

OBJECTIVES:

- ❖ develop enhanced leadership and professional skills and effect positive change in their workplaces and communities;
- ❖ build mutual understanding, and create lasting and sustainable partnerships. EU fellows will learn U.S. practices in sustaining civic participation and advocacy with minority communities (including African-American, Latino, Native American, Roma, Disabled, and Homeless) in civil society and democracy;
- ❖ explore diverse community organizing methods for citizens solving problems in their own communities;
- ❖ learn skills in community leadership development and gain hands-on experience at civil society organizations in the U.S.

www.glc-teachdemocracy2.org

OPEN COMPETITION FOR PARTICIPATION

WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. - Great Lakes Consortium for International Training and Development in Collaboration with C.E.G.A. Foundation in Bulgaria, CCF in Hungary, CeRe in Romania, and CKO in Slovakia Announce an Open Competition for Participation in "SUSTAINING CIVIC PARTICIPATION IN MINORITY COMMUNITIES," an Exchange Program for Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, and the United States of America.

INVITATION

We invite professionals from any region of Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia to apply for participation in a 42-day fellowship in the U.S.A. We encourage submissions by professionals who are actively involved in programs related to citizen participation and advocacy (NGO/civil society development), civic education organizations, citizen advocacy groups, community activists and/or community organizers who work with minority groups. **The overall goal** of the program is to provide a professional development opportunity for mid-level emerging leaders; create a forum for American and foreign participants to collaborate and share ideas and strategies; and build a global network of professionals able to work effectively in an interconnected environment.



U.S. PROFESSIONAL FELLOWS CONGRESS

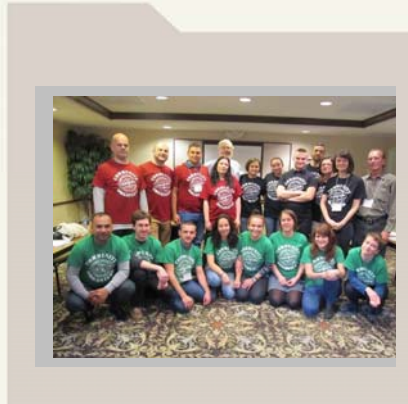
OBJECTIVES

- ❖ During their 4-week internship placement at national, state or local organizations across the U.S., European participants will observe the role of their U.S. counterparts and gain in-depth knowledge and experience as well as adaptable approaches that they can implement after their return.



THE PROGRAM

This program is a two-way exchange involving professionals and leaders from the U.S. and selected European countries who will effect positive change in their communities. U.S. mentors will share their professional expertise with fellows of this program and travel for a two-week reciprocal visit to their counterpart organizations for consulting and jointly workshops to share experience and to promote mutual understanding and partnership between key professional groups in the United States and counterpart groups in the selected European countries. The program is funded by the U.S. Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Citizen Exchanges, Professional Fellows Division and is organized by the WSOS Community Action Commission, Inc. - Great Lakes Consortium for International Training and Development (GLC) from Northwest Ohio in collaboration with Creating Effective Grassroots Alternatives Foundation (C.E.G.A) in Bulgaria, Civil College Foundation (CCF) in Hungary, The Resource Center for Public Participation (CeRe) in Romania, and Center for Community Organizing (CKO) in Slovakia and other local partners in the United States of America and selected countries in Europe.



Together with your application you need to submit: Essey, Statement of interest, Action plan, and scanned copy of your passport

36 participants (9 from each selected European country) will be included in two delegations visiting the U.S.A: the first delegation between April 19-June 2, 2017, and the second delegation between October 4-November 17, 2017.

Applicants need to:

- ❖ be age 25 to 40;
 - ❖ have good organizational and management skills;
 - ❖ be interested in long-term international cooperation;
 - ❖ have good communication and presentation skills;
 - ❖ be highly proficient in written and oral English,
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- ❖ be self-directed and able to work effectively in a cross-cultural setting, and have demonstrated leadership abilities.

THE PROGRAM

Participation in this exchange from the European side is a multi-phase program.

1/ In the first phase applicants need to prepare a 6-9 month Action Plan to be implemented before the U.S. trip focusing on community organizing field experience – either participation in alumni organizing activities, or the development of a program in their own minority community connected to their current work or volunteer involvement. This experience needs to be summarized in a report before arriving to the U.S., so that the U.S. host organizations can design part of the fellowship for the European participant program based on the different field experience.

2/ The second phase is the 6-weeks U.S. trip which includes 4-week internship at an American organization, 1 joint week with all participants before the internship and 1 joint week after the internship. The internship experience will be tailored to the delegation members' background and interest. The joint program before and after the internship will feature workshops, group discussions, site visits, mentoring, and other opportunities for interaction. Participants will prepare their 6-9 month Action Plan to implement new ideas gained in the U.S. and to share experience with others after their return. They will do presentations at professional and community events, and participate in volunteer service activity. The joint program will be organized in Toledo (Ohio), Chicago (Illinois), and Washington (D.C.), but internship placement may include other communities across the U.S. The Professional Fellows Congress is an enrichment program that will be also included in the itinerary. Professional Fellows from different U.S. State Department exchanges will have an opportunity to meet with government leaders and other program alumni and share experience at the end of their visit in Washington D.C.

3/ The third phase of the project will start when participants return to their home country where they will work on the implementation of new methods and continue their previous projects or start another one that they designed with their U.S. mentor during their U.S. visit. Participants will be required to help others with their new experience after they return, cooperate closely with the WSOS/GLC partners in their country, join and participate in the Alumni programs of each country.

THE PROGRAM

4/ The forth phase - As part of the exchange, delegations from the U.S. will visit Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania, and Slovakia for about 2 weeks to participate in seminars, workshops, visit applicants' organizations, and to provide on-site consultation and mentoring. **Applicants are encouraged** to cooperate with GLC in-country program directors and partners in the preparation of these events, participate in the workshops with presentations about the experience acquired during their US fellowship, and encourage others to join in and benefit from this experience. European participants will be actively involved in the implementation of the U.S. mentors' visit to their fellow's organization for a couple of days as well as assist in joint training with their U.S. mentors and other alumni.

5/ Fifth phase - Fellows will be also part of the alumni network in their country and will participate in learning circles for peer to peer learning and sharing experience and will work closely with the GLC Country Director in their own country.

6/ Sixth phase - Alumni will provide regular updates to the GLC Country Directors as well as the GLC Project Manager in the U.S. through on-line communication on how the new ideas were implemented in their organizations and what impact this program made. Alumni success stories will be published before the end of the grant period and each fellow is expected to contribute with an organizing story within 6-9 months after their return.



https://www.facebook.com/pages/GLC_Teach-Democracy



The Application Form has to be submitted by December 1, 2016 in two ways: a hard copy of the complete application and attachment by mail to the country director listed on the form; please also e-mail a copy of your application to: Dr. Elizabeth Balint, WSOS/GLC Project Manager in Toledo, Ohio USA, E-mail: GLC_teachdemocracy4@hotmail.com and copy this e-mail to your Country Director.

Your e-mail application will be immediately recognized from the U.S. and will be matched with the hard copy sent to the Country Director. Applicants will be invited for a one-day training and interview with GLC in-country program director and other collaborating partners.

Additional on-line interview by members of the Selection Committee may also be scheduled on Skype as needed. Recommendations from in-country program directors will be reviewed by the WSOS/GLC Selection Committee in Toledo, USA. GLC will finalize the selection of participants and alternates in cooperation with the US Embassies in each country and start the J-1 visa process.

SELECTION PROCESS

Participants will be selected through a competitive merit-based process. Applicants with previous community organizing training and practical experience will have an advantage since they are more prepared to be effective during the U.S. fellowship. Applicants should submit a letter of support from the organization and/or community group interested in being included in this program before and after the U.S. exchange and who will assist the fellow in implementing this project. We would like to invite applicants (between age 25-40) who are creative and have innovative ideas, have accomplishments in solving issues in minority communities and who can make a large impact by implementing new ideas and changes. Participants need to display evidence of good organizational and management skills; they should be active members of their local community, interested in long-term international cooperation, have good communication and presentation skills, and be receptive to modern technology. Successful candidates should be mid-level emerging civil society professionals with experience and current employment related to the designated project area. Selected participants will be encouraged in developing connections not only between their countries and the U.S. and other European countries but also within their own country. In order to establish a successful cooperation and communication with U.S. counterparts, all selected participants must be highly proficient in written and oral English, self-directed, able to work effectively in a cross-cultural setting, and have demonstrated leadership abilities. The WSOS/GLC Project Manager from the U.S. will contact the applicants by e-mail during the selection process and also during the preparation for the visit to the United States. So applicants need to maintain one regular email connection with GLC and their Country Director.

COSTS

All expenses of the U.S. program including visa, health insurance, transportation, accommodation (4-week home stays at American families, 2 weeks in hotels with double occupancy rooms), meals, and cultural programs will be provided. Participants need to have a passport valid at least 6 weeks after the program completion in the U.S. Participants need to cover their own expenses incurred within their own country (travel for one-day training & interviews, visa and overseas travel preparation from and to the Embassy and the airport, meals or accommodation while visiting the Embassy, pre-departure or after arrival). Selected participants (and alternates) are required to attend the program related activities (orientation meetings, interview at the U.S. Embassy), follow-on workshops in each country.

Application Deadline: December 1, 2016

Please contact Elizabeth Balint or the in-country program director with any questions.