

MAKING GLOBAL IMPACT

Guide to International Jobs in Government



ROBERTSON
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INTRODUCTION

So you want to land an international job in government? You're not alone.

Many young professionals have learned foreign languages and studied abroad, and that experience has led to a sincere interest in working for an organization focused on global issues. One of the premier international career options is the U.S. government.

While there are numerous resources that offer advice and assistance for professionals who are seeking to break into a global-minded government career, our research found that there was no single resource that pulled all of that information into one concise package. With this "Guide to International Jobs in Government," the Robertson Foundation for Government (RFFG), GovLoop, and the Association of Professional School of International Affairs (AP-SIA) hope to remedy that reality.

In the following pages, you will find that we have consolidated a lot of information and resources. However, more than providing information alone, we wanted to be sure you had insight. That's why we interviewed more than 20 international government employees and experts who shared their firsthand perspective on the steps you can take to establish your place in the field of international affairs. Specifically, this guide has three sections that answer the following questions:

1. Where Are the International Jobs in Government? In this section, we highlight traditional agencies like State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and analyze the lesser-known international job opportunities in government.

2. How Do You Launch and Advance an International Career in Government? This section explores the type of education, experience, and networking that prepares and positions you for success.

3. What's It Like to Be a Public Sector Professional in International Affairs and Foreign Policy? Here we share three stories of individuals who are working in international positions so that you can better understand the day-to-day reality of a current foreign policy professional.

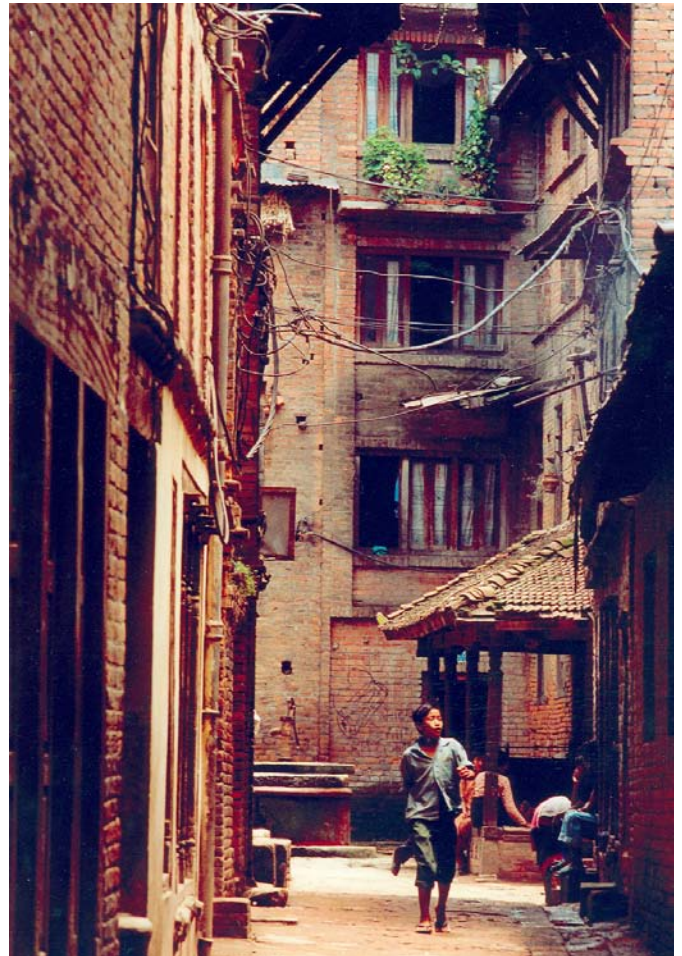
One thing to keep in mind is that not all international experience translates into jobs and not all international jobs are based abroad, so it's important to invest an appropriate amount of time to assess your interest and readiness. It might seem obvious, but before getting started, figure out if you really want to be in international affairs. C. Bryan Kempton, Director of the Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations at University of Maryland School of Public Policy, shared some solid advice:



“Make sure you seek out career counseling services to understand the overlay between your career needs and what is available in the work world. Career decision-making becomes more stressful when you have not laid a base foundation for what your goals are. Every day, students say they are interested in international affairs, but they have no idea where to focus. You need to dive deeper to understand what that world looks like and discover where your skills, interests, and values match.”

By reading this guide, you are taking one of those important first steps. You are ‘diving deeper’ and exploring the congruence between your skills, interests, values, and the growing need for globally minded individuals who can navigate the unique environment of international affairs.

We know that you are the future of our nation’s global leadership, and we’re honored and grateful that you are taking the time to learn more about the positive impact you can make on our world through an international career in public service.



ARE YOU PREPARED FOR A CAREER IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS / FOREIGN POLICY?

There are numerous things to consider when you are deciding to pursue a career in international affairs. It is important to think about the type of work you will be doing and the skills you will need to excel in the field. There are a few common characteristics and skills possessed by those in international relations, which lead to a series of questions you should ask yourself:

- Are you **comfortable living and working abroad** for both short and long periods of time?
- Do you have an ability and desire to **learn a foreign language**?
- Are you **‘culturally competent,’** meaning that you have the ability to interact effectively with individuals of different cultures and backgrounds?
- Do you have **strong interpersonal and communication skills**?
- Are you **adaptable and flexible**, exceling in new and difficult situations?
- Do you have an ability to **learn quickly on-the-job**?
- Do you have an **adventurous spirit and a willingness to take risks**?
- Do you have a **strong desire to work in public service**?

If you possess most of these characteristics and skills, then pursuing a career in foreign policy may be a great choice for you. However, do not make the final decision on your own. Make sure you seek out the advice of family members, mentors, and career advisors as they will provide you with valuable insight into your strengths and weaknesses.

WHERE ARE THE INTERNATIONAL JOBS IN GOVERNMENT?

When you think about international jobs in government, the agencies that quickly come to mind are the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). You might also know about foreign-related opportunities within the Department of Defense (DoD) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). In addition to the wonderful opportunities provided by traditional international job agencies, opportunities also exist in agencies such as the Treasury Department and Department of Agriculture. There are a variety of valuable opportunities to serve our nation and have a global impact in places and positions that might not be an obvious way to change the world.

It's also probable that a prospective foreign policy or international affairs professional romanticizes a life of frequent travel or long tenures living abroad. While that lifestyle might eventually become part of

a globally-focused career in government, the more common reality at first might be working in Washington, DC, and faithfully supporting those individuals who are stationed in foreign posts. While those early years might not seem as 'glamorous', they provide the foundation for learning about an agency, understanding its climate and culture, and gaining an appreciation for individuals in a variety of roles as well as the value they bring to accomplishing the organization's mission.

With that backdrop in mind, this section seeks to highlight the opportunities in the more common agencies, while also raising awareness about lesser-known agencies that allow you to launch a global job in government. To get you started, here is a list of almost 50 government agencies or subcomponents with an international facet:

- [Agency for International Development](#)
- [Aviation and International Affairs, U.S. Department of Transportation](#)
- [Broadcasting Board of Governors](#)
 - [Cuba Broadcasting/Radio and TV Marti](#)
 - [International Broadcasting Bureau](#)
 - [Radio Free Asia](#)
 - [Radio Free Europe](#)
 - [Voice of America](#)
- [Bureau of Industry and Security, U.S. Department of Commerce](#)
- [Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Global Health](#)
- [Central Intelligence Agency](#)
- [Citizenship and Immigration Services Bureau](#)
- [Commission on International Religious Freedom](#)
- [Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe](#)
- [Department of Energy, Office of Policy and International Affairs](#)
- [Environmental Protection Agency, International Cooperation](#)
- [Federal Legislative Branch](#)
 - [House Armed Service Committee and Subcommittees](#)
 - [House Committee and Subcommittees on Foreign Affairs](#)
 - [House Permanent Select Committee and Subcommittees on Intelligence](#)
 - [Senate Committee and Subcommittees on Foreign Relations](#)
 - [Senate Committee and Subcommittees on Armed Services](#)
 - [Senate Select Committee and Subcommittees on Intelligence](#)
- [Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture](#)
- [Foreign Commercial Service, U.S. Department of Commerce](#)
- [Homeland Security Department](#)
 - [U.S. Customs and Border Protection](#)
- [Import-Export Bank](#)
- [International Affairs, Department of Treasury](#)
- [International Affairs Office, Department of Interior](#)
- [International Education, Department of Education](#)
- [International Intellectual Property, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office](#)
- [International Trade Administration](#)
- [Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission](#)
- [Millennium Challenge Corporation](#)
- [Office of National Drug Control Policy](#)
- [Overseas Private Investment Corporation](#)
- [Peace Corps](#)
- [State Department](#)
 - [Global Affairs](#)
 - [Political Affairs](#)
 - [Public Diplomacy](#)
- [U.S.–China Economic and Security Review Commission](#)
- [U.S. Court of International Trade](#)
- [U.S. Department of Defense](#)
 - [Joint Chiefs of Staff](#)
 - [Office of Secretary of Defense](#)
 - [Unified Combatant Commands](#)
 - [U.S Air Force](#)
 - [U.S. Army](#)
 - [U.S. Coast Guard](#)
 - [U.S. Marine Corps](#)
 - [U.S. National Guard](#)
 - [U.S. Navy](#)
- [U.S. Trade Representative](#)
- [Veterans Affairs](#)
- [White House](#)

In [Appendix B](#), we have provided a brief description for many of these agencies if you want to learn a bit more before doing your own more thorough exploration. This list is not exhaustive as almost every government agency has an international affairs division.

TRADITIONAL FEDERAL AGENCIES WITH INTERNATIONAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

With roughly 24,000 individuals working at the State Department and U.S. embassies abroad, it is no surprise that these opportunities are among the most well known in government. However, approximately 11,000 of the staffers who work in the State Department are not FSOs. Rather, they are civil service personnel that work mostly in Washington, D.C. There is also a group of employees called Foreign Service Specialists that occupy unique positions that you want to take into consideration. Moreover, there are a number of international opportunities at agencies like the U.S. Agency for International Development, Department of Defense, and the intelligence community. We talk about each of those opportunities below.

STATE DEPARTMENT: FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

According to the State Department, Foreign Service Officers “serve at one of any of the more than 265 embassies, consulates, and other diplomatic missions in the Americas, Africa, Europe and Eurasia, East Asia and Pacific, Middle East and North Africa, and South Asia. Some of these posts are in difficult and even dangerous environments, but working in them affords great challenges and rewards.” There are eight steps that lead to becoming a Foreign Service Officer:

STEP 1: Choose a Career Track. There are five career tracks. You need to pick one:

- ▶ [Consular Officers](#) process visas, facilitate adoptions, help evacuate U.S. citizens, and combat fraud to protect our borders and fight human trafficking.
- ▶ [Economic Officers](#) work with foreign governments and other USG agencies on technology, science, economic, trade, energy, and environmental issues both domestically and overseas.
- ▶ [Management Officers](#) are resourceful, creative, action-oriented “go to” leaders responsible for all embassy operations from real estate to employees to budget.
- ▶ [Political Officers](#) analyze host country political events and must negotiate and communicate effectively with all levels of foreign government officials.
- ▶ [Public Diplomacy Officers](#) engage, inform, and influence opinion leaders, local non-governmental groups, the next generation of leaders, academics, think tanks, government officials, and the full range of civil society to promote mutual understanding and support for U.S. policy goals.

You can learn more about the five tracks here: careers.state.gov/officer/career-tracks.

STEP 2: Register for the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT): The test is administered three times each year over a period, or “window,” of eight days and candidates are allowed to take the exam only once a year. In 2013, those dates were in February, June, and October. You can register here: www.act.org/fsot/.

STEP 3: Take the Foreign Service Officer Test (FSOT): The test is taken online at an approved testing location and is designed to measure your knowledge, abilities, and skills. It takes about 3 hours to complete the multiple-choice exam, which includes three sections: (1) job knowledge, (2) English



expression, and (3) biographic questionnaire. You're also given 30 minutes to write an essay on an assigned topic. You must pass the multiple-choice test to have your essay graded. It will take about four hours to finish the entire exam.

After you pass the FSOT:

STEP 4: Submit a Personal Narrative: If you pass the FSOT, you'll receive an email and have precisely three weeks from date of receipt (this is strict) to complete Personal Narrative Questions. These brief essays, around 8 or 9, help the Qualifications Evaluation Panel of trained FSOs to analyze you on six precepts: leadership, interpersonal, communication, management qualities, intellectual skills, and substantive knowledge.

STEP 5: Take the Oral Assessment: You will spend one full day in Washington, D.C., or another major city around the U.S. where you'll engage in a group exercise, a structured interview, and a case management writing exercise. You'll be measured on your ability to demonstrate 13 dimensions that range from composure to judgment to resourcefulness.

After you pass the Oral Assessment:

STEP 6: Obtain Clearances: Medical and Security: If you make it this far, you will fill out a few more forms that lead to medical and security clearances.

STEP 7: Get Your Application Assessed by the Final Review Panel: Your application goes to a group of individuals that looks at your total record one more time.

STEP 8: Get placed on the Register. Congratulations - your name is on the list for placement over the next 18 months. Of course, you should know that there's still no guarantee for an offer of employment, but you've certainly placed yourself in the running! If you want to improve your ranking, you can repeat the process again in 11 months or take the language exams.

Learn more at: careers.state.gov/officer/selection-process.

8 TIPS TO NAVIGATE THE PROCESS

Below we outline eight actions you can take to navigate the Foreign Service Officer process and improve your chances of being a U.S. diplomat. These 8 tips come directly from individuals who have already successfully navigated this process, so they will definitely give you an edge over the competition.

1. **Take the official practice exams** offered by the State Department. Do not take the unofficial exams offered by other sources. If you are still in school, the career service officer will have a copy of the main practice exam. Remember: this practice exam is only the job knowledge section. Check out the [study materials](#) offered by the State Department.
2. **Review your AP U.S. History textbook** and look over the Constitution. The job knowledge section tests U.S. history and cultural knowledge for the states. Be sure to know major milestones in U.S. history, court cases, and major policies.
3. **Answer all personality questions as if you were in a management position in government.** There are several questions on the exam about what you would do in certain situations. These questions should be answered as if you were in a management position working for the State Department. This is about you making the

right choices based on your position. Follow this same technique when submitting the personal narrative and taking the oral assessment.

4. **Review every detail of your resume before taking the exam.** For the biographic questionnaire, you will be asked multiple questions about your work experience, such as whether or not you have exhibited a certain quality in the work place. You really need to be prepared with examples for almost every type of situation. It is fine to go back to the same example a few times over if it is a really good example. This part takes longer than most people realize because of the amount of typing involved, however, this section really allows you to differentiate yourself and demonstrate how you display the qualities of a FSO.
5. **Be concise on the written section.** Remember that you do not have much time and it is important to make your point as soon as possible, ideally in the first 2-3 sentences. In government, especially the Foreign Service, everyone talks about BLUF (bottom line up front).
6. **Research the 13 qualities of a FSO before submitting the personnel narrative or taking the oral assessment.** These 13 qualities are what they use to choose the officers, so

DOSCAREERS

DOSCareers is a mobile application designed by the Department of State for young professionals interested in a career in Foreign Service. The application provides access to more than 500 retired FSOT questions that test knowledge of U.S. government and culture, world history, technology, economics, and a multitude of other topics. It also allows you to learn more about the opportunities and experiences of those who have chosen the FSO career, as well as find a recruitment event, or contact a Diplomat in Residence near you. It is a great tool to use for all young professionals that hope to join the Foreign Service one day! Learn more here: careers.state.gov/doscareers.



make sure you have something prepared that incorporates many of them. You want to provide examples that will touch on these qualities. You do not have to call them out specifically, but someone reading the text should be able to understand the qualities you are displaying in the answers. These characteristics can also help you assess the strength of your application. If you possess all of the qualities, you will be a pretty solid candidate. Learn more about the 13 qualities [here](#).

7. Prepare yourself, for the oral assessment as a rigorous, daylong process. In no particular order, it is basically an interview, a group exercise, another interview, and a second written essay. There is no language test. According to one recently hired FSO, “the oral assessment is where individuals mess up the most. You cannot really prepare for it and a lot of people do not pass the first time. However, do not be discouraged, you were good enough to get there and you will be good enough to get there again.” Read the official study guide [here](#).

8. Improve your score on the registrar by testing in a language. This is where knowing a language can really be helpful.

So let’s say you make it through that painstaking process and you’re hired from the register. Again, we congratulate and salute you for your persistence and commitment to serving our country as a diplomat.

For this guide, GovLoop interviewed a new Foreign Service Officer, who was hired within the last year. Since his application and preparation process are fresh, we asked him about his experience so far.

“Everyone goes through a 6-week training course, called A-100, where they teach you about the basics

of a career in the Foreign Service,” explained the FSO. “The training covers rules and regulations, how you move from assignment to assignment, and how you select assignments. It’s eight hours a day of presentations and group exercises.”

He will also take a 6-week course on how to adjudicate visas, since that will encompass the bulk of his work as a Consulate Officer in his first post. That training includes role-playing so that he knows how to do the job once he arrives in the country.

There is also regional training and instruction on issues within the country. For instance, he took a two-week course on the Western Hemisphere that included a lot of material on drug policy, immigration, and trade.

Foreign Service Officers are assigned based on listing their preferences in a bid list. “You rank the posts on the bid list with everyone in your Foreign Officer cohort - you rank high, medium, or low. The career development officers review the preferences and you meet with them to explain why you want to go certain places. After this process, they assign you to a location.”

Ultimately, the State Department wants FSOs “to go out of their comfort zone and easily adjust to places where they are generally not familiar. You sign up for the Foreign Service understanding that it is about worldwide service and you agree to go almost anywhere.”

Lastly, he noted that flexibility is one of the highest virtues for the State Department. “You will learn very quickly that while you have some control about what you want to do and where you want to go, at first a lot of these decisions will be made for you and you have to be realistic about expectations and what you are going to do when you start out.”

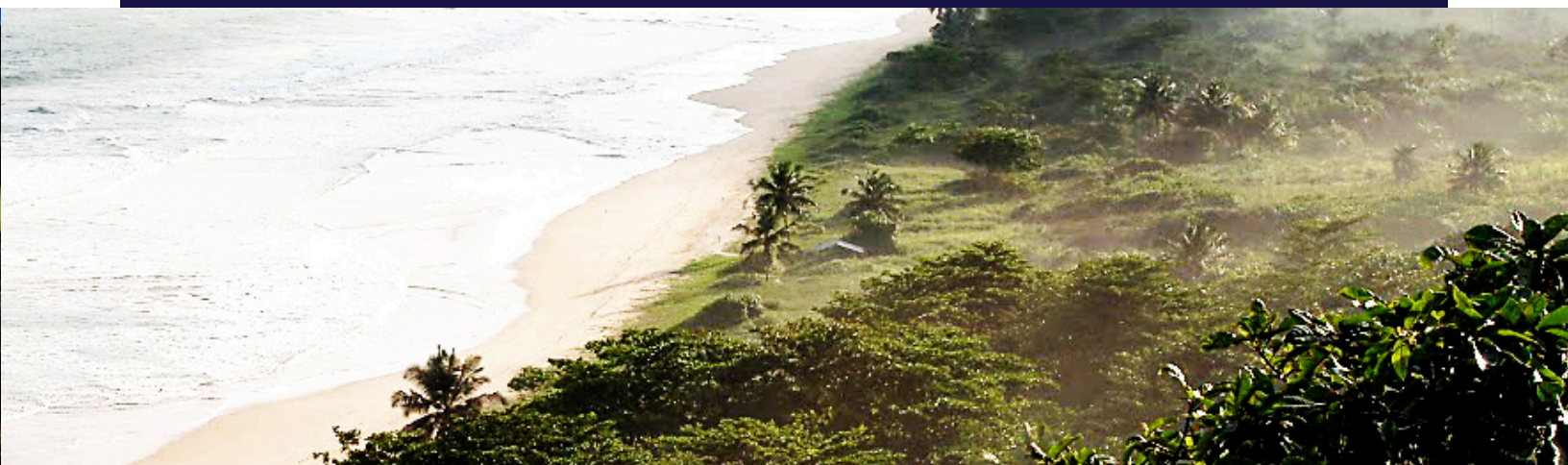


ULTIMATELY, THE STATE DEPARTMENT WANTS FSOS “TO GO OUT OF THEIR COMFORT ZONE AND EASILY ADJUST TO PLACES WHERE THEY ARE GENERALLY NOT FAMILIAR. YOU SIGNUP FOR THE FOREIGN SERVICE UNDERSTANDING THAT IT IS ABOUT WORLDWIDE SERVICE.”

TOP 8 CHALLENGES TO CONSIDER BEFORE BECOMING A FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

In [a great article](#) by Roy Licklider and Edward Rhodes at Rutgers, the authors recommend that applicants understand some of the unexpected aspects of the Foreign Service. The Foreign Service offers an attractive career, but several important observations are worth considering.

1. While **the number of new foreign service officers (FSOs) recruited each year varies dramatically** according to the needs of the service, the selection process is always extremely rigorous and highly competitive.
2. Even if one is eventually admitted into the Foreign Service, **the admission process is likely to take much or all of a year**. Applicants will need to have something to keep themselves busy in the meantime, even if they are ultimately admitted.
3. **The Foreign Service is divided into several “tracks” – political, economic, consular, management, and public information**. Entry into the Foreign Service in some of these tracks is much more difficult than in other tracks. Students who are absolutely sure that they want to be FSOs may want, for example, to think seriously about preparing themselves for the economic or management tracks.
4. **The Foreign Service seeks to be as diverse as the U.S.** At least in recent years, the Foreign Service has been particularly concerned about minority recruitment.
5. **Being an FSO is, in important ways, like being a military officer**. Although one has some freedom in requesting specific postings, one goes where one is assigned.
6. **The Foreign Service will teach you the languages you will need to know** – and, as already noted, it will decide where to post you, and this post may or may not take advantage of languages you already know.
7. **The process of applying for the Foreign Service is interesting and almost free**, so little is lost by pursuing this option.
8. **Many FSOs enter the foreign service in mid-life**, after a successful, or not-so-successful, career pursuing other avenues.



STATE DEPARTMENT: FOREIGN SERVICE SPECIALIST

If you're not sure the Foreign Service Officer, also known as a Generalist, matches your interests and talents, there is another option that is still competitive and offers a rewarding career path. It's called a Foreign Service Specialist and you can apply through the Gateway to State online application process. All vacancy announcements can be found here: careers.state.gov/specialist/vacancy-announcements.

Here's how the selection process works:

STEP 1: Choose a Specialization. There are 22 different Specialist career tracks that are grouped into eight different categories: (1) Administration, (2) Construction Engineering, (3) Facility Management, (4) Information Technology, (5) International Information and English Language Programs, (6) Medical and Health, (7) Office Management, and (8) Security. You can learn more about where you might fit here: careers.state.gov/specialist/which-specialization

STEP 2: Submit Your Application. You'll find all the opportunities and complete this process on USAJOBS. Note that there must be an open Vacancy Announcement for you to apply.

STEP 3: Qualifications Evaluations Panel. Just like a prospective Foreign Service Officer, your application will go before a QEP that looks at your professional experience, job history, and motivation.

STEP 4: Take the Foreign Service Specialist Oral Assessment. Successful candidates are invited to travel at their own expense to Washington, D.C., to participate in an oral assessment that includes a writing exercise, an online test, and a structured interview. Candidates are given the results the same day in an exit interview. Evaluations are based on 12 dimensions. State Department has a [Study Guide](#) to assist your preparation.

STEP 5: Get Clearances, Medical and Security. As we explained above, you'll need to fill out several forms to determine your medical fitness and apply for a security clearance.



STEP 6: Have Your Application Assessed by the Final Review Panel. This group gives your full package one last, careful look to determine suitability for a Foreign Service position.

STEP 7: Secure Your Spot on The Register of Cleared Candidates. In this situation, you have a conditional offer of employment and will be rank ordered based on overall assessment scores.

Just as we interviewed a Foreign Service Officer for the previous section, GovLoop learned about the Foreign Service Specialist position from Terry Davidson, Recruiting Outreach Division Chief, State Department.

Davidson said that Foreign Service Specialists “make embassies work. They are the backbone of the em-

bassies along with local employees. They really run the logistical side of U.S. embassies abroad and manage the day-to-day operations.”

For instance, Foreign Service Specialists working as health practitioners keep Foreign Service staff healthy, while security officers are responsible for protecting Department of State personnel, facilities, and sensitive information from acts of crime, terrorism, and technical espionage. Davidson explained that these are “not just a job for a year or two. They are career paths that can run 10, 15, or even 35 years.

Specialist candidates apply to vacancy announcements on USAJOBS for each specialty; these are generally open once or twice a year for a limited period. If your desired specialty has no current announcement, you can sign up on the State website to receive an email alert when one does open. All positions require availability for worldwide placement versus specific locations. Specialists are assigned to embassies and consulates for 1-3 years, and they rotate among 270 locations around the globe. “Depending on the specialty, we really need one in almost every embassy,” said Davidson.

Davidson also urged candidates to leave any preconceived notions about their placement at the door. “You need to love the variety and change that the job allows as you are on the move throughout your career,” said Davidson, “It’s not just a job, not just a career; it’s a lifestyle.”

Like the Foreign Service Officer placements, the Specialist opportunities are highly competitive. The State Department looks at upwards of 10,000 applications and only hires some 300 to 500 Specialists a year. Davidson shared that the average age of intake for candidates is in the early 30s, but they take people from a variety of ages, backgrounds, and experiences.

If a Foreign Service Specialist opportunity appeals to you, the next step would be to “go to the State website and do a deep dive into the specialties,” said Davidson. “You can also contact one of our Diplomats in Residence. These are 16 senior officers posted throughout the United States and are there to help answer questions about State Department careers.” Those interested can find the closest Diplomat in residence by scrolling over the map here: www.careers.state.gov/engage/dir.html

OTHER FOREIGN SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES:

Outside of the State Department, three other agencies offer Foreign Service Officer opportunities:

- ▶ U.S. Agency for International Development: transition.usaid.gov/careers/fsfaq.html
- ▶ Department of Commerce: trade.gov/cs/employment.asp
- ▶ Department of Agriculture: www.fas.usda.gov/admin/newjobs/foreignservice.asp

There are about 2,100 FSOs in USAID, 220 in the Department of Commerce, and 180 in the Department of Agriculture in comparison to the 13,700 FSOs working at the Department of State. FSOs outside of State are hired through a process specific to the hiring agency and follow a separate career track. Most of these types of FSOs are hired for technical purposes, such as engineering or financial management. Once in the Foreign Service, FSOs from these agencies go through similar training to State Department FSOs, including taking classes in cultural competence and language skills.



STATE DEPARTMENT: REGULAR CIVILIAN OPPORTUNITIES

Of course, you don't have to be affiliated with the Foreign Service to work for the State Department. There are thousands of jobs on the civil service side of State that range from improving trade to helping couples adopt children from foreign nations to monitoring human rights issues. As of the writing of this guide, there are vacancies with titles as diverse as Education Program Specialist, Realty Specialist, Travel Assistant, Acquisition Management Analyst, Passport Operations Officer, and Site Security Manager. These positions are located in places like Charleston, SC, Dallas, TX, and Dunn Loring, VA. Our best advice for someone who might not be ready for a stint abroad is to apply for one of these more specialized opportunities, perform with excellence, and maneuver yourself within the agency toward a global position.

VIRTUAL INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR U.S. COLLEGE STUDENTS

The State Department and USAID offer a virtual internship program with over 450 online career opportunities for college students. The elnternship program allows U.S. college students to collaborate on special projects at select federal agencies. Students are required to spend 10 hours per week assisting with the projects during the academic year. Bridget Roddy, program manager for the Virtual Student Foreign Service Program, states, "By offering U.S. college students the opportunity to contribute to the work government does, not only are we able to harness energy, excitement, and enthusiasm from an audience outside our organization, but we are able to accomplish more with more." To learn more about the virtual internship programs, check out this NextGov article, "[Coming Soon to Your Agency: Virtual Internships.](#)"

U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Another popular agency where there are fewer jobs, but equally excellent opportunities to work with foreign governments is the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). There are three primary ways that a person can become involved with USAID:

- ▶ **Direct Hire:** An individual can search [USAJOBS](#) for federal career opportunities or apply for paid and unpaid [student internships](#). Current opportunities are found in the Bureau for Legislative and Public Affairs, the Office of the General Counsel, the Office of Transition Initiatives, and the Bureau for Africa.
- ▶ **Private Sector:** There are several commercial mechanisms through which an individual can work for USAID as well.
 - **Personal Services Contract:** In this kind of contract, the individual acts as a government employee in accordance with Federal Acquisition Rules.
 - **Purchase Order:** The individual provides merchandise or services to the agency.
 - **Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPA):** These agreements serve as "charge accounts" through which the agency can acquire goods or services repeatedly. USAID anticipates BPA consultants needed in Sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and the Near East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Europe and Eurasia.
- ▶ **Local Employment:** Foreign Service Nationals (FSNs) provide unique services in support of foreign policy at USAID missions worldwide, performing vital mission program and support functions. Individuals interested in working at a specific post who are not host country nationals must be legally eligible to work in the country of hire. USAID missions are responsible for their local recruitment. Please visit the country page of the mission you are interested in for job listings: www.usaid.gov/where-we-work.



USAID has also identified two “Urgent Hiring Needs,” which includes Contracting Officers and opportunities in Afghanistan and Pakistan in areas of expertise like agriculture, general development, engineering, private enterprise, education, health, and crisis stabilization and governance.

PEACE CORPS

There are roughly 1,100 employees at the Peace Corps – 600 in Washington, D.C. and another 500 serving in recruitment offices across the U.S. and overseas. It’s a small agency, but another potential place that has an important global-oriented mission. There are four things you should know about the Peace Corps:

- ▶ It’s an independent agency of the U.S. Government and **jobs are a part of the “excepted service,”** not the competitive civil service. That means they can limit and streamline hiring (i.e. they don’t have to compete them like other agencies). It also means that they don’t have to post positions on USAJOBS, so if you’re interested in this agency, you’ll need to look directly at their job board to be sure you’re up on the latest (but it also might mean that you won’t be eligible for many of the positions unless you’re a current government employee and/or Returned Peace Corps Volunteer).

- ▶ **They have time limits on employment.** Peace Corps employees receive time-limited appointments, capped at a maximum of five years (60 months) of employment with the agency. This time limit is known as the “five-year rule,” which was implemented to ensure that Peace Corps’ employees remain as fresh and innovative as the Volunteers.
- ▶ **Former Peace Corps employees cannot be re-employed by Peace Corps** until they have been out of the agency’s employment for the same amount of time that they worked for the Peace Corps. For example, if you previously worked for the Peace Corps for three years, you cannot come back to work for the Peace Corps until you have been away for three years. Service as a Peace Corps Volunteer overseas is not counted for the purposes of this rule.
- ▶ After three years of employment (not volunteering) with the Peace Corps, you will earn **“non-competitive eligibility status,”** which can help you obtain employment at other federal government agencies.

The bottom line with Peace Corps is that it’s a great place to get international experience through their volunteer program (we say more about that below), but less likely to be your first international job in government.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

The Department of Defense (DoD) is the largest employer in government and has a mission that is global in scope, so it only makes sense that they have a lot of international opportunities. One of the first places to look for vacancies is the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). With offices both at home and abroad, DIA deploys globally alongside warfighters and interagency partners to defend U.S. national security interests. While many of the jobs are in Washington, D.C., DIA also has a limited number of support assistants in Defense Attaché Offices in embassies worldwide, primarily in Europe and Latin America. They also have several Combatant Commands, which are geared toward geographic regions such as Africa, Europe, the Pacific, and more. Graduate students looking to explore the agency may consider opportunities, such as:

- ▶ **Academic Semester Internship Program:** provides promising undergraduate seniors and graduate students enrolled as full-time degree-seeking students at U.S. accredited universities and colleges, located within commutable distances to DIA locations, the opportunity to gain practical work experience in intelligence analysis while enrolled in classes. Interns can be appointed for two semesters, depending on the university calendar, normally beginning in September. Students may be extended for a second semester, and are employed as part-time temporary employees, working between 16 and 20 hours per week.
- ▶ **Cooperative Education Program:** provides a select number of talented undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to gain valuable work experience in combination with their academic studies. Co-ops are often selected from academic institutions with recognized Co-op programs, though not exclusively. You must be eligible to work a six-month period during your academic career. You will be considered a full-time, temporary employee during the six-month Co-op, and offered increasingly challenging assignments that are commensurate with your academic training and ability to assume additional responsibilities.

- ▶ **Summer Intern Program:** provides talented undergraduate and graduate students the opportunity to gain practical work experience in the areas of analysis, research, report writing, oral briefings, policy development, program management, and computer applications related to the intelligence field. Interns are appointed for a 10-week period from June through August, as full-time, temporary employees. All interns must be granted a security clearance and successfully pass a drug screening test prior to being made a final offer.

Internships and temporary assignments are some of the most effective ways for prospects to gain exposure to an agency and increase their likelihood of becoming hired for full-time, permanent employment with an agency.

Another non-traditional path to global jobs at DoD is to consider the **Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA)**. Established shortly after World War II, DoDEA is essentially a series of schools located around the world that exist to teach the children of our service men and women. DoDEA is broken into three regions: Americas, Europe, and Pacific. A quick glance at vacancies reveals that they





are further broken into several districts, with several opportunities throughout Germany as well as countries like Belgium, Italy, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, and the UK. Pacific positions are located in Guam, Japan, Korea, and Okinawa. In addition to teach opportunities, these schools require civilian support staff, such as Office Automation, School Support, or Transportation Assistants, as well as School Secretaries and Clerks. Visit their website for more information: www.dodea.edu.

It is important to note that positions in the DoD require individuals to obtain a security clearance, a process which can take from 6 months to 1 year, if not more. Further, most opportunities are limited to U.S. citizens.

INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY

According to Evan Lesser, founder and managing director at ClearanceJobs.com, the U.S. Government's [intelligence agencies are looking to hire overseas](#), with career opportunities ranging from systems engineer or analyst to force protection and physical security. When you think of careers in intelligence, the FBI and CIA often come to mind. However, the intelligence community includes 17 agencies and organizations within the executive branch - broaden your search to give yourself the best chance at success.

Intelligence agencies are less interested in degrees than skills. Logisticians, linguists, and analysts are in demand. Language skills are always a plus, but an

ability to learn quickly is even more important. The Middle East remains a critical location, particularly for the vast military intelligence apparatus. However, locations range from Jubail to Germany. A few tips to keep in mind:

- ▶ **Be tenacious, but patient.** The application and security clearance process may be long and tedious, with onboarding and training programs being even more so.
- ▶ **Know the lingo.** Brush up on the difference between SIGINT, GEOINT and HUMINT, and research agency-specific programs and locations before you apply.
- ▶ **Highlight problem solving and critical thinking skills.** Overseas intelligence positions require professionals who can think on their feet.
- ▶ **Attend agency career fairs or hiring events.** Many intelligence agencies hold regional recruiting events. Attend to learn more and get an agency point-of-contact. In fact, the intelligence community hosts virtual career fair every year. Learn more here: www.icvirtualfair.com

Browse overseas jobs by location at www.usajobs.gov/JobSearch/Search/AdvancedSearch, but also visit the individual agency websites. Many have individual recruiting procedures and may not post vacancies online.

NON-TRADITIONAL FEDERAL AGENCIES WITH INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Leigh Morris Sloane, former Executive Director of the Association for Professional School of International Affairs, said that she “spends a lot of time trying to get students out of going to USAID and State.” Of course, Sloane says that tongue-in-cheek, but what she really means is that she “wants students to realize that there are other opportunities out there.” She said that her organization’s website has a link to the jobs that are outside these departments under their [Resources page](#).

As an example of alternative agencies, Sloane spoke about a student that was unsuccessful in applying for the Foreign Service. “Something came across my desk for the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and I knew that food security was a big thing right now in international affairs, so I sent the vacancy announcement to that student.” The student applied and did not get that specific job, but was referred by the USDA to another opportunity in program management focused on Eastern Europe.

Sloane also cited child labor and human trafficking as another key issue right now that is being addressed by the Department of Labor’s International Affairs Office. “There are lots of places like this scattered around the government. They are issue-specific, but still great opportunities,” said Sloane. “You just have to get your foot in the door in the government and gain the international experience, then you can always move to State.”

Michael Schneider, Robertson Foundation for Government Career Advisor and Director of the Washington D.C. Public Diplomacy Program at Syracuse University’s Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, underscored the variety of international opportunities that are available in government:



“You know one of the things that everyone should remember is that every federal agency has an international affairs, international program or division, it may not be very large, for many years these were just sort of necessary, but there is almost no issue that one deals these days that does not have either an international cause or effect or an international association. So you can pick any federal agency and check it out.”

He went on to cite another specific example:

“If you’re interested in China and you’re interested in health, check out the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health - they all have work and interests and relationships with people in the health field and public health field in China. So many of the communicable diseases that we are hearing about in the news - SARS, H1N1, H5N7, H9N1 - emanated from Southern China.”

Schneider’s comments also highlight the importance of simply paying attention to current events and noting which agency leaders get quoted in newspaper articles and television programs. If they are talking about that issue, they likely have staff that are performing important work around that topic.

Another important point was made by Donald Pierce, a Regional Export Control Officer at the U.S. Embassy in Singapore:



“Keep in mind though that many U.S. Government agencies post personnel abroad at embassies, such as the DoD, FBI, DEA, ICE, CBP, FAA, TSA, and others. These are often overlooked since the primary way in is agency-specific. In addi-

tion, Treasury, Commerce, and Justice often have “limited appointment” billets, where civil servants with specialized skills are detailed to the Foreign Service for 2-5 years; this is the type of assignment I am in right now.”

C. Bryan Kempton, Director of Career Services and Alumni Relations at the University of Maryland School of Public Policy, encouraged aspiring international affairs professionals to check out the Washington Information Directory services as “a wonderful go-to resource for individuals that are trying to educate themselves about the federal government,” said Kempton as he explained that it’s subscription-based, but students would likely have access through their schools.

“It’s basically like a phonebook for public policy,” said Kempton. “Outside of private firms, it allows you to research the entire D.C. Metro Area, including non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government.” A reader can break it down by topic area to focus specifically on a field like international affairs.

“It is a great resource for finding contacts at specific agencies or NGOs,” said Kempton. “Every time you read it, you learn about something that you might not have known existed before.”

To learn more about government agencies and non-governmental organizations in Washington, D.C., checkout the [Washington Information Directory](#).



ADVICE FOR FINDING FEDERAL JOB OPPORTUNITIES

INTERNATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES ON USA-JOBS

In the “[Guide to Getting into Government for High Achievers](#),” the Robertson Foundation and GovLoop provide a comprehensive resource for navigating [USAJOBS](#), the federal government’s primary job search tool. Since working in an agency with a global scope is so popular, we did want to give you a few quick pointers on using USAJOBS to search for international opportunities:

- ▶ Go to USAJOBS and click on “Advanced Search.”
- ▶ Try using “international” or “foreign” as your keywords. You could also use a specific language where you have proficiency.
- ▶ If you know the country where you’d want to work, use the location search to narrow your options by region, then by country – and you can even select a specific city.
- ▶ You might find that some of these jobs have “Multiple Locations:”
 - Contact the agency to learn more about how the opportunity might differ in the various locations.
 - Even if one of those locations is in the U.S., go ahead and apply anyway.
 - Be flexible and consider a different country than the one you originally had in mind, perhaps it could lead to a transfer down the road.

If you’re wondering what type of results you might discover, GovLoop extracted a one-day snapshot in USAJOBS, using the search term “international.” We found 515 openings for U.S. citizens (not targeted

exclusively to current federal employees or individuals that have reinstatement privileges) and 1,130 that were targeted to current federal employees. These jobs ranged from International Broadcaster at Broadcasting Board of Governors to International Program and Policy Analyst at Food and Drug Administration to Director of International Affairs at the U.S. Coast Guard.

We also performed a location search (only jobs located outside of North America) and discovered 171 openings for U.S. Citizens and 574 openings for current federal employees. Jobs ranged from Human Resources Specialist for the Army in Japan to Trade Compliance Officer for Commerce’s International Trade Administration in China.

We narrowed our search to include only State Department vacancies and learned that there were 22 announcements open to anyone and 68 targeted to current federal employees. Just two of these opportunities were foreign officer positions, while the balance were civilian jobs. Below is a sample list of the titles as well as the number of openings for each of them:

- ▶ Health Practitioners (3)
- ▶ Information Technology (2)
- ▶ Facilities Management (2)
- ▶ Visa (2)
- ▶ Foreign Affairs Officer (2)
- ▶ Banking (2)
- ▶ Procurement (2)
- ▶ Internships (2)
- ▶ Academic Exchange (1)
- ▶ Security (1)
- ▶ Senior Advisor (1)
- ▶ Program Analyst (1)
- ▶ Education Specialist (1)

Lastly, we looked at USAID and found just 4 openings (one in information technology, one in contracting, and two in healthcare). That number jumps to 12 openings for current federal employees.

The lesson from our research is clear: start with a broad international search. Applicants should worry less about the perfect position in a preferred agency, and focus more on getting a foot in the door. With a little guidance, many MPA or International Affairs students can shape their resume to fit positions in IT, procurement, facilities, or education – and people with degrees in these areas should not hesitate to apply for these vacancies even if they lack international experience.

One final note: It's one thing to find the vacancies; it's another to successfully apply and acquire a government job. We cannot emphasize enough the importance of using this guide as a companion to our "Guide to Getting into Government for High Achievers." We want to be sure that you are realistic and ready to navigate what can be an arduous process. You can download that guide here: pathtopmf.com/getintogov/.

HAVE YOU HEARD OF SCHEDULE B HIRING AUTHORITY?

According to one government insider, some agencies are utilizing the Schedule B hiring authority as a tool to streamline talent acquisition. Schedule B hiring authority is utilized when it is impractical for the agency to rate applicants using competitive procedures. Applicants must still meet the qualification standards for the job. However, they do not have to go through the normal application process. It used to be used for PMF, but currently all Pathways Program hiring is done via the newly created Schedule D. Recently, some agencies have been given the authority to hire for jobs using Schedule B due to need, especially in light of recent hiring freezes. The best way to find out if an agency is utilizing Schedule B is to ask your network!

FEDERAL LEGISLATIVE BRANCH OPPORTUNITIES

There are many opportunities to pursue a career in foreign policy within the Federal Legislative Branch. The U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate both have numerous committees and subcommittees that cover internationally related issues. U.S. House of Representatives committees include the [Committee on Foreign Affairs](#), the [Armed Services Committee](#), and the [Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence](#). Senate committees include the [Committee of Foreign Relations](#), the [Committee on Armed Services](#), and the [Select Committee on Intelligence](#).

In both chambers, the committees have several subcommittees that are more specific towards specific regions, policies, or issues. According to one committee staffer, "Employment opportunities, including full-time and internships, within these committees and subcommittees are difficult to obtain and often require having experience working for a House or Senate member." Therefore, if you are planning to pursue this career path, be sure to work or intern for your local Congressman or Senator to get a foot in the door.

CONTRACT OPPORTUNITIES

Currently, there are a number of opportunities to work internationally for the government through contracting work, specifically with USAID. In many situations, working as a contractor is one of the best ways to gain exposure with an agency and improve your chances of being hired by them as a full-time employee. Amy Truong, a Robertson Foundation for Government Fellow, graduate of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and a Project Management Associate at Chemonics International, offered some great advice to fellow recent graduates:



"As recent graduates look for work at State or USAID, getting a foot in the door requires a lot of flexibility in terms of how you get brought in. If one is not a Presidential Management Fellow, contract work is really the best, in some cases only,



way to get hired. Some offices, such as USAID, only hire the senior staff directly and contract everyone else.”

If you are interested in working with USAID and want to skillfully navigate the traditional hiring process, check out one of these top five private sector partners, based on a list constructed by [Devex](#), a leading international development organization.

- ▶ **Chemonics International:** designs and implements projects in agriculture, conflict and disaster management, democracy and governance, education, energy, environmental management, financial services, gender, health, and private sector development.
- ▶ **DAI:** focuses in economic growth, environment and energy, governance, health, stability, and the corporate sector.
- ▶ **Louis Berger Group:** provides engineering, architecture, program and construction management, environmental planning and science, and economic development services.

- ▶ **John Snow, Inc.:** delivers technical and management assistant to public health initiatives.
- ▶ **Deloitte Consulting:** offers numerous consulting services to many areas of government, mainly human capital, strategy and operations, and technology.

There are dozens of these kinds of organizations, many of whom are supporting or partnering with governments abroad, so it's worth taking the time to research options in this area. It's a great place to start, get some experience, and position yourself for a future public service job.

ADDITIONAL CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

It is important to note that this guide does not focus on all international jobs. There are many opportunities in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), such as the [Institute of World Affairs](#) or [Amnesty International](#), and intergovernmental organizations, such as the [United Nations](#) (UN) or [North Atlantic Treaty Organization](#) (NATO). Similar to U.S. government jobs, career opportunities within these organi-

zations are extremely competitive, especially as you are often competing with candidates from around the globe.

Below, we include several job boards that list career opportunities in international affairs. Employers and young professionals in the field actively use these to identify career opportunities and network with hiring officials.

- ▶ Young Professionals in Foreign Policy Job Board, ypfp.org/jobs/recent
- ▶ Foreign Policy Association Job Board, www.fpa.org/jobs/

- ▶ Foreign Affairs Job Board, jobs.foreignaffairs.com/

- ▶ Jobs.GovLoop.com, jobs.govloop.com/

In addition to these boards, Yale University's Jackson Institute for Global Affairs provides a detailed list of fellowships and young professional opportunities available for those desiring to advance in the field. These opportunities include [The Fulbright Public Policy Fellowship](#), the [Council on Foreign Relations Fellowships](#), and the [CARE USA Fellowship Program](#). Check out their website to learn more: jackson.yale.edu/careers_fellowships.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITIES: THINK GLOBAL, WORK LOCAL

While most of the international opportunities in government are found on the federal level, there are a few state and local possibilities for you to consider. First, every state has an international trade administration or department of commerce that manages foreign business relationships. For instance, the State of Delaware has International Trade and Development staff that assist Delaware companies to increase exports, imports, and investments through in-house and on-site counseling. Every single state has a similar office.

As another example of emerging international jobs coming to the states, the U.S. Small Business Administrative launched a pilot initiative in 2010 called the [State Trade and Export Promotion \(STEP\) Program](#). STEP aims to increase the number of small businesses that are exporting, and to increase the value of exports for those small businesses. One sign that this program might have legs is a public-private partnership called the Pure Michigan STEP Program, run by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation. Every state is eligible to apply to STEP and likely has staffing needs in the areas of economic development that have international implications due to economic globalization. You might want to do some homework and see what's happening in your state.

Finally, while not a government organization, the [Sister Cities International initiative](#), which was created at President Eisenhower's 1956 White House conference on citizen diplomacy, is another way to become involved in an international venture that puts relevant experience on your resume. Each state has a volunteer coordinator that serves as a resource at the local level to provide professional assistance and help to member communities in their state. You'd be assisting communities that wish to establish or maintain a sister city. As of this writing, there are no fewer than 20 vacancies in states like Alaska, Connecticut, Kansas, Massachusetts, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee.

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HOW DO YOU LAUNCH OR ADVANCE AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER IN GOVERNMENT?

So now that you know where you can find a variety of international job opportunities in government, we wanted to shift our attention to how you get there. How do you acquire the right blend of knowledge, experience, and contacts to position yourself effectively for the application process? We answer that question below with the types of experience, education, and networking that will increase your likelihood of success.

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Not surprisingly, international experience is the single most important experience to have on your resume when applying for jobs in foreign policy. To hiring personnel, this experience shows that you have an interest in international affairs and have an ability to travel overseas and work for a time period. This experience is a quick way to show that you have the flexibility, skills, and cultural sensitivity to collaborate with individuals from very different backgrounds.

Amy Truong, a Robertson Foundation for Government Fellow, graduate of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and Project Management Associate at Chemonics International, said:



“International experience really adds value to a candidate looking to advance in the international relations field. It lends credibility to a person and gives the person context for the work. While initially that might mean volunteering or taking a low-paid internship or job in another country, the time abroad is very valuable.”

Furthermore, the type of international experience that you gain really does matter. While all international experience counts and enables you to grow, hiring personnel view experiences differently depending on the amount of time spent in the foreign country and what was done. The longer you spend in a foreign country the better because it enables you to gain a deeper understanding of the language and culture. When abroad, it is important to gain experience in the field and do similar work to what you want to do in your career. For instance, if you are interested in international development and women’s issues, gain experience working with African women and developing a business plan for selling purses internationally. Ideally, you will spend between 1 to 3 years abroad acquiring knowledge and key skills that will help to advance your career.

However, it can be difficult financially and personally to travel abroad for long-time periods. For professionals that have limited time abroad, it is important that you learn the culture and focus your experi-

“HIRING AUTHORITIES CAN GLEAN A LOT FROM ANY TYPE OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE THAT YOU HAVE.

IT SHOWS THAT YOU ARE ABLE TO **PUT YOURSELF OUTSIDE YOUR COMFORT ZONE**. IT FURTHER DISPLAYS THAT YOU ARE A **RISK TAKER**, SOMEONE THAT **ENJOYS CHALLENGES**, ASSIMILATES TO A NEW PLACE, AND POSSESSES **CULTURAL SENSITIVITY**. STUDENTS INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS SHOULD **TRY TO GO ABROAD IN ANY CAPACITY WHENEVER POSSIBLE.**”

C. Bryan Kempton, Director, Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations, University of Maryland School of Public Policy



ence. In the end, the international experience depends on how you position it within your story and how you can communicate your experience to hiring personnel.

HOW TO GET INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

There are many different ways to get international experience, ranging from dedicated programs to simply living and working abroad. The experts that we interviewed for this guide invariably said that the [Peace Corps](#) and teaching English in a foreign country were two of the best experiences to have on your resume if you want to launch a successful international career in government.

Peace Corps Volunteer opportunities vary based on the needs of host countries, but generally map to the following categories: education, youth and community development, health, business and information technology, agriculture, and environment. The

most competitive applicants for the Peace Corps have a college degree in agriculture, forestry, or environment, and speak either Spanish or French. Another plus to the Peace Corps, you gain a full year of non-competitive eligibility for searching for U.S. government jobs when you return.

Teaching English Abroad is also a great opportunity, especially for recent graduates. It fosters the development of important leadership, organizational, and program management skills, while also allowing you to learn a foreign language and gain cultural sensitivity. There are a number of programs avail-

APPLYING TO THE PEACE CORPS

There are seven steps to the Peace Corps Application Process:

1. **Application:** It includes two essays, three references, employment history, resume, a list of community and volunteer activities, educational background, and practical skills. You'll also need to submit your college transcript(s), outstanding student loan information, and legal obligations as well as a completed health history form.

2. **Interview:** Within two weeks of submitting an application, you'll be contacted for an interview that will cover your skills and interests, job opportunities that are available, and your personal attributes. It's almost always with a returned Volunteer, so be sure to ask them questions about their experience as well.

3. **Nomination:** If the recruiter determines you are qualified, you will be nominated to serve with a general departure date.

4. **Medical, Legal, Suitability, and Competitive Reviews:** This is, plain and simple, due diligence on the part of the Peace Corps.

5. **Invitation:** This is where you receive a specific offer in writing from a placement officer that details your country, job description, departure date, and welcome packet. If you accept, you're on your way!

6. **Final Medical Clearance:** Within 60 days of leaving, you get a medical and dental exam to make sure you're fit for service and have all your immunizations and such.

7. **Preparation for Departure:** Get ready and good luck!

You can learn more about putting your best foot forward for Peace Corps by visiting files.peacecorps.gov/multimedia/pdf/about/tipsheet.pdf. Moreover, they recommend a few other organizations that can help you shore up any lack of experience at www.peacecorps.gov/learn/howvol/partners/.



able around the world, some sponsored by foreign governments, such as the [Japan Exchange and Teaching Program](#) (JET), and others hosted by private organizations, like [LanguageCorps](#). It is best to find a program in the region that you are interested in and speak with a career advisor before choosing a program. The [University of Michigan's International Center](#) has a great resource on teaching English abroad [here](#).

Besides these programs, there are many other ways to get international experience. These include finding a position within a non-governmental organization (NGO), intergovernmental organization, or working with a foreign government. Most of these opportunities are unpaid or provide a small stipend, but the experience you obtain is invaluable and opens many doors for you when you return to the States. The resources below may help you think about a couple other viable avenues to get some international experience:

- ▶ Federal Jobs Network, Overseas Jobs: www.federaljobs.net/overseas.htm#Exchange_Service
- ▶ State Resources for Working Overseas: www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/79765.htm
- ▶ USAJOBS, Teaching Positions: help.usajobs.gov/index.php/Teachers
- ▶ USAJOBS, Linguist Positions: help.usajobs.gov/index.php/Linguists

In the end, it can be difficult to discover these positions while in the U.S. and it's necessary to simply travel abroad and find a job once you get there. Joshua Marcuse, founder of Young Professionals in Foreign Policy, provided some excellent advice toward this end:



"I tell people to just go to the country where you want to be. I have a friend who just went to Sierra Leone with no job lined up. She had no plans whatsoever, but a fantastic attitude, and now she's highly in demand. She just showed up with

a skill set and a perspective that everyone wants. She took a risk, but she has been phenomenally successful. Skills that we take for granted in the U.S. are sometimes rare and unusual qualities and experiences in an emerging market environment, let's say in Sub-Saharan Africa or Southeast Asia. These include project management, strategic planning, resource modeling. Some people aren't trained for these activities because their education systems don't inculcate that behavior and their economy does not reward success in the same way. And so when someone with that passion and ability shows up in that community, they find that their capabilities are really prized."

In other words, sometimes you need to toss out your meticulously detailed career plan, pick a point on the map, live in a strategic or intriguing place for a few months, and allow serendipity to be your guide. Just being abroad puts you in a creative frame of mind when it comes to considering potential options and landing unanticipated opportunities.

"IF YOU REALLY HAVE NO EXPERIENCE AND NEED TO JUST GET EXPERIENCE, GO TEACH ENGLISH ABROAD. YOU CAN DEVELOP YOUR LANGUAGE SKILLS, GET TO KNOW LOCAL PEOPLE, AND UNDERSTAND THE CULTURE. YOU WILL ALSO HAVE TIME WHILE YOU ARE DOING THIS TO VOLUNTEER FOR A NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION AND DEVELOP INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE."

Leigh Morris Sloane, former Executive Director, Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs



EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

IMPORTANCE OF A MASTER'S DEGREE AND STUDY FOCUS

In international policy, a master's degree is extremely important to both obtain a job and advance in your career. The degree helps young professionals develop hard skills, such as writing, quantitative, and qualitative analysis skills, and cultivate soft skills, such as oral communication and leadership. There is no edge for any specific type of master's degree, such as a Master in International Affairs or a Master in Public Policy. However, it is important that you are focusing your studies in an area that allows you to develop your skills and expertise.

For instance, there is a high demand for regional expertise. As Tamara Golden, a Career Consultant in the Office of Career Services at the University of California San Diego's School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, said, "Deeper is better than wider. Know one country and one language really well versus a smattering of languages at a basic level. This will give you an edge in the hiring process."

Currently, Asia and the Middle East are making the headlines and many individuals are focusing their studies on these regions. Europe and NATO will always be key players. Latin America is also an excellent area to focus your studies, as it is one of our biggest trading partners. Finally, Africa is growing in importance and a lot of innovative and interesting opportunities are emerging due to focused development efforts.

Just be sure that you are not choosing a region only because it is en vogue right now. Jessie Babcock, Country Director for Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in the Department of Defense, said, "The main thing is to pursue your passion as it will communicate your level of commitment. Hiring officials do not want another student that studied something only because it was 'hot.'"

"IF YOU WANT TO BE **INFLUENCING FOREIGN POLICY**, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU HAVE A **MASTER'S DEGREE AS WELL AS EXPERIENCE**. SKILLS CAN REPLACE A MASTER'S DEGREE IN SOME UNIQUE INSTANCES; HOWEVER, THE MASTER'S DEGREE IS THE MORE CONVENTIONAL PATH TO FOLLOW TO ADVANCE IN AN INTERNATIONAL CAREER."

*Aileen Axtmayer, Assistant Director,
Office of Career Services, Tufts University,
The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy*










There is also a high demand for technical expertise. As Donna L. Dyer, Director of Career Services at Duke University Sanford School of Public Policy said, "I tell my students to have a regional or technical focus. Technical includes Global Health, Food and Nutrition, Women's Empowerment, Sustainable Development, Small Business and Entrepreneurship, and Humanitarian and Post Conflict." Broader technical skills are especially important and are discussed in more detail later in the guide.

CRITICAL SKILL SETS AGENCIES ARE SEEKING FROM A CANDIDATE

There are numerous skills that agencies are specifically seeking in a candidate. These range from hard skills, such as statistical analysis and foreign languages, to soft skills, like strategic thinking and leadership. Many of the skills necessary for foreign policy careers are essential for most career paths; however,

some competencies are specific to international relations. Key skills that translate well to international contexts include:

- ▶ Communication 
- ▶ Interpersonal skills 
- ▶ Cultural sensitivity 
- ▶ Project management 
- ▶ Strategic thinking 
- ▶ Problem solving 
- ▶ Organizational skills 

Below, career advisors and foreign policy experts discuss in more detail the skills they find to be the most important for hiring personnel.

- ▶ *“Make sure you **show that you are committed to public service**, especially in an era of budget constrains and sequestration. You need to show passion for the job and the work. It is also important to **multitask** and be able to **work with people with many different backgrounds and perspectives**. Be able to handle a fast paced workload. Be someone who can write and think critically.”*



Jessie Babcock, Country Director for Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense

- ▶ *“Hard skills are truly important. They come in the form of **economics, statistics, quantitative methods, statistical programing, data analysis, and foreign languages**. The most striking thing for me moving into my professional career was the importance of hard skills, especially in the field of program evaluation. I highly suggest taking **econometrics** as it will never hurt you and can open up doors for you.”*



Andria Hayes-Birchler, Senior Development Policy Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation

- ▶ *“The important skills are often **interpersonal**. I think we really underestimate the intangible qualities that people bring through their personalities, their communication style, and the way they work with people. Those are really critical, particularly because we’re moving towards a place where **collaborative and interdisciplinary work** is essential.*

The coalition building capability and ability to work with people across cultures are vital.”



Joshua Marcuse, founder of Young Professionals in Foreign Policy

- ▶ *“**Financial literacy and understanding budgets** is the most important skill. It really sets young professionals apart, specifically those that show they are comfortable with it. **Management and leadership skills** across the board are critical. You really need these skills to break through and help your resume stand out.”*

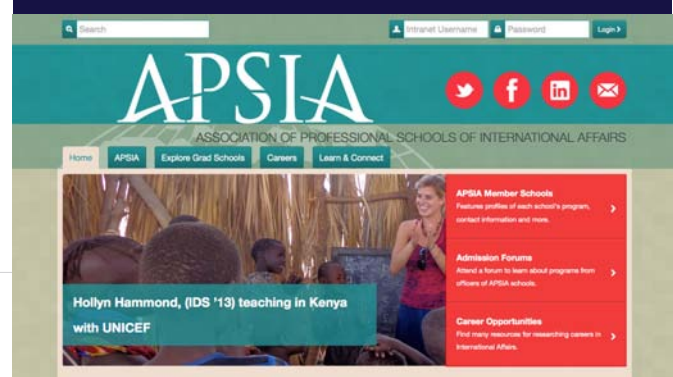


Leigh Morris Sloane, former Executive Director, Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs

If you studied these subjects in school or gained expertise in them through employment, be sure to highlight them in your application package if the job calls for that specific skill set.

ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

The Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs (APSIA) comprises 34 member schools in North America, Asia, and Europe. The organization is dedicated to the improvement of professional education in international affairs and advancement of international understanding, prosperity, peace, and security. All APSIA schools offer two-year master’s degree programs, which are designed to impart a thorough knowledge of international relations, public policy, and the world’s countries and cultures. Learn more about the organization here: www.apsia.org/.



ROBERTSON FOUNDATION FOR GOVERNMENT: SCHOLARS PROGRAM

The Robertson Foundation for Government (RFFG) is a nonprofit family foundation dedicated to helping government meet its talent needs by identifying, educating and motivating top U.S. graduate students to pursue federal government careers in foreign policy, national security and international affairs.

As part of its long-term effort to identify and prepare future U.S. government leaders in the areas of national security, foreign policy and international affairs, the RFFG launched the Robertson Fellows program during the 2010-2011 academic year. Under this program, graduate students at select partner universities agree to work for the federal government for a minimum of three of their first five years after graduation in exchange for a full scholarship and internship stipend.

Please learn more about the Robertson Fellows Program at <http://www.rffg.org/programs.html>.



IMPORTANCE OF LANGUAGES

While learning a new language can be extremely difficult, it can also give you an edge when applying for jobs and advancing your career in international relations, even when the current position does not require a specific foreign language skill. According to C. Bryan Kempton, Director, Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations at University of Maryland School of Public Policy, learning a foreign language “shows that you are a language learner and will learn languages if the need arises in the future.” This will impress hiring officials and can increase your chances of traveling abroad for work.

The U.S. State Department produces a critical foreign languages list each year. This list is comprised of foreign languages that the government considers to be critical from a security point of view. In 2013, the list included:

- ▶ Arabic
- ▶ Azerbaijani
- ▶ Bangla
- ▶ Chinese
- ▶ Hindi
- ▶ Indonesian
- ▶ Japanese
- ▶ Korean
- ▶ Persian
- ▶ Punjabi
- ▶ Russian
- ▶ Turkish
- ▶ Urdu

বাংলা
日本語
Bahasa Indonesia
اُردُو
Русский
آذربایجان دیلی / آذری
汉语/漢語
हिन्दी
Türkçe
العربية
ਪੰਜਾਬੀ
한국어/조선말
فارسی

Can you match these scripts with their English counterparts? If so, congratulations! You may have a future career in linguistics!

There are several programs designed to encourage students to learn these languages, such as the U.S. Department of State [Critical Language Scholarship](#)

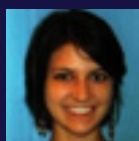
Program. The [National Security Education Program](#) and [Boren Fellowship](#) are other educational programs dedicated to fostering student language learning. The Boren Fellowship also gives you a year of non-competitive status when you are looking for a federal job, which is a tremendous asset these days.

At the same time, professionals should not focus solely on the critical languages. As Leigh Morris Sloane, former Executive Director, Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs, explained:



“Learning a language is a very personal thing. You have to like the language and have an interest in the region. Do not just learn a language because it is in demand. Instead, you need to pick a language that really motivates and interests you. The language is where you want to focus yourself. There are definitely a lot of jobs in international affairs where being fluent is not critical, just helpful. It is important to understand yourself in making the decision of what language to pursue.”

K. NADINE RADA SPEAKS ABOUT THE BOREN FELLOWSHIP

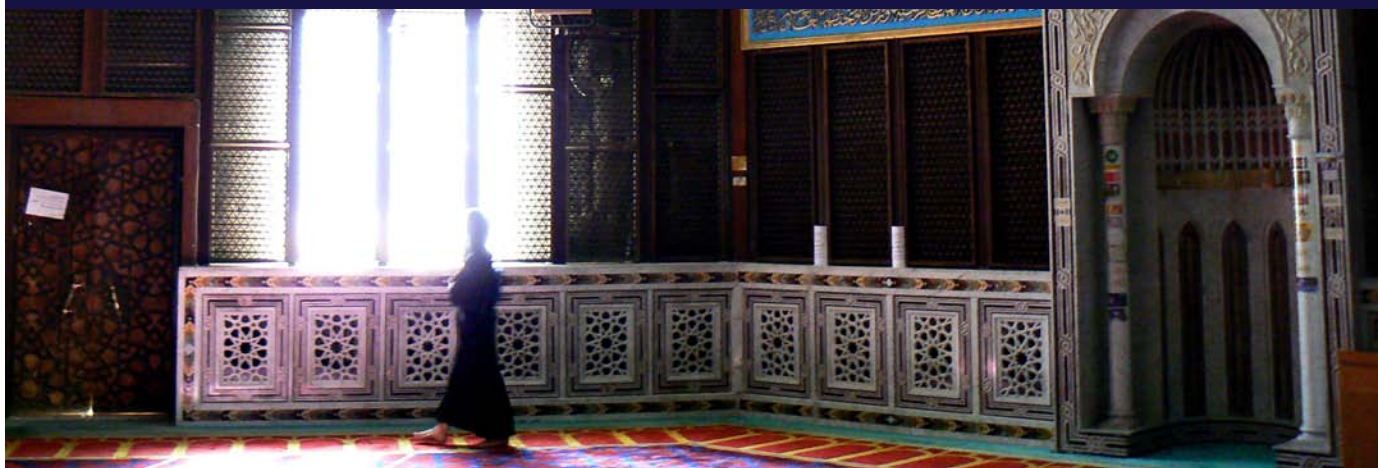


K. Nadine Rada, a Robertson Fellow for Government and student at University of Maryland School of Public Policy, is a current Boren Fellow in Egypt, participating in an intensive Arabic study program. Rada told us, “The Boren Fellowship is a fantastic program that funds language studies for graduate students with an eye toward developing the next generation of culturally equipped public servants. The benefits are huge.” Aside from the maximum award of \$24,000, being a fellow opens a lot of doors. The organization has a strong alumni network that actively helps fellows find federal jobs. Further, government employers recognize the name and prestige of the fellowship.

When it comes to applying for a Boren Fellowship, “the application process is quite rigorous and lengthy,” noted Rada. “I think I spent a whole month on my proposal!” Rada also indicated that a key requirement of a Boren proposal is that it be relevant to national security. While their definition of national security is fairly broad, the best applications are those that can make a strong, coherent and consistent argument.

“It’s also helpful to sit in on the Boren webinars and to review your application several times with different people, both professors and family,” advised Rada. “You need to make sure each group understands what you’re proposing because you have no way of knowing whether the review committee members will be subject-matter experts or generalists. Chances are if your aunt from Indiana can understand your topic, then anyone else will, too.”

To discover more, check out their website: www.borenawards.org/boren_fellowship.



NETWORKING & LEARNING: ASSOCIATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS

NETWORKING - GET YOUR NAME OUT THERE!

One of the best ways to learn about international jobs in the government is to connect with your college/university alumni networks. Alumni can give you great insights on available positions within agencies that are currently hiring or are planning to hire in the near future. Networking can also provide you with updates on potential job openings, allowing you plenty of time to prepare your resume and cover letter ahead of the competition.

C. Bryan Kempton, Director, Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations at University of Maryland School of Public Policy said:



“The alumni network is extremely important in giving you the heads up for jobs and helping to stay on top of what is posted out there and what is available. This will also give you more time to prepare document for USAJOBS, especially for jobs that have short openings, because you will be ahead of the game.”

Beyond simply learning about potential job openings, it is important to utilize your network to meet with individuals in agencies where you wish to work. You should ask them questions about how they ended up there and what will make your resume stand out for hiring officials. Aileen Axtmayer, Assistant Director, Office of Career Services, Tufts University, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, suggested that students talk to as many individuals as possible at many different levels:



“The more people you can speak with, the better. Be sure to ask them how they think you can make yourself stand out when there are openings. Do not limit yourself to thinking of only the people who have your dream job, and talk to people at many levels of the organization. Entry-level employees may not be in a hiring position, but they have been on your side of the table more recently and are likely to offer great advice on how to market yourself in this hiring climate. Higher-ups are more likely to be able to pass your resume along or inform you of internal or prospective openings. Tap into people at different levels as they all add different value in your job search.”



WHAT ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD YOU JOIN TO NETWORK AND LEARN MORE?

There are a number of organizations that you can join to network and learn more about the international relations field. Each of these organizations holds events and publishes newsletters to keep members updated on the most pertinent issues. Some organizations are specifically relevant to a particular field in foreign policy, while other organizations are broader and provide a bit of everything. It is important to identify the best organization that will meet your needs as you begin to build your network and learn more about the field. The following is a list of just a few organizations you can join!

Young Professionals in Foreign Policy is one of the only organizations exclusively devoted to young professionals in international relations. The organization holds events, skill training opportunities, and discussion groups for members. It is located in 75 countries and is one of the largest groups for young professionals.

Foreign Policy Initiative is a nonprofit organization that is dedicated to promoting U.S. diplomatic, economic, and military engagement in the world. The organization holds events and distributes newsletters on a number of different

topics in the realm of international relations. Overnight newsletters are a good way to find out all the latest news happening throughout the world. Also, most events are open to anyone, you just have to visit their website and sign up!

Young Professionals in International Affairs Meetup in Washington, D.C. is for anyone interested in foreign affairs. It includes individuals that work in the field, are looking for a job, or just have an interest. They hold regular discussions about current international issues. If you do not live in D.C., look on Meetup for a group in your community.

GovLoop has numerous groups dedicated to **international affairs**. These groups range from “international relations majors” to issue-based topics, such as “international development.” In the groups, you can start a discussion about topics that interest you, learn about challenges fellow foreign policy members are facing, and simply build your network. There is always something new going on, so do not be afraid to join the discussion!

LinkedIn also has many groups focused on **foreign policy**. Look for groups where individuals in your network have already joined. Aileen Axtmayer, Assistant Director, Office of Career Services, Tufts University, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, is a huge advocate of LinkedIn:





"LinkedIn is one of my favorite resources to recommend for connecting with people and professional organizations, no matter where you are in the process of your job search. It can help you look at career paths to see where individuals worked and what roles they had before landing international jobs. This can allow you to shape your own career path, so that you can reach your goals in the future."

Devex is specifically devoted to international development. It holds events, publishes newsletters, and offers career advice to individual's specifically interested in international development. It also archives a list of organizations dedicated to the field. It has a global community of 500,000 development professionals and 1,000 funding agencies, companies, and NGOs in 100 countries.

Project on Nuclear Issues (PONI) is a group for young professionals yearning to pursue a career in nuclear strategy. PONI aims to build and sustain a networked community of young nuclear experts from the military, national laboratories, industry, academia, and policy communities. The organization hosts several events a year, maintains an online blog, holds live debates, and runs academic programs from young experts. It has a community of over 1,000 members.

YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN FOREIGN POLICY

FOUNDER JOSHUA MARCUSE

Young Professionals in Foreign Policy (YFPF) is one of the leading associations for young professionals who are interested in international affairs. YFPF's mission is to foster the next generation of foreign policy leaders by providing young professionals with the knowledge, skills, exposure, and relationships to tackle critical global challenges over the course of their careers. Members gain the knowledge to understand complex foreign policy issues, the skills to address problems effectively and the competencies to thrive, exposure to cutting-edge guidance and perspectives, and building bridges across multiple sectors and disciplines.

For jobseekers and career counseling, YFPF provides a service called **JobLink**, which includes a job board, a newsletter, and skills workshops on topics such as mock interviews, resume review, social media tips, and salary negotiation tactics.

If you want to learn more about YFPF, check out their website: www.yfpf.org



The screenshot shows the YFPF website homepage with a dark blue header. The navigation bar includes location filters (Global, Washington, Brussels, London, New York) and utility links (Apply, Renew, Contact Us, Support Us). The main content area features a login section, social media icons, and a menu with categories like Why YFPF, Events, Programs, JobLink, Membership, What's Happening, and Blog. A featured article titled "Headline Of The Month: The Slowdown Of Emerging Markets" is highlighted. Below this are sections for "Join Us", "Looking For A Job?", and "What's Happening". A sidebar on the right lists upcoming events such as "Policy Picnic: EU Development Policy And The Post-2015 MDG Goals" and "YFPF DC: DC Central Kitchen Public Service Event".

DIFFERENTIATE YOURSELF FROM AN INCREASINGLY CROWDED FIELD

Everyone seems to have some international experience these days. In such a competitive job market, it is important to be able to differentiate yourself from the field and stand out to hiring officials. Once you discover a job, either through networking or searching job boards, follow these five steps to move ahead of the competition and land your dream job in foreign policy.

STEP 1: Talk to someone within the agency before applying for the position. Margaret New, Associate Director, Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations, The George Washington University, Elliott School of International Affairs, asserted that it is essential to hold an information interview with at least one person from the agency. In the informational interview, “ask what they think makes someone stand out or what qualities do employees have that make them shine in their role within the agency. You need to see how you fit into the organization and exhibit those skills in your cover letter and resume.”

STEP 2: Possess a combination of hard skills, experience abroad, and a clear interest in the job position. Andria Hayes-Birchler, Senior Development Policy Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation, has found that, “It is very difficult to come by a candidate with strengths in all three categories. Some individuals have experience abroad and no quantitative skills or have quantitative skills and no experience abroad. Finally, hiring officials want to see a clear interest from the candidate, either through the cover letter or a personal note. If you have all three, then it would be very impressive.”

STEP 3: Tailor your resume to the position. This may seem a little too obvious, but many young professionals do not change their resume for every

job application. Aileen Axtmayer, Assistant Director, Office of Career Services, Tufts University, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, explained:



“For every application, tailor your language to the organization and job. Match the way you describe yourself and your experience to fit with the language used by the employer. Many individuals send their resume as is and expect hiring officials to connect the dots. Do not assume people will be able to translate your experience to match the position and instead show why you are competent for the role and a good fit for the organization. If you take the time to tailor your resume, the connection between you and the organization is that much more clear to see. Looking for a job is a full-time job and investing the time and energy to take the extra step to change a verb on your resume to match a verb used in the job description is a priceless investment.”

STEP 4: Have a clear story. You have to show a demonstrated path across your resume, cover letter, and interview that shows how all of your previous experiences led to a particular job or interview. Austin Pedersen, International Relations Analyst, Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor and Human Trafficking, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, United States Department of Labor, said,



“I think that you have to be able to tell that clear story about yourself, including what you’re interested in, what motivates you, and what you contribute. So the more you can show a very clear path and story, the more attractive you’ll be to that employer.”

STEP 5: Be prepared for the interview. Candidates that possess a lot of knowledge about the

agency, office, and position are always more memorable to hiring officials. It shows that they care about the organization's mission and want to be apart of the team, as Hayes-Birchler of the Millennium Challenge Corporation suggested:



“Come in with specific questions for the hiring official. Also, come in knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the office. Mention the strengths of the office and how they inspire or motivate you. Go light on the weaknesses, phrase it as a constraint and ask how they deal with it. Many people can be trained to do the job, but not trained to care. Displaying knowledge about the agency shows that you care.”

If you follow these five steps, you should be one stride ahead of your colleagues who are vying for the same opportunities.



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WHAT'S IT LIKE TO BE A PUBLIC SECTOR PROFESSIONAL IN INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS AND FOREIGN POLICY?

Now that you know where the jobs are and how to position yourself to get them, we turn our attention to three people who have followed this path already. In this section, we explore their career journeys and how they have traveled the globe to arrive at their present position. Specifically, for this guide we interviewed:

- ▶ Jessie Babcock, Country Director for Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy, Department of Defense.
- ▶ Andria Hayes-Birchler, Title, Agency
- ▶ Austin Pederson, Title, Agency

Maybe you will have a similar story one day.



JESSIE BABCOCK

TITLE: Country Director for Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay

AGENCY: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP), Department of Defense

DEGREE(S): Master in Business Administration from Brandeis University, Heller School for Social Policy and Management; Bachelor of Arts in Spanish and English Literature from Mount Holyoke College

LANGUAGE(S): Spanish (Fluent), Mandarin and Swahili (Conversational)

FOREIGN EXPERIENCE: 2008 National Security Education Program (NSEP) Boren Fellow in Kenya for 6 months in graduate school, 2009 Presidential Management Fellow (PMF) at Department of Defense

WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR POLICY?

The mission of the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP) is to consistently provide responsive, forward-thinking, and insightful policy advice and support to the Secretary of Defense, and the Department of Defense, in alignment with national security objectives.

In 2008, Jessie Babcock was living in Kenya, finishing her MBA in nonprofit management, and trying to figure out her future. She had gone to Kenya with the goal of starting a nonprofit organization to work with women entrepreneurs, but started to wonder whether that was the right path for her career.

Around this time Babcock learned about the Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF) Program and decided to submit an application. She advanced to the finalist stage and successfully landed a position at the Pentagon. Over the next two years, she had the opportunity as a PMF to work on the USG's Haiti earthquake response efforts, managed programs to help refugees in East Africa, and worked on an interagency team to draft the 2009 USG Strategy to Combat Gender-Based Violence in the DRC, among other assignments. Babcock also had the chance to learn about issues such as peacekeeping and stability operations.

Today, Babcock is the Country Director for Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy (OUSDP) in the De-

partment of Defense. In her role, she is the principal policy advisor for Department of Defense leadership on defense bilateral relations with Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. On a day-to-day basis Babcock works directly with the Joint Staff, U.S. Southern Command, the State Department, U.S. Embassies, and host nation counterparts to achieve DoD defense policy priorities. She makes policy recommendations in multiple capacities, including:

- ▶ Identifying priority areas for defense cooperation with the countries in her portfolio;
- ▶ Reviewing current events in the countries in her portfolio and advising senior DoD officials on appropriate policy responses as required; and
- ▶ Representing DoD policy views in interagency and multilateral meetings related to security in the Southern Cone of South America.

Babcock also manages events and meetings related to defense relations between the U.S. and the countries in her portfolio. This includes planning, coordinat-



ing, and executing senior –level dialogues between DoD and Ministry of Defense counterparts. In her role, she states, “I am responsible for determining the agenda, the goals of the meeting or event, what the meeting or event is achieving, and the focus of engagement between the countries for the coming year.” She also performs research and writes briefs for senior leadership to read before the meetings. As principal policy advisor, Babcock accompanies senior defense officials on trips to the countries in her portfolio.

“MANY PEOPLE DO NOT SPEAK ENGLISH IN HOST COUNTRIES, SO IT GREATLY HELPS WITH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS TO INTERACT WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT IN A PROFESSIONAL MANNER IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE.”

Babcock manages relations with the country’s defense leadership and representatives when they travel to Washington, D.C. She meets directly with countries’ defense representatives in the United States, and discusses how the U.S. can partner with those countries to achieve shared security objectives. In this capacity, Babcock coordinates with a number of different agencies and embassies.

As the Country Director, Babcock utilizes a range of key skills, especially interpersonal and research skills. At least every other week, she communicates with

“WHEN A SENIOR DOD OFFICIAL TRAVELS TO ONE OF THE COUNTRIES IN MY PORTFOLIO, I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR DETERMINING THE AGENDA, THE GOALS OF THE MEETING OR EVENT, WHAT THE MEETING OR EVENT IS ACHIEVING, AND THE FOCUS OF ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES FOR THE COMING YEAR.”

key defense leadership in Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay. She states, “I utilize my Spanish language skills on a daily basis, such as reading Spanish articles from the countries, communicating with key leadership, and writing papers in Spanish.” When in the foreign countries, Babcock uses her Spanish continuously when interacting with foreign government officials and citizens.

She typically works in the Washington, D.C. Office most of the year, but goes on trips for three or four days about four or five times a year.

“THERE IS A CONSTANT RHYTHM TO MY JOB. IN A GIVEN WEEK, I WILL GO FROM ORGANIZING MEETINGS TO SPEAKING WITH COUNTRY REPRESENTATIVES TO PERFORMING BACKGROUND RESEARCH FOR SENIOR DEFENSE OFFICIALS. IT IS AN EXTREMELY REWARDING AND EXCITING POSITION.”





ANDRIA HAYES-BIRCHLER

TITLE: Senior Development Policy Officer

AGENCY: Millennium Challenge Corporation

DEGREE(S): Master in International Public Affairs from University of Wisconsin-Madison, Robert M. La Follette School of Public Affairs; Washington College

LANGUAGE(S): French (Conversational), Bambara (Conversational)

FOREIGN EXPERIENCE: Spent two-years in Mali with the Peace Corps, Presidential Management Fellow at United States Agency for International Development

WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION?

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is an independent U.S. foreign aid agency that is helping lead the fight against global poverty. Created by the U.S. Congress in January 2004, MCC is altering the conversation on how best to deliver smart U.S. foreign assistance by focusing on good policies, country ownership, and results. The agency is limited to 300 employees that work in one of six departments: (1) Office of Chief Executive Officer, (2) Department of Administration and Finance, (3) Department of Compact Operations, (4) Department of Congressional and Public Affairs, (5) Department of Policy and Evaluation, and (6) Office of General Counsel.

Andria Hayes-Birchler was always interested in pursuing a career in public service. After graduating college, Hayes-Birchler joined the Peace Corps and spent two-years in Mali. There she decided that she would dedicate her career to fighting poverty. Soon after returning to the States, Hayes-Birchler earned a Master in International Public Affairs from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She was accepted as a Presidential Management Fellow upon graduation and has been working for the federal government fighting poverty ever since.

Today, Andria Hayes-Birchler is a Senior Development Policy Officer with the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC). In her current role, she conducts qualitative and quantitative research and data analysis that MCC's Board of Directors utilizes to select countries eligible for grant assistance. Selection decisions are based on scorecards developed by her team, which exhibit how countries perform on twenty policy measures. Quantitative measures range from immunization rate to control of corruption. In addition, Andria

gathers qualitative information to supplement the scorecards, in topics spanning poverty distribution to human rights violations.

Along with scorecard development, Hayes-Birchler is responsible for communicating with the eligible countries and answering questions about the country's scorecard results. She said, "These interactions are often directly with foreign governments, but I also answer questions for non-governmental organizations and civilians when requested." Hayes-Birchler communicates mostly in English and utilizes a translator when necessary.

If an MCC partner country is in jeopardy of not passing the scorecard in the future, Hayes-Birchler sometimes travels to the country and meets with government officials. During these meetings, she explains "the scorecard indicators in more detail and works with the officials to ensure that policy performance is sustained or improved." Since 2010, she has traveled three times for roughly a week at a time.



Outside of interacting with government officials, Hayes-Birchler utilizes her quantitative and qualitative research skills to ensure that the scorecard is accurately portraying a country's development status. She conducts research to see if MCC is measuring the correct policy indicators in the most effective way. She says, "I often look at how other governments and third parties measure policies and compare their data to MCC's data." Hayes-Birchler specific expertise enables her to work closely with foreign governments in over ninety different countries, which is both challenging and rewarding.

"I HAVE DEVELOPED A VERY SPECIFIC EXPERTISE IN QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION, WHICH ALLOWS ME TO WORK CLOSELY WITH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN OVER NINETY DIFFERENT COUNTRIES. IT IS NOT UNCOMMON FOR ME TO INTERACT WITH MULTIPLE FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS IN A GIVEN DAY. I WILL SPEAK WITH THE ONE COUNTRY'S MINISTER IN THE MORNING AND ANOTHER COUNTRY'S FINANCE OFFICER IN THE AFTERNOON."

"I RARELY GIVE ADVICE ON WHAT POLICY OR ACTION A COUNTRY SHOULD TAKE. I MOSTLY DETAIL THE MEASURES THAT A SPECIFIC INDICATOR IS COVERING. I THEN EXPLAIN THAT IF A COUNTRY IMPROVES IN THIS TYPE OF PERFORMANCE, THEY WILL NO LONGER BE IN DANGER OF FAILING THE SCORECARD."





AUSTIN PEDERSEN

TITLE: International Relations Analyst

AGENCY: Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking, Department of Labor

DEGREE(S): Master in Public Policy, Concentration in International Security and Economic Policy from University of Maryland at College Park; Bachelor of Arts in Political Science from Nebraska Wesleyan University

LANGUAGE(S): Chichewa (Conversational), Danish (Conversational), French (Beginner)

FOREIGN EXPERIENCE: Volunteered in Malawi, Africa, for two years with the Peace Corps

WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL LABOR AFFAIR IN THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR?

The International Labor Affairs Bureau's (ILAB) mission is to lead the U.S. Department of Labor's efforts to ensure that workers around the world are treated fairly and are able to share in the benefits of the global economy. Its mission is to use all available international channels to improve working conditions, raise living standards, protect workers' ability to exercise their rights, and address the workplace exploitation of children and other vulnerable populations. It has three main offices: (1) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking, (2) Office of International Relations, and (3) Office of Trade and Labor Affairs.

Austin Pedersen discovered his passion for international affairs as a Rotary exchange student in Denmark when he was in high school. He obtained further experience overseas in college where he was very active in international service learning, traveling to Vietnam, Panama, and Swaziland. After graduating, he joined the Peace Corps and spent two years in Malawi working on a myriad of community development projects. After returning home he pursued his master's degree at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy with the intention of pursuing a career in U.S. foreign policy.

Today, Pedersen is an International Relations Analyst in the Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking at the U.S. Department of Labor. His role primarily involves producing congressionally-mandated reports related to foreign trade and development. The largest report he assists with is entitled The Findings on the Worst Forms of Child Labor. This report covers 244 countries around the world that are eligible for trade benefits with the U.S. He explains, "The report outlines the prevalence of child

labor within the countries and what efforts those foreign governments are making to address it." The second report that he contributes to and helps coordinate is essentially a list of foreign goods produced by either child labor or forced labor.

"THESE REPORTS ARE LARGELY USED AS AN AWARENESS-RAISING TOOL AND TO START A DIALOGUE WITH COUNTRIES ON HOW TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF CHILD LABOR. BUT THEY ARE ALSO USED BY CONGRESS AND OTHER POLICY-MAKERS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE ISSUES."

Pedersen's main responsibility within the reports is researching child labor practices in Southern and Eastern Africa and writing country briefs based on his findings. He specifically covers Zimbabwe, Botswana, Zambia, Swaziland, Mauritius, Somalia, Eritrea, and Djibouti. Pedersen is also the main point of contact for these countries.

In gathering information, Pedersen says, "I use public sources, such as non-governmental organizations or academics, input from U.S. embassies overseas, and conduct independent research in the field." He also follows the local news and communicates with the embassies to ensure that all information reported is accurate and reflective of the issues within the countries.

Pedersen interacts with delegations from foreign nations and industry groups regularly. Since most of his countries speak English, he said, "Communication is mostly in English; however, I did have the opportunity to utilize my Chichewa skills when traveling to Zambia on a few occasions." So far, he has traveled to Zimbabwe and Zambia for about two weeks to conduct research in the field.

While in countries, Pedersen meets with leaders in relevant ministries, non-government organizations, and any other contacts that the embassies suggest, such as labor unions. He also meets with individuals that are benefiting from the Department's projects, which mostly relate to building the capacity of foreign governments to develop and implement policies and laws on child labor or the prevention and withdrawal of children from involvement in exploitative labor through the provision of direct educational services.



"I WAS RECENTLY IN ZAMBIA AND TRAVELED TO A SPECIFIC REGION WHERE THE LOCAL TRIBE SPEAKS CHICHEWA, A LANGUAGE THAT I LEARNED WHILE IN MALAWI. I WAS ABLE TO DO ALL MY PUBLIC SPEECHES IN CHICHEWA, WHICH WAS VERY BENEFICIAL IN BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE COMMUNITY."



"WHEN I TRAVELED TO ZIMBABWE AND ZAMBIA, MOST OF MY TIME WAS SPENT IN THE CAPITAL CITY, ENGAGED IN MEETINGS WITH GOVERNMENTAL AND NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS. I TRY TO MEET WITH THE MINISTRY OF LABOR AND OTHER RELEVANT MINISTRIES, AS WELL AS ANY TYPE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS OR INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION THAT ARE ACTIVE ON CHILDREN'S ISSUES."

CONCLUSION

As you pursue the path of a career in foreign affairs, we hope that this guide has given you a road map for the journey. We hope that you have a better sense of where you can find job opportunities, how you can maneuver to position yourself through education, experience and networking, and what public sector professionals do on a day-to-day basis in this kind of career. International opportunities in government will continue to expand as the world around us becomes even smaller and increasingly interconnected.

In her farewell speech, former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton masterfully articulated the challenge and opportunity in U.S. diplomacy:



The things that make us who we are as a nation – our openness and innovation, our diversity, our devotion to human rights and democracy – are beautifully matched to the demands of this era and this interdependent world.

We are the force for progress, prosperity, and peace. Leadership is not a birthright. It has to be earned by each new generation. The reservoirs of goodwill we built around the world during the 20th century will not last forever. In fact, in some places, they are already dangerously depleted.

New generations of young people do not remember GIs liberating their countries or Americans saving millions of lives from hunger and disease. We need to introduce ourselves to them anew, and one of the ways we do that is by looking at and focusing on and working on those issues that matter most to their lives and futures.

So because the United States is still the only country that has the reach and resolve to rally disparate nations and peoples together to solve problems on a global scale, we cannot shirk that responsibility.

By considering a career in foreign policy or international affairs, you are joining a team of individuals who are stepping up to this responsibility. You are that new generation which will sustain and support our leadership on the world stage.

Do you feel the weight of responsibility for that world on your shoulders? If you do – and you feel up to the task of bearing that weight with dignity and courage – we hope that this guide strengthened your resolve and solidified your strategy as you explore your important and unique place in the world of international affairs and foreign policy in government.

THE THINGS THAT MAKE US WHO WE ARE AS A NATION – OUR OPENNESS AND INNOVATION, OUR DIVERSITY, OUR DEVOTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY – ARE BEAUTIFULLY MATCHED TO THE DEMANDS OF THIS ERA AND THIS INTERDEPENDENT WORLD.

WE ARE THE FORCE FOR PROGRESS, PROSPERITY, AND PEACE. LEADERSHIP IS NOT A BIRTHRIGHT. IT HAS TO BE EARNED BY EACH NEW GENERATION. THE RESERVOIRS OF GOODWILL WE BUILT AROUND THE WORLD DURING THE 20TH CENTURY WILL NOT LAST FOREVER. IN FACT, IN SOME PLACES, THEY ARE ALREADY DANGEROUSLY DEPLETED. NEW GENERATIONS OF YOUNG PEOPLE DO NOT REMEMBER GIS LIBERATING THEIR COUNTRIES OR AMERICANS SAVING MILLIONS OF LIVES FROM HUNGER AND DISEASE. WE NEED TO INTRODUCE OURSELVES TO THEM ANEW, AND ONE OF THE WAYS WE DO THAT IS BY LOOKING AT AND FOCUSING ON AND WORKING ON THOSE ISSUES THAT MATTER MOST TO THEIR LIVES AND FUTURES.

SO BECAUSE THE UNITED STATES IS STILL THE ONLY COUNTRY THAT HAS THE REACH AND RESOLVE TO RALLY DISPARATE NATIONS AND PEOPLES TOGETHER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS ON A GLOBAL SCALE, WE CANNOT SHIRK THAT RESPONSIBILITY.

- HILLARY CLINTON



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Robertson Foundation, GovLoop, and APSIA appreciate the many individuals who shared their experience and expertise with us through a series of surveys and interviews. We especially want to thank the following individuals for providing critical insight into the international government jobs sector for this report:

AILEEN AXTMAYER, Assistant Director, Office of Career Services, The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, Tufts University; Robertson Foundation for Government Partner School

JESSIE BABCOCK, Country Director of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy in the Department of Defense

RYAN BEDFORD, Program Training Assistant, Foreign Agricultural Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

TERRY DAVIDSON, Recruiting Outreach Division Chief, Department of State

DONNA L. DYER, Director, Office of Career Services, Sanford School of Public Policy, Duke University

TAMARA GOLDEN, Career Consultant, Office of Career Services, School of International Relations and Pacific Studies, University of California - San Diego; Robertson Foundation for Government Partner School

ANDRIA HAYES-BIRCHLER, Senior Development Policy Officer, Millennium Challenge Corporation

C. BRYAN KEMPTON, Director, Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations, University of Maryland School of Public Policy; Robertson Foundation for Government Partner School

SUZANNE LAWRENCE, Director of Senior Level Division of the Office of Career Development and Assignments, Department of State

EVAN LESSER, Founder and Managing Director, ClearanceJobs.com

JOSHUA MARGUSE, Founder of Young Professionals in Foreign Policy

MARGARET NEW, Associate Director, Office of Career Services and Alumni Relations, Elliott School of International Affairs, The George Washington University

AUSTIN PEDERSEN, International Relations Analyst, Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking, Bureau of International Labor Affairs, United States Department of Labor

DONALD PIERCE, Regional Export Control Officer, U.S. Embassy in Singapore

K. NADINE RADA, Robertson Foundation for Government Fellow, Boren Fellow, and University of Maryland School of Public Policy student

MICHAEL SCHNEIDER, Career Advisor, Robertson Foundation for Government; Director of the Washington D.C. Public Diplomacy Program, Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University

LEIGH MORRIS SLOANE, Executive Director, Association of Professional Schools of International Affairs

AMY TRUONG, Robertson Foundation for Government Fellow, graduate of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and Project Management Associate at Chemonics International, USAID Contractor

The Robertson Foundation, GovLoop, and APSIA are grateful for their dedicated commitment to public service careers.

In addition, GovLoop would like to acknowledge the members of its internal team that conducted the interviews, coalesced the information, and contributed to the creation of this guide:

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PHOTO CREDITS: Peace Corps, US Department of State, Department of Defense Media Services, Jeff Ribeira, Jessie Babcock, Autin Pedersen, Sandra Jacobs, GayLynn Ribeira, Diego Angel, Hector Garcia, Marc Osborn

MISSION STATEMENTS

ROBERTSON FOUNDATION FOR GOVERNMENT: *Helping government meet its talent needs by identifying, educating and motivating top U.S. graduate students to pursue federal government careers in foreign policy, national security and international affairs.*

GOVLOOP: *Inspiring public sector professionals to better service and helping them to foster collaboration, learn from one another, solve their common challenges and advance in their government careers.*

ASSOCIATION FOR PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: *Dedicated to the improvement of professional education in international affairs and the advancement of international understanding, prosperity, peace, and security.*



APPENDIX A

Resources to Learn More about International Jobs in Government

APSIDA'S [INTERNATIONAL CAREERS GUIDE: OPTIONS IN THE FIELD](#)

This guide outlines a number of employment sector profiles in the international affairs field. It is organized by issue area and institutional entities. It has an entire section on the government, separated by federal government, state, and local governments. It outlines career paths, level of demand for jobs, challenges, qualifications, and sample employers.

BOOKS TO GATHER INFORMATION:

- ▶ [Career Diplomacy: Life and Work in the U.S. Foreign Service](#), Harry W. Kopp & Charles A. Gillespie, Georgetown University Press, Washington, DC, 2008.
- ▶ [Careers in International Affairs](#), Maria Pinto Carland and Candace Faber (Eds.), Georgetown University Press, Washington, D.C., 8th Ed. 2008.
- ▶ [Inside a U.S. Embassy: How the Foreign Service Works for America](#), Shawn Dorman (Ed), Potomac Books, Inc., Dulles, VA, 2nd Ed. 2005.
- ▶ [International Jobs: Where They Are, How to Get Them](#), Eric Kocher and Nina Segal, Basic Books, New York, NY, 6th Ed. 2003.
- ▶ [Working World: Careers in International Education, Exchange, and Development](#), Sherry L. Mueller & Mark Overmann, Georgetown University Press, Washington, DC, 2008.
- ▶ [Student Federal Career Guide](#), Kathryn Troutman & Pail Binkley, The Resume Place, Inc., Baltimore, MD, 2nd Ed. 2012.

GOVLOOP RESOURCES:

- ▶ [“What Is It Like Being a Program Training Assistant for the Foreign Agricultural Service?”](#)
- ▶ [“What is the Best International Affairs Oriented Organization for Young Professionals to Join?”](#)
- ▶ [“The Perfect Reading List to Begin Your International Job Journey”](#)
- ▶ [“You Just Can’t Get Abroad, What Can You Do?”](#)

OTHER RESOURCES:

- ▶ Robertson Foundation for Government: <http://www.rffg.org>
- ▶ Association for Professional Schools of International Affairs: <http://www.apsia.org>
- ▶ State Resources for Working Overseas: <http://www.state.gov/m/fsi/tc/79765.htm>
- ▶ The Big Guide to Living and Working Overseas: <http://www.workingoverseas.com/>
- ▶ Young Professionals in Foreign Policy: www.yppf.org
- ▶ Partnership for Public Service: <http://gogovernment.org/>

APPENDIX B

U.S. Government Agencies - International Focus

“POPULAR” U.S. INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES

[Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#)

USAID’s mission is to save and improve millions of lives around the world, advance U.S. values, increase global stability, and drive economic growth in emerging markets. The agency has nine main goals in providing assistance to foreign countries: (1) promote broadly shared economic prosperity; (2) strengthen democracy and good governance; (3) protect human rights; (4) improve global health; (5) advance food security and agriculture; (6) improve environmental sustainability; (7) further education; (8) help societies prevent and recover from conflicts; and (9) provide humanitarian assistance in the wake of natural and man-made disasters. USAID employs individuals with a wide variety of technical, managerial, and operational skills to achieve their international development objectives. Their workforce consists of both direct-hire and contract employees.

[Peace Corps](#)

The Peace Corps’ mission is to serve the U.S. in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. Peace Corps Volunteers work on issues ranging from AIDS education to information technology to environmental protection. The Corps has three simple goals: (1) helping the people of interested countries in meeting their need for trained men and women; (2) helping promote a better understanding of Americans on the part of the peoples served; and (3) helping promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of Americans. Joining the Peace Corps is a difficult, but rewarding process. Checkout their website to learn more and meet with a recruiter near you!

[State Department](#)

The State Department’s mission is to advance freedom for the benefit of U.S. citizens and the international community by helping to build and sustain a more democratic, secure, and prosperous world composed of well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people, reduce widespread poverty, and act responsibly within the international system. The Department supports a multitude of programs and policies, including U.S. embassies abroad, U.S. foreign partnerships, U.S. foreign organizations, etc. There are plenty of international job opportunities available in the Department. Bureaus include [Global Affairs](#), [Political Affairs](#), and [Public Diplomacy](#).

LARGER AGENCIES DEDICATED TO U.S. NATIONAL DEFENSE/SECURITY

[Central Intelligence Agency \(CIA\)](#)

The CIA is the premier agency responsible for providing global intelligence on the political, social, economic, technological and military environment. The Agency’s paramount goal and mission is to protect the national security of the United States. They ensure that virtually any job you can imagine is available at the CIA, including some you can’t imagine. They offer a number of professional and student opportunities on their website and outline the application process in detail. Remember, for a job in this field you will need to pass clearance, which can take time!

[Defense Department \(DoD\)](#)

The Department of Defense’s mission is to provide the military forces needed to deter war and to protect the security of our country. The department’s headquarters is at the Pentagon. The DoD manages an inventory of installations and facilities to keep U.S. citizens safe. Currently, the DoD is the nation’s largest employer with over 1.4 million men and

women on active duty, and 718,000 civilian personnel. The DoD includes numerous components working on international affairs related to national security, including: the [Office of the Secretary of Defense \(OSD\)](#), [U.S. Army](#), [U.S. Navy](#), [U.S. Marine Corps](#), [U.S. Air Force](#), [U.S. Coast Guard](#), and [Unified Combatant Commands](#) (such as USAFRICOM, USCENTCOM, USPACOM, USSOUTHCOM, and others).

[Department of Homeland Security \(DHS\)](#)

The Department of Homeland Security's mission is to secure the nation from the many threats the U.S. faces both inside and outside our borders. The agency's mission requires the dedication of more than 240,000 employees in jobs that range from aviation and border security to emergency response, from cyber security analyst to chemical facility inspector. DHS offers a number of career opportunities for all levels of experience, which can be located on USAJOBS.

SMALLER AGENCIES DEDICATED TO U.S NATIONAL DEFENSE/SECURITY

[Bureau of Industry and Security, U.S. Department of Commerce \(BIS\)](#)

BIS's mission is to advance United States national security, foreign policy, and economic objectives by ensuring an effective export control and treaty compliance system and promoting continued United States strategic technology leadership. The BIS administers industry compliance for two programs: (1) the Chemical Weapons Convention, which is an international treaty that bans the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons among its signatories; and (2) the U.S. Additional Protocol, which is a bilateral agreement between the United States and the International Atomic Energy Agency that supplements provisions of the U.S.-IAEA Safeguards Agreement.

[Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, U.S. Helsinki Commission](#)

The Commission is an independent agency of the federal government charged with monitoring compliance with the Helsinki Accords and advancing comprehensive security through promotion of human rights, democracy, and economic, environmental, and military cooperation in 57 countries. The Helsinki Accords stem from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). The OSCE is engaged in standard setting in fields including military security, economic and environmental cooperation, and human rights and humanitarian concerns. It also undertakes a variety of preventative diplomacy initiatives designed to avert, manage, and resolve conflict within and among the participating States. The Commission has fifteen staff members and a number of internship opportunities.

[U.S. – China Economic and Security Review Commission](#)

The United States Congress created the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission in 2000. Its legislative mandate is to monitor, investigate, and submit to Congress an annual report on the national security implications of the bilateral trade and economic relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China. In the report, the Commission is to provide recommendations, where appropriate, to Congress for legislative and administrative action. It is a small, nonpartisan, legislative branch Commission. They have three internship opportunities for students.

[U.S. Customs and Border Protection \(CBP\)](#)

CBP is one of the Department of Homeland Security's largest and most complex components, with a priority mission of keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the U.S. It also has a responsibility for securing the border and facilitating lawful international trade and travel while enforcing hundreds of U.S. laws and regulations, including immigration and drug laws. The CBP has a number of career programs for veterans, students, and recent graduates.



AGENCIES DEDICATED TO U.S. ECONOMIC INTERESTS

Export-Import Bank (Ex-Im Bank)

The Export-Import Bank is the official export credit agency of the United States. Its mission is to assist in financing the export of U.S. goods and services to international markets. Ex-Im Bank provides working capital guarantees, export credit insurance, and loan guarantees and direct loans. Main career opportunities exist in the following fields: (1) business development specialist, (2) loan specialist, (3) engineer, (4) economist, (5) attorney-advisor, (6) resource, and (7) management.

Foreign Commercial Service (CS), Department of Commerce

The Foreign Commercial Service is the trade promotion arm of the Department of Commerce's International Trade Administration. CS trade professionals work in over 100 U.S. cities and in more than 75 countries to assist U.S. companies in exporting and increasing sales in new global markets. CS's main objective is to support American businesses with inherently governmental and trade promotion activities. They do this by providing (1) trade counseling, (2) market intelligence, (3) business matchmaking, (4) advocacy and commercial diplomacy, and (5) trade promotion programs.

International Affairs, Department of Treasury

The Office's mission is to protect and support U.S. economic prosperity by strengthening the external environment for U.S. growth, preventing and mitigating global financial instability, and managing key global challenges. There are twelve offices within the Treasury's Office of International Affairs: (1) African Nations, (2) Development Policy and Debt, (3) East Asia, (4) Environment and Energy, (5) Europe and Eurasia, (6) International Monetary and Financial Policy, (7) Investment Security, (8) Middle East and North Africa, (9) South and Southeast Asia, (10) Technical Assistance, (11) Trade and Investment Policy, and (12) Western Hemisphere. Along with a number of international economic issues, institutions, and priority areas, the Office works with the International Monetary Fund, Exchange Stabilization Fund, and the Committee on Foreign Investment in U.S.

International Trade Administration (ITA)

ITA strengthens the competitiveness of U.S. industry, promotes trade and investment, and ensures fair trade through the rigorous enforcement of our trade laws and agreements. It works to improve the global business environment and helps U.S. organizations compete at home and abroad. ITA has four distinct units: (1) U.S. and Foreign Commercial Service, (2) Manufacturing and Service, (3) Market Access and Compliance, and (4) Import Administration.

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)

Developed as an agency in 1971, OPIC is the United States Government's development finance institutions. It mobilizes private capital to help solve critical problems in more than 150 developing and post-conflict countries around the world. The corporation offers a number of job opportunities and student internships, both general and legal.

U.S. Court of International Trade

The United States Court of International Trade has jurisdiction over civil actions arising out of the customs and international trade laws of the United States. The mission of the Court is to resolve disputes by: (1) providing cost effective, courteous, and timely service to those affected by the judicial process; (2) providing independent, consistent, fair, and impartial interpretation and application of the customs and international trade laws; and (3) fostering improvements in



customs and international trade law and practice and improvements in the administration of justice. The Court has a number of job opportunities and internship and clerk opportunities for students.

U.S. Trade Representative (USTR)

USTR is part of the Executive Office of the President. Through an interagency structure, USTR coordinates trade policy, resolves disagreements, and frames issues for presidential decision. USTR also serves as vice chairman of the Board of Directors of the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), is on the Board of Directors of the Millennium Challenge Corporation, is a non-voting member of the Export-Import Bank Board of Directors, and a member of the National Advisory Council on International Monetary and Financial Policies. The organization works directly with the President, Congress, and a number of other agencies to develop and coordinate U.S. trade policy. They offer internship opportunities to students.

AGENCIES DEDICATED TO INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bureau of International Labor Affairs, U.S. Department of Labor (ILAB)

The ILAB's mission is to lead the U.S. Department of Labor's efforts to ensure that workers around the world are treated fairly and are able to share in the benefits of the global economy. Its mission is to use all available international channels to improve working conditions, raise living standards, protect workers' ability to exercise their rights, and address the workplace exploitation of children and other vulnerable populations. It has three main offices: (1) Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor, and Human Trafficking, (2) Office of International Relations, and (3) Office of Trade and Labor Affairs.

Foreign Agricultural Service (FAS), U.S. Department of Agriculture

The Foreign Agricultural Service is located in the United States Department of Agriculture. The Service's goal is to enhance export opportunities and global food security. Outside of Washington, D.C., FAS is located in 96 offices covering 169 countries. FAS provides four main programs and services: (1) trade policy, (2) trade promotion, (3) capacity building, and (4) food security.

Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC)

MCC is an innovative and independent U.S. foreign aid agency that is helping lead the fight against global poverty. Created by the U.S. Congress in January 2004 with strong bipartisan support, MCC is changing the conversation on how best to deliver smart U.S. foreign assistance by focusing on good policies, country ownership, and results. The agency is limited to 300 employees that work in one of six departments: (1) Office of Chief Executive Officer, (2) Department of Administration and Finance, (3) Department of Compact Operations, (4) Department of Congressional and Public Affairs, (5) Department of Policy and Evaluation, and (6) Office of General Counsel.

AGENCIES DEDICATED TO U.S. FOREIGN ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

International Affairs Office, Department of Interior

The Office supports and coordinates the international activities of the Department of Interior in over 100 countries. This work includes conservation and management of wildlife and other natural resources, protection of cultural resources, cooperation on indigenous affairs, and scientific research and monitoring of natural hazards such as volcanoes and earthquakes. The Office is organized into three divisions: (1) policy, (2) technical assistance, and (3) passports/visas.

Environmental Protection Agency, International Cooperation

EPA's international programs aim to improve air quality, expand access to clean water, and protect vulnerable communities from toxic pollution in nearly 180 nations worldwide. The EPA has identified six international priorities: (1) building strong environmental institutions; (2) combating climate change by limiting pollutants; (3) improving air quality; (4) expanding access to clean water; (5) reducing exposure to toxic chemicals; and (6) cleaning up electronic waste. Most international work is done within the EPA's Office of International and Tribal Affairs (OITA).

AGENCIES DEDICATED TO OPEN COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

[Cuba Broadcasting/Radio and TV Marti](#)

TV Marti is a Cuban news aggregate. All of the stories are in Spanish. It is an entity of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) and partnered with La Habana Cuba, US Department of State, The White House, Voz de America, and Voice of America. There are many opportunities for students and professionals who wish to pursue an international career related to media.

[International Broadcasting Bureau \(IBB\)](#)

IBB is an entity within the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG), which has oversight authority over all non-military U.S. government international broadcasting. It supports the day-to-day operations of Voice of America and the Office of Cuba Broadcasting (Radio and TV Marti). IBB supports broadcasts to the world in 61 languages. They have a number of internship opportunities for students.

[Radio Free Asia \(RFA\)](#)

RFA is a United States government funded, non-profit organization operated by the Broadcasting Board of Governors. Its mandate is to broadcast timely, accurate news happening within its broadcast region that is otherwise not reported. RFA broadcasts in nine languages to listeners who do not have access to full and free news media.

[Voice of America \(VOA\)](#)

Voice of America is the official external broadcast institution of the United States federal government and is under the umbrella of the Broadcasting Board of Governors. VOA's mission is to promote freedom and democracy and to enhance understanding through multimedia communication of accurate, objective, and balanced news, information and other programming about the U.S and the world to audiences overseas. They have a number of job opportunities located throughout the world.

AGENCIES DEDICATED TO OTHER U.S. FOREIGN SOCIAL POLICY INTERESTS

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Global Health](#)

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Global Health branch works in over fifty countries to achieve four overarching global health goals. These include: (1) improving the health and wellbeing of people around the world, (2) improving capabilities for preparing for and responding to infectious diseases and emerging health threats, (3) building country public health capacity, and (4) maximizing organizational capacity. They have over 304 U.S. assignees working around the world with approximately 1,600 local staff members.

[Citizenship and Immigration Services Bureau \(USCIS\)](#)

USCIS's mission statement is to secure America's promise as a nation of immigrants. They have 6 main goals: (1) strengthening the security and integrity of the immigration system; (2) providing effective customer-oriented immigration benefit and information services; (3) supporting immigrants' integration and participation in American civic culture; (4) promoting flexible and sound immigration policies and programs; (5) strengthening the infrastructure supporting the USCIS mission; and (6) operating as a high-performance organization that promotes a highly talented workforce and a dynamic work culture. USCIS has over 18,000 government employees and contractors in 250 offices around the world.

[Commission on International Religious Freedom \(USCIRF\)](#)

USCIRF monitors the universal rights to freedom of religion or belief abroad. The organization reviews the facts and circumstances of religious freedom violations and makes policy recommendations to the President, Secretary of State, and Congress. The Commission has fourteen fulltime employees and offers a number of internships for students.

[International Education, Department of Education](#)

The Office's mission is to coordinate and guide the Department of Education's international activities and serve as the liaison office to international organizations, ministries of education abroad, and the diplomatic community in the United States. Priority areas include: (1) improving education systems through international benchmarking and comparative research; (2) conducting education diplomacy; and (3) promoting foreign language and cultural studies. The Office has six staff members.

[Office of National Drug Control Policy \(ONDCP\)](#)

ONDCP is a component of the Executive Office of the President and was created by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988. It advises the President on drug-control issues, coordinates drug-control activities and related funding across the Federal government, and produces the annual National Drug Control Strategy, which outlines Administration efforts to reduce illicit drug use, manufacturing and trafficking, drug-related crime and violence, and drug-related health consequences. They conduct research, help shape drug-related policy, and oversee drug-related grants.

[Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission](#)

The Japan-US Friendship Commission is an independent federal agency established by Congress in 1975 to strengthen the US-Japan relationship through educational, cultural, and intellectual exchange. Its mission is to support reciprocal people-to-people understanding, and promote partnerships that advance common interests between Japan and the United States. They accept grant applications in the following areas: (1) exchange and scholarship, (2) global challenges, (3) arts and culture, and (4) education and public affairs. The Japan-U.S. Friendship Commission has three individuals on staff.

OTHER AGENCIES DEDICATED U.S. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS/FOREIGN POLICY

[Aviation and International Affairs, U.S. Department of Transportation](#)

The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) has many offices outside of the United States. FAA international offices are separated into four categories: (1) Africa, Europe, and Middle East; (2) Asia-Pacific; (3) Western Hemisphere; and (4) Global Issues and Presidential Initiatives. Internationally, the FAA strives to harmonize aviation systems and increase aviation safety.

[White House](#)

The White House offers a number of fellowship and internship opportunities. These opportunities provide young public service leaders with great insight into a number of foreign affairs related issues. These opportunities are extremely competitive and it is important to start your application early to get ahead of the competition.





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