“Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world.”

– Malala Yousafzai
Bringing individuals together who share a common professional focus, for an in-depth international exchange.

Citizen Ambassador is a Cultural Vistas program which brings individuals together who share a common professional focus, for an in-depth international exchange. Spanning both political and international boundaries, Citizen Ambassadors openly discuss the challenges facing their profession and advancements in their fields. When Citizen Ambassadors are immersed in the culture and environment of their counterparts, they gain a unique perspective for their profession at home.
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Welcome

Citizen Ambassador contact information

Email: info@culturalvistas.org
Phone: (212) 497-3500
Address: 1250 H Street NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20005
Website: culturalvistas.org

“I am not an Athenian or a Greek, but a citizen of the world.”

–Diogenes
Thank you for partnering with the Citizen Ambassador Program and accepting the position of Delegation Leader.

We are honored to have you as a leader and look forward to working with you. We hope that leading a delegation will prove to be both personally and professionally rewarding. The following Leadership Handbook will help you to understand our process and your role as the Delegation Leader. This handbook is broken down into four major sections.

1 **Getting Started.** This section explains the role of the association, you as a leader, and the Citizen Ambassador team.

2 **Before Travel.** This section guides you through what will happen before you depart for your delegation.

3 **During Travel.** This section leads you through what you can expect in country.

4 **After Travel.** This section will tell you how to complete your program.

If you have questions at any time, please do not hesitate to contact me. Our team is here to ensure that you and your delegates have a rewarding experience. Thank you for all of the thought and time you have and will put into this program.

Sincerely,

Dawn Davis, Director,
Citizen Ambassador Program, Cultural Vistas
You will be asked to review information provided by your counterparts regarding discussion topics and presentations (if applicable). To ensure mutually beneficial interactions with your counterparts, we will ask the association to do the following:

**Provide topics of discussion** for the delegation. Topics of discussion will define the mission and objectives for delegates and overseas counterparts.

**Curate a Professional Purpose Statement** using the topics of discussion. Guidelines can be found on the delegation communication site.

**Prepare a vocabulary list** (including frequently used industry terms) to help with seamless translation. This list will be due no later than 30 days prior to departure.

In the event that you have yet to provide these materials, please do so as soon as possible.

“There is no passion to be found playing small – in settling for a life that is less than the one you are capable of living.”

— Nelson Mandela
The main responsibility of the association is to announce the delegation.

Inviting Members

The main responsibility of the association is to announce the delegation. To begin this process, we recommend developing a list of those individuals you wish to personally invite to ensure they receive the first invitations. Based on our experience, we have outlined guidelines for how to best announce the delegation. Sample communications will be provided by our team. Your association will also receive reminder emails from Citizen Ambassadors when it is recommended to send follow-up emails to invitation list. It’s important to discontinue the invitation process for the delegation within 30 days of departure because by that point, we will be less likely to be able to confirm additional participants.

When to send ... What to send

Before Departure

*Eight to ten months before departure* send the initial invitation email. Attach the formal invitation and itinerary created by the Citizen Ambassador team.

After the Initial Invitation

1. *One month after* the initial invitation send a follow-up email and post on social media.
2. *Two months after* the initial invitation send a follow-up email and post on social media.
3. *Three to four months after* the initial invitation send last chance-email. Send only if recommended.
The Role of the Delegation Leader

A Delegation Leader is a well-respected and accomplished member in their field. Your expertise in the profession is one reason we have asked you to serve as the Delegation Leader. Your input into the development of the professional program is vitally important.

Pre-Invitation

**Oversee the development of the Professional Purpose Statement** (see role of the association).

**Personalize the Letter of Invitation.** This will be drafted by the Citizen Ambassador team and will be sent by your association in an email to the invitation list.

**Review and personalize a Welcome Letter** to be sent to enrolled delegates. A template will be provided.

Program Development

**Review program content and meeting topics** as we work together to fine-tune and agree on the final itinerary. We will provide the final itinerary as outlined by your counterparts, usually within 21 - 30 days of departure. Your feedback on the agenda and suggestions on specific discussion points will contribute greatly to the success of each meeting.

**Coordinate professional gifts and/or donations** on behalf of the delegation (see section on gifts).

“**What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.**”

—Jane Goodall

A Delegation Leader is a well-respected and accomplished member in their field.
During Travel

Play a leading role in the initial orientation and set the tone for participation in professional meetings. The orientation will include delegation members, the Delegation Manager, and the local representative(s).

Represent the delegation by attending all scheduled professional meetings and stress that attendance is mandatory.

Make opening remarks and introductions during professional meetings and social gatherings.

Socialize and circulate with all delegation members. Delegates feel honored to have been invited by you to participate on the delegation. Spending equal time with everyone helps promote camaraderie within the group.

Meet regularly with the delegation and with the local representative(s) to gauge the level of satisfaction with the activities. This includes setting up time to debrief and prepare for the next professional meeting.

Post-Travel

Participate in a debriefing with the Citizen Ambassador Program team and let us know of future collaboration, contributions, or related activity arising from the delegation.

Supervise writing the delegation’s journal. If requested by your association, a journal should be kept aiding in future publications. Professional journal templates will be provided prior to departure. All journal notes are property of the association. If you wish to submit the journal to Citizen Ambassadors, we may choose to feature it to our online blog.
Your Delegation

You are the uniting force for the delegation.

Delegations are generally comprised of 15 to 20 delegates, but the size of each delegation depends on the interest of those invited as planned by your association. We have had delegations as small as 10 and as large as 75. The program itself is less than two weeks long. Activities are fairly work-intensive; delegates will be involved in 10 to 20 hours of professional meetings and field site visits, in addition to a number of cultural and social activities.

Non-professional guests and spouses are invited to join delegates for cultural and social activities. A parallel unique cultural program will be prepared for accompanying guest, if minimum number of guests enroll.

If the delegation reaches enrollments of over 25 paid delegates, a co-leader will be added in order to support the program. A co-leader’s program costs are covered by the program. A co-leader will be selected at least 60 days prior to departure. As this is a private-citizen effort, delegates are responsible for their own program costs. Many will receive funding or sponsorship, often from their employer, for the purpose of continuing education. Grants or scholarships are also a common way to fund program costs.

Once overseas, you become the uniting force for the delegation. You will host meetings, make opening remarks, guide the professional discussions, and represent the delegation at formal banquets and activities. You will be accompanied by professional guides and interpreters who will assist with logistical matters.
“Whoever lets himself be led by heart will never lose his way.”

- Egyptian Proverb
Review the goals and objectives to help define the mission for overseas counterparts.

Forming the Delegation

One of your first responsibilities as a Delegation Leader is to review the goals and objectives of the delegation. Refining the information outlined in the professional purpose statement will help define the mission for overseas counterparts, participating delegates, and the organizations with which the delegation will meet. This will help guide the development of the final itinerary.

The Citizen Ambassador Program team will draft a letter of invitation, from you and the association, which will be signed and sent digitally to your association members. This letter of invitation will contain a link to the delegation enrollment website, created by our office. The invitations are sent approximately six to eight months prior to departure, and invitees are directed to contact our office with questions. Our team will advise when and if a follow up email should be sent to encourage additional enrollments.

Each delegation will have an online information and communication site. Access information will be sent to delegates following enrollment. You may add information or communicate with your delegates via this platform.

“Be the change you want to see in the world.”

- Gandhi
Delegation Unity

Your other major area of responsibility is to be a uniting force for the delegation, beginning with the invitation process.

Your actions should aim to:

**Solidify your position** as the delegation leader.

**Maintain a positive attitude** and alleviate any delegate uncertainty.

**Begin the bonding process** before the delegates’ travel.

**Emphasize that traveling abroad requires flexibility** and keeping an open mind to other cultures.

Occasionally, situations may arise that require your intervention. These might include the formation of inappropriate cliques among delegates or negative commentary about the experience or meetings. In such cases, we ask you to speak privately and directly to the individuals involved and suggest a more positive direction. If this fails, you might discreetly ask another respected delegation member to intervene by speaking publicly and positively about the program.

You may be responsible for managing some logistics and announcements for the delegation while traveling. This will always be done in conjunction with accompanying representatives. We will discuss the role of local representatives and the delegation manager (where there is one) later in this handbook.
Handling Delegate Questions

**STEP ONE**

We've included a list of FAQs below. These are the most common questions delegates ask, typically after they receive the initial invitation letter.

**Q** How was I selected?

A Selected members from (association) or from the leader's/(my own) personal invitation list, were invited to participate based on their areas of interest, experience, and expertise in the field of __________. It is our intent to develop a diverse delegation of professionals who will prove to be good representatives and who are able to contribute meaningfully to our professional meetings.

**Q** I'm not bringing a guest. Can I room alone?

A Yes. An additional charge applies to delegates electing single accommodations. Delegates also may have Citizen Ambassadors assign a roommate to avoid the additional charge, based on availability. Roommates are not guaranteed.

**Q** How can I fund my participation?

A Many delegates are successful in securing sponsorship through their employer or local or national organizations.

**Q** What type of hotels will we stay in?

A Hotels will be international first class (where available), or best available for the destination. All hotels are westernized and have virtually the same amenities as in the USA.

**STEP TWO**

If you can't answer a delegate's question, please encourage him or her to call our office at 1-212-497-3500.
Q Am I qualified to participate in this program
A As long as your primary professional pursuit is reflected in the program, you are a member of our professional association or aligned association and received an invitation or were recommended, you are qualified to join.

Q How many people will travel on this delegation?
A A delegation averages 15 – 20 participants, but the size of each delegation depends on the interest of those invited. We have had delegations as small as 10 and as large as 75.

Q Is there a program for my spouse or guest?
A Yes, guests pay the same program cost as the delegates, guests will have a parallel cultural program during your professional meetings. In the event that we do not have enough guests to run a cultural program, a credit will be made to the guest.

Q Which airline will we fly on? Can I make my own flight arrangements?
A Airfare is booked individually by each delegate. Citizen Ambassadors will instruct you on arrival and departure guidelines. Please do not book flights before you receive this guidance.

“Go as far as you can see; when you get there, you'll be able to see farther.”
– J. P. Morgan
Each delegation will have a scheduled presentation time which will also include a welcome by you.

Pre-program Communications

A custom website will be provided to serve as the primary resource for information pertaining to the delegation. Access to the website will be exclusive to enrolled delegates. Cultural Vistas will use this site to provide logistical information and trip details such as flight schedules, itinerary updates, and important information to note before you travel.

As the Delegation Leader you can assist our team to ensure materials are sent in a timely manner, you will need to:

**Prepare a welcome letter** to be sent to delegates by the guest Citizen Ambassador.

**Send trade publications, reading suggestions, lectures, and websites** that are related to the delegation topics to the Citizen Ambassadors team. This information will be sent to travelers in preparation for their time overseas.

Virtual Program Briefing Sessions

The goal of virtual program briefing sessions is to provide the basic structure and setting for the in-person exchange. The structure of each session will include a welcome from a high-level professional from the institution or organization, followed by a presentation covering the topics of discussion.

Each Delegation will have a scheduled presentation time which will also include a Welcome by the you, Delegation Leader, the Module Session (content presentation) followed by a live Q&A with a representative from the identified institution. (Ministry, University, US Embassy).

The sessions will be recorded and made available online through our delegation communication site for delegates who are either unable to attend the scheduled session, as continuing education (continuing education fees will be charged), or for those in-person program delegates who enroll after the session has aired.
Pre-departure Briefing

Approximately two weeks before departure, you will have a phone call with the Citizen Ambassadors team to review the final materials, your responsibilities, and any last-minute questions. Prior to this phone call, our team will send you a package with the following materials:

**Thank you cards for meeting hosts.** Notes should be written prior to meeting and given to the main meeting contact. The specifics will be covered in the pre-departure call.

**Final leader packet.** It will contain the final itinerary, key traveler details, and in-case-of-emergency information.

**Professional journal notes.** Keeping a journal is optional.

“Confidence comes from being prepared.”
– John Wooden
Role of the In-Country Support Team

Delegation Manager

If a Delegation Manager is assigned to travel with the delegation, he or she will support and coordinate with the delegation leader as well as the local representatives who accompany the delegation. Not all programs require a Delegation Manager. In cases where a Delegation Manager is not assigned, the tasks below will be divided between local representatives and the delegation leader.

The Delegation Manager is responsible for:

- **Meeting the delegation** upon arrival.
- **Assisting with luggage** issues after clearing customs.
- **Communicating with professional hosts** to confirm and finalize meeting arrangements.
- **Finalizing local transportation**.
- **Confirming restaurant reservations** and meal selection in advance of arrival.
- **Managing special needs** of delegation members.
- **Handling any on-site medical emergencies** or crises.
- Facilitating the **thank-you letter distribution**, if needed.
- **Handling tipping and entrance fees** related to the program and its supporting members (drivers, interpreters, secondary Local Representatives, bell staff, restaurant staff, etc.).

"Surround yourself with only people who are going to take you higher."
– Oprah Winfrey
Local Representative

Local Representatives are experts in the specific city or region. The Local Representatives’ role is to provide information and context on a particular city and the cultural and professional activities during the visit. The Local Representative will be your point person throughout the delegation. They have essentially the same duties to the delegation as a Delegation Manager, except that their role is limited to the activities in one particular city. A Local Representative will meet you upon arrival and see you off to your next city on the itinerary or on your way home. Many delegations will have a Delegation Manager and Local Representative. Look to the Local Representative/interpreters as great resources for answering questions about protocol. The Delegation Manager and Local Representative(s) will be able to help with any problems or questions.

*Local Representatives are experts in the specific city or region.*
Delegation Orientation

Upon arrival in the first city. You will meet the Delegation Manager or Local Representative(s). The delegation will gather for a welcome briefing where the leader's role will be explained, and additional delegation details will be given.

The delegation orientation typically lasts about 30 minutes and includes:

Welcome Message

Provide a brief introduction of who you are and describe your professional background.

Thank and welcome the members of the delegation on behalf of Cultural Vistas (and your association, if appropriate).

Protocols and Punctuality

Reiterate the importance of being prompt for meetings. Insist on punctuality to avoid arriving late or delaying activities. Participation in meetings is mandatory and therefore reflects on the delegation to our hosts.

Leadership and Delegate Roles

Review your role as the Delegation Leader.

Explain what is expected of the delegates during professional meetings.

Journal Responsibilities (if applicable).

Collect volunteers and share tips for taking journal notes.

Discuss the collection of business cards.

Personal Gratuities

Discuss tipping etiquette—whom to tip and when.

Group Introductions

Ask delegates to briefly introduce themselves. Delegates can also briefly recap their reasons for joining the delegation and goals for the program/professional.
Gifts

We are often asked what kinds of gifts are most appreciated when traveling internationally. There is no obligation for delegates to bring gifts—this section is intended only to provide helpful guidelines should you and/or any of the delegates choose to do so. Since you will be meeting with professional counterparts, we advise bringing informational materials relevant to the field, or other gift items branded by your organization.

Suggestions include:

**Professional journals, articles, books, or multimedia presentations**
(especially any to which you have contributed).

**Pens, paper pads, tote bags, etc.,** with your organization’s name or logo.

**Practical tools or equipment** relevant to your field.

Delegation Language

English will be the language used throughout the program, although many of your counterparts may not speak English fluently. An interpreter will be available during professional meetings. As previously mentioned, we will ask you to curate a list of industry specific terms and their definitions.

This list of terms will allow your translator to prepare for meetings appropriately. Here are recommendations for working with an interpreter.

**Speak in small sound bites.**

**Make eye contact** with people to whom you are speaking rather than with the interpreter.

**Pay attention to your volume.** People often speak more loudly than required when working with an interpreter.
Guide to Professional Meetings

Dress Code

Plan to wear appropriate business attire to meetings and social events involving professionals. Business attire is not required for cultural activities. Country specific dress code recommendations will be explained on the delegation communication site and final materials.

Meeting Formats

The essence of the delegation is an exchange between colleagues. In most cases, your counterparts overseas are just as educated and informed about your field as the delegation members. The purpose of each meeting is to learn from and about each other. You will find that information is exchanged between colleagues in several different formats.

Roundtable discussions are an effective and popular approach. Usually, this begins with an introduction of both sides, beginning with the hosts, and is followed by a question–and–answer session with participation from both sides. We aim to provide information about each meeting in advance. Due to the complexity of setting up international meetings through intermediaries, we are not always able to provide the depth of information we would like.

As Delegation Leader, you should prepare an introduction that encompasses the interests and specialties of your delegates. Unless the delegation is very small, you probably don’t want to take time for an introduction by each delegate. Rather, you can describe the collective background of the delegates by listing the types of facilities represented on the delegation, the types of positions delegates hold, and how many states or countries are represented.
The purpose of each meeting is to learn from and about each other.

Meeting Tips and Suggestions

To assist you in leading the delegation and to help the delegation get the most from its meetings, we offer the following suggestions:

**Communicate questions or requests** regarding professional meetings to our staff prior to departure. The more time allowed to request meetings, the more likely they will be confirmed.

**If a question arises** or an issue seems to be of special interest to your counterparts, call on one (or several) of the delegates to offer more information.

**Consider asking individual delegates to chair meetings** based on their strengths, backgrounds, and interests.

If necessary, we encourage you to **rephrase delegate questions if they are unclear** to your hosts, or if the question seems inappropriate.

Meet regularly with delegates to **get feedback** on how the program is meeting expectations.

“As we learn about each other, so we learn about ourselves.”

— William Hartnell
You will never be alone to solve emergencies.

Emergencies

In the event you are faced with a medical or logistical emergency, know you will never be alone to solve the problems. Your Local Representative(s) are your first resource for collecting information and developing a solution for emergencies. The Cultural Vistas office in Washington, DC is your second resource.

After local medical personnel have rendered immediate assistance in a medical emergency, please inform the Cultural Vistas office of the situation and complete an incident report (provided in your leader final materials.) If the delegate has purchased travel insurance, you or the delegate should contact their insurance provider.

American embassies and consulates overseas can assist with some emergencies by replacing lost passports or securing wire transfers due to loss of funds. If you have any concerns on how to handle an emergency, please review the procedure with Cultural Vistas at the pre-departure briefing.

Reaching Cultural Vistas in DC during an Emergency

During Business Hours: 1+212-497-3500
After Hours: 1+512-210-8591.

Detailed instructions about calling internationally are provided in your final delegation notes.
Your feedback is welcome and appreciated.

Debriefing

Cultural Vistas will contact you within four weeks of your return to collect feedback on the program. We'd like to receive feedback about the delegation and how various service staff performed during the program. Any feedback on professional events is also welcome and appreciated.

You may be asked questions on the following topics:

- Pre-travel communication.
- Trip highlights.
- Operational or logistical issues to report.
- Trip suggestions for improvements.
- Future travel plans and opportunities.
- Meals, transportation, trip staff, and accommodations.
- Guest feedback gathered on the ground.
- Whether you felt adequately prepared for the trip.
- Future travel plans and opportunities.
Welcome Home

Within one to two weeks of your return home, Citizen Ambassadors will send the delegates a welcome-home email.

Evaluations

At the conclusion of the program, electronic evaluations will be sent to each delegate. Evaluations are confidential and designed for use in our office only.

Follow-up

We always enjoy receiving program photos from leaders and delegates that portray the unique nature of the Citizen Ambassador Programs. If you’re willing to share digital images with Citizen Ambassadors, label them clearly and be sure to watch for them in future delegation materials.

We are also interested in hearing if you or your delegation members continue any aspects of the exchange, in the form of continuing relationships, with hosts that you met. We would appreciate copies of articles published in professional journals or local publications about your experiences.

We enjoy receiving program photos that portray the unique nature of the Citizen Ambassador Program.
“As surely as there is a voyage away, there is a journey home.”

— John Kornfield
Expenses

We are happy to reimburse you for necessary and reasonable expenses.

Expense Report Guidelines

Being a Delegation Leader is a personally rewarding and intellectually stimulating experience. Your participation is paid for by the program (including domestic airfare). In order to keep the program cost to delegates as low as possible, we ask Delegation Leaders to make every effort to avoid incurring unnecessary costs, particularly during the planning stages of the program. We are happy to reimburse you for necessary and reasonable expenses incurred during the pre-travel and travel period as outlined below. IRS regulations require that all expenses be documented with an original written receipt. An official expense report will be provided to you prior to departure. Additional instructions for completing this form will be reviewed during the pre-trip briefing. Please complete the form provided and return within 14 days of return.

Authorized Expenses

All expenses outside these must be pre-approved:

Photocopying program specific materials, telephone calls when deemed vitally necessary, and visa fees that are incurred before the delegation’s departure and directly related to the delegation. Maximum reimbursement of $150 total for the above related expenses.

Guide/driver gratuities. Cultural Vistas will provide you with guidelines and funds, if applicable.

Hotel accommodations, pre-or post-delegation at a pre-approved maximum if deemed necessary due to flight connections or related circumstances.
Unauthorized expenses Items which the program office cannot reimburse:

**Purchase/shipping of gifts.** If this is a burden, please contact our office.

**Overweight luggage.** Airline regulations on luggage weight limits must be adhered to, including any optional gifts you decide to bring overseas.

**Discretionary tips.** Your individual, discretionary gratuities will not be covered by Citizen Ambassadors, as most tips are included in the program price.

**Mileage and parking.** Airport parking fees and mileage to/from the airport.

**Costs related to optional extension,** deviations, and personal air or travel reservation requests.

**Optional insurance.**

**Meals and drinks** not outlined in the final itinerary.
Mission Statements

Citizen Ambassador brings individuals together who share a common professional focus, for an in-depth international exchange.

Cultural Vistas equips global leaders to solve complex challenges by connecting lives to exchange knowledge, values, and perspectives.

Come Share the World with Us.

(212) 497-3500 • culturalvistas.org

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