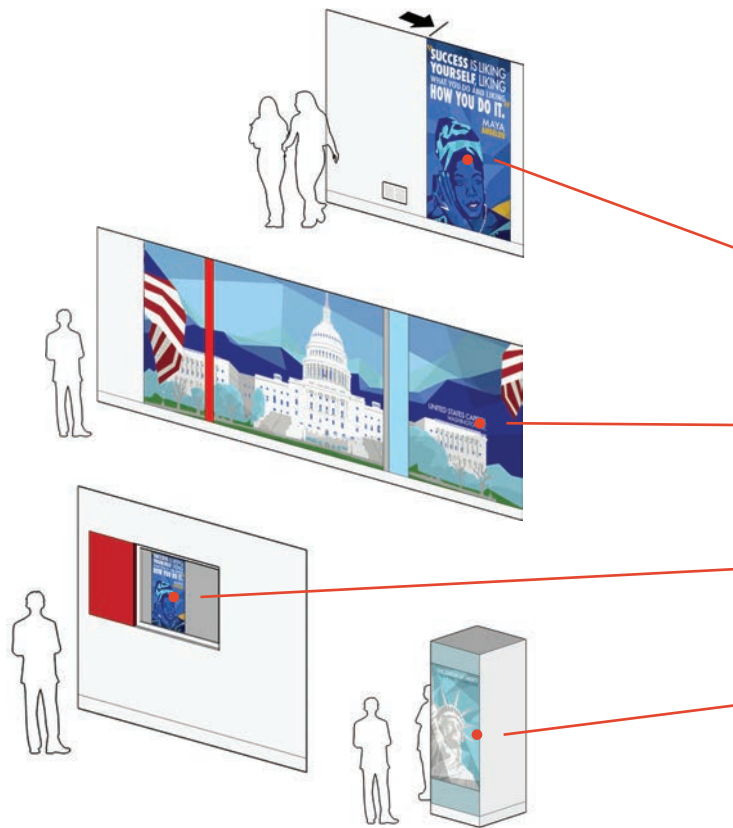
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# List of Acronyms

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.



### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Long wall? No problem.**

Long wall surfaces can become bold murals that help define a room.

### **Windows: A Clear Solution.**

Graphics can be printed on translucent window clings for a fun light effect or in place of heavy window coverings.

### **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!

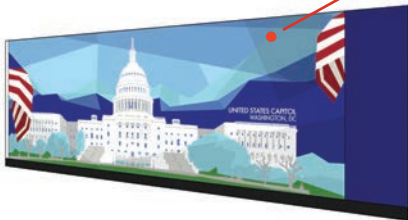
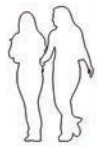


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All of these graphics are free to use and free of restrictions, so browse through the **American Spaces Collections** to find the perfect graphics to bring color and excitement to your space!



### **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.

### **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!

### **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.

### **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.

### **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.

### **Where to go.**

Download the wall graphics via the American Spaces Collections website: <https://amspaces.state.gov/collections/graphics>



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Public Diplomacy staff, American Spaces staff and Regional Public Engagement Specialists should work together to assess 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.

Public Diplomacy staff, American Spaces staff, and Regional Public Engagement Specialists should work together to assess American Spaces. Posts should make notes identifying plans for improvement on target elements if needed, including whether funding is needed to realize the objectives. 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.*



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# The Standards for American Spaces