



MANDELA  
WASHINGTON  
FELLOWSHIP  
FOR YOUNG AFRICAN LEADERS



# Reciprocal Exchange WORKBOOK



The Mandela Washington Fellowship is a program of the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and administered by IREX.

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Want to learn more about Reciprocal Exchanges?

Visit [mwfellows.info/reciprocal-exchanges](https://mwfellows.info/reciprocal-exchanges)

or scan this QR code to learn more.



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*U.S. Participant Valarie Dunbar leads participants through an interactive game designed to help teach children with autism develop social skills during her Reciprocal Exchange in Lagos, Nigeria, with 2018 Fellowship Alumna Olowo Titilope.*

## About the Reciprocal Exchange

The Mandela Washington Fellowship for Young African Leaders—the flagship program of the U.S. Government’s Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI)—was created in 2014 to invest in the next generation of African leaders. The Fellowship’s Reciprocal Exchange component provides U.S. professionals with the opportunity to build upon strategic partnerships and professional connections developed during the Mandela Washington Fellowship. The Reciprocal Exchange component provides funds for U.S. professionals to implement in-person or hybrid projects in sub-Saharan African countries to continue collaborative work with Fellowship Alumni on the continent. U.S. professionals may include those met during the Fellowship through networking, the Summit, Professional Development Experiences, Givitas, or other activities.

### WORKBOOK OBJECTIVE

This workbook is intended as a precursor tool to a full Reciprocal Exchange application. The four activities that follow will guide you through the initial steps of planning a project, including project conceptualization, activity mapping, impact statements, and budget planning. The workbook can be completed independently by either Fellowship Alumni or U.S. professionals, though a few exercises can be completed with potential partners.

### SYMBOLS



Workbook activity should be completed with your collaborator.



Workbook activity should be completed alone.

### DEFINITIONS

<b>U.S. Professionals</b>	U.S. citizens who collaborate with Mandela Washington Fellowship Alumni to apply for a Reciprocal Exchange Award.
<b>Fellowship Alumni</b>	Mandela Washington Fellowship Alumni who collaborate with U.S. professionals to apply for a Reciprocal Exchange Award.
<b>Participants</b>	U.S. professionals who are selected to receive a Reciprocal Exchange Award.
<b>Fellowship Alumni Collaborators</b>	Mandela Washington Fellowship Alumni who are selected to receive a Reciprocal Exchange Award.
<b>Hybrid Reciprocal Exchange</b>	Hybrid Reciprocal Exchange projects aim to conduct activities in the Fellowship Alumni Collaborator’s community with the U.S. professional participating virtually via Zoom or another platform. Hybrid Reciprocal Exchanges do not involve any international travel by the U.S. Participant.

## Activity 1: Getting Started



What kind of project do you want to implement?



What will be the main activities of your collaboration?

**Use the SMART framework as you brainstorm activities for your collaboration.**

- S** - Specific
- M** - Measurable
- A** - Achievable
- R** - Relevant
- T** - Time-bound



*U.S. Participant Donna McCurry facilitates a training session during a sickle cell management workshop for Ugandan healthcare workers, in partnership with 2017 Alumnus Sharifu Tusubira.*



*U.S. Participant John Lumkes visited several smallholder farms in Ethiopia and helped 2016 Alumnus Butta Abrhame manufacture a farming vehicle during their Reciprocal Exchange.*

ACTIVITY 1



Who will you partner with? Why have you selected this collaborator(s)?

**Example**

Potential Collaborators: Maria Elena Gomez and Dwane Jones

Notes: Dr. Gomez and Mr. Jones run a successful charter school in Philadelphia, PA, using a model similar to the one I want to implement at my school...

Potential Collaborator(s)	Notes



Will the Reciprocal Exchange be hybrid or in-person? Why is this format best?

In-Person

Hybrid



Where and when will the project take place?

Reminder: The grant periods are:

- Round 1: January 15 – June 30
- Round 2: July 1 – November 30

Location (Town, City, and/or Community and Country)	Anticipated Dates



Young leaders brainstorm community challenges during a Reciprocal Exchange workshop led by U.S. Participant Kathleen Newell and 2017 Alumnae Ulala Kondowe and Enelless Phiri in Malawi.



2015 Alumna Glory Oguegbu installs solar panels in Makoko, Lagos, Nigeria, during a virtual Reciprocal Exchange with U.S. Participant Nickolas Martin.

## Activity 2: Activities, Outcomes, and Beneficiaries



In the table below, list your project’s **main activities** and **intended outcomes**. Be as specific as possible with your activities and make sure your intended outcomes are measurable. Use the example below as a guide.

Main Activities	Intended Outcome
<b>Example:</b> Host a workshop for entrepreneurs in Kenya on developing a business proposal	<b>Example:</b> Attendees create draft business proposals to pitch to local stakeholders





In the table below, list your **beneficiaries**, how many you will reach, and what you hope they will gain.

<b>Who are they?</b> <small>Are they in the United States or Africa?</small>	<b>How many will you reach?</b> <small>Consider both direct and indirect.</small>	<b>What will they gain?</b>
<b>Example:</b> Kenyan entrepreneurs ages 18–35	<b>Example:</b> <u>Direct:</u> 30 workshop attendees <u>Indirect:</u> 100 colleagues of attendees	<b>Example:</b> Proposal development and pitching skills; increased networks among fellow entrepreneurs and local stakeholders



After completing the tables above, discuss the following questions with your potential project partner(s):

	Yes	No
Are your activities and intended outcomes <b>aligned</b> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the activities <b>specific</b> and <b>feasible</b> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the outcomes <b>measurable</b> ?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you considered all beneficiaries, including those in the United States and Africa, both direct and indirect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If you answered “No” to any of these questions, adjust your activities and outcomes as necessary.*

## Activity 3: Project Impact



In a few sentences, describe the impact that your project will have on organizations, communities, and/or countries in...

Sub-Saharan Africa	United States
<p><b>Example:</b> Teachers trained in curriculum will be able to better integrate students with autism in their classrooms in the Republic of the Congo.</p>	<p><b>Example:</b> U.S. collaborator will expand their teaching and curriculum portfolio, enabling them to impact students in their hometown.</p>



After completing your impact statements above, review your partner’s statements. Is there anything you would change about their statements? Is there anything you would add or take away?



With your partner, think about the **continued impact** of your project. After you have completed the project, how will you sustain its impact in both Africa and the United States?



*2016 Alumna Diana Mensah (right, in pink), U.S. participant Dennis Donovan (left, with scarf) celebrate with workshop participants after completing a problem-solving workshop with local youth brainstorming how they can create change in their community, society, and workplaces.*

## Activity 4: Planning your Budget



When submitting a Reciprocal Exchange, you must include a draft budget that outlines the total estimated costs of project implementation, inclusive of expenses that will be provided in-kind and/or through cost-share. **All costs should be in U.S. dollars.**

With your project partner(s), use the questions below to begin thinking through your project budget.

### FINANCIAL PROVISIONS:

- Maximum award for **in-person** projects      \$5,000 per *U.S. Participant*\*
- Maximum award for **hybrid** projects      \$3,000 per *project*

### BUDGET DOS AND DON'TS


Do	Don't
Convert your costs into U.S. dollars and include the exchange rate used to calculate them	Leave costs in local currency
Verify the math and formulas before submitting your budget	Submit your budget before checking it
Itemize your budget, including in-kind and cost-share items	Include costs above the grant threshold or non-allowable costs

What costs do we need to account for?

\*Please note this grant amount is subject to change

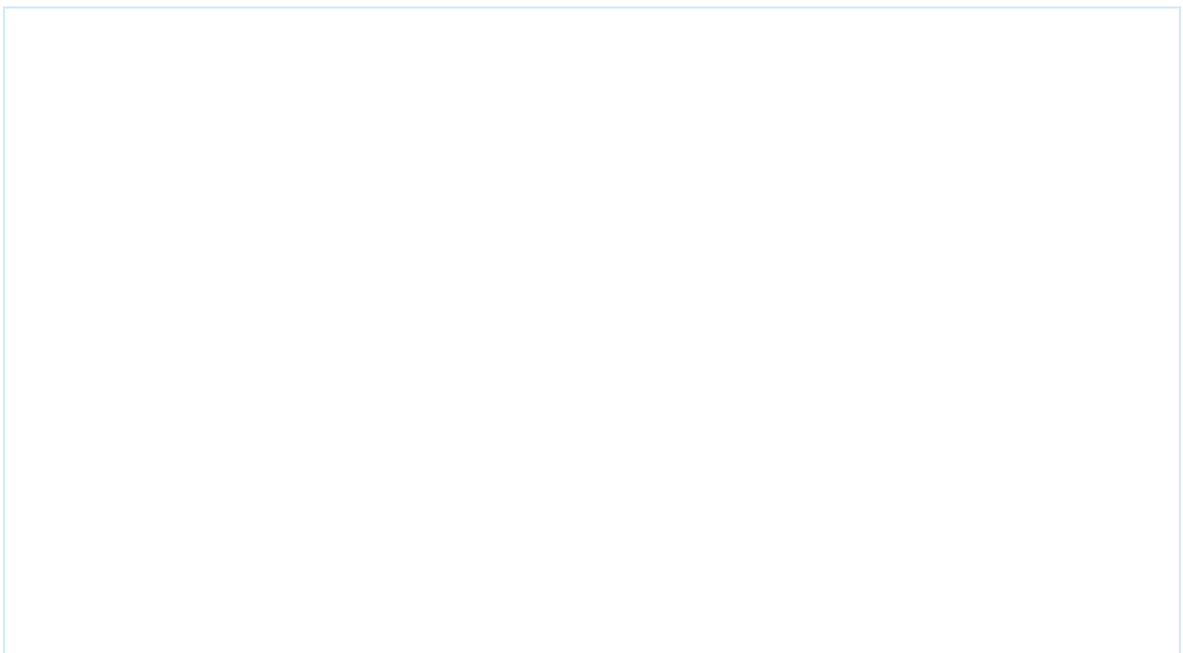
What expenses could be provided through **cost-share**? Cost-share occurs when a portion of your project is paid for *using your own resources or donations from sponsors or organizations*, rather than the Reciprocal Exchange Award.

**Example:** Lodging for the U.S. Participant will be covered by XYZ organization.



What expenses could be provided **in-kind**? In-kind expenses are *non-monetary contributions*.

**Example:** Event space and technological equipment will provided by a venue at no cost.



# Application Selection Criteria

## CORE SELECTION CRITERIA (“THE MUSTS”):

Selection Criteria	What Reviewers Look For
<p><b>Demonstrates impact on the Fellowship Alumni Collaborator’s home organization, community, and/or country.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will this project engage African stakeholders, and how many will it engage?</li> <li>• What specific lessons or direct impact will this project have for African communities?</li> <li>• Is the project relevant for the local context? Will beneficiaries gain knowledge, resources, etc. that truly meet their needs and support long-term positive impact in their personal lives, communities, and countries?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Demonstrates impact on the U.S. professional’s home organization and community.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will this project benefit U.S. citizens, beyond the U.S. Participants themselves?</li> <li>• Will (non-Participant) U.S. stakeholders be engaged during or following the project?</li> <li>• What specific lessons or direct impact will this project have for U.S. communities?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Demonstrates joint engagement between the Fellowship Alumni Collaborator and U.S. professional in project design and implementation (i.e., it should be clear to application reviewers that each applicant contributed equally to the overall application).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do both applicants demonstrate relevant expertise to implement this project?</li> <li>• Are the proposed roles balanced (i.e., are both contributing substantively to objectives)?</li> <li>• Does the voice and project vision of both applicants come through clearly in the application?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Provides measurable goals and specific project activities during implementation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do project goals clearly meet the SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound?</li> <li>• Are proposed activities well thought-out, relevant to/ appropriate for the local context, and clearly supportive of the outlined goals?</li> <li>• Are there specific methods planned to measure project impact?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Demonstrates continued impact of the project after implementation.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How will impact and lessons learned be shared with both the Alumni Collaborator and U.S. Participant’s networks?</li> <li>• How will this project benefit citizens of both the United States and African countries in the immediate aftermath? In the weeks, months, and years following?</li> </ul>

## PREFERENTIAL CRITERIA (“THE NICE-TO-HAVES”):

- Concrete benefit to U.S. companies, communities, or organizations (e.g., identification of new business markets or export opportunities, development of institutional partnerships or student/scholar exchanges, presentation of findings to U.S. professional, community, or academic audiences, etc.)
- A history of collaboration between the U.S. professional and the Fellowship Alumni Collaborator as a result of the Mandela Washington Fellowship
- Proposals for the implementation phase of project execution
- Project teams with professional expertise relevant to the proposed activities
- Interest in both the cultural and professional exchange aspects of the collaboration
- Contribution to furthering a pre-existing project or initiative
- Budget cost-sharing
- Engagement of Mandela Washington Fellowship Alumni networks
- Participants, Fellowship Alumni, and/or project beneficiaries who represent traditionally underrepresented groups or communities

## Common Errors Leading to Non-Selection

- **Ineligibility:** Violation of the eligibility requirements (posted with the application announcement each cycle).
- **Incomplete or Missing Deliverables:** The budget and work plan are not in the required templates, or are missing key information specified in each template’s guidance tab.
- **Imbalanced Impact:** Project impact is almost exclusively focused on the African community where the project will be implemented, while U.S. impact is underdeveloped or missing entirely.
- **Imbalanced Team Investment:** The application does not demonstrate equal engagement from the U.S. and Alumni applicants. This may manifest in the following ways:
  - One applicant’s voice (often the Alumni’s) is missing from the application (i.e., essay responses are copy-pasted for both application portions, one applicant’s essays are written in the third person, responses focus exclusively on one applicant’s role, expertise, and vision for the project, etc.).
  - One applicant bears the majority of substantive expertise and responsibility for implementation, while the other is primarily handling logistics/minor components.
- **Limited Scope:** The project will only impact an extremely specific, small group of beneficiaries, and/or impact beyond the duration of the project is not clearly demonstrated.
- **Mismatched Expertise:** The U.S. professional(s) and Alumni do not possess the relevant expertise to implement the proposed initiative.
- **Lack of Buy-In:** The project relies heavily upon institutional buy-in (from U.S./African government agencies, large independent corporations, etc.), but the applicants do not sufficiently demonstrate that they A) have already secured this support, or B) have the networks and ability to quickly acquire it.
- **Lack of Cultural Awareness:** The project seeks to implement a model or approach developed in a U.S. context, without sufficiently demonstrating how this model/approach applies to the African context, or how it will be tailored to meet local needs and sociopolitical dynamics to be truly relevant for beneficiaries.

