

Request for Proposals: 2023 Diplomacy Begins Here Summits and Learning Labs

Showcase your community as a leader in public and citizen diplomacy

Overview

We invite all Community-Based Members (CBMs) to submit a proposal to host a 2023 *Diplomacy Begins Here Regional Summit* and *Learning Lab*. **Proposed hosts should not have hosted a *Summit* or *Learning Lab* in 2022. Hosts prior to 2022 are eligible to apply.**

Diplomacy Begins Here Regional Summits bring together local, national, and international leaders from the business, government, and nonprofit world to build connections, share ideas, and deepen understanding of the critical role that public and citizen diplomacy programs play in advancing U.S. foreign policy goals.

Learning Labs are full-day professional development events for Global Ties Network members working on the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Programming is designed to help IVLP partners learn with and from one another in an informal setting and build their capacity around specific needs. *Learning Labs* take place **the day before** the *Diplomacy Begins Here* Summit. Outcomes from the *Learning Lab* discussions are disseminated throughout the Network at the end of the Diplomacy Begins Here series and inform future professional development efforts.

CBMs are encouraged to be collaborative, entrepreneurial, and creative in their proposals. CBMs can submit proposals to be the sole host or can collaborate with other Global Ties U.S. member organizations in proximity on a joint proposal. Joint proposals are welcome.

In 2023, we are reducing the number of regional Summits and Learning Labs from three to two. We want to ensure that we are (re)building community within our Network after unprecedented staff turnover and reducing the summits from three to two allows for larger attendance per event. It also enables us to increase the hosting grant to \$40,000, which is important given overall inflation, especially for event planning. Additionally, in order to better evaluate the impact of these summits within U.S. communities, beyond the Global Ties Network, we will be completing a full assessment of 2023 and past regional summits throughout the year.

Timeline

- **January 9, 2023:** Request for Proposals Open
- **February 13, 2023:** Proposals Due by 11:59 p.m. ET
- **March/April 2023:** Site Selections Announced

Hosting Benefits

Organization(s) selected to host a *Diplomacy Begins Here Summit* and *Learning Lab* receive **up to \$40,000** for event-related expenses*, in addition to programming, logistics, marketing, and implementation support from Global Ties U.S. and the U.S. Department of State's Office of International Visitors (OIV). See *Division of Responsibilities* on pages 8-13 for more details.

Hosting provides CBMs the opportunity to:

- Raise awareness of the organization's work with elected officials and local community
- Enhance relationships with members in the Global Ties Network
- Develop partnerships with new organizations and strengthen existing partnerships
- Expand understanding of U.S. foreign policy initiatives and celebrate the impact of public diplomacy in the local community

**Pending based on available funds. Funding is provided by Global Ties U.S., as authorized by the U.S. Department of State's Office of International Visitors. Authorized expenses can include meeting space, food and beverage, audio/visual services, and staff support. Additional event costs can be recouped via cost-share (including in-kind support) and from proposed Summit registration fees.*

Key Themes for 2023

Summit Themes

Summit proposals should integrate *at least one* key U.S. foreign policy theme into the design of the program. Key thematic areas include:

- Bolstering democratic principles and civic engagement
- Advancing Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility
- Integrating foreign policy and domestic policy
- Climate Change Mitigation

Learning Lab Themes

Learning Lab proposals should focus on **one** theme from **each** track and outline how it will be addressed in program sessions.

Track One—Nonprofit Capacity Building:

1. Organizational Management: Building and Strengthening Policies, Processes, and Relationships
2. Finances for International Exchange Nonprofits: Partnerships, Grants, Fundraising, and Financial Management
3. (Re)Building Community for Advocacy, Fundraising, and Support

Track Two—IVLP Implementation:

1. Building Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility into IVLP Programming
2. Common Challenges – Joint Solutions in IVLP Programming

Proposal Requirements

The proposal will include several key elements, among them:

- **Proposal Narrative** that outlines why your organization(s) should host in 2023.
- **Partnerships & Support Section** to identify potential local organizations that can contribute to reducing costs, increasing attendance, and strengthening program content.
- **Marketing and Outreach Plan** for the *Summit* that demonstrates how your organization(s) will: 1) attract a broad general audience outside of the IVLP Network such as individuals and groups who may not be familiar with the work of the CBM, and 2) integrate partners within the community including universities, elected officials, youth and young professional organizations, cultural organizations, and other local exchange organizations to engage and inform local audiences about the event. You may refer to this [Sample Communications Plan](#) as a foundation for your own plan.
- **Logistics** such as projected attendance, suggested venues, and hotel pricing for out-of-town guests. If you consider hosting the *Learning Lab* in a nearby community, please elaborate on the logistics for attending both the *Learning Lab* and the *Summit*.
- **Detailed Program Content** for both the *Learning Lab* and *Summit*, including tentative agendas.
- **Detailed Budget** including target numbers and tentative registration fees for attendees including General Audience, Students, and Global Ties Network. Budgets must demonstrate *at least 20%* cost share. Cost-share can include any partnership and in-kind support. You may use this sample [Summit Budget](#) and sample [Learning Lab Budget](#) to help you design your own proposed budget.
- **Signature Page** signed by the host organization's Executive Director and Board Chair.
- **Agreement to Support Research & Evaluation** efforts to understand the impact of the event beyond members of the Global Ties Network.

Proposal Review Criteria and Site Selection

Pending funding, we anticipate holding up to **two** *Diplomacy Begins Here Summits* with *Learning Labs* across the United States. The following criteria will be used to select hosts:

- **Organizational Capacity:** The host organization(s) must be a Global Ties U.S. Community-Based Member in good standing and have the necessary organizational leadership and volunteer support to assist with local arrangements. Proposals must include an intended staffing plan that outlines who will take on specific roles in the planning and implementation process.
- **Network Geographic Distribution:** The host city should be in a geographic location that provides cost-effective accommodations and convenient travel options to encourage maximum attendance of Global Ties Network attendees. Ideally, *Summits* and *Learning Labs* will be distributed evenly throughout the United States, however the quality of the proposal will supersede regional diversity considerations.
- **Community Collaboration, Partnering, and Timing:** Proposals should demonstrate the host's ability to partner with CBMs or other local organizations in the region to encourage maximum participation and meet *Summit* objectives.
- **Marketing and Outreach:** Proposals should demonstrate the host's plan to engage local media, community organizations, and education stakeholders to raise awareness of the *Summit* and maximize student and general audience attendance. Proposals must include an intended engagement plan to connect with offices of local, state, and federal representatives with requests to speak and/or provide video remarks or letters of support.
- **Cost-effectiveness:** The overall cost and quality of the hotel, meeting space, and food should be competitive. Room rates must be at or below the government rate and non-commissionable. See <http://www.qsa.gov> for domestic per diem rates. The host organization's ability to generate cash and in-kind contributions will be considered.
- **Session Content:** Ideas for the *Summit* should be timely and relevant to a broad audience. *Learning Lab* topic(s) should serve both executive and program staff and be appropriate to the current needs of the Global Ties Network. Proposals should demonstrate how the host(s) plan to achieve *Learning Lab* and *Summit* learning objectives.

The proposal review board will consist of former *Diplomacy Begins Here* hosts, representatives from the U.S. Department of State and National Program Agencies and be moderated by Global Ties U.S. staff.

Learning Lab Requirements

Each 2023 *Diplomacy Begin Here Summit* will be **preceded** by a day of programming content specifically related to the training and capacity-building needs of the Global Ties Network.

Learning Lab Audience

Learning Labs are **open only to members of the Global Ties IVLP Network**. Participation in the *Learning Lab* must be **free** for all Network members.

Learning Lab Objectives

- Increase knowledge about IVLP programming best practices
- Deepen understanding of effective nonprofit management
- Enhance ability to strengthen organizational reach into community

Proposals should demonstrate how these objectives will be achieved. Content for the *Learning Labs* will be developed in close coordination between Global Ties U.S., OIV, and the host(s).

Key Learning Lab Elements

Arrival Day: The day before the *Learning Lab* should include an early evening registration opportunity at the hotel and an optional (host or no-host) networking event for out-of-town guests.

Town Hall: The *Learning Lab* should begin with a session that introduces attendees to the latest news from OIV and Global Ties U.S.

Engaging Content: Content should deepen attendees' knowledge of key elements relevant to IVLP programming and nonprofit organizational management. Hosts are encouraged to showcase a wide range of local resources and include a mix of outside experts and Network-led sessions.

Nonprofit Capacity Building and IVLP Implementation Tracks: Breakout sessions should provide opportunities for Network members to learn from peers based on the overall theme identified.

Optional Resource Tour: Providing an opportunity for Network members to meet with local resources as part of a half day or full day resource tour is a way to share more about your organization and programming resources. This is an optional activity and is not covered by the funding received from Global ties for event expenses.

Arrival Day & Learning Lab: [Sample Agenda](#)

Diplomacy Begins Here Summit Requirements

The *Diplomacy Begins Here Summit* aims to engage a large, local audience on international exchange-related topics driven by the needs of the host community and/or region. Proposals must tie the *Summit* activities to key U.S. foreign policy thematic areas as outlined on pg.2 and show the impact of public and citizen diplomacy on the local and regional communities.

Summit Audience

The target audience for the *Summit* is **the general public** who may have had *little to no exposure* to citizen diplomacy or your organization's work. We encourage hosts to consider a wide range of potential attendees, ranging from students and next generation leaders to current community leaders and IVLP resources, individuals working in fields relevant to the implemented exchange programs, and the general public at large.

Summit Objectives

- Deepen attendees' understanding of U.S. public diplomacy, U.S. foreign policy, and international exchange programs in communities served by Global Ties Network members.
- Enhance attendees' abilities to understand important regional development issues and the role public diplomacy plays in addressing those challenges.
- Celebrate the IVLP, U.S. Department of State exchange programs, and other exchange activities across the United States.

Key Summit Elements

Engaging Content: Session speakers may come from academic, business, cultural, nonprofit, political, and social sectors. Please consider the format most appropriate to the proposed speaker. Creative formats (interviews, TED-style, etc.) are appreciated. *Summits* should start with a session that sets the tone and deepens attendees' understanding of the program theme. Subsequent sessions should appeal to the local community and have a tie-in to U.S. public diplomacy or foreign policy goals.

Diversity: The *Summit* must maintain a nonpartisan character and be balanced and representative of the diversity of U.S. political, social, and cultural life. "Diversity" should be interpreted in the broadest sense and encompass differences including, but not limited to, age, disability, gender/gender identity, geographic origins, opinions, race, religion, socio-economic status, or sexual orientation.

Youth Engagement: A youth/student track during the *Summit* is strongly encouraged. We encourage hosts to provide low-cost registration options for students, including youth alumni of U.S. Government Exchange Programs (Exchange Alumni), and include a simulation from the U.S. Department of State's National Museum of American Diplomacy (formerly the U.S. Diplomacy Center).

Exhibitors: Proposals should include space for an exhibit area that allows at least four (4) U.S. Department of State offices to present information and maximize connections between local and national resources. The host may choose to invite local exhibitors as well.

Meals: The *Summit* must include lunch. A light breakfast is encouraged if programming starts at 9:00 a.m. or earlier. A closing reception is optional but encouraged if it serves the purpose of connecting attendees with local resources.

Summit: [Sample Agenda](#)

Optional Post-Summit Activity

Diplomacy Begins Here Summits are often accompanied by an optional tour that highlights regional activities and specialties. These typically occur on the day after the Summit (usually a Saturday) and are charged an additional registration cost. See below examples from 2019 and 2022. Proposals containing optional post-Summit activities are encouraged, but not required.

Host	Tour	Dates	Attendees	Fee
2019 Utah Council for Citizen Diplomacy	Moab, UT and Arches National Park	Friday, July 12 – Sunday, July 14	5 (50% full)	\$349 - \$525 <i>(per room occupancy)</i>
2019 San Diego Diplomacy Council	Tijuana Gastro Diplomacy Tour	Saturday, September 21	41 (82% full)	\$75
2019 World Affairs Council of Kentucky and Southern Indiana	Horses, Bourbon, and Fried Chicken	Saturday, November 16	20 (80% full)	\$65
2022 WorldChicago	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2022 Gulf Coast Diplomacy	2-hour Dolphin Cruise	Saturday, September 24	Unknown (sign ups through tour company)	\$30
2022 WorldOregon	14-hour Mt. Hood & Columbia River Gorge, including brunch buffet, wine tasting, and dinner	Saturday, October 15	26 (96% full)	\$100

Logistics

Expected Summit Attendance & Registration Fee Guidance

Strong proposals will reflect the following numbers based on past *Diplomacy Begins Here* attendance levels.

Registration Type	Attendance Range	Fee Range (based on 2022 numbers)
Global Ties Network (CBMs, NPAs, DoS, Global Ties U.S.)	70 – 100 attendees <i>*Hosts should expect around 3 – 4 Global Ties U.S. staff and up to 10 OIV representatives in this count</i>	(e.g. \$55-150) <i>*Includes Learning Lab offered at no cost.</i>
Summit General Audience (<i>including IVLP resources, members of the host CBM, CBM Board Members, and local audiences new to your work</i>)	30 – 70 attendees	(e.g. \$50-75)
Summit Students (<i>high school OR college</i>)	30 – 100 attendees	(e.g. \$20-30) <i>*We recommend seeking sponsorships to cover the cost of student attendance.</i>
Summit DoS Exhibitors/Speakers (<i>folks not staying for lunch</i>) and Host Staff/Volunteers	20 – 30 attendees	Usually comped
Summit Total (<i>including General Audience and Global Ties Network</i>)	150 – 300 attendees	

Note: Hosts will receive registration payments directly through our event software company. The company retains 2.9% of every registration payment as a service fee. Instructions on how to set up the account in our event software will be shared with selected hosts in the grant guidance.

Hotel

Hosts should either request a courtesy hold or secure a room block, with a discounted room rate that aligns with the local GSA rates. Hosts should expect about 30 –50 attendees needing a hotel room, with each staying 1-3 nights.

Venue(s)

The venue(s) for the *Learning Lab* and *Summit* must include sufficient event space, including:

- One (1) registration desk with storage space
- One (1) large room to seat the plenary audience
- Space for exhibitor tables (*Summit only*)
- At least two (2) breakout rooms for the *Learning Lab*
- At least three (3) breakout rooms for the *Summit*

Typically, the *Summit* is held at the hotel where out-of-town guests are staying. Other examples of past venues include universities, museums, and city halls. **All venues must recognize the tax-exempt status** of the host organization.

Cost-share

Proposal must include a budget with *at least 20%* host cost share. Cost-share can include any partnership and in-kind support. Past *Summit* hosts have used this as an opportunity to strengthen their relationships with the corporate community by seeking sponsorships and in-kind support that offsets event costs. Creative partnerships also allow for greater attendance and content that is more robust. **Honoraria and/or travel expenses for speakers are unallowable costs towards the grant based on Global Ties U.S. guidelines.** You may, however, include these expenses as cost-share.

Division of Responsibilities

The *Diplomacy Begins Here Summit* and *Learning Lab* is a partnership between Global Ties U.S., OIV, and the host CBM(s)-- host organizations are not expected to plan, execute, and do all this work alone. The nature of this partnership is intended to be flexible and dynamic, and your proposal should reflect the needs and capabilities of your organization. For example, if your organization is less experienced in event management, your proposal should reflect the need for closer collaboration.

More information about each partner's role in **Programming, Marketing, Logistics, and Implementation** is below.

Programming

Host	Set theme/focus areas and identify key audiences to meet local needs and create local interest, in line with U.S. foreign policy thematic priorities and training topics
	Identify speakers on relevant topics and propose keynote speakers for the <i>Summit</i>
	Formally invite and confirm session speakers (working with OIV to invite U.S. Department of State speakers as available)
	Develop a detailed Run of Show document
	Provide moderators with preparation packets and coordinate sessions
Global Ties U.S.	Advise and provide feedback on proposed theme, content and format
	Provide guidance on the Run of Show
OIV	Arrange high-level speakers from the U.S. Department of State (including an ECA speaker at the opening session)
	Coordinate OIV staff members to serve as session speakers or moderators
	Provide input on proposed theme, session content and format
	Invite DoS offices to participate as exhibitors. Past Summits have included the Passport Agency, Bureau of Diplomatic Security, Youth Exchanges, and the Office of Alumni Affairs.
	Coordinate participation of the National Museum of American Diplomacy, Diplomat in Residence, and other DoS stakeholders
Shared	Collaborate on program content and event flow

Marketing

Host	Develop general audience and student participation targets and strategic outreach plan to meet local participant goals
	Develop a robust local and regional media outreach plan to market <i>Summit</i> to local participants
	Engage local, state, and federal representatives to speak, provide video remarks, and/or letters of support
	Provide content for event website, <i>Summit</i> program book and signage, including overall promotional language, agenda, session titles and descriptions, speaker bios and headshots, partner logos, descriptions of optional activities, and venues
	Obtain approval for all <i>Diplomacy Begins Here</i> -related content that either mentions Global Ties U.S. and/or the U.S. Department of State, OR utilizes the Global Ties U.S., U.S. Department of State, or <i>Diplomacy Begins Here</i> logo(s), for any cross-promotional purposes including emails, flyers, social media graphics, and/or marketing on host's website
	Arrange for local printing of <i>Summit</i> program book and signage, utilizing branded materials provided by Global Ties U.S.
	Print the Global Ties U.S. designed <i>Learning Lab</i> one-pager program agenda
	Develop a robust social media plan that includes pre-, post-, and live-event coverage, to ensure maximum coverage and marketing of the <i>Summit</i>
	Identify a photographer to take photos during the <i>Summit</i>
	Notify and coordinate any media presence at the Summit with OIV
Global Ties U.S.	Provide marketing toolkit and suggested timeline
	Use the content provided by host to build the Cvent registration site
	Review and edit all <i>Diplomacy Begins Here</i> content for consistency, clarity, and space limitations
	Review and approve all content for host's cross-promotion efforts (including emails and website) for branding consistency in a timely manner
	Design branded <i>Diplomacy Begins Here</i> materials, including the <i>Summit</i> program book and signage, and the <i>Learning Lab</i> agenda
	Market the <i>Summit</i> and <i>Learning Lab</i> to the Global Ties Network
	Provide hosts with an up-to-date local media list for outreach (upon request) and press release templates.
	Coordinate media outreach with U.S. Department of State entities
Provide input and feedback on the hosts' outreach plans (upon request and as relevant)	
OIV	Review event website content and format and provide input.

	Assist with development of a cohesive media outreach plan
	Review all promotional material that mentions the U.S. Department of State or utilizes its logo including the <i>Summit</i> program book, the <i>Learning Lab</i> one-pager agenda, event signage, and event registration website
Shared	Email and social media marketing

Logistics

Host	Communicate regularly with Global Ties U.S. staff and OIV during the planning process
	Secure <i>Summit</i> and <i>Learning Lab</i> venue(s), meeting space, audio/visual needs, hotel block, transportation (if needed), and catering
	Provide a detailed Event Memo/Run of Show (at least 1 week in advance of the event) to include the expected onsite roles and responsibilities of Global Ties U.S. staff in attendance
	Create and provide welcome packets for each participant at registration (Convention and Visitor Bureaus and local businesses will often provide local items free of charge)
	Provide complimentary exhibit space for up to four (4) U.S. Department of State offices
	Purchase name badges and print after receiving final registration list from Global Ties U.S.
Global Ties U.S.	Manage the event website and registration on the Cvent platform to ensure that appropriate registration data is uniformly gathered, and the <i>Diplomacy Begins Here</i> brand maintains a consistent look and feel across all <i>Summits</i> and <i>Learning Labs</i>
	Provide weekly registration updates
	Manage participation grants for eligible Network members
	Supply the name badge template and printing instructions, final registration list for host to use in creating name badges, and affiliation ribbons
	<i>If requested by host</i> , help with negotiating the hotel contract, tracking guest room count, and determining the necessary banquet event orders (food, space, exhibits, audio/visual, etc.)
OIV	Supply U.S. Department of State-related exhibit materials to the host in advance of the <i>Summit</i>
Shared	Create VIP table assignments
	Meet the agreed upon planning deadlines that are determined in the kick-off phase, to ensure a smooth execution of the <i>Summit</i> and <i>Learning Lab</i>

Implementation & Wrap-Up

Host	Lead the event
	Provide adequate staff and volunteers to support event setup and take down, exhibitor setup, vendor management (including catering, transportation, and venue), live social media promotion, speaker coordination, room setup (including name tents, speaker gifts, handouts, etc.), crowd control, and time management
	Write final narrative report to Global Ties U.S. post-event
	Submit budgets (tentative prior to event and final post event) to Global Ties U.S.
Global Ties U.S.	Provide on-site support for event setup, registration, social media amplification, and crowd management
	Manage the distribution, collection, and summary of participant evaluations for the <i>Learning Lab</i>
	Ship and set up <i>Diplomacy Begins Here</i> stage backdrop (step and repeat)
	Disburse host grant upon receipt and approval of a submitted final budget. Disburse registration revenue post-event close-out
	Write final grant report and submit to U.S. Department of State
OIV	Support for VIP U.S. Department of State speaker management
	Provide exhibitors and materials for U.S. Department of State tables
	Review final event report from Global Ties U.S. and provide feedback

Diplomacy Begins Here Goals

While many factors play into the creation and execution of a successful event, the following factors will be used to measure *Diplomacy Begins Here Summit* and *Learning Lab* success:

- At least 30% of *Summit* attendees qualify as General Audience.
 - Not counted in this calculation are:
 - Attendees tied to the Global Ties Network and to the *Summit* host(s)
 - Speakers
 - Student attendees
- At least one (1) media (print or online) article about the *Summit* is published
- At least 70% of *Summit* general audience (non-Global Ties Network) reported an increased understanding of U.S. public diplomacy and/or exchange programs
- At least 85% of attendees report satisfaction with the Learning Lab in the post-event survey
- 100% of Learning Lab attendees indicate having networked with CBMs, NPAs, and OIV staff

Submitting Your Application

Only complete submissions submitted via Submittable will be considered for review.

Access the Application [here](#).

Application Deadline: February 13, 2023, 11:59 p.m. ET