



INTERNATIONAL VISITOR LEADERSHIP PROGRAM



Intro to IVLP

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs funds and administers the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), one of its premier professional exchange programs. The IVLP is designed to build mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through carefully designed visits that reflect the participants' professional interests and support U.S. foreign policy goals. Participants are established or potential foreign leaders in government, public policy, media, education, labor, the arts, and other key fields. Selected by American embassies abroad, International Visitors come to the United States to meet and confer with their professional counterparts and to gain an appreciation of the ethnic, cultural, political, and socio-economic diversity of the U.S. In fiscal year 2003, 4,570 International Visitors participated in the program; 966 of those came at their own or their government's expense.

The IVLP is carried out through close collaboration with 8 non-profit program agencies in Washington, D.C. and 94 community-based organizations across the U.S., whose members arrange professional meetings, cultural activities and home hospitality for the visitors. These organizations are members of the National Council for International Visitors (<http://www.nciv.org/>) Tens of thousands of Americans volunteer their time and expertise

IVLP SNAPSHOT

- A typical IVLP project is three weeks in length, and includes visits to four U.S. cities. IVs meet with professional counterparts, visit U.S. public and private sector organizations and institutions related to the project theme, In addition, IVs are often hosted by American families during their visits.
- As an example, a recent project explored the role of the media in the U.S. The fourteen participants, representing eleven countries in the Near East and North Africa, visited Washington, DC, Seattle, Phoenix, and New Orleans. Among the people and organizations they met with were *The Washington Post*, Voice of America, MSNBC *The New Orleans Times-Picayune*. They also went on a day trip to the Grand Canyon and a jazz dinner cruise on the Mississippi River.
- Over 135,000 International Visitors have participated in the program since its inception in 1940.
- At any given point during the year, approximately 250 IVs are on projects in the United States. In 2003, over 4,500 IVs participated in 1,022 projects on themes such as:
 - Democracy and Human Rights
 - U.S. Government Operations
 - Counter-terrorism
 - Combating HIV/AIDS
 - Journalism
 - Women's Issues
 - Diversity in the U.S.
 - Trade and Economic Issues

to strengthening relations between the United States and other countries through the International Visitor Leadership Program.

Alumni

Many participants in the International Visitor Leadership Program have become prominent leaders in their societies. Among the program's alumni are over 200 current and former Heads of Government or Chiefs-of-State, 41 currently serving in this capacity. Alumni include:

- *President Hamid Karzai of Afghanistan (1987)*
- *President Mikhail Saakashvili of Georgia(-99)*
- *Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder of Germany (-81)*
- *President Megawati Sukarnoputri of Indonesia (-89)*
- *President Mwai Kibaki of Kenya (-99)*
- *Prime Minister Faisal al Fayed of Jordan (-88)*
- *President Ricardo Lagos of Chile (-88)*

Educational and Cultural Programs

The International Visitor Leadership Program exchanges are among more than 30,000 annual exchanges managed by the Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Other academic and professional exchange programs include the Fulbright Program and the new Partnerships for Learning (P4L) initiative. For further information, go to www.exchanges.state.gov

"The IV Program offers priceless opportunities to understand the United States and the American people through direct experience, and to make valuable contacts...I am immensely grateful for the insights into the U.S, which this exchange scheme provided. I have drawn on them regularly since then."

— Tony Blair, British Prime Minister