



Fall 2025 Project Menu

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Project ID	191
Project Name	Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT)
Office	Embassy Niamey - Public Affairs Office
Embassy	Niger
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	<p>In the rapidly evolving digital landscape of Niger, the proliferation of disinformation poses a significant threat to democratic governance and stabilization. The Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT) is a proposed online platform designed to equip stakeholders in Niger with the tools necessary to identify and counteract disinformation.</p> <p>This project seeks to harness low-cost and accessible technology to monitor and analyze digital media across Niger, offering real-time insights into the sources and spread of misleading content. By providing a centralized, accessible hub for data analysis, NODT aims to enhance the capacity of journalists, civil society, and government bodies to uphold information integrity and foster a well-informed public discourse. The project will entail the development of an intuitive interface that aggregates and visualizes data from a variety of online sources, using natural language processing and machine learning to track disinformation trends. We hope this project will create a robust analytical framework that can adapt to the unique challenges of Niger's media environment.</p> <p>This project will not only advance efforts to counter disinformation but also engage a new generation of tech-savvy leaders in the fight against disinformation. NODT promises to be a critical resource for enhancing democratic engagement and countering the destabilizing effects of false information in Niger.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>The final product format for the Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT) project could be envisioned as a comprehensive digital platform that includes the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interactive Dashboard: A user-friendly interface that displays real-time analytics, trends, and visualizations of disinformation campaigns across various media channels in Niger. This dashboard will allow users to quickly understand the scope and impact of false information circulating online. 2. Analytical Reports: Regularly updated reports that provide deeper insights into specific disinformation incidents, their origins, and the effectiveness of countermeasures. These reports can be used for briefing stakeholders and guiding policy decisions. 3. Training Module: An integrated component designed to educate users on identifying and countering disinformation. This module would include tutorials, best practices, and resources to enhance the skills of journalists, civil society members, and government officials. 4. Alert System: A notification feature that alerts users to sudden spikes in disinformation or emerging trends that require immediate attention. This

	format combines real-time data processing with educational resources and analytical reporting to create a dynamic tool that not only tracks but also combats the spread of disinformation in Niger.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	206
Project Name	Identifying Potential EXBS Partner Countries
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>This project will focus on outlining criteria to be considered when the Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) program is deciding to engage a particular country. Criteria to engage may include proliferation risk, current strategic trade system status, strength of customs/port of entry operations and border security systems, and other issues related to export controls.</p> <p>The project POCs will provide information on the current method at the start of the project for the research team to validate. In consultation with the project POCs, research teams may test their criteria on a few countries that they would like to propose as potential new partners.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product should include validation of the current partner criteria and recommendations for additional criteria. This information should be presented in a final presentation and submitted as a policy paper no longer than 20 pages. Research teams are strongly encouraged to use data visualizations and infographics where possible to support their research.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/

Project ID	209
Project Name	Assessing Open-Source Analytical Tools to Identify Sanctions Evasion
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>The purpose of this project is to identify and assess open-source software and analytical tools that present the best, most reliable, and most-cost effective options to map key supply chains and evasion pathways and enable U.S. allies and partners to develop analytical capabilities for sanctions evasion investigations and compliance management. ISN/ECC is interested in a broad examination of analytical tools, especially those outside of commercial markets, like academic institutions, non-governmental organizations, and other non-traditional groups, as well as new thinking on where such tools may reside that may provide the best, most cost-effective options for U.S. allies and partners.</p> <p>Following Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Russia has been subject to an expanded array of sanctions and export control restrictions from the United States, the European Union, and other entities. These wide-ranging economic restrictions target Russia's financial, commercial, and public sectors, with a special emphasis on state-owned defense and energy companies. Through these mechanisms, the international community seeks to restrict Russia's access to advanced technology and to disrupt Russia's ability to produce and stockpile weapons.</p> <p>Russia, like other countries facing sanctions regimes, will inevitably try to adapt its acquisition modalities to obtain the components needed to sustain its war effort. There is increasing evidence of collaboration and cooperation between Russia and other state actors like Iran and North Korea. There is increasing evidence of Russia's use of major transshipment points and distribution hubs. As reported by media and open-source analysis, components produced by non-Russian manufacturers have turned up in Russian, Iranian, and North Korean-produced missiles, vehicles, uncrewed systems, communications equipment, and precision, timing, and navigations systems used by Russia and recovered from the battlefield in Ukraine. Components range from older items found in legacy systems to recently manufactured components made by companies based in Europe and the United States found in current generation Russian weapons and equipment.</p> <p>The success of sanctions, export controls, and broader efforts to disrupt the flow of dual-use components to Russia depends greatly on the capacity of partner states to understand the complexity of Russia's defense and energy supply chain and acquisition networks.</p> <p>Open-source information capable of being shared with and analyzed by U.S. allies and partners is increasingly important to shed light on Russia's acquisition networks, disrupt those networks, and support sanctions and export control implementation and enforcement. Such information enables relevant national authorities, as well as the public, the press, and</p>

	academia, to further investigate means and methods of sanctions and export control evasion and, where relevant, determine whether component flows violated sanctions. However, many current commercial open-source analytical tools are prohibitively expensive for U.S. allies and partners-especially those who may be targets for transshipment by Russia and other entities.
Final Product Format	Research Paper (not more than 20 pages) and Options Memo
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic Sanctions</i>
Additional Information	<p>For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/</p> <p>Common High Priority List (CHPL): U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security (February 23, 2024)</p> <p>FinCEN & BIS Joint Notice : FinCEN and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security Announce New Reporting Key Term and Highlight Red Flags Relating to Global Evasion of U.S. Export Controls (November 6, 2023)</p> <p>Alert : FinCEN and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security Urge Increased Vigilance for Potential Russian and Belarusian Export Control Evasion Attempts (June 28, 2022).</p> <p>BIS frequently asked questions for exporters on the commodities and red flags identified in the June 28, 2022 FinCEN alert (August 16, 2022).</p> <p>Department of Commerce, Department of the Treasury, and Department of Justice Tri-Seal Compliance Note : Cracking Down on Third-Party Intermediaries Used to Evade Russia-Related Sanctions and Export Controls (March 2, 2023).</p> <p>Supplemental Alert : FinCEN and the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Industry and Security Urge Continued Vigilance for Potential Russian Export Control Evasion Attempts on the highest priority nine HS codes (May 19, 2023).</p> <p>BIS guidance on these same nine highest-priority HS codes for exporters and re-exporters, including manufacturers, distributors, resellers, and freight forwarders (May 19, 2023).</p> <p>Department of Commerce, Department of Justice, Department of State, and Department of the Treasury guidance on items sought by Iran for the production of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs), including to enable Russia's brutal war against Ukraine (June 9, 2023).</p>

	<p>The guidance listed above was generated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security, and provides information on evasion trends and fact patterns and identifies transactional and behavioral red flags to assist financial institutions and exporters in identifying suspicious transactions relating to possible export control evasion or violations.</p>
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Project ID	232
Project Name	Teasing out Multilateral Sentiments and Strengthening the NPT Regime with Artificial Intelligence
Office	MNSA - Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>International multilateral forums, both those that are part of the United Nations system and others, serve as formal mechanisms for diverse groups of countries to work to make shared progress on global challenges, including nuclear nonproliferation. Bodies dedicated to upholding and advancing the global nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament regime primarily include meetings of the review process of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT), the Conference on Disarmament (CD), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), UN First Committee (UNFC), and the UN Security Council (UNSC).</p> <p>National statements published in these bodies, as well as statements delivered on behalf of likeminded, regional, or cross-regional groups (e.g., the G77, the Non-Aligned Movement, ASEAN, the EU, and the New Agenda Coalition) highlight areas of consensus and contention on issues discussed. The wealth of data contained in these statements forms a web of international policy positions that can reveal how nations' positions evolve over time, and help policymakers understand where collaboration may be possible in the future.</p> <p>Successfully tracking and analyzing these narratives is challenging. It requires national delegations to parse the text of a given statement to identify key sentiments that may vary depending on the forum and the context of the statement. This interpretation of the text must then be correlated against the positions of fellow parties to identify motifs and trends that may indicate shifting priorities and relational structures when examined over time.</p> <p>Increasingly, these interpretations must further be correlated among forums to identify countries' tendencies across the multilateral system. Doing so is directly correlated with our ability to effectively counter negative trends and advance U.S. positions.</p> <p>This project seeks to build a tool that can analyze the evolution of narratives on key issues within the nonproliferation regime. Though the ideal tool could be applied to issues more broadly, one example that could be used as a test case would be to examine evolving positions on the "peaceful uses" of nuclear science and technology and provide guidance, so as to offer insight to U.S. delegations to multilateral forums in support of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty and the global nuclear nonproliferation and disarmament regime. (In recent years the PRC has advanced a narrative that purports to build support for the "peaceful uses" of science and technology for development purposes but is actually an attack on the multilateral export control regimes including the Nuclear Suppliers Group.)</p>

	<p>Such a tool should draw on publicly available data from 2019 to the present from a select subset of multilateral forums and conferences including the NPT Review Conferences, the UNFC and UNSC, and IAEA conferences and use modern data science tools (e.g., large language models and automated video-to-text transcription) to extract insights on national and multinational sentiments centered around “peaceful uses” and export control regimes.</p> <p>Once verifying the ability of this tool to identify well-understood sentiments shared between key countries, the project will attempt to use the tool to either</p> <p>(1) identify new as-yet-unidentified insights in these select forums and</p> <p>(2) the existence of similar sentiments in further afield multilateral forums (e.g., UN Human Rights Council). If technically viable, this tool could be packaged in a user-friendly form to actively support U.S. multilateral delegations at forums.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>This project would produce two deliverables that rely on a data analysis to extract correlated sentiments from publicly available national statements, working papers, and multilateral resolutions in UN and other forums.</p> <p>(1) Demonstration: To validate the viability of the data analysis, produce a short report that demonstrates the ability to automate the identification of well-understood sentiments on “unilateral coercive measures” and export controls.</p> <p>(2) Tool: A tool that can be used to produce updated insights and extrapolated insights in real time to augment the engagement of U.S. delegations in these same multilateral forums.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	<p>1) Primary Discipline/Expertise - It wasn't available in the drop down menu we are requesting Data Science and Artificial Intelligence for Discipline & Expertise.</p> <p>2) In reference to Max Number of University Teams - As this is a data science project with a directed goal, this project has the potential to be approached using the “kaggle” approach (https://www.kaggle.com/) in which multiple teams approach the same project in competition for a defined period. At the conclusion of this period, the results and outcomes are ranked and, if coordinated appropriately, could be integrated to produce a single final tool to integrate the strengths of each team. As such, we envision that this project could accommodate more than one team but not more than five teams given bandwidth of office advisors.</p> <p>3) Additional Information - NPT PrepCom: https://meetings.unoda.org/npt-/treaty-on-the-non-proliferation-of- </p>

	<p>nuclear-weapons-preparatory-committee-for-the-eleventh-review-conference-second-session-2024 PRC Peaceful Uses Resolution: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3944826?v=pdf Reaching Critical Will's Disarmament For a database: https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora</p>
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Project ID	238
Project Name	Global Criminal Justice Rewards Program (GCJRP) Authorities Revisions
Office	Global Criminal Justice
Embassy	
Bureau	Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights
Project Description	Does 22 USC Â§ 2708 need to be rewritten to authorize/clarify the following, and if so, how should it be rewritten: To pay rewards for information that leads to the resolution of an open indictment, most relevantly if definitive information were brought forward that a designated fugitive was dead. This would contribute to international justice processes by allowing prosecutors to close files on cases that cannot proceed and preserve their investigatory and tracking resources. How might the statute be rewritten to allow for reward payments for such information?
Final Product Format	A paper assessing and analyzing options for a path forward.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	244
Project Name	Whistleblower Protection: an Element of Protection and Not a Mechanism to Target Opposition
Office	International Narcotics and Law Enforcement
Embassy	Columbia
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>The United States promotes strengthening anti-corruption measures around the world. In Colombia, U.S. Embassy Bogota supports the Government of Colombia's initiative to create a Whistleblowers Protection Bill that would protect whistleblowers reporting corruption through legal mechanisms. It is difficult for individuals to speak out against corruption without legal backing or protection, especially against their employer or own government.</p> <p>A whistleblower protection law would ensure that individuals would be able to address corruption within the government and other sectors. The United States passed our first whistleblower protection law in 1979 and continues to update the legislation as necessary.</p> <p>Current opposition to whistleblower legislation in Colombia state that individuals could use this legislation to retaliate against employers or government agencies or officials. Additionally, there are questions surrounding which branch of government should anti-corruption entities belong to and how to ensure transparency and objectivity. This research project could focus on analyzing whistleblower protection legislation in the region, who oversees these policies, and how these entities engage with the courts, executive, and legislative branches.</p>
Final Product Format	Negotiable, but recommend a policy paper addressing key research questions.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Western Hemisphere Studies</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	258
Project Name	Free Trade Zones in Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC): Analyzing and Understanding the Trade-Offs of FTZs in the GCC
Office	Office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes (TFFC)
Embassy	
Bureau	Department of Treasury
Project Description	<p>The research project should identify trade-offs in the rapid growth or presence of Free Trade Zones (FTZs) in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states. This could be done in three parts.</p> <p>First, the analysis should include a synopsis of the various FTZs in the region, the economic benefits that these FTZs provide, and identify the potential illicit finance risks. Second, the Treasury Department has identified FTZs as an anti-money laundering/countering the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) vulnerability in some jurisdictions and would like to better understand the current regulatory frameworks of FTZs in each GCC member state, potential AML/CFT deficiencies that can be identified in open-source information, and recommended corrective actions that could be implemented to close any AML/CFT loopholes while maintaining likely economic benefits. Financial Action Task Force (FATF) mutual evaluation reports could be a primary source of information for each jurisdiction where they are available, and may provide additional insights into vulnerabilities identified by FATF as well as recommended corrective actions.</p> <p>Third, a comparative analysis that identifies a potential non-GCC "model" that effectively reaps the economic benefits of FTZs with sufficient regulatory oversight to preclude exploitation by malign actors, could be useful, but is not required.</p>
Final Product Format	Ideally the final product would be a written analysis, augmented by an oral presentation on the research projects key findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Middle East/North African Studies</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	337
Project Name	How the COVID-19 Pandemic Transformed Global Fiscal Transparency Standards
Office	Office of Macroeconomic Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Economic and Business Affairs
Project Description	<p>Proposal: Assessing how global fiscal transparency trends and standards have evolved since the beginning of the COVID-19 Pandemic to better target U.S. Department of State, NGO, and IFI programming and support. Scope of work: Fiscal transparency is an important driver of stability and opportunity in the global economy.</p> <p>Transparent fiscal policies help create global markets with greater certainty and increased opportunities for American firms to compete. Increased fiscal transparency bolsters economic security by rooting out illicit financial flows, increasing government accountability, and countering opaque and predatory Chinese lending practices. It provides citizens with a window into public expenditures, equipping local governments with the resources to be more self-sufficient and ensuring effective expenditure of public funds. Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, governments across the globe faced unprecedented budget and financing challenges. In some cases, this accelerated public spending on expedited timelines while lowering traditional fiscal oversight and review standards.</p> <p>At the same time, a variety of public and private stakeholders ramped up their support for financially distressed governments via capacity building programs to help improve budgeting practices and promote more transparency.</p> <p>This project will analyze fiscal transparency indicators over time to determine the impact of pandemic-related economic repercussions on global fiscal transparency standards. Additionally, the program will evaluate the impact of bilateral capacity building assistance as well as non-governmental organizations (NGO) and international financial institution (IFI) programming on fiscal transparency indicators in targeted countries.</p> <p>The assessment will leverage data from a variety of sources, including: the U.S. State Department's Fiscal Transparency Report; the International Budget Partnership's Open Budget Survey; the World Bank's Public Expenditure Framework Assessment; and the IMF's Fiscal Transparency Evaluation.</p> <p>To evaluate the impact of capacity building programs and assistance, the assessment will include a review of projects funded by State's Fiscal Transparency Innovation Fund, the World Bank's Open Budget initiatives, and other NGO/IFI fiscal transparency related initiatives. The project authors may choose to focus on a particular region, such as sub-Saharan Africa or the Levant and north Africa.</p>

Final Product Format	Policy Paper and/or Presentation that: 1) Analyzes fiscal transparency trends during the period from 2019 to 2023; and 2) Assesses the impact of U.S. government, NGO, and IFI fiscal transparency-related programming across State's Fiscal Transparency Report indicators.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	

Project ID	352
Project Name	A Warm December: Resilient U.S. Embassy Design in the EU.
Office	OBO/Project Design and Coordination Service (PDCS)/Design and Engineering (DE)/Architectural Design (AD)
Embassy	
Bureau	Overseas Buildings Operations
Project Description	<p>U.S. Embassies around the world are being replaced and upgraded with resilient facilities in response to the effects of global warming. Rising cost, warming temperatures and commitments to reduce CO2 emissions greatly impact construction durations and escalation costs. Nowhere is this more impactful than in the European Union.</p> <p>Particularly in Brussels where the U.S. Department of State has purchased a ten (10) acre site to construct a New Embassy Bilateral Compound to support U.S. Embassy Belgium, U.S. Embassy European Union and U.S. Embassy NAT. The City of Brussels has committed to meeting the G8 Agreement's 2050 CO2 reduction goals by 2030. This aggressive goal challenges the new U.S. Embassy project in Brussels to do the same.</p> <p>The Diplomacy Lab project uses the Brussels embassy program, site, bilateral missions, and local permitting requirements to explore opportunities for embedding CO2 emissions in the design of the new embassy.</p>
Final Product Format	Website with student design projects presentations and videos
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Architecture</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	Global warming is now considered a security threat to the continuity of diplomatic missions all over the world. In Brussels there are many factors in addition to global warming that provide for a complex set of conditions: Metro and commuter rail running below a portion of the site, the surrounding low rise residential neighborhood, aggressive local CO2 reduction goals for 2030, multiple bilateral missions to be contained in one facility often with opposing missions, designing for a dense historically developed urban environment, security requirements, requirements for returning the majority of the existing site to "Plein Terre" or solid earth, a constantly shifting geo-political dynamics effecting the three missions.

Project ID	361
Project Name	Mapping Foreign Malign Influence in Guinea: A Case Study on China and Russia
Office	Public Diplomacy Section / Political and Economic Section
Embassy	Guinea
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	<p>Guinea, located at the crossroads of significant geostrategic interests, has increasingly become a target of influence by foreign actors, particularly China and Russia. These nations employ tools ranging from economic investments to media campaigns to extend their influence in the country. Understanding the extent and impact of these activities is critical for developing effective U.S. policies that support Guinea's sovereignty, democracy, and sustainable development.</p> <p>This project aims to map China and Russia's influence in Guinea across key sectors, including infrastructure investments, political engagements, media narratives, and cultural exchanges. Students will evaluate their impact on Guinea's sovereignty, transparency, adherence to international norms, and potential to undermine democratic governance or U.S. strategic interests. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, student teams will analyze the tools and strategies employed, identify vulnerabilities in Guinea's governance and economy, and provide actionable insights into mitigating malign influence while supporting Guinea's resilience.</p>
Final Product Format	The Embassy seeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A comprehensive report (20-25 pages) detailing the influence mechanisms of China and Russia. • Interactive visual tools, such as GIS maps or network diagrams, highlighting areas of influence. • A presentation summarizing key findings and policy recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>African Studies</i>
Additional Information	Links to resources on foreign influence campaigns, Guinea's political and economic landscape, and U.S. policy goals will be provided. This project could serve as the foundation for a follow-on study into regional trends in West Africa.

Project ID	362
Project Name	Political Anthropology: Traditional Governance Systems of Togo's Ethnic Groups
Office	AF/W - Embassy Lome - Political and Economic Section
Embassy	Togo
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	<p>Togo's President Faure Gnassingbe, who has been in power since 2005, often references "African democracy" to suggest his hold on power is rooted in traditional governance systems. Togo, however, has more than 40 ethnic groups, each with a distinct traditional governance system. Some granted a chief power for life, but with key differences from Togo's modern formal system, including fully empowered councils, social levers to ensure just leadership, and political-economic structures that more justly shared resources between the leader and the people.</p> <p>Embassy Lome requests research on the nuances of the traditional governance systems of Togo's ethnic groups. The questions would include: how are leaders chosen, who is qualified to serve, how long do they serve, what are the economic costs or benefits of ruling, how are resources shared/distributed, what other governance bodies are there (e.g. a council), how do they interact with the chief, and what recourse does the community have when the leader abuses power or performs poorly.</p> <p>(Note: We do not anticipate research will reach all of the 42 ethnic groups; we hope it could investigate at least 10.)</p>
Final Product Format	A research paper including approximately 3 paragraphs per ethnic group researched. The first paragraph would discuss context for the ethnicity, such as where in Togo do they traditionally reside, historic notes on the group's settlement in Togo, size, common occupations or economic drivers, most common religions, gender and marriage norms as compared to other Togolese groups, distinguishing characters of the group versus other groups, how do they see themselves as different. The second two paragraphs would explore the traditional political and economic structures discussed in the summary. We hope the project could reach 10-20 groups.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Anthropology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	Ideally, the university would be located near a large Togolese expat community so that students could interview Togolese regarding their ethnicity's traditional system.

Project ID	364
Project Name	Why Not Malaysia? Uncovering Study Abroad Trends for American Community College Students
Office	Public Diplomacy Section
Embassy	Malaysia
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Are you passionate about diving into qualitative data and promoting cross-cultural exchanges? Then this project is for you!</p> <p>The Public Affairs Section at the U.S. Embassy in Kuala Lumpur is delving into the intriguing question: why aren't more American community college students choosing Malaysia as their study abroad destination? This project aims to understand the factors influencing these students' decisions, their preferred subjects, and their perceptions of Malaysia as a study destination.</p> <p>Importance of the Project: Studying abroad is a transformative experience that fosters cross-cultural understanding and global awareness. However, the participation of American community college students in study abroad programs remain relatively low. By understanding the motivations and barriers faced by these students, we can develop targeted strategies to promote study abroad opportunities in Malaysia, thereby strengthening educational and cultural ties between the United States and Malaysia.</p> <p>Project Purpose and Scope: This project will involve a comprehensive investigation into the preferences and perceptions of American community college students regarding studying abroad in Malaysia. The team will conduct qualitative and quantitative research, including surveys and interviews, to gather data on the following:</p> <p>Interest in Studying Abroad: Assess the level of interest among community college students in studying abroad and identify the factors that influence their decision-making process.</p> <p>Preferred Destinations: Understand the students' perceptions of Malaysia as a study destination and compare these with other popular study abroad locations.</p> <p>Subject Preferences: Identify the subjects and academic programs that community college students are most interested in pursuing while studying abroad.</p> <p>Barriers and Motivations: Explore the barriers that prevent students from studying abroad and the motivations that encourage them to consider such opportunities.</p> <p>Expected Outcomes: The findings from this project will provide valuable insights into the preferences and perceptions of American community college students regarding studying abroad in Malaysia. This information will be instrumental in designing effective outreach and promotional strategies to encourage more students to consider Malaysia for their study abroad experiences. Additionally, the project will contribute to the</p>

	<p>broader goal of enhancing educational and cultural exchanges between the United States and Malaysia.</p> <p>Conclusion: This project offers a unique opportunity for students to engage in meaningful research that addresses a critical aspect of international education. By participating in this project, students will not only develop their research skills but also contribute to the promotion of cross-cultural exchanges and the strengthening of U.S.-Malaysia relations. We look forward to collaborating with a dedicated team of students and faculty to achieve these goals.</p>
Final Product Format	The project results, both quantitative and qualitative, will be instrumental in designing effective outreach and promotional strategies to encourage more students to consider Malaysia for their study abroad experiences.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	365
Project Name	Evaluate South Africa's foreign policy partnerships with Middle East and North African countries
Office	U.S. Embassy Pretoria - Political Affairs
Embassy	South Africa
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	<p>South Africa's solidarity with and advocacy for the Palestinian people is well-established. Less well-understood is the extent of South Africa's partnerships with other Middle East and North African countries, many of which have better or more pragmatic relationships with Israel. While some Middle East countries have expressed support for South Africa's ICJ case against Israel, others have remained noticeably silent and some diplomats privately complain that the ICJ case is a distraction to long-term peace efforts.</p> <p>This project will provide quantitative analysis of South Africa's relationships with these countries, including an analysis of bilateral trade relations, foreign direct and private investment levels, and structured bilateral and party-to-party relationship mechanisms. It will also review historic relations between South Africa and the Middle East region.</p> <p>The project's aim is to provide a set of data points, and perhaps identify leverage points, to better inform our understanding of South Africa's advocacy for Palestine and its impact as an instrument of foreign policy.</p>
Final Product Format	1-3 page capsules explaining South Africa's bilateral relationships with each country that borders the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, plus Syria and Lebanon
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Middle East/North African Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>African Studies</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	366
Project Name	Developing Case Studies on the Conduct of Diplomacy and Diplomatic Tradecraft
Office	Office of the Historian
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	<p>The Senior Advisor for the Study of the Conduct of Diplomacy solicits academic input for the background research to support the drafting of the Policy Implementation Review "Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century: Lessons Learned from U.S. Diplomacy in the European Union, the Lake Malawi Region, and Argentina." (Cases include: Supporting American Agricultural Producers by Opening Export Markets in Europe; Working with Regional Partners to Implement the Lake Malawi Invasive Weeds Project; Enhancing U.S.-Argentina Cooperation on Space.)</p> <p>A case study (for the purposes of this project) involves a diplomatic mission (almost always a bilateral embassy) trying to achieve something concrete over a definable period of time that can be judged to be a success or failure. While final research includes material not publicly available, much of the necessary work relies on open sources, e.g., memoirs, speeches, or interviews of key people who were active at the given times, oral histories (as collected by the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training and elsewhere), press releases, transcripts of press briefings (especially including background briefings), reports by U.S. government agencies (USAID, Congressional Research Service, et al), reports from NGOs in the relevant field, and academic articles. This project would be appropriate for graduate students of Diplomatic Studies, International Relations, or History.</p>
Final Product Format	Word document with relevant, fully footnoted background information (length would vary according to how much data is identified).
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	This project would be appropriate for graduate students of Diplomatic Studies, International Relations, or History. I would expect to share copies of previous completed reviews, additional information about where to find key materials, examples of the type of background information that would be useful, as well as hints on where to find key documentation were this project to be selected. I'd be happy to share purpose-built reading lists. This project could be modified to have the three case studies split among members of one academic team or between multiple institutions.

Project ID	367
Project Name	Ecuador Illicit Mining Value Chain Data Analysis to Counter Ecuador's Illegal Gold Mining Crisis
Office	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)
Embassy	Ecuador
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Illegal mining has devastated over 23,000 hectares in Ecuador and generated an estimated \$1 billion annually in illicit profits for transnational organized criminal networks. Alarming, 90% of mining activities in the country remains unregulated, posing severe environmental, social, economic, and security challenges. To address this critical issue, INL will invest \$3.5 million in a project designed to enhance the institutional capacity of the Government of Ecuador (GOE) to combat illegal gold mining. Implementation is set to begin August 2025.</p> <p>As part of this initiative, a targeted research study-including actionable policy recommendations-on illegal gold exportation (demand-side dynamics) and related money-laundering activities will complement project execution. This study will deliver essential strategic insights into key areas such as: -Ecuador's illicit mining value chain from extraction to export. -Illicit gold exportation logistics. -Transnational organized crime networks. -Financial triangulation and laundering mechanisms.</p> <p>The research findings will provide GOE institutions with robust quantitative and qualitative data, empowering them to design and implement concrete, evidence-based measures to dismantle illegal mining operations and disrupt the associated financial flows.</p>
Final Product Format	The research final product includes: -A 20-page research paper, including actionable policy recommendations. -A presentation. -An illicit mining value chain data analysis.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs - United States Department of State Homepage ES - Embajada y Consulado de EE.UU. en Ecuador

Project ID	368
Project Name	Establishment of Ecuador's Drug Observatory
Office	International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs-Ecuador
Embassy	Ecuador
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The Government of Ecuador (GOE) is in dire need of strong policies and programs based on research and data to address increasing drug consumption and demand, as well as effectively respond to violent crimes directly related to drug trafficking and transnational criminal organizations. Ecuador lacks a National Drug Observatory (NDO) for collecting and analyzing information related to drug consumption. Not having an NDO undermines the GOE's capacity to monitor and assess the drug situation in the country and effectively implement comprehensive interinstitutional responses to this phenomenon, including prevention, treatment, and recovery initiatives. An NDO would establish evidence-based scientific and practical methodologies for data collection and analysis, as well as publish reports on drug use to inform policymaking.</p> <p>The project aims to provide the Ecuador Ministry of Health with expert advice from a U.S. university to reestablish an NDO with up-to-date data-gathering methodologies on drug consumption. An NDO would contribute to bringing attention to the importance of drug demand reduction and informed security policies.</p>
Final Product Format	Evidence-based scientific-practical methodology for data collection and analysis.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Narcotics and Law Enforcement</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>
Additional Information	We expect this project to take more than one semester.

Project ID	369
Project Name	Using Satellite Imagery to Understand Economic Growth in Central China
Office	Political-Economic Section, US Consulate General Wuhan
Embassy	
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	<p>Significant advances in computer vision have driven the development of applications that can infer the socioeconomic development of a region from daytime and nighttime satellite imagery. We are interested in working with university partners to use such applications to better understand economic conditions in the four Central Chinese provinces of Hubei, Hunan, Henan, and Jiangxi. These provinces boast a population of over 300 million and a GDP the same size as Brazil's.</p> <p>Despite playing an important role in the national Chinese economy, the precise nature and degree of economic development in this region are not as well understood as in coastal regions like Guangdong and Shanghai. We believe leveraging existing computer vision approaches to inferring economic conditions from satellite imagery can help fill in this gap.</p> <p>Although much research has been conducted on inferring economic conditions from satellite imagery, Central China may provide some unique and interesting challenges to overcome. First, the economies of the four provinces are extremely diverse, with some areas depending on agriculture, others on heavy industry, others on mining and mineral extraction, and still others on high-tech and service industries. Second, reliable and fine-grained economic indicator statistics for our region may be difficult to procure, so our partners may have to turn to workarounds such as semi-supervised learning using nighttime light as a proxy for economic development. Finally, most research on inference from imagery we have seen are static with respect to time. A possible area of innovation for our university partners would involve inferring economic activity from time series satellite imagery. Considering Chinese rapid economic growth over the past 20 years, we believe our region provides an interesting testing ground for this approach.</p>
Final Product Format	10-15 page report on final results; trained inference model
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Geography</i>
Additional Information	<p>We've done a tentative search of some related research in a similar vein as our project proposal. Some examples are linked below. Depending on the skill/level, resources, and academic level of our potential partners we are willing to be flexible on the "innovation" aspect of the project - on one hand, our partners can work on simply trying to adapt an existing technique to our region, on the other hand, capabilities permitting, our partners can try to develop new methods dealing specifically with time series data. https://tinyurl.com/yduxrvuc, https://tinyurl.com/589mtakn,</p>

	https://tinyurl.com/2hbx366z , https://tinyurl.com/5yeh5ww3 , https://tinyurl.com/4a6d3dyc
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Project ID	370
Project Name	Exploring opportunities to encourage and support preservation of submerged archaeological sites in Ghana
Office	Regional Environment, Science, Technology, and Health Hub for West and Central Africa
Embassy	Ghana
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The primary goal of this project is to identify policies and Government of Ghana actions the US Government can advocate for to encourage and support preservation of shipwrecks and other submerged cultural resources found in Ghana's waters. A secondary goal is to identify the environmental impact of other activities (e.g. illegal, unregulated, unreported fishing (IUUF), illegal mining, or other activities) on these cultural resources, and recommend strategies to advocate for protecting submerged cultural resources.</p> <p>The project will explore Ghana's legal and regulatory framework for preserving and developing cultural and archaeological resources, with a particular focus on shipwrecks/submerged resources. Identifying existing policies or policy gaps that might hinder development of these resources should be a priority. This could include potential obstacles to collaboration between US and Ghanaian researchers, as well as obstacles to Government of Ghana development and preservation activities. Identifying any such obstacles that have affected ongoing or past work performed by U.S. or other researchers in Ghana would be valuable.</p> <p>In support of the secondary goal, the project should identify and, where possible, quantify potential benefits to Ghana of preserving and developing shipwrecks and other submerged cultural sites. Potential benefits could include habitat preservation, other environmental advantages, tourism, and other economic development, and any other aspect of preservation or development that could serve as a point of entry into advocating for policies that would support submerged archaeological site preservation.</p> <p>In addition, where possible the project should identify potential negative impacts of other activities on submerged cultural resources and how they might affect advocacy for site preservation. Effects of illegal, unregulated, unreported fishing (IUUF) and illegal mining would be of particular interest.</p>
Final Product Format	A written report and, as applicable, a presentation of the project's findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>African Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>History</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	371
Project Name	Identifying Malign Interference by the Russian Orthodox Church in Europe
Office	Office of International Religious Freedom
Embassy	
Bureau	Other Domestic Office
Project Description	<p>The Russian Orthodox Church (ROC) has a rich and complex history of over one thousand years, which was marked by periods of growth, persecution, and revival. The ROC is an important religious and cultural institution in Russia and in the Orthodox Christian world. It plays a prominent role in Russian society and politics, and a significant role throughout Europe's religious, cultural, and political institutions. The ROC has interfered with Europe's religious, cultural, and political institutions, often in alignment with the geopolitical interests of the Russian government, for decades.</p> <p>The ROC promotes Russian government interests in Europe by using its religious ties with other Orthodox Christian churches and leveraging its financial resources to support Orthodox parishes and clergy, and fund new church construction. The ROC aligns with political parties and movements in Europe that are sympathetic to Russian government policies, including the invasion and occupation of Ukraine. It also has been accused of spreading propaganda by funding media outlets that align with Kremlin plans to undermine European unity, NATO, and the EU. Some examples of countries where the ROC has been active are Ukraine, Georgia, Romania, and Bulgaria.</p> <p>The Office of International Religious Freedom is seeking a partner to help deepen the Department's understanding of the actions the ROC is taking throughout Europe. Specifically, we seek to understand the methods the ROC is using to gain influence with religious leaders and groups. Our office's interest is primarily in the religious nature of the ROC's actions, but we would also welcome information related to the intersection of ROC and Russian government's joint actions to influence government leaders and political parties. This information will help the United States better meet its goal of protecting freedom of religion or belief for all individuals.</p>
Final Product Format	Presentation and Written Report
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Religious Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>European and Eurasian Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>The Office of International Religious Freedom (J/IRF) promotes universal respect for freedom of religion or belief for all as a core objective of U.S. foreign policy. We monitor religiously motivated abuses, harassment, and discrimination worldwide, and recommend, develop, and implement policies and programs to address these concerns.</p> <p>The Office publishes the annual International Religious Freedom Report, a critical tool for advancing human rights, democracy, and national security, providing a comprehensive review of religious freedom</p>

	conditions in over 200 countries and territories. J/IRF is led by the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom, who is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate.
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Project ID	372
Project Name	Unpacking China's Space Diplomacy and Global Ambitions
Office	Office of Space Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>China is investing in developing countries' space programs across the globe, furthering their goal of becoming a world-class space leader and matching or exceeding the United States by 2045. A declassified ODNI assessment from April 2021 assesses that by 2030 Chinese space activities will increasingly erode the national security, commercial, and global influence advantages that the United States has accrued from its leadership in space.</p> <p>The Office of Space Affairs is looking for a research team who can address the following questions: "How has China used Belt and Road (BRI) space infrastructure projects (also known as the "Space Silk Road") and other forms of space assistance (such as education and training programs through APSCO) to emerging space programs in developing nations around the world? What nations are more receptive to China's BRI space assistance and why? To what extent has this assistance advanced the Chinese Communist Party's broader technological, diplomatic, and military ambitions? To what extent has the assistance advanced China's political goals (e.g. Uighur repatriation, public support for China's "One-China principle," non-recognition/isolation of Taiwan, votes at the UN)?</p>
Final Product Format	20-page research paper, double-spaced
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	We recommend that the project uses case studies to inform their research.

Project ID	373
Project Name	Lunar Legalities and Resource Realities: Navigating the Next Frontier
Office	Office of Space Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The United States and China are likely the next two states to send people to the Moon and seek to use lunar resources in-situ. Both states have ratified the same relevant international law, may have similar interpretations of the legality and technical propriety of using water, regolith, unique locations, and other resources in their activities but conflict may arise as lunar resource exploitation becomes a reality. These resources are crucial for sustainable lunar missions and our journey to Mars.</p> <p>The Office of Space Affairs is looking for a research team who can address the following research question: How will differing interpretations of the international legal requirements and developing best practices inform the utilization of space resources on the Moon and other celestial bodies? Additional guiding questions include: What precedents have been, and are likely to be established, by the actions of these two states by 2040? How might international resource disputes on Earth (e.g. seabed mining; Antarctica claims) impact space resource activities? How will unique Lunar geographies and resources (eg, continuously sunlit Lunar peaks, Lunar cave systems, Lunar deposits of helium-3) shape outcomes?</p>
Final Product Format	20-page research paper, double-spaced
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	374
Project Name	Launching into the Future: How to Create a Thriving Space Economy
Office	Office of Space Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The space economy is marked by the growing commercialization of space, where private companies and investors play a significant role in advancing space exploration. As a global leader in space, the United States serves as a model for developing countries aiming to grow their commercial space sectors. However, China's space sector rapidly expanding, growing its international clients, and is on track to become a significant global competitor by 2030.</p> <p>Imagine that you are a policymaker in a developing country that is tasked with developing an action plan to grow the country's emerging space economy.</p> <p>What foundational policy, regulatory, and legal steps would you take first, based on international best practices and the experiences of other countries that have developed a successful space economy?</p> <p>What sources of national or international funding, investment, and financial support are essential to your plan? What types of space activities (or sectors within the space economy) would you prioritize, why, and in what order?</p> <p>How would you look to partner with the United States and/or China, and why?</p> <p>And lastly, based on your action plan, what could the United States do to help the U.S. commercial sector more effectively compete in your country?</p>
Final Product Format	30 to 40-page research paper, double-spaced
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	We recommend using case studies to inform your analysis.

Project ID	375
Project Name	Crafting a Stellar Space Program for Emerging Nations
Office	Office of Space Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	<p>As a global leader in space, the United States serves as a model for developing countries aiming to grow their cadre of space professionals. Imagine that you are director of a U.S. university program that specializes in space. A university in a developing country has asked you to advise on the creation of their own brand-new space-related educational program. Based on your familiarity with the U.S. system, what would you advise for a beginner-level space course?</p> <p>Consider the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What should students know about space policy (laws, norms, standards, regulations, etc.)? - How much time should the program devote to civil, commercial, and national space topics? - What technical skills would you teach students? - How could you leverage free U.S. Government space-related data and services? - How would you evaluate students' learning progress? - How would you tailor the program to meet the country's specific needs?
Final Product Format	Course catalogue of all required courses (to include one paragraph description, units, and semesters/terms) and draft syllabi for each course. Plan for one-year or two-year certificate program.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	376
Project Name	Enhancing Healthcare Access and Quality through a University Partnership Plan for Braun Hospital in Rural Northern Togo
Office	Public Diplomacy Section
Embassy	Togo
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	<p>Braun Cinkasse Hospital, located in a remote area of Northern Togo, is a vital healthcare provider for the local population. Despite its importance, the hospital faces significant challenges such as financial constraints, insufficient and inadequately trained personnel, difficulty in maintaining and repairing medical equipment, and high treatment costs that are unaffordable for many local residents. The hospital has already conducted comprehensive assessments of these challenges and needs assistance in finding university partners or private investors, both American and Togolese, to bridge the gap between their needs and their goals.</p> <p>This Diplomacy Lab project should identify and establish these crucial connections, develop strategic plans for staff training, and propose funding solutions for infrastructure development. The successful completion of this project will enhance the quality of healthcare services at Braun Cinkasse Hospital, improve access to specialized medical care, and strengthen the hospital's financial independence and sustainability.</p> <p>By fostering international collaboration and knowledge exchange between U.S. and Togolese medical institutions, the project will contribute to the U.S. Embassy Lome's goal of supporting the improvement of the quality of and access to healthcare for the Togolese people, ultimately leading to better health outcomes and a stronger healthcare system in the region, and a stronger regional partner for the United States. This area of Northern Togo is susceptible to frequent attacks by violent extremists, so emergency health care is especially important for both the civilian and military population and relates to regional stability.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>At the end of the semester, the student team will present their findings and recommendations to the U.S. Embassy in Lome and Braun Cinkasse Hospital. The expected outcomes include:</p> <p>A comprehensive report detailing potential university partners and private investors, both American and Togolese, along with strategies to engage them and secure their support for the hospital's needs and goals.</p> <p>A strategic plan for staff training and development, including potential partnerships with U.S. medical faculties.</p> <p>A funding proposal for the construction of new hospital departments and the acquisition of medical equipment.</p> <p>Recommendations for improving community engagement and access to healthcare services.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>

Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	377
Project Name	Identifying Regulatory Gaps: Critical and Emerging Technology
Office	Office of Export Control Cooperation (ECC)
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>Technology continues to evolve at a pace with which government regulations cannot keep up. Inevitably, some technologies may end up in the hands of a bad actor for use in an advanced conventional weapon, nuclear weapon, or another kind of weapon of mass destruction (WMD). This means that critical and emerging technology (CET) is an American national security related proliferation issue requiring strong export controls.</p> <p>The goal of this project is to research and identify how CET is or is not regulated through national and multilateral export control regimes. This would include examining U.S. and other national export control laws/regulations, as well as control lists from the four multilateral export control regimes: the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Missile Technology Control Regime, the Australia Group, and the Wassenaar Arrangement. Research should identify groups of CET that the U.S. seeks to control and identify where there are regulatory gaps for those technologies.</p> <p>The final product should provide recommendations on how to address this issue in the international community through multilateral bodies (i.e., the regimes, the UN, etc.) or by individual governments (non-U.S.). This project will support the EXBS program by providing information on the current "state of play" in controlling CET and propose specific recommendations for addressing the issue of regulatory gaps with partner countries, including what CET might be controlled and if national control lists or multilateral bodies should lead on establishing controls on CET.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product will be a no longer than 20-page research paper that includes policy analysis and recommendations. There will also be an oral briefing with a slide deck. Research teams will work with the project POC to identify relevant case studies and technologies to focus on. Research teams are encouraged to incorporate data into the project where appropriate.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/

Project ID	378
Project Name	Technology for Good and Evil: Examining Technology Use and Arguments for Export Controls
Office	Office of Export Control and Cooperation (ECC)
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>Critical and emerging technologies (CET) have the potential to make daily life easier and safer for millions globally. While CET can and should be used for good, many are weapon of mass destruction (WMD) enabling. CET is also difficult to manage through traditional export controls. Rapid technological innovation coupled with the delicate balance between security and scientific innovation means that CET may lack clear export controls. The proliferation of CET can have immediate, negative impacts in this context, putting lives at risk and jeopardizing American national security.</p> <p>The goal of this project is to research and develop case studies on specific CET and their positive and negative use with examples, highlighting how and why the CET may be export controlled and the potential impacts of control. Case studies should clearly explain the different positive and negative uses of the CET, include any real-world or potential examples of use, provide sound reasoning for controlling or not controlling the CET based on national security considerations, and propose potential language to use when engaging partner countries that either already use or are considering using the CET. Special attention should be paid to counternarratives in this space, specifically the PRC's counternarrative that export controls are a way to prohibit economic growth and national independence. This information will support the EXBS program in engaging with partner countries that are seeking to leverage CET to support their economic growth.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product will be a collection of case studies. Research teams will work with the project POC to identify relevant case studies and technologies to focus on. Research teams are encouraged to incorporate data into the project where appropriate. The final product should be no longer than 20 pages and include an oral briefing accompanied by a slide deck.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	For more information on the EXBS program, please see: https://www.state.gov/export-control-and-related-border-security-program/

Project ID	379
Project Name	PRC Impacts on Territorial Disputes in Southeastern Europe
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	Greece
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	There are numerous historical and current disputes over territory and recognition in Southeastern Europe. Countries in the region often hope that China, with its stated support for each state's sovereignty and territorial integrity, will help balance or intervene in these disputes in a positive way, or at least exert leverage on one side to prevent or resolve conflict or advance negotiations. This project would examine these disputes, the positions of multilateral organizations and status of the disputes under international law, the positions of the countries involved and the PRC, and analyze how the PRC has or has not supported one or both sides claims, helped or not helped bring about resolution, or how the PRC might intervene in the future or in the case of a crisis. The information will be used to inform U.S. policy on these issues and engagement with China and other parties involved to advance U.S. interests in the region and peaceful resolution of any disputes.
Final Product Format	Research paper and accompanying presentation.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Law</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	380
Project Name	Language of Success: Measuring 20 Years of English Language Impact in Jordan
Office	Public Diplomacy Amman
Embassy	Jordan
Bureau	Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Project Description	<p>Young Jordanians consistently inquire about opportunities to improve their English skills - but how do these skills empower youth to achieve a more positive future?</p> <p>Through this Diplomacy Lab project, students will utilize statistical techniques, polling data, and qualitative analysis to provide insights on the impacts of an almost two-decade-long English language program - the English Access Microscholarship Program -- on young Jordanians and the Jordanian economy. Students will identify methodologies to assess how English language proficiency, critical thinking skills, and exposure to U.S. culture and pedagogy from the Access Program have influenced educational attainment, employment opportunities, economic growth, and social mobility among the 7,000 Jordanian alumni.</p> <p>The data collection, innovative data analyses, and compelling stories compiled through this project will provide recommendations that help inform future U.S. government-sponsored educational programs in Jordan that can enhance the country's development, and in turn, its continued stability.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>The project will detail the findings of the longitudinal impacts of the Access Program in Jordan. Final products will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A comprehensive assessment of the program's overall 20-year impact, with a summary of key takeaways from polling data, statistical reports, and in-depth analysis of qualitative data collected; - Infographics or visual representations of key data points and findings; - Three brief case studies highlighting specific examples of the program's impact; and - A summary outlining the project's methodology and policy recommendations for future U.S. government-sponsored English language programming in Jordan.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Statistics</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Additional Information	The project outcome will help inform the Public Diplomacy Section in U.S. Embassy Amman's strategic planning and priorities vis-à-vis future English language programs in Jordan. By understanding the scope and capacity of English language as a tool for public diplomacy outreach, the U.S. Embassy in Amman will be able to better target its investment in English

	<p>language programming to specific geographic areas, demographic audiences, and key economic sectors in Jordan.</p> <p>For more information about the English Access Microscholarship Program: https://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/english-access-microscholarship-program</p>
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Project ID	381
Project Name	Empowering the Next Generation of Sports Professionals
Office	Public Diplomacy
Embassy	Mexico
Bureau	Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Project Description	<p>The FIFA Men's World Cup 2026, co-hosted by the United States, Mexico, and Canada, presents a significant opportunity to strengthen economic ties across North America. Aligned with the U.S. commitment to a safer and prosperous America, this project aims to equip undergraduate students in Mexico with essential skills in technical English for sports, major event management, and leadership.</p> <p>Additionally, training Mexican sports students in key areas such as event operations and crisis management will contribute to a safer and more organized environment for the thousands of American visitors attending the World Cup. By focusing on sports marketing, management, and effective communication, this initiative seeks to bridge skill gaps and prepare students for opportunities not only in soccer but across various sports. YMCA University of Mexico would be a strong partner in this initiative, offering its expertise in sports sciences and education to enhance the program's impact. Its involvement will help provide students with a solid academic foundation and create sustainable career opportunities leading up to the FIFA Men's World Cup 2026 and beyond.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>By the end of 2025, 40 YMCA University undergraduate students in Mexico will have acquired essential skills in technical English for sports, major event management, and leadership. Their progress will be measured through pre- and post-program surveys and evaluations of action plans, demonstrating their readiness to contribute to the growth and professionalization of Mexico's sports sector.</p> <p>This initiative aligns with U.S. commitment to prepare a skilled workforce to support the successful hosting of the 2026 FIFA World Cup, thereby enhancing safety, stability and prosperity.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	YMCA University, located in Mexico City, is a private institution and offers a range of programs, including degrees in sports sciences, business, and law. As part of the YMCA Mexico group, the university emphasizes community development and global engagement.

Project ID	383
Project Name	China Space Technology: Landscape Analysis, Foreign Ties, and Risks to U.S. Interests
Office	Office of Critical Technology Protection
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>This project will identify and analyze the main companies, research institutions, and universities comprising China's increasingly sophisticated space industry. The project will also seek to identify external collaborations by these entities in support of efforts to measure China-based companies' level of integration with global space technology industrial supply chains. CTP will work with student teams to identify China-based companies, research institutions, and universities comprising China's space technology industrial complex. The student teams will then conduct open-source research to create profiles for each of these entities in close consultation with CTP.</p> <p>This project will feed into a larger Department of State data analysis initiative to map China's integration in global technology supply chains, identify existing or potential U.S./international dependencies on China-based companies, support the protection of sensitive and dual-use U.S. technologies, and help international universities and partner governments conduct better vetting of potential China-based partners in the space sector in light of China's dual circulation and military-civil fusion strategies. Chinese language research abilities are highly desired for the successful completion of this project.</p> <p>The Chinese Communist Party (CCP) prioritizes achieving dominance in key scientific fields, including space technologies, to maximize China's comprehensive national power and resulting ability to prevail in strategic competition. The CCP is strengthening links between its civilian universities and commercial entities, its military and defense industrial base, and state security agencies to achieve dominance in this field. As the United States strengthened export controls, visa screening, and domestic research security, China shifted focus to other key producers of sensitive technology, including those in allied and partner nations, to allow it to continue to exploit global trade and investment relationships and international research collaborations to advance its military ambitions.</p> <p>This project seeks to create analytic products to raise awareness about growing PRC dual-use space capabilities, ties between China-based companies and the CCP and China's military and risks inherent in collaborating with CCP-linked entities on sensitive technologies.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Project deliverables will include:</p> <p>(1) a five-page policy memo assessing China's strategy for developing space technologies, notable successes and challenges, top global partners, and implications for U.S. interests; and</p>

	(2) a database with profiles for each of the companies, research institutes, and universities identified in the course of the project; (3) a briefing to State Department officials on the study's findings.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Additional Information	ISN's Office of Critical Technology Protection (CTP) develops foreign policy to protect U.S. critical technologies and to counter strategic competitors and adversaries' destabilizing behavior and influence. CTP's China Research Team applies area studies and Chinese language research capabilities to identify, assess, and highlight risks stemming from CCP technology development and acquisition strategies and tactics and leverages these analyses to counter problematic PRC activities. CTP's China Team conducts corporate due diligence to highlight ties between the Chinese Communist Party, PRC government, and PRC military, and China-based private companies.

Project ID	384
Project Name	The History of Negotiation and Implementation of the Biological Weapons Convention
Office	Office of the Biological Policy
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>Biological weapons were declared to be “repugnant to mankind” when the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) entered into force in 1975. The BWC bans the development, production, stockpiling, or acquisition of biological weapons under any circumstances. Yet due to the dual-use nature of biology (meaning that the same research, materials, or technologies can be used for peaceful purposes or to cause harm), it has always been a challenge to assess whether all countries are actually complying with their obligations under the treaty. The United States destroyed all of its biological weapons stockpiles and ended all efforts to weaponize biological agents from 1969-1973, while the Soviet Union, despite signing onto the BWC, continued to build out its program, which has since been inherited by Russia.</p> <p>Today, misinformation continues to spread regarding the continuation of the U.S. program; many diplomats and members of the general public are under the misapprehension that the United States has continued to pursue biological weapons. Meanwhile, public knowledge is limited about other compliance concerns throughout the Convention's history, including the Soviet program, and about how the United States sought to respond to such concerns.</p> <p>The Office of the Biological Policy Staff (ISN/BPS) is working on declassification of relevant documents pertaining to the Convention's history; a number of these documents have already been declassified and digitized. As the BWC celebrates its 50th anniversary year, BPS is looking to increase public awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (1) the negotiations of the BWC in Geneva; (2) the Nixon administration's decision to terminate the U.S. offensive biological weapons program and the process of its elimination; (3) compliance concerns throughout the Convention's history (including, among other events, the 1979 anthrax outbreak in the Soviet city of Sverdlovsk and the reciprocal site visits under the Trilateral Agreement in the early 1990s); and (4) other miscellaneous events related to the treaty, including its reinvigoration. The project team will look through weapons control archives and produce summary reports to be shared publicly at events related to the 50th anniversary and support BPS in crafting a public narrative around these issues to combat ongoing misperceptions.
Final Product Format	The final product would include a searchable database of relevant documents; a 3-4-page executive summary of documents; and a presentation that could be tailored to various audiences, including other components of the Department of State, the U.S. Government interagency, academia, industry and/or members of the international diplomatic community. We are also eager to support and encourage

	efforts undertaken by the partnering team or institution to disseminate historical or analytical insights that they develop through the project.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	<p>Current tranche of released documents pertaining to this project can be found here:</p> <p>https://foia.state.gov/Search/Results.aspx?searchText=&beginDate=&endDate=&publishedBeginDate=20230401&publishedEndDate=20230430&caseNumber=</p>

Project ID	385
Project Name	Disrupting the Pacific: Factors of Instability and Future U.S. Engagement
Office	CSO Office of East Asia & Pacific / South & Central Asia Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>REQUEST: What are the primary drivers of instability and conflict in the Pacific? This proposal continues to explore the topic from the 2024-25 academic year through new case studies of three Pacific Island Countries, selecting at least one from those that have not yet been covered in Diplomacy Lab case studies: French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Tonga, and Tuvalu.</p> <p>Case studies should determine the three most significant factors which create or exacerbate instability, tension, conflict, and/or violence. We hope eventually to have one case study completed for each PIC. Consider not only international issues and national policies but also factors which impact communities and even families. Think broadly and take into account political and economic factors as well as cultural, demographical, geographical, historical, religious, technological, and other relevant concerns. Your findings will guide our office in determining how best to expand activities to the Pacific region, both in terms of which countries to support with strategic interventions and how best to contribute positively for greater stability to ensure a United States that is safer, secure, and more prosperous. In recent years, the Indo-Pacific region broadly and the “Blue Pacific” region more narrowly have garnered more attention and taken a more prominent position in U.S. strategy and foreign relations. Accordingly, the value of effective diplomatic engagement; the importance of understanding local context and cultural implications; and the need to maximize limited time, funding, and human resources continues to grow, as all are essential for strengthening ties and increasing influence.</p> <p>The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) takes a strategic view to its work, seeking to formulate and implement policies and programs which prevent conflict, reduce fragility, strengthen institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives. Pacific Island Countries face myriad challenges, from natural disasters to ineffective governance to insufficient economic opportunities. Combined with demographic challenges, culture clashes, and the impact of modern media and social networking apps, various PICs at times have experienced significant levels of economic deprivation; violence and crime, both petty, violent, and transnational; political turmoil, including military coup d'etat; and other destabilizing changes and events.</p>
Final Product Format	For each country case study, please present a paper of no more than 15 pages inclusive of a one-to-two-page executive summary. Please include sources in an annex with links when possible. Visual representations of analytical data are welcome but not required. A visual presentation combining the findings of all the case studies is welcome but not required.

Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>History</i>
Additional Information	<p>The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is charged with leading the formulation and implementation of U.S. conflict prevention strategies, policies, and programs (https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/). It is the State Department's lead implementer of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/) and works to reduce fragility, strengthen institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.</p> <p>The Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs seeks to enable effective, efficient responses to national security priorities in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP) and South & Central Asia (SCA) regions. Team Pacific leads our efforts with Pacific Island Countries. Reference & Strategy Documents: The United States is engaged in efforts to prevent conflict and promote stability in Papua New Guinea. https://www.state.gov/united-states-strategy-to-prevent-conflict-and-promote-stability-country-and-regional-plans/.</p> <p>The 10-Year Plan for Papua New Guinea may inform your efforts, as it includes an assessment of the key factors of instability there: https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/The-U.S.-Strategy-to-Prevent-Conflict-and-Promote-Stability-10-Year-Plan-for-Papua-New-Guinea-Accessible-3.29.2024-1.pdf</p>

Project ID	386
Project Name	Who's Who in Mongolia: Network Analysis of Connections
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	Mongolia
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>This project aims to allow us to better understand connections between politically and economic important individuals in Mongolia. While it has a small population, Mongolia is a high-context and very interconnected environment where connections between various individuals are not clear but are key to effectively promoting U.S. interests here.</p> <p>At present, we rely on our local staff (including one American who is a full-time resident of Mongolia) to provide that information. We rely on our local staff to provide not only general context about a given individual's business, background, reputation, but also on the various connections that she/he may have (or be perceived to have) with other countries, businesses, interests, or potential political exposure (member of a certain party or perceived to be), etc. All of this information resides in the heads of our local staff, which means a long learning curve for officers and also makes it difficult for us to fully understand the context and connections of our interlocutors. Most concerning, we risk losing this knowledge completely should one of our local staff depart.</p> <p>We are looking for a database that can allow us to hold, update, and search these connections. For example, we could put in members of parliament and see whom they're connected to by party affiliation (or faction), family/marriage, business, international ties, and other factors. The database would have to use our existing technology (most likely Access) and be designed in such a way that it runs on our embassy servers and can be updated (to include potentially adding or removing fields) by staff, while also being searchable. While our work is unclassified, the final database would be SBU. We would ideally run tests on it with strictly non-SBU information during the development and testing phase.</p>
Final Product Format	The final deliverables would be 1) a working database and 2) documentation on how to update, change, and search it.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Sociology</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	387
Project Name	Policy Framework for Bridging Education and Employment: Advancing Experiential Learning Programs for Namibian Youth
Office	Public Diplomacy
Embassy	Namibia
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	Namibia is struggling with a gap between education and jobs, leaving many young people without the skills or experience needed for work. This project will create a policy plan to include hands-on learning programs, like internships and apprenticeships, in schools and workplaces. These programs will help students gain real-world skills, prepare for jobs, and reduce youth unemployment. By working on this project, students and faculty can help design practical solutions that will make a lasting difference for Namibia's future.
Final Product Format	We would like to receive a comprehensive policy brief that outlines the key recommendations for integrating experiential learning programs into Namibia's education and employment sectors. The brief should include an analysis of current challenges, proposed policy strategies, and actionable steps for implementation. Additionally, a presentation summarizing the main points of the policy brief would be valuable for engaging key stakeholders and policymakers. The brief should be concise, no longer than 8-10 pages, with clear recommendations and supporting evidence.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Education and Cultural Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Youth Issues</i>
Additional Information	<p>This project is expected to take one semester (approximately 4 months). To help students get started, the following resources are recommended:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Namibian Youth Employment Report - Overview of youth unemployment in Namibia. 2. Experiential Learning Programs in Africa - Successful examples of hands-on learning programs. 3. Namibian Education and Labor Market Policies - Key government documents on education and employment strategies. 4. Global Best Practices for Youth Employment - U.S. models to inform Namibia's approach.

Project ID	388
Project Name	Battle for Bougainville: Competing with China in the Pacific
Office	Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>RESEARCH QUESTION: What are the key factors for a new country to succeed, and how can the United States ensure this success, thus strengthening our relationship, increasing our influence, and making ourselves safer, stronger, and more secure? Results from this project will guide our office in determining how best to support Bougainville in its current state and if it moves towards greater independence from the government of Papua New Guinea.</p> <p>Optional: Investigate the inroads that the Chinese government and Chinese-backed businesses have made in recent years in Bougainville; assess their success in terms of economic and political influence. Results from this element will guide our office in determining how best to compete with China over influence in Bougainville. Bougainville may be on the cusp of becoming the newest country in the world. A much-feared battlefield during World War Two and later the site of the most violent post-war conflict in the Pacific Islands, the Autonomous Region of Bougainville currently remains a part of the Independent States of Papua New Guinea. The region, "which is made up of one large island and several outlying islands and atolls, has sought independence since long before Papua New Guinea's own independence from Australia in 1975." As Bougainville seeks to break away from Papua New Guinea - and to acquire funding that can sustain its statehood - it, too, could increasingly become a site for geostrategic rivalry." In fact, Bougainville already commands attention from China for its natural resources and strategic location. Following this 50th anniversary year of Papua New Guinea's independence and the 50th anniversary of U.S.-PNG relations, Bougainville could play an important role in the future of the Pacific.</p> <p>For the United States to compete in the Pacific and ensure a safer, stronger, more prosperous outlook, building our influence by supporting a safe, strong, and prosperous Bougainville will be vital. Research the existing academic literature, review analytical data, and discuss with experts the essential elements which determine whether a new country thrives or falters. Many countries gained independence in the second half of the Twentieth Century; the most recent examples of new and emerging countries are South Sudan(2011), Kosovo (partially recognized since 2008), Montenegro & Serbia (split in 2006), Timor Leste (2002), Palau (1994), Eritrea (1993), Czech Republic & Slovakia (split in 1993, now Czechia and Slovak Republic), former Yugoslav republics (Montenegro & Serbia split in 2006, others in 1992, 1991), and former Soviet Republics (1992 & 1991) and Eastern Block countries (1989).</p>
Final Product Format	Please present a paper of no more than 20 pages inclusive of a one-to-two-page executive summary. Please include sources in an annex with links when possible. Visual representations of analytical data are welcome but not required. A visual presentation combining the findings of all the

	case studies is welcome but not required. For the optional China portion, a 15-page paper with a two-page executive summary should be sufficient.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>History</i>
Additional Information	<p>The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is charged with leading the formulation and implementation of U.S. conflict prevention strategies, policies, and programs (https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/). It is the State Department's lead implementer of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/), houses the Negotiations Support Unit, which advises U.S. diplomats and other officials on resolving international disputes, and works to reduce fragility, strengthen institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives. The Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs seeks to enable effective and efficient U.S. government and international community response to national security priorities in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP) and South & Central Asia (SCA) regions. Team Pacific leads our efforts with Pacific Island Countries (PICs).</p> <p>References:</p> <p>Bougainville Seeks U.S. Support Amid Strategic Rivalry in the Pacific https://www.usip.org/publications/2023/11/bougainville-seeks-us-support-amid-strategic-rivalry-pacific Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map https://pacificaidmap.lowyinstitute.org/#msdyntrid=9nSu2BeRQj0aykdAE4_UkOGGNWun3x3r8_DLwk7Hvqk</p>

Project ID	389
Project Name	Development of a Low-cost Air Purifier for PM 2.5 Filtration in South Asia
Office	South Asia Regional Environment Office (REO)
Embassy	Nepal
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Air pollution is a significant environmental and public health issue in South Asia, with PM 2.5 being one of the most harmful pollutants. Commercial air purifiers are cost-prohibitive for many households, due to the initial expense of purchasing the device and the ongoing expense of replacement filters.</p> <p>This project aims to develop an affordable and effective air purifier that can be constructed using locally available, reusable materials. The goal is to create a sustainable solution that can be easily adopted by households and communities across the region to improve air quality and public health. Cleaning and reuse of filtration materials would be ideal to reduce operational cost of the device.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and Design: Conduct research on existing air purification technologies and materials available in South Asia. Design an air purifier that effectively filters PM 2.5 particles using affordable and reusable materials. 2. Prototype Development: Develop a prototype of the air purifier and test its effectiveness in filtering PM 2.5 particles in a small-to-medium-sized room. 3. Community Engagement: Work with REO to build a prototype device in country and virtually engage with local communities to gather feedback on the design and usability of the air purifier with support from REO. Revise the design based on community and end-user feedback.
Final Product Format	<p>Research Report: A comprehensive report detailing the research conducted, design process, and materials used, and filtration effectiveness.</p> <p>Prototype: Detailed design plans and build instructions to construct a working prototype of the air purifier.</p> <p>Community Feedback Report: A report summarizing the feedback received from local communities and any adjustments made to the design.</p> <p>Final Design Plans and Instructions: Finalize a detailed manual under a Creative Commons license that includes a list of required materials; build instructions; maintenance procedures; and recommendations for use. Create a video demonstrating the build process and use that can be posted to social media platforms.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>

Project ID	390
Project Name	Sustainable Landscaping Guidance for Embassies and Mission Community Members in the Indo-Gangetic Plains
Office	South Asia Regional Environment Office (REO), U.S. Embassy Kathmandu
Embassy	Nepal
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>The Indo-Gangetic Plains, stretching across Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh, are among the most fertile and densely populated regions in the world. This area is characterized by its rich biodiversity and significant agricultural output. However, the region faces severe environmental challenges, including air pollution, water scarcity, and the loss of native plant species. These issues not only impact public health but also threaten the ecological balance, biodiversity, and sustainability of the region.</p> <p>This project aims to address these challenges by developing comprehensive landscaping guidance that regional U.S. embassies and Mission community members can use to increase endemic habitats for local species, reduce water use, and increase landscape resilience to local weather conditions. The guidance will focus on selecting plants that are well-suited to the region's climate and environmental conditions, promoting biodiversity, improving air quality, and requiring minimal watering.</p> <p>The project will also highlight plants that have synergistic benefits by being planted together, and provide narrative text on each plant that can be used on educational signage. By transforming embassy grounds into educational resources, the project seeks to enhance environmental awareness, improve efficiency, and beautify embassy landscapes.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>A manual of landscaping guidelines, tailored to the Indo-Gangetic Plains, which identify plant species that are native or well-adapted to the region, require minimal watering, promote biodiversity of flora and fauna, and improve air quality.</p> <p>Narratives for embassy ground signage that will serve as educational resources for embassy staff, community members, and visitors. • A virtual seminar, online workshop, or video for interested embassy participants presenting the principles of sustainable landscaping, and the guidelines tailored to the region. The session may be in the evening/night or early morning to account for time zone differences with South Asia.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Geography</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	391
Project Name	Thin Red Line: China's Pacific Push and How to Counter It
Office	Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>RESEARCH QUESTION: How are Xi Jinping's Global Development Initiative, Global Security Initiative, and Global Civilization Initiative implemented in the Pacific?</p> <p>Conduct case studies of three Pacific Island Countries to determine how China is advancing these initiatives, which are primary lines of effort in its foreign policy strategy. Select one, two, or three of the lines of effort to explore (GDI, GSI, GCI), and show whether China's assistance, investments, and spending matches its public statements and proclamations.</p> <p>In recent years, China has successfully influenced several PICs to switch diplomatic recognition from Taiwan to the People's Republic of China. This includes Nauru (2024), Kiribati (2019), and Solomon Islands (2019), leaving only three Pacific Island Countries still recognizing Taiwan - Marshall Islands, Palau, and Tuvalu. By exploring the details of the GDI, GSI, and/or GCI in select countries in the Indo-Pacific region, we can better understand how China, the Chinese Communist Party, and elements of the party-state effectively engage PICs, exert influence beyond their borders, and how best to counter their strategy, as it undermines the existing international order that has enabled many of the political, economic, academic, and cultural developments over the past 80 years.</p> <p>Results from this project will guide our office in determining how best to expand activities to the Pacific region and ensure the United States is safer, secure, and more prosperous.</p>
Final Product Format	For each country case study, please present a paper of no more than 15 pages inclusive of a one-to-two-page executive summary. Please include sources in an annex with links when possible. Visual representations of analytical data are welcome but not required. A visual presentation combining the findings of all the case studies is welcome but not required.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Additional Information	The Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) is charged with leading the formulation and implementation of U.S. conflict prevention strategies, policies, and programs (https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-civilian-security-democracy-and-human-rights/bureau-of-conflict-and-stabilization-operations/). It is the State Department's lead implementer of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent Conflict and Promote Stability (https://www.state.gov/stability-strategy/), houses the Negotiations Support Unit, which advises U.S. diplomats and other

	<p>officials on resolving international disputes, and works to reduce fragility, strengthen institutions, and increase social cohesion to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.</p> <p>The Office of East Asian & Pacific South & Central Asian Affairs seeks to enable effective and efficient U.S. government and international community response to national security priorities in the East Asia & Pacific (EAP) and South & Central Asia (SCA) regions. Team Pacific leads our efforts with Pacific Island Countries (PICs).</p> <p>References: https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/issue-brief/how-beijings-newest-global-initiatives-seek-to-remake-the-world-order/ https://thediplomat.com/2023/07/chinas-switch-from-the-belt-and-road-to-the-global-development-initiative/ https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/nauru-s-diplomatic-switch-china-rising-stakes-pacific-geopolitics https://www.csis.org/blogs/new-perspectives-asia/support-threefold-taiwans-pacific-island-allies https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/china-nauru-re-establish-diplomatic-ties-state-media-2024-01-24/ Lowy Institute Pacific Aid Map https://pacificaidmap.lowyinstitute.org/#msdyntrid=9nSu2BeRQj0aykdAE4_UkOGGNWun3x3r8_DLwk7Hvqk</p>
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Project ID	392
Project Name	Messaging Campaign on How Engagement with ASEAN Makes the United States Safer, Stronger, and More Prosperous
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	U.S. Mission to ASEAN
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	<p>The U.S. Mission to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (USASEAN) is looking for a team to conduct research and create a messaging campaign to highlight how U.S. engagement with ASEAN makes America safer, stronger, and more prosperous.</p> <p>The team will be tasked to</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) draft a series of 1 to 2-page briefs and 2) create accompanying visuals (graphics, or even social media posts) highlighting how each of several select U.S.-ASEAN cooperation projects benefits both the United States and Southeast Asia, with particular attention to the following questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Does it make America safer? · Does it make America stronger? · Does it make America more prosperous? <p>USASEAN will provide the specific examples to be analyzed, which may include U.S.-ASEAN cooperation on artificial intelligence, U.S. support for regional energy connectivity, the U.S.-ASEAN Smart Cities Partnership, and the U.S.-ASEAN Science, Technology, and Innovation Program.</p> <p>The team is encouraged to use statistics and data analysis in support of the research briefs and visuals. The final activity for this project will be verbal presentations on the research briefs and the visuals.</p>
Final Product Format	4-5 short research briefs; visuals illustrating the findings of the research and highlighting answers to the three key questions; (optional) draft social media posts to message these findings to the American and Southeast Asia public.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	393
Project Name	Proposal for One-Page Analysis and Use Cases on Using Satellite Data Tools to Address Environmental Challenges in ASEAN
Office	Economic Section
Embassy	U.S. Mission to ASEAN
Bureau	East Asian Affairs
Project Description	<p>The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is a regional organization comprising 10 member states, representing a population of over 660 million people. The U.S. Mission to ASEAN collaborates with ASEAN and its member states to provide training in areas of mutual interest, such as space technology. Recently, a series of workshops conducted by a visiting U.S. scientist introduced ASEAN to NASA's Earthdata Ecosystem, data-visualization tools, and publicly available satellite data.</p> <p>We propose to create a one-page analysis that demonstrates how ASEAN member states can utilize publicly available satellite data tools to address economic and environmental challenges. This analysis will build on the foundational knowledge provided in the workshops and offer detailed guidance on using the Earthdata Ecosystem to tackle regional environmental issues such as tropical storm formation, deforestation, and illegal fishing or mining operations, all of which have an impact on ASEAN's economy and potentially U.S.-ASEAN economic cooperation.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A 5-7 page report on the electoral systems of select countries in the Western Hemisphere - Visual representations, including maps and graphs, illustrating the diversity of electoral systems. - A 2-page brief and presentation summarizing key findings and insights from the project to include policy recommendations on key correlations between electoral system factors and resilience/fragility of democratic indicators A group presentation for an audience of Foreign Affairs professionals working in or on Latin America/Caribbean Project deliverables will be used in training modules for foreign affairs professionals (foreign and civil service) focused on Latin America and the Caribbean.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Western Hemisphere Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	<p>The selected team will:</p> <p>Data Selection: Use data from the Earthdata Ecosystem to choose two economic or environmental challenge use cases.</p> <p>Visualization: Demonstrate how to visualize the economic and environmental impacts over time using the selected data.</p>

	<p>Process Documentation: Detail the systematic process used to select and analyze the data, providing context and actionable information for the predetermined use cases.</p> <p>This proposal aims to empower ASEAN member states with the knowledge and tools necessary to effectively address environmental challenges using satellite data</p>
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Project ID	394
Project Name	Science Communication for Community Impact: Engaging the public in science to enhance community responses and awareness.
Office	Public Affairs
Embassy	Central African Republic
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	A group of 30 to 50 science students with limited research experience collaborate with peers from American universities over the course of a semester. They learn foundational research skills, engage in scientific communication, and explore everything from defining problems to presenting findings. These students also work with their local communities to address development challenges, promoting research as a crucial tool for meeting societal needs and expectations.
Final Product Format	A 4-page options memo if provided enough details
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	Post will have two separate students group of 15 each for this project.

Project ID	395
Project Name	Ensuring Research Integrity in the Age of AI: Safeguarding the reliability and trustworthiness of research in the era of applications and artificial intelligence.
Office	Public Affairs Bangui
Embassy	Central African Republic
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	The students from CAR Social Science Institute face significant barriers due to limited access to educational resources and scientific information, with internet connectivity ranging from 10.06% to 11.44%. This lack of access, combined with limited research experience, restricts their potential. As a result, many resort to technological tools, such as apps and AI, to complete their work, which undermines academic integrity and diminishes the values of personal effort and merit.
Final Product Format	a 4-page options memo
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	Although Post does not intend to submit several projects, the following topics are of interest to students and are likely to further the Mission's objectives. Balancing AI and Research Integrity: Defining boundaries in AI usage to maintain research standards and integrity. Defending Democracy: Fostering Values in Challenging Times Democracy in Crisis: Cultivating Values through Cultural and Educational Dialogue

Project ID	396
Project Name	PRC's Economic Influence in Argentina: Examining the Risks of Coercion
Office	Buenos Aires, Economic Section
Embassy	Argentina
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	<p>This proposal seeks to analyze six critical areas in which the People's Republic of China (PRC) exerts economic leverage in Argentina to advance its strategic and political objectives. As the PRC expands its global economic footprint, its growing influence in Latin America—particularly in Argentina—warrants closer examination. Understanding the mechanisms by which the PRC leverages economic dependencies, infrastructure investments, and financial instruments will inform U.S. policymakers and assist in strengthening Argentina's resilience against economic coercion.</p> <p>Through this study, participating university teams will provide a comprehensive analysis of the PRC's economic engagement in Argentina, the risks associated with PRC involvement in key sectors, and policy recommendations to mitigate vulnerabilities. By leveraging academic expertise, this project will generate data-driven insights that directly support diplomatic engagements and policy formulation. The findings will serve as a briefing resource for high-level U.S. officials engaging with Argentine counterparts, reinforcing U.S. strategic interests in the region and contribute to the broader effort of ensuring economic stability and sovereignty in the Western Hemisphere.</p>
Final Product Format	The project will produce a 12-20 page research report that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides an in-depth assessment of each area of economic coercion. • Analyzes the mechanisms and consequences of PRC influence. • Incorporates case studies and quantitative data. • Proposes policy recommendations to mitigate vulnerabilities and foster economic resilience.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Additional Information	<p>Key Areas of Focus</p> <p>1. Infrastructure Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rationale: Infrastructure development is a cornerstone of Argentina's growth strategy, with significant investments in transportation, energy, and telecommunications. The PRC's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) has financed major projects, including railway expansions, hydroelectric dams, and power plants. Control over these assets grants China leverage over Argentina's strategic infrastructure. • Leverage Mechanism: PRC-backed loans often come with opaque terms that favor Chinese contractors and suppliers. Delays or cost overruns can pressure Argentina into concessions, such as prioritizing PRC firms for future projects or supporting Chinese positions in multilateral forums. </p> <p>Example: The PRC-funded Nestor Kirchner and Jorge Cepernic hydroelectric dams in Patagonia have faced delays and rising costs,</p>

	<p>placing Argentina in a position of financial and technical dependency on Chinese firms.</p> <p>2. Debt Dependency Rationale: Argentina's reliance on external financing to stabilize its economy has made it vulnerable to creditor nations. The PRC is Argentina's second-largest bilateral lender, with financial agreements structured to increase dependency over time. Leverage Mechanism: By offering debt relief, currency swaps, or restructuring, China can demand diplomatic alignment on critical issues, such as Taiwan or trade agreements, in return. Example: In 2023, China extended a \$6.5 billion currency swap, stabilizing Argentina's reserves. However, Beijing reportedly conditioned continued support on critical infrastructure plans.</p> <p>3. Energy and Natural Resources Rationale: Argentina possesses vast reserves of lithium, copper, oil, and natural gas, making it a critical global supplier of these resources. The PRC seeks to secure access to critical minerals, particularly lithium, to fully control the supply chains for battery production and technology, regardless of global prices or project rentability. Leverage Mechanism: PRC firms secure extraction rights through direct investment, increasing Argentina's reliance on Chinese-controlled supply chains. Example: Chinese company Ganfeng Lithium acquired majority stakes in multiple lithium projects in Salta and Jujuy, influencing Argentina's export policies and limiting diversification efforts.</p> <p>4. Agricultural Trade: Rationale: China is Argentina's largest agricultural export market, particularly for soybeans, beef, and corn. Overreliance on Chinese demand increases Argentina's vulnerability to economic retaliation. Leverage Mechanism: The PRC can impose sudden import restrictions or adjust sanitary regulations to exert pressure. Example: With over 70 percent of its beef exports destined for the PRC, in December 2024 the PRC began a review of beef imports for antidumping concerns, and Argentina faces heightened vulnerability to economic coercion from Beijing.</p> <p>5. Technology and Telecommunications: Rationale: Argentina is expanding its digital infrastructure, with Chinese firms playing a central role. The reliance on Chinese technology firms introduces risks related to cybersecurity and data security. Leverage Mechanism: PRC-controlled supply chains allow China to restrict access to technological upgrades, steal sensitive information, and conduct cyberattacks. Example: Despite U.S. warnings, Argentina allows PRC firms like Huawei and ZTE in network development, increasing exposure to Chinese tech influence. The Ministry of Defense reported dozens of PRC-linked cyberattacks in 2024, while telecom contacts claim Huawei employs coercive tactics, including unprofitable bids and direct pressure on decision-makers.</p>
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	<p>6. Subnational Engagement:</p> <p>Rationale: The PRC has expanded its influence at the provincial level, engaging directly with subnational governments. This circumvents national oversight, allowing China to establish economic footholds without central government scrutiny in provinces in dire need of economic development.</p> <p>Leverage Mechanism: Direct funding, partnerships, and agreements create localized dependencies that fragment national decision-making.</p> <p>Example: PRC investment in provincial infrastructure projects, such as a planned deep-water port in Tierra del Fuego, advances Beijing's strategic reach while bypassing Buenos Aires.</p>
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Project ID	397
Project Name	People's Republic of China (PRC) Investment and Influence in Europe
Office	School of Professional and Area Studies/Area Studies
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	<p>The People's Republic of China's role as a global financier and investor has been rapidly growing in the past decades, and this includes a growing presence in Europe. China is one of Europe's largest trading partners, has developed closer ties with some countries across in the region, and has pushed its Belt and Road initiative as a popular option for European nations seeking more investment in infrastructure projects. There is a concern that not only is China gaining a competitive advantage over Europe in developing technologies of the future, but that they are also seeking to expand their soft power, economic prowess, and political ideals in a manner that threatens Europe's economic and political security.</p> <p>What are the primary areas within Europe that China seeks to invest in and influence? What implications does this interaction have on Western security and U.S. foreign policy? How does ongoing Chinese influence affect the political, economic, social, and military domains of European nations and regions?</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Project participants should produce a final written report to include:</p> <p>(1) key case studies examined, and lessons drawn from them;</p> <p>(2) Suggested courses of action for limiting Chinese influence/threats in Europe</p> <p>Project participants should produce a final presentation of key findings and recommendations.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>European and Eurasian Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Additional Information	<p>China-Russia Alignment: A Threat to Europe's Security Merics. 26 June 2024, https://merics.org/en/report/china-russia-alignment-threat-europes-security. https://www.gmfus.org/news/security-implications-chinese-infrastructure-investment-europe</p>

Project ID	398
Project Name	The Arctic Security and Diplomacy Dynamics: Challenges and Opportunities for the U.S. in the Great Power Competition
Office	School of Professional and Area Studies/Area Studies
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	<p>The Arctic region has re-emerged as a critical area for global security, and stability in the wake of Great Power competition. Russia has shown interest within the region, compounded by increasing low-intensity warfare operations. China's interests lie within resource access diversification as part of the Belt and Road Initiative. With many European nations being a part of the Arctic region, there is a clear need for NATO and primarily the United States to take a larger role in managing the Arctic security environment.</p> <p>With the accession of Sweden and Finland into NATO, what is NATO's role in managing Arctic security? What are the major threats to the U.S. presented by the Arctic insecurity? What are the most critical resources and opportunities present in the region that garners the attention of great global powers? What role does the United States have in managing the Arctic affairs, and working with European partners to deter threats emerging from the region?</p>
Final Product Format	Project participants should produce a final written report to include: (1) key case studies examined, and lessons drawn from them; (2) Suggested courses of action for the United States and Europe to manage Arctic security and diplomacy Project participants should produce a final presentation of key findings and recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>European and Eurasian Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arctic Region Studies</i>
Additional Information	Mathieu Boulègue, Minna Ålander, Charlotta Collén, Edward Lucas, Catherine Sendak, and Krista Viksnins. "Up North: Confronting Arctic Insecurity Implications for the United States and NATO." CEPA, 5 Dec. 2024, https://cepa.org/comprehensive-reports/up-north-confronting-arctic-insecurity-implications-for-the-united-states-and-nato/ .

Project ID	399
Project Name	Elections after Irregular Transitions: Sooner or Later?
Office	East Asia & Pacific - South & Central Asia
Embassy	
Bureau	Conflict and Stabilization Operations
Project Description	<p>In 2024, Bangladesh experienced an irregular transition of power when Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina fled the country after intense political protests and riots sparked a violent response by the government. A caretaker Interim Government (IG) of Bangladesh led by Muhammad Yunus was formed in early August 2024 and is facing an increasingly vocal pressure campaign to hold elections. CSO would like to know what leads to successful Democratic transitions after there is an irregular transfer of power like the one discussed above.</p> <p>How soon should elections be held to maximize success? Should elections be held immediately after the previous government fell/ left? Is it best to wait until the situation is stabilized, even if that necessitates lengthy election delays? Should the interim government follow the previously outlined process in the Constitution and/or pre-established election cycle?</p>
Final Product Format	The deliverable should be a 15-20 page paper (not including the references and tables/ figures, if any) reviewing the relevant literature and relevant cases studies of irregular transitions. There will be several checkpoints scheduled with the research team to discuss the proposed deliverable and fine-tune research in progress.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	400
Project Name	Field Study of Embassy Strategic Planning Key Variables
Office	F/PPS/STR Strategic Planning
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Assistance
Project Description	<p>Explore an actionable diagnose-treatment approach to produce better, more effective embassy-level strategic plans. Universities will develop context-specific causes through (statistical) analysis of strategic planning information, followed by a field study with 2 or 3 wave surveys, using structured questions informed by the theory of planned behavior to observe both the causes and effects.</p> <p>This project is expected to last up to 12 months, since after surveying the causes (i.e., antecedents or predictors), a time lag is necessary to observe the effects (i.e., outcomes), allowing the antecedents or predictors to produce an effect on the outcome, which could be either objective or subjective measures, or both. Then, using data from the context-specific analysis and the two-wave studies, a statistical analysis will be conducted to identify or establish the associations and cause-effect relationships to identify which causes are most powerful in influencing an outcome.</p>
Final Product Format	A qualitative and quantitative analysis of "key variables" in Embassy strategic plans which identifies causes that are most powerful in influencing an outcome.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Political /Military Affairs</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Statistics</i>
Additional Information	We expect this project to take more than one semester.

Project ID	401
Project Name	The Long Arm of the Law: Use of Public Safety Laws to Suppress Freedom of Speech in the Near East
Office	Office of Near Eastern Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
Project Description	<p>The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor's Office of Near Eastern Affairs is interested in the increasing prevalence of misuse of public safety laws in order to suppress free speech and expression. Laws ostensibly intended for cybercrime prevention, misinformation prevention and counterterrorism initiatives are instead weaponized in order to prevent dissent, censor media organizations and punish individuals for criticizing the government. Examples include Tunisia's Decree 54 (2022) being used to jail journalists, or Egypt's Anti-Cyber and Information Technology Crimes Law (2018) being used to target TikTok content creators.</p> <p>Our office is looking for more information on the weaponization of these laws, how they are being combated and what stakeholders - including but not limited to human rights defenders, interested governments, multilateral institutions and civil society organizations - have done in response, with a particular interest in exploring success stories in halting this kind of backsliding.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product must produce a recommendation memo that could inform United States Government policies and decisions. In addition, the final product should expand on the body of knowledge around use of public safety laws to repress free speech, effective measures to combat these uses and success stories in halting or reversing backsliding in this area. Specific format can be negotiated with the student team subsequent to selection.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Middle East/North African Studies</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	402
Project Name	Outnegotiating China: How the United States can best negotiate with the Group of 77 (G77) in the United Nations
Office	The Office of Economic and Development Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	International Organization Affairs
Project Description	<p>The G77 was founded in 1964 when 77 countries signed a joint declaration at the UN. Today, its 134 members-ranging from middle-income to the poorest nations and covering Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia-Pacific-represent about 80% of the world's population. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres is a vocal supporter of the G77, urging the group to "change the rules of the game" to challenge the Global North.</p> <p>While the People's Republic of China (PRC) is not an official member, it plays a crucial role by providing political and financial support and is often counted among the 134, which is why the group is sometimes called "G77 + China." The PRC is a strong advocate for increased development assistance to the Global South-a primary concern for G77 members. This support enables the PRC to influence the bloc and represent the Global South's interests without being strictly bound by collective group positions.</p> <p>Furthermore, by classifying itself as a "developing country," the PRC positions itself in a way that exempts it from the obligations it typically expects from developed nations. To effectively shape the future of global governance, the United States must seize the opportunity to engage with the G77 in a smarter, more strategic way.</p> <p>By understanding its internal dynamics, the United States can build stronger alliances with like-minded members, amplifying its influence where it matters most. This is a chance to push back against the PRC's growing dominance-ensuring that the G77's decisions are not dictated by a single power. This project is not just about developing multilateral diplomacy skills, it is a direct opportunity to inform U.S. negotiation tools and strategy and promote and protect American interests in the UN.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>An ideal deliverable would be a comprehensive stakeholder map of G-77 sub-coalitions on key issues, assessing their relative strength-identifying those that consistently emerge across multiple UN fora versus those that are more ad hoc or opportunistic. This visual would guide the IO bureau's coalition-building strategy, helping determine where strong unity makes disruption difficult and where early intervention could prevent a coalition from opposing U.S. positions.</p> <p>Alternatively, a concise (3-4 page) memo outlining negotiation strategies and tools for engaging with the G-77 on various issues would be valuable. Additionally, a briefing on G-77 dynamics, trends, and strategic recommendations for U.S. negotiators would further support our office in navigating engagements with the group at the negotiating table.</p>

Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	<p>Office of Economic and Development Affairs (IO/EDA): IO/EDA advances U.S. economic and development goals across the UN, G7, and other multilateral fora and oversees \$4 billion in annual contributions to 36 UN agencies. EDA has a particular focus on economic growth and sustainable development, global food security, UN funds and programs, and global health issues. IO/EDA manages U.S. participation in the UN General Assembly Second Committee, Economic and Social Council, the UN's regional Economic Commissions, and in bodies, funds and programs working in these priority areas, including the UN Development Program (UNDP), the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the World Food Program (WFP), and the World Health Organization (WHO). https://www.state.gov/key-topics-bureau-of-international-organization-affairs/#eda</p> <p>The G77: The Group of 77 (G-77) is a coalition of developing countries that works together to promote their economic interests and improve their lives. The G-77 is the largest intergovernmental group of emerging countries in the United Nations. https://www.g77.org/ More background on the G77: https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/09/g77-intergovernmental-developing-countries/</p> <p>https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/japanese-journal-of-political-science/article/endurance-of-the-g77-in-international-relations-southsouth-ideology-and-voting-at-the-united-nations-19702015/384214A0BA4D9A050DA653E507C1A13E</p> <p>https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3944408</p> <p>https://www.un.org/en/chronicle/article/historic-importance-g-77</p> <p>https://theglobalobservatory.org/2024/12/can-the-g77-be-the-voice-of-a-rising-global-south/</p>

Project ID	403
Project Name	Digital Dictators: Transnational Repression in the 21st Century
Office	Near Eastern Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
Project Description	<p>Authoritarians have become increasingly capable at reaching beyond their borders to punish, intimidate, or coerce dissident exiles and dissenters. This has historically included transnational killings, unlawful removals and targeting of relatives - but more recently, a new form of transnational repression (TNR) has come to light. Digital transnational repression has become a bigger tool in the authoritarian toolkit, using technology to surveil or punish people from afar, and putting human rights defenders at greater risk.</p> <p>The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor's Office of Near Eastern Affairs is interested in exploring TNR methods and use cases, and in particular in developing defenses against it to share with human rights defenders. In addition, the Office is interested in exploring opportunities in international governance and diplomacy to reduce its efficacy.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product must contain a recommendation memo that could inform US Government policy and decisions. A useful final product would also help create a "toolbox" for human rights defenders to protect themselves and their allies from digital TNR. Final product can be negotiated subsequent to selection.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Democracy & Human Rights</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	<p>Per the Department of Justice: Transnational repression (TNR) refers to a range of tactics that foreign governments employ to reach beyond their borders to harm, intimidate, threaten, harass, or coerce individuals. Targeted victims of transnational repression often include political dissidents and activists, journalists, political opponents, religious and ethnic minority groups, and members of diaspora and exile communities. Transnational repression represents a threat not only to those who seek to exercise their basic rights and freedoms in the United States and abroad, but also to United States' sovereignty and democracy.</p>

Project ID	404
Project Name	Measuring the Performance of the U.S. Diplomatic Landscape
Office	Program Development, Coordination & Support Directorate; Design Management
Embassy	
Bureau	Overseas Buildings Operations
Project Description	<p>Our diplomatic landscapes are the threshold to enable diplomacy across the world. These spaces serve as public forums to bring people together from all parts of society. Within these places there is a combination of built and natural spaces where workers and visitors can experience the natural environment before proceeding to the formal activities of the embassies and consulates. These landscapes are more than a beautiful curation of outdoor rooms and selective flora and fauna; These sites also have a performative aspect that need further study. The goal of this project is to quantify the physicality of the diplomatic landscapes and then to evaluate their performance. By documenting the existing vegetation and landscape areas through plan review then using industry toolkits, we can quantify the biodiversity, carbon capture, habitat creation, waste reduction, water runoff reduction, and rainwater harvesting of our sites. In addition to the environmental performance metrics these studies can also quantify the value of economic and social benefits of our sites. Together, this analysis will help determine the impact of U.S. diplomatic landscapes.</p>
Final Product Format	Data analysis
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Architecture</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Other</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	405
Project Name	Analyzing the Impacts of Illegal Gold Mining in the Amazon region
Office	Economic Policy and Summit Coordination (EPSC)
Embassy	
Bureau	Western Hemisphere Affairs
Project Description	Illegal gold mining in the Amazon region undermines economic stability and regional security while degrading the environment and creating health risks. This project will analyze best practices and lessons learned through ongoing efforts to combat illegal gold mining across the Amazon region (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela). Students can evaluate how big data and emerging technologies might be used to reduce illegal gold mining and create alternatives for local economic development.
Final Product Format	A report with data analysis, summarized in a presentation that can be shared with U.S. embassies in Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, and Suriname. (Note: The paper produced for a 2023 Diplomacy Lab, "Interrogating Financial Flows in the Artisanal Mining Sector of Mauritania" was a nice example of a good product)
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Narcotics and Law Enforcement</i>
Additional Information	The project can be completed in one semester. While we can find reports on efforts to combat illegal gold mining in each Amazon country (Bolivia, Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru, Suriname, and Venezuela), we would value more data and insights on regional trends and best practices.

Project ID	406
Project Name	Assessing the economic impact of UNESCO network designations
Office	U.S. Mission to UNESCO
Embassy	France
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	The goal of this paper is to estimate the economic impact associated with an official UNESCO network designation. Domestic UNESCO designations like World Heritage Sites, University Chairs, and Creative Cities link U.S. cities, parks, and colleges to a prestigious global network to address some of the world's most pressing challenges. They may also provide local economic benefit through revenues and jobs and thereby enjoy significant grassroots level support from mayors, governors, and chambers of commerce. This study aims to quantify the economic impact of UNESCO designations to further assess how multilateral engagement contributes to American prosperity.
Final Product Format	Research paper, mixed-methods, quantitative analysis
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>International Development</i>
Additional Information	

Project ID	407
Project Name	Phone App for Agricultural Day Laborers in Mexico
Office	U.S. Consulate General Tijuana/ Office of Labor Affairs
Embassy	Mexico
Bureau	U.S. Mission
Project Description	<p>Many workers in the San Quintin agricultural region of Baja California find jobs by gathering at parks at 3:30am or 4am and waiting for buses to come by and take them to area farms for that day's work. While this does allow the workers to have flexibility as to which days they work and the growers to meet their needs in peak seasons, it is conducted completely outside the formal economic system. As such, the workers are paid in cash and do not receive the benefits required by law. In addition, there are no checks to ensure that workers are the legal age to work, potentially leading to child labor concerns. The workers also do not have a direct contractual relationship with the farm where they will work, a violation of third party contracting laws in Mexico and also do not have much protection in the case of a bus accident. Workers often have to walk to the parks in the dark (often up to 30-40 minutes) and can wait up to three hours, with no guarantee they will get a job that day.</p> <p>An application could be a way for growers to post their opportunities the night before, meaning that workers would be able to connect with growers without having to wait for several hours in the dark. In addition, an application would promote formality, with a record of the employment relationship between the grower and the worker, thus making it easier for the workers to receive the benefits they are entitled to by law.</p>
Final Product Format	An application that workers can use on their phones
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Human Rights</i>
Additional Information	The application will need to be easy to use and with little text- many of the workers do not read Spanish beyond an elementary school level.

Project ID	408
Project Name	Dashboard for Strategic Planning
Office	F/PPS/STR Strategic Planning Office
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Assistance
Project Description	<p>We are looking to collaborate with academic partners to more effectively use and display strategic planning data. Students will design an interactive dashboard that compiles data from several datasets using Power BI and then display that information in an intuitive, graphical format. The dashboard must update automatically to reflect new data. The Department of State is transitioning to more data-driven diplomacy.</p> <p>This project asks academic partners to create an intuitive dashboard using Power BI that integrates multiple data sources. As part of this process, students will need to formulate data using SharePoint, Excel, Power Automate, and Power Apps to ensure that data is concise, easily updated, and automated. Students will then use this data to create reports that visualize trends and important information. Such reports may include but are not limited to strategy updates, training, and other strategy tracking metrics.</p> <p>Technological knowledge of Power BI and other Microsoft Power apps is essential to this project. The State Department can provide Master Reference data (MRD) with API protocols and instructions in the following categories: Missions, Posts, Countries and Areas, Locations, Employee Position Titles, Domestic Organizations, Post Sections. The application should use the same naming conventions as the MRD</p>
Final Product Format	A Power BI dashboard on the Managing for Results website that automatically updates with data from multiple datasets and forms and workflows for SharePoint document libraries. Maybe developed in an academic environment but must work in a State Department Open Net operating environment.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Computer Science</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	On acceptance of the project, our office will provide Master Reference Data to help frame the project

Project ID	409
Project Name	Pathways to Nuclear: Peaceful Uses as a Steppingstone to Future Commercial Opportunities
Office	Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is often regarded as a grand bargain. Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS) commit to refraining from developing nuclear weapons, while Nuclear Weapon States (NWS) agree to cooperate with other states to advance the peaceful applications of nuclear energy, science, and technology and work towards disarmament. Supporting peaceful uses cooperation to advance power (i.e., nuclear energy for electricity generation) and non-power applications (e.g., cancer treatment through radiotherapy, food irradiation, groundwater mapping) through the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and through bilateral engagement, reinforces the global non-proliferation regime and bolsters economic growth. Few countries retain the scientific technical capacity to cross the high barriers of entry into nuclear power programs.</p> <p>With the advent of advanced and small modular reactors (SMRs), developing countries are increasingly viewing nuclear power as an attractive option to address their growing energy needs. Certain countries (i.e., Ghana) are being actively engaged by the United States and considering a U.S. nuclear supplier. An additional group of developing countries (including El Salvador, which recently signed a Nuclear Cooperation Memorandum of Understanding with the United States) are indicating that they are potentially ready to embark on a program of civil nuclear cooperation but have a long journey before arriving at an operational nuclear power program.</p> <p>Encouraging countries to develop national nuclear energy infrastructure that implements the highest standards of nuclear safety, security, and nonproliferation can support the competitiveness of U.S. industry in this sector, advancing American global energy leadership. However, for many Global South countries, civil nuclear power is attractive but unrealistic in the near term despite expressions of interest in advanced fit-for-purpose technologies.</p> <p>Many countries lack the domestic resources, technical capacity, and key stakeholder support to embark on the pathway to nuclear power. By engaging in non-power peaceful uses, countries can build essential infrastructure, technical expertise, and regulatory frameworks that create a "pathway to nuclear" for the safe and effective use of nuclear energy.</p> <p>Advancements in nuclear medicine and agriculture, for example, can foster a more favorable environment among key national stakeholders, including the public and lawmakers, by demonstrating the tangible benefits of nuclear technology. Additionally, projects on nuclear applications can stimulate diverse growth across a country's science and technology enterprise.</p>

	<p>One way for countries to advance their national programs is by collaborating with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) through the Technical Cooperation Program and the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications.</p> <p>This project involves a research initiative that analyzes countries' pathways to nuclear power to identify trends, commonalities, and divergent actions. It will explore how developing countries' engagement in non-power programs supports the development of the necessary domestic science and technology (S&T) enterprise, education system, and legal and regulatory infrastructure to establish a civil nuclear power program. The analysis will consider key components, including but not limited to types of applications, timelines of milestones (when and what was started), safeguard agreements, related treaty ratification, economics of non-power applications, IAEA engagement, and power application trade partners. Researchers may include additional data sets they believe influence a country's progression to nuclear power. The research project should feature a visual dashboard that provides an overview of key trends and data analysis, as well as an executive summary describing the findings. The final executive summary should outline considerations for the U.S. government and American private nuclear energy industry in interacting with nuclear newcomers to develop partnerships and market access. This report should be framed with reference to enhancing the competitiveness of American industry and ensuring the highest standards of nuclear safety, security, and nonproliferation.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Deliverable I: Data Analysis and Dynamic Digital Dashboard Objective: Provide visual data analysis of how past developing countries' engagement in non-power programs supported the development of the requisite domestic science and technology (S&T) enterprise necessary for establishing a civil nuclear power program.</p> <p>Deliverable II: Executive Summary of Findings Objective: Provide an executive summary of the findings on countries' pathways from non-power nuclear applications to power applications. The report should include an analysis detailing trends, commonalities, lessons learned, and risk factors among countries that progressed towards nuclear power. Additionally, it should include considerations for the U.S. government and the American private nuclear energy industry in interacting with nuclear newcomers to develop partnerships and market access.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Additional Information	<p>Project Length: ~3-4 months Sources Our Office: Office of Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs - United States Department of State: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-</p>

[affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-multilateral-nuclear-and-security-affairs/](#)

Peaceful Uses of Science and Technology: Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/peaceful-uses-initiative>

Rays of Hope | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/rays-of-hope>

IAEA- Nutrition:
<https://www.bing.com/search?q=stable+isotopes+for+nutrition+IAEA&qs=n&form=QBRE&sp=-1&ghc=1&lq=0&pg=stable+isotopes+for+nutrition+iaea&sc=12-34&sk=&cvid=5E1B7649D51549C2B97C37D15CCC5076&ghsh=0&ghacc=0&ghpl=>

Global Water Analysis Laboratory (GloWAL) Network | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/services/networks/glowal>

Mosquitoes | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/topics/sterile-insect-technique/mosquitoes>

Combining External Radiation with High-dose Rate Brachytherapy Effective for Cervical Cancer, IAEA Study Confirms | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/combining-external-radiation-with-high-dose-rate-brachytherapy-effective-for-cervical-cancer-iaea-study-confirms>

Food irradiation, benefits, use, standards | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/topics/food-irradiation>

Scientists Explore Groundwater in the Sahel with Nuclear Technology | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/scientists-explore-groundwater-in-the-sahel-with-nuclear-technology>

Atoms4Food | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/atoms4food>

Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy: Navigating Nuclear Development | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/bulletin/navigating-nuclear-development>

Developing Nuclear Power Infrastructure in Newcomer Countries | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/bulletin/developing-nuclear-power-infrastructure-in-newcomer-countries>

Small modular reactors (SMR) | IAEA: <https://www.iaea.org/topics/small-modular-reactors>

American Nuclear Energy: Nuclear Energy -- ANS / About Nuclear: <https://www.ans.org/nuclear/energy/>

United States Nuclear Industry Council: <https://www.usnic.org/>

Nuclear Suppliers Organization - We're a group of approximately 60 companies that specialize in the manufacture and distribution of products and services for nuclear energy users. <https://nuclearsuppliers.org/>

Project ID	410
Project Name	Rare Earth Elements and Export Controls
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>Rare earth elements (also frequently referred to as critical minerals or rare earths) are vital natural resources for everyday technologies such as cellphones and televisions. However, these same elements can also be used in proliferation sensitive dual-use goods, such as batteries and semiconductors. Countries with large reserves of rare earth elements are particularly vulnerable to adversary exploitation, especially by China as they seek more reserves to support their military-civil fusion strategy and seek to gain more coercive influence over countries in the "global south." These same countries could also benefit from U.S. investment in rare earth element reserves to support not only in mining, refining, and manufacturing but also in the development of legal/regulatory best practices.</p> <p>The goal of this project is to clearly define the nexus between rare earth elements and export controls, outlining specifically how a strong export control system can prevent the exploitation of rare earth elements by adversaries throughout the element life cycle (from locating and gaining access to deposits to gaining control over the deposits for indigenous or U.S. mining and manufacturing efforts to exporting raw proliferation sensitive minerals from the country of origin).</p> <p>The final product should be a white paper discussing the nexus and providing key areas for EXBS engagement with partners. This information will support the EXBS program in identifying with whom and how to engage with potential partners on rare earth elements to ensure that proliferation sensitive elements are not controlled, accessed, or exported to U.S. adversaries, and thus bolstering American national security and inviting new U.S. business opportunities.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product will be in the form of a white paper no longer than 10 pages that details the rare earth element-export control nexus and provides key areas of EXBS engagement. Research teams will work with the project POC to identify the rare earth elements to focus on and other refinements to the project. Research teams are encouraged to incorporate data into the project where appropriate. Research teams should be prepared to deliver a short presentation with a slide deck on the final results.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Additional Information	<p>For more information on ISN/ECC, please see:</p> <p>https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-export-control-cooperation/</p>

Project ID	411
Project Name	Understanding Adversary Cooperation
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea have increased cooperation on the transfer of dual-use technologies, including those with a military end-use. This is exemplified by Russia's extensive use of Iranian and North Korean-made weapons in Ukraine. The United States has developed counterproliferation strategies to identify, track, and shut down procurement networks, and enforce sanctions and export controls.</p> <p>However, there is ample evidence of sanctions evasion by military end-users and increased reliance on Chinese dual-use components. This blatant circumvention of technology export control restrictions and sanctions evasion damages U.S. businesses and undermines the nonproliferation goals underpinning U.S. national security.</p> <p>The goal of this project is to explore sanctions evasion and technology export restriction circumvention and the associated adversary cooperation to discuss lessons learned that could be applied to Russia, China, Iran, or North Korea to strengthen U.S. and international enforcement measures for government and private sectors. Specifically, the project should use the Russian invasion of Ukraine as a case study to draw out lessons learned and best practices, but the project team can explore other examples if necessary. The project should pay close attention to how U.S. adversaries work together to accomplish their proliferation goals.</p> <p>This information will support ISN/ECC programming in identifying new best practices to implement with partner countries and support decision making to counter U.S. adversaries as effectively as possible to uphold American security.</p>
Final Product Format	The final product will be in the form of a policy brief no longer than 20 pages that includes case studies, lessons learned, and best practices. Research teams are encouraged to incorporate data into the project where appropriate. Research teams should be prepared to deliver a short presentation with a slide deck on the final results.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Science and Technology</i>
Additional Information	<p>For more information on ISN/ECC, please see:</p> <p>https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-export-control-cooperation/</p>

Project ID	412
Project Name	EXBS Partner Country Prioritization
Office	Export Control Cooperation
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	The goal of this project is to refine a country identification and prioritization model to support ISN/ECC programming, ensuring efficient use of resources to support the President's America First Policy. Research teams will focus on export controls, customs and port of entry operations, and border security as the three lines of effort for engagement. Using open-source data, research teams will refine an existing country identification and prioritization tool to identify potential new partner countries and prioritize existing partners based on a clear, quantitative methodology that accounts for threat, risk, vulnerability, trade volumes, commodities traded, adversary influence, and other fields identified by the research team and project POC.
Final Product Format	The final product will be in the form of a proposal to update the current model, including data fields to be added/removed, links to existing data sets, new data sets that the research team creates, a "country information collection form" (in excel or Microsoft Forms) to facilitate information collection as needed, and a mock up of the new model either in excel or a data visualization software (Tableau or Microsoft PowerBI preferred). Research teams should be prepared to deliver a short presentation with a slide deck on the final results.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Arms Control/Non-Proliferation</i>
Additional Information	For more information on ISN/ECC, please see: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-export-control-cooperation/

Project ID	413
Project Name	A Holistic Regional Comparison: Mapping China's Academic and Research Influence in Southeast Asia
Office	Cooperative Threat Reduction
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>This project will provide a regional comparative analysis of Chinese influence in Southeast Asia's science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) academic sector by examining the interaction between scholarships, infrastructure investments, research partnerships, talent programs and their economic and security outcomes across the region. It will assess how different Southeast Asian countries are affected by China's educational and research investments and what impact these investments have on local economies, research innovation, and research security risks.</p> <p>The project will look at how Chinese scholarships and infrastructure projects contribute to university growth, the quality of research, and whether these efforts increase risks of intellectual property theft, predatory partnerships, talent acquisition or political influence. By compiling data across multiple countries, the study will use qualitative and quantitative analysis to identify patterns and correlations between Chinese academic engagements and economic outputs, as well as security incidents related to research integrity and security.</p> <p>The results of this project will provide a detailed understanding of the effects and related U.S. national security risks of Chinese academic investments in Southeast Asia. Additionally, the project will identify potential vulnerabilities and threats, enabling the U.S. to create more effective strategies to safeguard national security and protect intellectual property.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>• Comprehensive report analyzing the regional patterns of Chinese influence on and investment in STEM focused universities in Southeast Asia.</p> <p>• Excel data spreadsheet aggregating scholarship, infrastructure, and partnership data, along with economic and security outcomes.</p> <p>• Statistical models analyzing correlations between Chinese involvement and both economic benefits and security risks.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Economic and Finance Issues</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Cyber Security</i>
Additional Information	<p>Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction Information: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-cooperative-threat-reduction/</p> <p>This project can be scaled up/down as needed to fit team availability and capabilities.</p>

Project ID	414
Project Name	Evaluating Chinese Influence in Smart City Technology Development Across Southeast Asia
Office	Cooperative Threat Reduction
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>This project will map and explore the influence of the Chinese investments and partnerships in smart city technology development across Southeast Asia, specifically focusing on countries like Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, Singapore, and Vietnam. The research will examine where and how Chinese technology companies and government-backed initiatives are shaping the growth of smart cities in the region, focusing on areas like urban infrastructure, IoT (Internet of Things) integration, data management, and surveillance technologies.</p> <p>The project will assess where China is investing, the potential risks associated with increasing reliance on Chinese technologies in urban planning and governance, particularly with respect to national security concerns, data privacy issues, and the potential for technological dependency. The research will assess potential vulnerabilities associated with Chinese technology that could be exploited to threaten international security and will leverage data on China-backed smart city projects to map Chinese investments and partnerships with universities and local governments in Southeast Asia and identify potential risks to U.S. national security and opportunities for U.S. businesses.</p> <p>The project aims to provide a comprehensive assessment of the strategic implications of Chinese involvement in smart city technologies across Southeast Asia, highlighting challenges posed by foreign control over critical urban infrastructure. Furthermore, the analysis will identify opportunities for promoting U.S. norms and adopting U.S. technologies to outcompete China. Ultimately, this project will enhance America's safety and prosperity by identifying threats posed by smart city collaborations with China to partner countries, thereby facilitating American investments and partnerships to replace existing Chinese ones</p>
Final Product Format	<p>In-depth report evaluating the impact of China-backed smart city technologies on urban development and governance and identification of potential vulnerabilities that could be exploited by China to threaten international security. Report should include analysis on opportunities for U.S. technology security norms and standards to be promoted and U.S. technologies adopted to outcompete China.</p> <p>Excel spreadsheet with data on Chinese investments in smart city projects, technology providers, and outcomes in each country.</p> <p>Statistical analysis measuring the correlation between Chinese investments and improvements in smart city metrics (e.g., efficiency, public safety, economic impact).</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Cyber Security</i>

Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>East Asian Pacific Studies</i>
Additional Information	<p>Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction Information: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-cooperative-threat-reduction/</p> <p>This project can be scaled up/down as needed to fit team availability and capabilities.</p>

Project ID	415
Project Name	Evaluating Colombia's AI Governance and Vulnerabilities to Chinese Communist Party Influence
Office	Cooperative Threat Reduction
Embassy	
Bureau	International Security and Nonproliferation
Project Description	<p>Among Colombia's recent initiatives is its swift implementation of artificial intelligence policies and supporting government offices, which are designed to promote economic competitiveness on both the regional and international scale. The scale and depth of these policy movements is unprecedented in South America, positioning Colombia to be a future paragon or cautionary tale for regional AI technology protection and promotion.</p> <p>It is currently unclear if or how the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) can exploit Colombia's rapidly developing AI landscape, but it has established itself as a global power willing and capable of exploiting tech ecosystem vulnerabilities and weaponizing AI. As evidenced by past behavior, China has leveraged memorandums of understanding, Belt and Road Initiatives, and malicious AI software to exploit third-party country vulnerabilities and threaten U.S. security. Therefore, it is important to understand Colombia's AI policy landscape and identify opportunities where China may undercut U.S. economic security; promote digital systems that surveil and censor users; capture foreign data and gain access to dual-use research and technology; and strengthen its military and intelligence capabilities.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>A summary of Colombia's ongoing and upcoming national AI governance policies, guidance, and regulations that have or will impact dual-use AI research and development.</p> <p>A map of Colombia's federal AI governing offices and major internal and external AI advisory groups.</p> <p>An analysis of how these policies either hinder or facilitate memorandums of understanding, research agreements, or tech exchanges between Colombia's tech and research sector and China and the CCP.</p> <p>A summary of vulnerabilities within these policies and how they may be exploited by the CCP or PLA to licitly obtain sensitive data, AI models, and/or AI-affiliated technology and what the U.S. can do about those vulnerabilities to make America safer.</p>
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>South/Central Asian Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Information and Communication Technology</i>
Additional Information	<p>Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction Information: https://www.state.gov/bureaus-offices/under-secretary-for-arms-control-and-international-security-affairs/bureau-of-international-security-and-nonproliferation/office-of-cooperative-threat-reduction/</p>

	This project can be scaled up/down as needed to fit team availability and capabilities.
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Project ID	416
Project Name	V is for Voting: Electoral Systems in the Americas
Office	Area Studies
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	<p>In 2001, the member states of the Organization of American States (OAS) signed the Interamerican Democratic Charter signaling that democracy should be the common form of government throughout the Americas marking, it was believed at the time, the end of the authoritarian era that affected many nations in the region throughout the preceding decades. Despite this shared promise, the specific democratic values and the processes designed to uphold them can vary widely throughout the hemisphere.</p> <p>The main objective of this project is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the electoral systems employed by countries in the Western Hemisphere. By examining and mapping out these systems, we are seeking information on the diverse approaches to democratic elections within the region, to include an analysis of the electoral systems of various countries in the Western Hemisphere by studying the rules, processes, and institutions that govern their electoral processes, party structure, and representation in governing bodies. We encourage innovative submissions such as ones proposing a mix of narrative, statistic, and graphic information (e.g., mapping Electoral Systems via maps and graphs); a comparative study of different systems over the last X political periods to illustrate claims on democratic resilience or backsliding; or an in-depth exploration of the role of a particular segment of the population (e.g., youth) in shaping electoral processes and outcomes. Project scope to be defined in consultation.</p>
Final Product Format	<p>Deliverables:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -A 5-7 page report on the electoral systems of select countries in the Western Hemisphere - Visual representations, including maps and graphs, illustrating the diversity of electoral systems. - A 2-page brief and presentation summarizing key findings and insights from the project to include policy recommendations on key correlations between electoral system factors and resilience/fragility of democratic indicators A group presentation for an audience of Foreign Affairs professionals working in or on Latin America/Caribbean Project deliverables will be used in training modules for foreign affairs professionals (foreign and civil service) focused on Latin America and the Caribbean.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Western Hemisphere Studies</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	

Project ID	417
Project Name	Partnering to Combat HIV/AIDS Infections in the Pacific
Office	Regional Environmental Office
Embassy	Fiji
Bureau	East Asian and Pacific Affairs
Project Description	Working with local partners at UNAIDS and within the Fiji Ministry of Health to support communication, data collection, and policy briefs on the rising HIV/AIDS infection rate in Fiji and what it may indicate for the Pacific region. UNAIDS estimates that the number of people living with HIV/AIDS has jumped from just over 2,000 to 6,100 between mid-2023 to January 2025 when Fiji declared a national HIV outbreak.
Final Product Format	Policy briefs, communication campaigns, fact sheets.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Global Health</i>
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	<i>Communications</i>
Additional Information	

