

Project Title: Cultural Discovery Camp

Name(s): The World in Us Team

Please provide a clear, concise, and well-supported statement of the challenge your project will address and why the proposed project is needed.

No child should grow up in fear of being attacked, brutalized, or discriminated against for their cultural identity. Yet, amidst anti-Asian xenophobia and violence, global struggles for racial justice, and COVID-19's disproportionate devastation of minority communities, it's clearer than ever that systemic cultural ignorance and intolerance still pervades far too many of our lives.

The World in Us is a student-led organization seeking to eliminate this cultural ignorance from its roots. Through our youth-for-youth educational programs, we aim to plant the seed of cultural awareness in youth and cultivate the next generation of global citizens. Thus far, we've taught introductory lessons on global cultures to over 100 elementary schoolers through three main means: a partnership with North Albany Elementary School's 5th grade classes, an independently organized weeklong Culture Camp, and a class partnership with Oregon State University's Talented and Gifted program. Our international team of high school volunteers has created over 20 lessons and 30 hours of curriculum, all of which has been taught virtually in synchronous Zoom classes since our organization's conception in July 2020.

Our ultimate goal is to cultivate a future of equity, empathy, and understanding for people of all cultures. Many founding members of The World in Us have faced cultural ignorance since elementary school — an age when such ignorance is almost always unintentional and rooted in lack of exposure rather than malice. Our personal experiences have taught us that cultural education at an early age is the key to preventing future generations from having to experience the same exclusion we did. By bringing the wonders of the world into bright minds at an early age, we hope to prevent ignorance from taking root in the first place and instead foster a lifetime of cultural curiosity, discovery, and inclusivity.

What is your project's target audience? How many people will your project reach? Please describe your motivation behind supporting your target audience.

The intended beneficiaries of this project are a diverse group of youth between the ages of seven and 11 years from around the world. Specifically, we hope to impact at least 25 students from 5 countries spanning at least 3 of the 6 inhabited continents through this program. Our program is accepting of individuals from all backgrounds and welcomes students of diverse cultures, ethnicities, genders, and socio-economic statuses. These individuals will be interested in learning more about varying global perspectives and the importance of cultural diversity. Because this is a community-building program, students should be interested in making an impact on their community. We also hope to engage youth who have a love of languages and culture through the cultural presentations and crafts.

We will recruit student participants from previous The World in Us programs, connections from Department of State programs, our high school partners, and our social media base. As our leadership team members are themselves part of the global youth community and come from all corners of the world, we will use our strong ties within our local communities to recruit participants and maximize our impact. Through programs we have previously implemented, our team has experience with our target audience and has optimized our program structure to fill the gaps in diversity within cultural exchange and leadership education.

Describe what your project intends to achieve. Who will your project benefit during the project and after the project's completion? Your goals should be achievable and contain as much quantitative data as possible.

The political and cultural divides within contemporary society are painfully apparent. The world is rife with cultural ignorance, some intentional and some not. Many people do not understand the importance of diversity and how to have civil conversations. Our ability to solve global problems, such as climate change, poverty, and world hunger, is hindered because we are unable to work past our differences to create sustainable and effective solutions. Especially considering how organizations with diverse leadership teams are 33% more likely to outperform their competitors, there is a dire need for cross-cultural collaboration and communication skills in our ever-globalizing world.

However, the education system is not preparing students to have the leadership skills necessary to solve these global problems. Although we are no longer using one-room schoolhouses, the concepts we learn in school and the methods in which they are taught remain the same. The education system is inequitable, and many students are unable to receive the best quality education due to their zip code or other circumstances beyond their control. Therefore, due to lack of education, many young people are unaware of the vast number of cultures, ethnicities, and lifestyles that populate our world today.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the education gap and has negatively impacted the education of most students around the world, regardless of their socioeconomic status. The COVID-19 pandemic has also contributed to increased loneliness and depression. Since the pandemic, loneliness and anxiety has increased by 25% globally. As mental health problems continue to skyrocket, more avenues must be created for youth to form lasting friendships and connections.

Our project seeks to address these challenges effectively and change this narrative around culture, education, and connection. We hope to make cultural education and awareness the norm for our next generation because everyone deserves to feel safe sharing and celebrating both their own and each other's cultures. To create this future, we embrace the fact that education is the foundation of any sustainable change in society; we believe education is the key to instigating cultural shifts toward appreciation, understanding, and empowerment.

Thus, the Cultural Discovery Camp is a free virtual one-week program seeking to cultivate cross-cultural empathy, friendship, and collaboration among elementary schoolers across the world. This five-day program will have a daily theme. Each day, participants will engage in cultural lessons pertaining to various countries and participate in a craft or activity related to the daily cultural theme. Students will learn about China, Nigeria, the United Kingdom, Iran, India, and India.

With the assistance of this grant, we hope to expand the scope of this project and enhance the quality of our participants' experiences. Our team hopes to directly impact 45 students from over 5 countries through the 2023 CDP. We aspire to indirectly affect 150 communities around the world through the service aspect of our program.

In conclusion, we hope that through the CDP, students will form lasting friendships with peers from across the world whom they otherwise would have never had the opportunity to meet. Students will also gain necessary support and resources to feel welcome and connected to the global youth community. Instead of just learning about cultural differences in a class, students can interact with their peers to directly learn about and humanize diverse cultures from someone who personally experiences a different way of life than them.

Please provide a detailed action plan on what steps you will need to take to ensure your project's success.

 Detailed Action Plan Example

What are some potential barriers that you might face during your project, and how will you address them?

 Potential Barriers Example

Who will support you as you implement this service project? Describe the role of each individual supporting you in your project. What specific skill sets do you/they have that will help your project be successful?

 Team Roles Example

The World in Us will reward \$150 microgrants to students based on their participation in the program and their grant proposal. Please describe how much funds you need, how the funds will be used, and why they are necessary for the implementation of your project.

This grant would help us immensely with funding our online platforms (such as Zoom, Squarespace, and Instagram ads) to ensure that our program is functional and accessible to as many students as possible. We also hope to provide participants with the ability to interact through a Zoom Pro platform.

Item	Cost	Reason Requested
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Instagram Ads	\$25.00	Run for 2 weeks to promote the program to parents.
Zoom Pro	\$15.99	To engage with the participants in a user-friendly platform.
Website	\$23.00	To share important resources in a central hub to parents.
		Total Cost: \$63.99

How will you measure the success of your project? What checkpoints will you set for yourself throughout the project to ensure that you are on track with your project goals/plan?

The number of participants and countries reached will be key indicators of the CDP success. We aim to serve around 150 participants from at least 30 countries spanning all 6 inhabited continents. We will track these data points through our program application form, which is hosted on Google Forms and includes questions about country of origin. Thus, after finalizing our participant lists, we can easily view the total number of participants and countries on our Google Sheet of participants.

We will also track the level of participant engagement in the CDP through a variety of measures, including participants' activity levels in the Slack, responsiveness to discussions/questions in language classes and program workshops, and turn-in rates of the culminating project. Overall program completion rates will be tracked by counting the number of completion certificates distributed, as only participants who attend all global issue workshops, leadership workshops, and language classes and who turn in the culminating project and feedback survey receive the completion certificate.

For more qualitative evaluation measures, we will primarily rely on post-program feedback surveys. Like our other forms, the survey will be hosted on Google Forms. The survey will include several multiple choice questions about favorite and least favorite parts of the program, as well as the overall success of the program in

achieving its goals for the participant (e.g., “Compared to before the program, do you feel more well-informed and aware of global issues?”). There are several open-ended spaces for participants to explain their answers to these questions. Additionally, there are several open-ended questions about memorable moments from the program, participants’ feelings about the program structure/schedule, how the program could be improved, etc. These answers will help us understand the personal impact of the program on participants and how we can optimize potential future iterations of the program to most effectively build participants’ cultural empathy, civic leadership, and language skills.

Below is a summary of key organizational progress milestones, which are discussed in greater detail in the Implementation Plan:

- Recruitment/confirmation of professional development speakers
- Recruitment/confirmation of language teachers
- Creation of program curriculum (language classes, global issue workshops, civic leadership workshops, partner and coffee chat discussion guides, and culminating project guidelines)
- Publication and advertising of program application and web page
- Reaching 150+ participant applications from 30+ countries
- Successful implementation and conclusion of 5-week program

Please provide any additional files/information.

To enhance your project proposal, include any additional information here that did not pertain to the above questions. This might include...

- Current progress on the project (if you have already started).
- Further analysis + reasoning on your project development process so far.
- Notes + details discussed from brainstorm sessions.
- Any other information that relates specifically to your project that you would like the judging committee to be aware of.