Fall 2025 - Round 2
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Project ID	191
Project Name	**Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT)**
Office	Embassy Niamey - Public Affairs Office
Embassy	Niger
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	In the rapidly evolving digital landscape of Niger, the proliferation of disinformation poses a significant threat to democratic governance and stabilization. The Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT) is a proposed online platform designed to equip stakeholders in Niger with the tools necessary to identify and counteract disinformation. This project seeks to harness low-cost and accessible technology to monitor and analyze digital media across Niger, offering real-time insights into the sources and spread of misleading content. By providing a centralized, accessible hub for data analysis, NODT aims to enhance the capacity of journalists, civil society, and government bodies to uphold information integrity and foster a well-informed public discourse. The project will entail the development of an intuitive interface that aggregates and visualizes data from a variety of online sources, using natural language processing and machine learning to track disinformation trends. We hope this project will create a robust analytical framework that can adapt to the unique challenges of Niger's media environment. This project will not only advance efforts to counter disinformation but also engage a new generation of tech-savvy leaders in the fight against disinformation. NODT promises to be a critical resource for enhancing democratic engagement and countering the destabilizing effects of false information in Niger.
Final Product Format	The final product format for the Niger Online Disinformation Tracker (NODT) project could be envisioned as a comprehensive digital platform that includes the following components: 1. Interactive Dashboard: A user-friendly interface that displays real-time analytics, trends, and visualizations of disinformation campaigns across various media channels in Niger. This dashboard will allow users to quickly understand the scope and impact of false information circulating online. 2. Analytical Reports: Regularly updated reports that provide deeper insights into specific disinformation incidents, their origins, and the effectiveness of countermeasures. These reports can be used for briefing stakeholders and guiding policy decisions. 3. Training Module: An integrated component designed to educate users on identifying and countering disinformation. This module would include tutorials, best practices, and resources to enhance the skills of journalists, civil society members, and government officials. 4. Alert System: A notification feature that alerts users to sudden spikes in disinformation or emerging trends that require immediate attention. This

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

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

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

	The guidance listed above was generated by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Industry and Security, and provides information on evasion trends and fact patterns and identifies transactional and behavioral red flags to assist financial institutions and exporters in identifying suspicious transactions relating to possible export control evasion or violations.

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

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

	nuclear-weapons-preparatory-committee-for-the-eleventh-review-conference-second-session-2024 PRC Peaceful Uses Resolution: https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3944826?v=pdf Reaching Critical Will's Disarmament For a database: https://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/disarmament-fora

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

Final Product Format	Policy Paper and/or Presentation that: 1) Analyzes fiscal transparency trends during the period from 2019 to 2023; and 2) Assesses the impact of U.S. government, NGO, and IFI fiscal transparency-related programming across State's Fiscal Transparency Report indicators.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Economic and Finance Issues*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	
Project ID	337

Project ID	361
Project Name	**Mapping Foreign Malign Influence in Guinea: A Case Study on China and Russia**
Office	Public Diplomacy Section / Political and Economic Section
Embassy	Guinea
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	Guinea, located at the crossroads of significant geostrategic interests, has increasingly become a target of influence by foreign actors, particularly China and Russia. These nations employ tools ranging from economic investments to media campaigns to extend their influence in the country. Understanding the extent and impact of these activities is critical for developing effective U.S. policies that support Guinea's sovereignty, democracy, and sustainable development. This project aims to map China and Russia's influence in Guinea across key sectors, including infrastructure investments, political engagements, media narratives, and cultural exchanges. Students will evaluate their impact on Guinea's sovereignty, transparency, adherence to international norms, and potential to undermine democratic governance or U.S. strategic interests. Using qualitative and quantitative methods, student teams will analyze the tools and strategies employed, identify vulnerabilities in Guinea's governance and economy, and provide actionable insights into mitigating malign influence while supporting Guinea's resilience.
Final Product Format	The Embassy seeks: â€¢ A comprehensive report (20-25 pages) detailing the influence mechanisms of China and Russia. â€¢ Interactive visual tools, such as GIS maps or network diagrams, highlighting areas of influence. â€¢ A presentation summarizing key findings and policy recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Democracy & Human Rights*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*African Studies*
Additional Information	Links to resources on foreign influence campaigns, Guinea's political and economic landscape, and U.S. policy goals will be provided. This project could serve as the foundation for a follow-on study into regional trends in West Africa.

Project ID	363
Project Name	**Water Scarcity in Central Asia**
Office	School of Professional and Area Studies/Area Studies
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan), is a region characterized by diverse landscapes, including vast deserts, mountain ranges, and significant bodies of water. Despite its rich natural resources, Central Asia faces numerous environmental challenges that threaten its ecosystems and the livelihoods of its inhabitants. Water scarcity is one of the most pressing environmental issues in the region. This project will explore major environmental issues in Central Asia, including water scarcity, desertification, and pollution, and will discuss potential solutions to mitigate these problems. The primary questions within the project are: - What are the legacies of Imperial Russian and Soviet policies on the Central Asian environment and water resources? - What are the implications of deforestation, grazing practices, and overuse of land for agriculture? - What lasting impact have diversion of rivers for irrigation, extensive use of chemical fertilizers, and the establishment of heavy industries without adequate environmental safeguards left on the region's environment? - What transboundary issues should be considered when discussing water issues in Central Asia? - What policies could effectively address environmental issues in Central Asia?
Final Product Format	Project participants should produce a final written report to include: (1) Case studies examined, and lessons drawn from them, including an executive summary on the report (2) Suggest policy recommendations for mitigating further water scarcity in Central Asia. Project participants should produce a final presentation of key findings and policy recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Water Security*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*South/Central Asian Studies*
Additional Information	Final Projects will be used in SCA regional and sub-regional courses, as well as seminars addressing the environmental and water issues in Central Asia. Our office provides area studies training for diplomats and other U.S. Government foreign affairs specialists serving in or working with South and Central Asia. Micklin, P. (2007). The Aral Sea Disaster. Annual Review of Earth and Planetary Sciences, 35, 47-72. Glantz, M. H. (1999). Creeping Environmental Problems and Sustainable Development in the Aral Sea Basin. Cambridge University Press. World Bank. (2019).

	Climate Change and Water Resources in Central Asia. World Bank Publications. CAREC. (2020). Environmental Challenges in Central Asia: Regional Cooperation and Policy Responses. Central Asia Regional Environmental Center. Maya K. Peterson's 2019 book, Pipe Dreams: Water and Empire in Central Asia's Aral Sea Basin, provides an in-depth analysis of the historical and contemporary water issues in Central Asia, exploring the complex interplay between water management, political power, and environmental change in the region, particularly focusing on the Aral Sea Basin.

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

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

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

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

Project ID	375
Project Name	**Crafting a Stellar Space Program for Emerging Nations**
Office	Office of Space Affairs
Embassy	
Bureau	Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs
Project Description	As a global leader in space, the United States serves as a model for developing countries aiming to grow their cadre of space professionals. Imagine that you are director of a U.S. university program that specializes in space. A university in a developing country has asked you to advise on the creation of their own brand-new space-related educational program. Based on your familiarity with the U.S. system, what would you advise for a beginner-level space course? Consider the following questions: - What should students know about space policy (laws, norms, standards, regulations, etc.)? - How much time should the program devote to civil, commercial, and national space topics? - What technical skills would you teach students? - How could you leverage free U.S. Government space-related data and services? - How would you evaluate students' learning progress? - How would you tailor the program to meet the country's specific needs?
Final Product Format	Course catalogue of all required courses (to include one paragraph description, units, and semesters/terms) and draft syllabi for each course. Plan for one-year or two-year certificate program.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Education and Cultural Studies*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*Science and Technology*
Additional Information	

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

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

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

Project ID	380
Project Name	**Language of Success: Measuring 20 Years of English Language Impact in Jordan**
Office	Public Diplomacy Amman
Embassy	Jordan
Bureau	Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs
Project Description	Young Jordanians consistently inquire about opportunities to improve their English skills - but how do these skills empower youth to achieve a more positive future? Through this Diplomacy Lab project, students will utilize statistical techniques, polling data, and qualitative analysis to provide insights on the impacts of an almost two-decade-long English language program - the English Access Microscholarship Program -- on young Jordanians and the Jordanian economy. Students will identify methodologies to assess how English language proficiency, critical thinking skills, and exposure to U.S. culture and pedagogy from the Access Program have influenced educational attainment, employment opportunities, economic growth, and social mobility among the 7,000 Jordanian alumni. The data collection, innovative data analyses, and compelling stories compiled through this project will provide recommendations that help inform future U.S. government-sponsored educational programs in Jordan that can enhance the country's development, and in turn, its continued stability.
Final Product Format	The project will detail the findings of the longitudinal impacts of the Access Program in Jordan. Final products will include: - A comprehensive assessment of the program's overall 20-year impact, with a summary of key takeaways from polling data, statistical reports, and in-depth analysis of qualitative data collected; - Infographics or visual representations of key data points and findings; - Three brief case studies highlighting specific examples of the program's impact; and - A summary outlining the project's methodology and policy recommendations for future U.S. government-sponsored English language programming in Jordan.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Statistics*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*Education and Cultural Studies*
Additional Information	The project outcome will help inform the Public Diplomacy Section in U.S. Embassy Amman's strategic planning and priorities vis-Ã -vis future English language programs in Jordan. By understanding the scope and capacity of English language as a tool for public diplomacy outreach, the U.S. Embassy in Amman will be able to better target its investment in English

	language programming to specific geographic areas, demographic audiences, and key economic sectors in Jordan. For more information about the English Access Microscholarship Program: https://exchanges.state.gov/non-us/program/english-access-microscholarship-program

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

Project ID	394
Project Name	**Science Communication for Community Impact: Engaging the public in science to enhance community responses and awareness.**
Office	Public Affairs
Embassy	Central African Republic
Bureau	African Affairs
Project Description	A group of 30 to 50 science students with limited research experience collaborate with peers from American universities over the course of a semester. They learn foundational research skills, engage in scientific communication, and explore everything from defining problems to presenting findings. These students also work with their local communities to address development challenges, promoting research as a crucial tool for meeting societal needs and expectations.
Final Product Format	A 4-page options memo if provided enough details
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Communications*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*Science and Technology*
Additional Information	Post will have two separate students group of 15 each for this project.

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

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

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

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

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

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

	Peaceful Uses of Science and Technology: Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/peaceful-uses-initiative Rays of Hope | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/rays-of-hope IAEA- Nutrition: https://www.bing.com/search?q=stable+isotopes+for+nutrition+IAEA&qs=n&form=QBRE&sp=-1&ghc=1&lq=0&pq=stable+isotopes+for+nutrition+iaea&sc=12-34&sk=&cvid=5E1B7649D51549C2B97C37D15CCC5076&ghsh=0&ghacc=0&ghpl= Global Water Analysis Laboratory (GloWAL) Network | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/services/networks/glowal Mosquitoes | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/topics/sterile-insect-technique/mosquitoes Combining External Radiation with High-dose Rate Brachytherapy Effective for Cervical Cancer, IAEA Study Confirms | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/combining-external-radiation-with-high-dose-rate-brachytherapy-effective-for-cervical-cancer-iaea-study-confirms Food irradiation, benefits, use, standards | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/topics/food-irradiation Scientists Explore Groundwater in the Sahel with Nuclear Technology | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/scientists-explore-groundwater-in-the-sahel-with-nuclear-technology Atoms4Food | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/atoms4food Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy: Navigating Nuclear Development | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/bulletin/navigating-nuclear-development Developing Nuclear Power Infrastructure in Newcomer Countries | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/bulletin/developing-nuclear-power-infrastructure-in-newcomer-countries Small modular reactors (SMR) | IAEA: https://www.iaea.org/topics/small-modular-reactors American Nuclear Energy: Nuclear Energy -- ANS / About Nuclear: https://www.ans.org/nuclear/energy/ United States Nuclear Industry Council: https://www.usnic.org/ Nuclear Suppliers Organization - We're a group of approximately 60 companies that specialize in the manufacture and distribution of products and services for nuclear energy users. https://nuclearsuppliers.org/

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

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

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

	This project can be scaled up/down as needed to fit team availability and capabilities.

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

	This project can be scaled up/down as needed to fit team availability and capabilities.

Project ID	418
Project Name	**Minerals for Security? Assessing the U.S. Strategic Case for Backing the Democratic Republic of the Congo Peace Deal**
Office	School of Professional and Area Studies/Area Studies
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is home to some of the most valuable untapped reserves of cobalt, copper, and other minerals critical to U.S. manufacturing, defense, and energy independence. Amid rising instability in eastern DRC due to M23 insurgency activity, President Felix Tshisekedi has floated a peace proposal that would grant U.S. firms greater access to mineral concessions in exchange for political and economic backing from Washington. This proposal arrives at a time when the Trump administration is sharply focused on securing strategic resources, curbing Chinese and Russian control of supply chains, and promoting U.S. commercial interests abroad through transactional diplomacy. The DRC deal offers a rare opportunity, but it also raises security, reputational, and ethical considerations.
Final Product Format	â€¢ Project participants should produce a final written report (MSWord) outlining the pros and cons of U.S. endorsement of the peace deal. â€¢ Project participants should produce a final presentation (PPT) of key findings and recommendations o Strategic impact assessment on mineral security, other competing powers/ influence, and investment opportunity o How the U.S. could structure support to maximize benefits and minimize liability o Alternative pathways for securing access to Congolese minerals without overcommitting to unstable actors
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*Conflict, Stabilization & Reconstruction*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*Political /Military Affairs*
Additional Information	Project is to run from August to December with presentation to occur in December 2025.

Project ID	420
Project Name	**AGOA AND AMERICA FIRST: WHAT SHOULD THE NEXT US-AFRICA TRADE FRAMEWORK LOOK LIKE?**
Office	School of Professional and Area Studies / Area Studies
Embassy	
Bureau	Foreign Service Institute
Project Description	Policy Context & Rationale: The African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA), enacted in 2000, allows duty-free access to the U.S. market for thousands of goods from eligible sub-Saharan African countries. While intended to promote development through trade, AGOA has produced mixed results, with only a handful of countries capitalizing on its benefits. As the legislation approaches expiration in September of 2025, the Trump administration is rethinking AGOA's utility through the lens of reciprocity, strategic alignment, and domestic benefit. The central question is not whether trade should continue, but what kind of trade best supports U.S. interests in a world of intensifying competition with China and increasing global economic fragmentation. Research Goal: To evaluate US-Africa trade performance and develop strategic policy options for a post-AGOA trade framework that strengthens U.S. industries, rewards partner alignment, and advances transactional diplomacy over open-ended preferences.
Final Product Format	ï,§ Project participants should produce a final written report (MSWord) to include: o Key case studies examined, and lessons drawn from them. o Future trade scenarios: (1) AGOA renewal, (2) bilateral trade deals, (3) potential for regional framework agreements - An analysis of how trade reform can counter the intensifying competition for Africa's resources and business. § Project participants should produce a final presentation (PPT) of key findings and recommendations.
Primary Discipline/Expertise	*International Development*
Secondary Discipline/Expertise	*Marketing*
Additional Information	Project is to run from August to December 2025 with deliverables expected in December.