

YEAR PROGRAM

Year of Exchange in America for Russians

Host Family Application

Length of Hosting: 2016-2017 Academic Year

YEAR Program Overview

The Year of Exchange in America for Russians (YEAR) program will provide 75 scholarships for outstanding Russian students to spend the 2016-17 academic year participating in non-degree, full time study at institutions of higher education throughout the United States. It is funded by the U.S. Embassy in Moscow and administered by the American Councils for International Education.

The YEAR program is designed to provide promising young Russian leaders a comprehensive understanding of American society while building leadership skills and empowering participants to share their experiences after returning to their home communities. The program also aims to strengthen participants' English language skills and subject-knowledge in selected fields of study while building their self-confidence and motivating them to improve local communities and forge lasting international relationships.

Drawn from regions throughout Russia, all participants will be between the ages of 18 and 20. YEAR participants are selected on the basis of academic excellence, English language proficiency, maturity, leadership, and ability to overcome the cultural challenges of living and studying in the U.S. for an academic year.

Participants will complete full academic course loads in a wide range of academic fields during two semesters of (non-degree) study at U.S. institutions of higher education throughout the United States. All participants are required to complete one course in American studies during each semester of study. Most applicants will be placed at community colleges, while some will be enrolled at four-year institutions.

In addition to coursework, participants are required to complete community service and to conduct three professional interviews in the course of the academic year. Interviews are to be conducted with professionals in fields relating to each student's academic interests. They provide an opportunity for YEAR participants to learn more about the American workplace and the ways in which academic studies translate into professional experience.

All program participants are required to return to Russia for at least two years upon completion of the program.

Instructions:

Thank you for your interest in hosting a YEAR Program student. Please complete this form as completely and accurately as possible. The American Councils placement process consists of the following:

1. Interested potential hosts submit a completed application and photographs of their homes and family members by one of the following methods:

E-mail:	russiavearprogram@gmail.com
Fax: (ATTN) Higher Education Programs	202-833-7523
Mail: If you cannot submit by e-mail or fax, please notify us that your hard copy application is en route.	American Councils for International Education Attn: <u>Higher Education Programs (YEAR)</u> 1828 L Street NW, Suite 1200 Washington DC, 20036

2. A background screening is conducted on all members of the household 18 years of age or older.
3. An American Councils representative calls personal references and conducts an in-home interview with host family applicants.
4. An American Councils representative conducts a host family orientation.



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Family Information:

First Parent:	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Last Name:		First Name:	
Occupation:		Employer:	
Work Phone:		Cell Phone:	
E-mail:			

Second Parent:	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/> Mrs. <input type="checkbox"/>		
Last Name:		First Name:	
Occupation:		Employer:	
Work Phone:		Cell Phone:	
E-mail:			

Physical Address:

Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Mailing Address (if different):

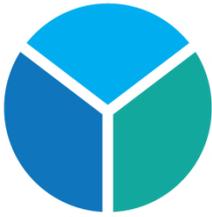
Street: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Home Phone: _____ Primary Phone: _____

Is your home the site of a functioning business (daycare, farm, etc.)? YES NO

If yes, please explain: _____



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Full-Time Members of Household

Please list all full time members of the household including family members and unrelated renters. Anyone 18 or older is required to undergo a criminal background check.

Full Name	Relationship	Birth Date	Country of Birth	Phone/email

Part-Time Members of Household

Part-time members of household may include college students, nannies, other family members, seasonal boarders/renters, or anyone who may potentially be in the home alone with the student. Please explain their part-time status below. Anyone in the home 18 or older, even part-time, is required to undergo a criminal background check.

Full Name	Relationship	Birth Date	Part-time status (e.g. "during school breaks")

Students arrive in August 2016 and depart in late May or early June 2017. Will any family members be away from home during this time? YES NO

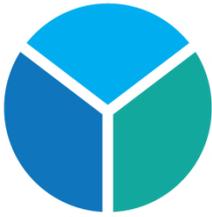
If yes, please explain who, dates away, and if this will affect hosting. _____

How did your family become interested in hosting? _____

Which family member initiated the idea of hosting? _____

What is the primary language spoken in the home? _____

What other languages are spoken or known by family members? _____



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Has your family hosted an international student/visitor before? YES NO

If yes, please provide the details below:

Age		Gender	Country	Year(s) (approx.)	Organization through which you hosted
<input type="checkbox"/> High school	<input type="checkbox"/> University Student	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
<input type="checkbox"/> High school	<input type="checkbox"/> University Student	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
<input type="checkbox"/> High school	<input type="checkbox"/> University Student	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			
<input type="checkbox"/> High school	<input type="checkbox"/> University Student	<input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F			

Has any family member participated in an exchange program? YES NO

If yes, please provide the details below:

Name	Country	Year(s) (approx.)	Organization

Family Details

Please describe each family member (including yourself) as to personality, education, profession, interests, sports, activities, and hobbies:



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Please describe your family's involvement in any groups/organizations/government/etc. in your community:

Describe a typical weekday in your home or family:

Please provide responses to questions below. Please note that answering "yes" to any of the questions below is not a barrier to hosting but may require follow-up from American Councils staff.

1. Have there been any recent major changes (separation, divorce, death) in your family? YES NO

If so, please briefly describe the change and any effects on your lifestyle or members of your family:

2. Does any family member have a serious illness, chronic condition, or disability? YES NO

If so, please briefly describe the condition and any effects on your lifestyle or members of your family:

3. Has any family member received professional counseling within the past five years? YES NO

If so, please include a brief explanation:



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4. Has any member of your household ever been convicted of a crime?

YES NO

If so, please include a brief explanation.

5. Has any member of your household been arrested?

YES NO

If so, please include a brief explanation.

6. Have you had any contact with any child protective services agency in the past?

YES NO

If so, please indicate when and for what reason(s).

Finances

Please note: The income data collected will remain confidential and be used solely for the purposes of ensuring that the basic needs of the exchange student(s) can be met, including three quality meals and transportation to and from school activities.

Average Household Annual Income:

Less than \$25,000

\$25,000–\$35,000

\$35,000–\$45,000

\$45,000–\$55,000

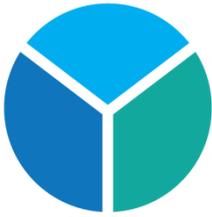
\$55,000–\$65,000

\$65,000–\$75,000

\$75,000 and above

Does anyone residing in your home receive any kind of public assistance (financial needs-based government subsidies for food or housing)? YES NO

If so, please describe:



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Community Information

Community Name: _____ Population (Approximately): _____

Our Community is: Urban Suburban Small town Rural Area Farm

Nearest major city: _____ Distance and Population: _____

Nearest airport: _____ Distance: _____

City or town website: _____

Briefly describe your neighborhood and community including socio-economic characteristics, diversity, public transportation, nearby amenities/points of interest, etc.

Are you located on a public transportation network? YES NO

If yes, how far is the nearest bus/metro stop? _____

If your home is not within walking distance to public transportation, would you be willing and able to assist the student with transportation to and from his/her place of study?

Please note: It is against program policy for students to drive.



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Home Environment

1. Describe your type of home (e.g. single family home, condominium, duplex, apartment, mobile home), including number of bedrooms and bathrooms, brief description of common areas, utilities, etc.:

2. Describe the amenities available to a student, such as access to a computer, Internet, musical instruments, sports equipment, etc.:

3. Will the student have his/her own bed? Note: This cannot include any convertible beds such as an inflatable mattress, convertible sofa, or futon. YES NO

4. If there is no bed in the photographs submitted, what is your plan for placing a bed in the student's room prior to his/her arrival?

5. Will the student share a bedroom? YES NO
If so, with whom?

6. Briefly describe the student's bedroom (furniture, amenities, etc.):

7. Does your family own any firearms that are kept in the home? YES NO
If so, how are they secured?

Please note: American Councils prefers that firearms are stored securely (with a lock) separately from ammunition whenever possible.

8. Are any of the following prescription medications kept in your home: prescription painkillers, ADD medication, medical marijuana? YES NO

If so, what is the medication and how is it secured?

Please note: American Councils prefers that these types of medications are stored securely (with a lock) in a low-traffic area (e.g. master bedroom/bathroom) whenever possible.

9. Does anyone in the family smoke? NO Yes, cigars Yes, cigarettes Yes, pipe

If yes, where do they smoke? Outdoors only Indoors/In the home

10. Would you be willing to host a smoker? NO YES Only outside Other (please specify)



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11. Do you have any pets? YES NO

If so, briefly describe all your pet(s), including how many, type, size, indoor/outdoor, personality, etc.:

Required Photos

As part of your application to host, you will need to include the following pictures of your home and family. These should be sent electronically to American Councils at russiayearprogram@gmail.com. Please indicate below that the following photos are being sent by checking the corresponding boxes. Please note: During your in-home interview, an American Councils representative may take additional photos.

Student's bedroom Student's bathroom Kitchen Family/Living Room
 Front exterior & grounds Back exterior & grounds Family Photo

In the space below, please identify the members of your family in your family photos from left to right:

Your Student

Our family is willing to host a following student: male female no preference

Due to family structure and housing, we cannot host a male female no preference

Religion

1. Family's religious affiliation or preference: _____

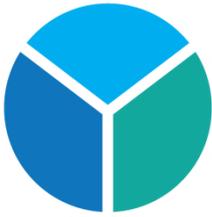
2. Would you be willing to inform the exchange student in advance of your household's religious affiliations, if requested? YES NO

3. How often do you attend services? weekly monthly occasionally never

4. Would you expect the exchange student to attend services with you regularly? YES NO

Note: Students are encouraged at their pre-departure orientation to view religious institutions in the U.S. as an opportunity for cultural exchange, better understanding of their host family, socializing, and a source of volunteer opportunities. American Councils also encourages this, however it is against program policy for students to be proselytized, to make life-changing decisions (such as a change in religion), or to be forced/required to attend religious services while they are on program.

5. Our family is open to hosting a student whose religious affiliation may be different from our own: YES NO



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Diet

1. Does anyone in your family follow any dietary restrictions or adhere to a vegetarian diet? YES NO

If yes, please explain:

2. Do you expect the student to follow any dietary restrictions? YES NO

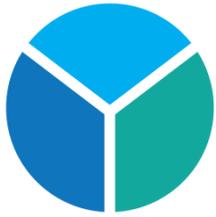
If yes, please explain:

3. Are you able to host a student who follows a particular dietary restriction? YES NO
Examples: no pork, vegetarian, vegan, etc.

4. Is your family able to provide three meals per day (including either lunch money or provisions for a packed lunch for school) to a student(s) in your home? YES NO

EXPECTATIONS

Briefly describe your expectations regarding the responsibilities and behavior of the student while in your home.



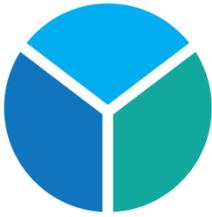
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Please list any family activities that you would expect your student to participate in.

What personal expenses would you expect to be covered by the student?

Does your household have Wi-fi? Is there a home computer that members of the family, including an exchange student, would have access to?



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PERSONAL REFERENCES

Please provide two personal references. Please note that an American Councils representative or a local coordinator may not serve as a reference.

Non-relative who has visited you in your home:

Name: _____ Relationship to family: _____

City, State: _____ E-mail: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____

Relative or friend in your community:

Name: _____ Relationship to family: _____

City, State: _____ E-mail: _____

Daytime Phone: _____ Evening Phone: _____



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Host Family Agreement

Our family has volunteered to host a student with American Councils for International Education, so that, by sharing our lives with an international visitor, we may gain exposure to new ideas and perspectives and promote international friendships.

As a host family with American Councils for International Education:

1. We will welcome our student as a member of our family and assist in our student's adjustment to our family life as well as to U.S. life and culture.
2. We will familiarize ourselves with the YEAR Program policies and materials to prepare for hosting our student.
3. We will provide a safe and nurturing home environment for our student, including a bed, study area, and daily meals (three per day, which may include either lunch money or provisions for a packed lunch for school).
4. We will ensure that our student knows how to leave his/her room and the house in the event of an emergency (such as a fire) and will explain what to do in an emergency.
5. We understand that our student has spent his or her life in a culture that may be very different from our own. We will work with our student and contact the American Councils Program Coordinator to resolve misunderstandings and issues.
6. We will help our student meet other Americans through introductions to friends, neighbors, and classmates, and by encouraging our student to join clubs or pursue activities.
7. We will help arrange necessary transportation for our student by driving him/her, providing access to a bicycle, a bus, through rides with friends, carpooling, or familiarizing him/her with public transportation, etc.
8. We will help our student become familiar with our community and its resources such as local recreational facilities, sights, shopping areas, and libraries.
9. We will neither allow nor encourage our student to violate American Councils policies or the law, and will immediately report any such violation to the American Councils Program Coordinator.
10. We will expect contact on a monthly basis from the American Councils Program Coordinator.
11. We will notify American Councils immediately should any issues arise in our family's and/or student's adjustment, or if our family must withdraw from the program at any point after a student placement is confirmed with us.
12. We will also reach out to the American Councils Program Coordinator if we have any general questions our hosting experience.
13. In case of emergencies, we will contact the American Councils Washington, DC office at 1-800-621-9559.
14. We understand that our student's passport and travel documents cannot be removed from his/her possession if the student does not agree.
15. We understand that our family cannot host a student who is a relative.
16. We understand that in the event of adjustment issues, we are not expected to communicate directly to our student's natural family and instead will contact American Councils.
17. We understand that if for any reason our student needs to move out of our house, it may take two to three weeks for American Councils to find another family to host the student.
18. We understand that prior to our student's departure from their home country, he/she will be provided with information about our family, including family make up. He/she may also be provided information about our family's religious affiliations, home environment, school, and community.
19. We will contact American Councils immediately if any information that we provided in our Host Family Application changes before our student arrives or during our student's stay with us (i.e. if we move, if an additional person comes to live in our house, if we separate, etc.)
20. I confirm that the information provided in my American Councils Host Family Application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

We have read and understand the above guidelines and agree to follow them throughout our participation as a YEAR Program Host Family.

Signature of host parent: _____ Date: _____

Signature of host parent: _____ Date: _____

Family Name: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____



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Background Screening

As part of the host family application process, the U.S. Department of State requires that all host family members 18 years old or older and living in the home on a full or part-time basis complete a background screening. American Councils will email you a link to initiate your background check.

E-mail Invitation with Link to Online Portal

Below, please provide the full name and an e-mail address for each household member requiring a background screening. Once American Councils receives your application to host, you'll be sent an e-mail invitation to complete the background screening using our online portal with Intellicorp Records, Inc. **Please note that your response to this email invitation is necessary to initiate a background check.**

Please provide the full names and most convenient e-mail addresses of each member of your household required to undergo a background screening. If you wish, you can provide a single e-mail address for all household members and separate invitations will all be sent to that address. Please remember to check your spam filter settings and/or junk mail folder. Your invitation(s) will arrive from year@americancouncils.org.

First and Last Name

E-mail address where invitation should be sent

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____
