



The Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange (WCTE) brings together integration practitioners and public officials from Germany and the United States to share ideas and best practices on welcoming and integrating refugees at the local level.

This professional exchange program, administered by Cultural Vistas, together with its partners Welcoming America and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America, aims to build the capacity of local integration leaders and, through them, strengthen the welcoming infrastructure of the communities in which they work. The program is taking place over a period of three years (2016–2018), incorporating new communities in both countries each year.

Each year, up to 25 German and 16 American integration practitioners from a range of backgrounds will visit each other's countries to learn important new skills around issues such as community engagement, refugee outreach, positive communications, local policy development, evaluation, and many other areas critical for creating a welcoming community where all members can thrive.

Participants include individuals who work on a daily basis in key areas of migrant integration, and represent various offices of government, civil society, business, education, and other related sectors.

Applications from U.S. and German communities for the 2018 program are currently being accepted. For more information on WCTE, visit culturalvistas.org/wcte

Program Objectives

- To address the unprecedented refugee situation by fostering conversations and collaboration between U.S. and German integration practitioners
- To build the capacity of integration leaders and a transatlantic network to share successful strategies
- To create actionable plans for each community to support the integration process
- To establish a more sustainable and welcoming integration infrastructure in local U.S. and German communities

The Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange (WCTE) is organized and administered by Cultural Vistas, in collaboration with Welcoming America and the Heinrich Böll Stiftung North America. The exchange program is concluding its second of three years, in which it will bring together professionals and public officials working with immigrant and refugee populations in Germany and the United States. The program is funded by the Transatlantic Program of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany through funds of the European Recovery Program (ERP) of the Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy (BMW), as well as by the U.S. Department of State, the Robert Bosch Stiftung, the Heinrich Böll Foundation, and BMW Group.

 **HEINRICH BÖLL STIFTUNG**
NORTH AMERICA

Gefördert durch:



aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages

Robert Bosch **Stiftung**



Embassy of the United States of America

WELCOMING
AMERICA



**BMW
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About Cultural Vistas

Founded in 1963, Cultural Vistas is a nonprofit exchange organization promoting global understanding and collaboration among individuals and institutions. We develop international professional experiences that create more informed, skilled, and engaged citizens. Our programs empower people to drive positive change in themselves, their organizations, and society.



WELCOMING COMMUNITIES TRANSATLANTIC EXCHANGE

WCTE Application Process & Eligibility Requirements

The Welcoming Communities Transatlantic Exchange brings together integration professionals from the United States and Germany to share best practices and successful initiatives in integrating refugees, asylum-seekers, and immigrants at the local level. Teams representing a city or geographic region of at least 100,000 residents are eligible to apply. Smaller cities or counties may also apply as a consortium if there are clear geographic reasons for doing so.

WCTE seeks to identify communities that have provided compelling responses to challenges integrating immigrants and refugees. The program aims to incorporate communities that are working to include a diverse array of immigrants across different countries of origin, immigration categories, and economic statuses. Communities that have experience with responding to unexpected arrivals are of special interest. Communities should demonstrate that they are ready to actively contribute to the exchange, that they have sufficient institutional support to implement the lessons from the exchange, and that they will share their learning within their broader local community. Demonstrated institutional support (for example, in the form of a support letter from the mayor) for sustained commitment to the results of the exchange and the action plan that your community develops is strongly recommended.

Each team consists of 4 individuals and should reflect the diverse range of organizations involved in providing a successful integration network locally. Up to 4 cities will be selected to participate each year from the United States.

Steps in the WCTE Application Process

1. The “Team Leader” assembles a group of 4 individuals (including the Team Leader) who collectively represent the integration network of their city or region. Each team must include one local government administration representative, and there should be no more than one individual per organization on each team. The team members may represent civil society, local government, resettlement agencies, religious institutions, workforce integration, and any other relevant actors in the integration of immigrants and refugees at the local level.
2. The Team Leader submits an application request via culturalvistas.org/wcte. The names, titles, and email addresses of all 4 of the team members must be included in this application request.
3. A Cultural Vistas staff member reviews the team and makes suggestions for any recommended adjustments to the Team Leader. If the team fulfills all of the eligibility requirements, each team member will be granted access to the online application.
4. Each team member separately completes the online application form (submission deadline: December 1).
5. Applications are reviewed by a selection committee, and final decisions are made in early January. Your team will be collectively notified if you have been selected to participate.

Example of a WCTE Team (Detroit, 2017)

Christine Sauve:	Senior Program Coordinator, Welcoming Michigan (Team Leader)
Brigitte Fawaz-Anouti:	Social Services & Special Projects Director, Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services
Mariana Martinez:	Chief of Staff, Detroit City Councilmember Raquel Castañeda-López
Sarida Scott:	Executive Director, Community Development Advocates of Detroit

Questions?

Email info@culturalvistas.eu to join our free webinar on “How to Assemble a Successful Team and WCTE Application” on **September 19 at 10:00am Eastern US Time**. We look forward to answering any questions you have about the exchange and the application process!