

# Iowa City Foreign Relations Council

## 2025 IMPACT REPORT

[icfrc.org](http://icfrc.org)



**CONNECTING IOWA TO THE WORLD**

# EXECUTIVE MESSAGE

Dear Friends,

In a year marked by complex challenges and opportunities, 2025 reminded us that global understanding is not a luxury. It is essential. From shifting climates and contested democracies to the rise of disinformation and the evolution of public health, the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council responded with timely, accessible programming rooted in the conviction that learning together creates stronger, more resilient communities.

We launched two major thematic series this year, The Changing Climate and Big Questions Confronting 2025, exploring how global forces impact lives locally. Through 23 public programs, we reached more than 2,450 participants in Iowa and around the world. We hosted global scholars and grassroots advocates, explored solutions to climate adaptation, and tackled democratic fragility with honesty and hope.

Thanks to your support, we exceeded our fundraising goals and deepened our work with students, educators, and community partners. This was not only a year of growth. It was a year of impact.

We are grateful for your involvement. As we step into 2026, our mission remains clear: to connect Iowa to the world through courageous conversation, global learning, and inclusive dialogue.

With deep appreciation,



Peter Gerlach  
Executive Director



Sunday Goshit  
Board President



# OUR MISSION

To foster global understanding and civic engagement by providing forums for timely international topics that matter locally and globally.

# OUR HISTORY

Founded in 1983, the Iowa City Foreign Relations Council is a nonpartisan, nonprofit educational organization committed to expanding knowledge, empathy, and dialogue around international issues. We believe that informed citizens strengthen democracy and that Iowa, like the world, is made better through curiosity, cultural literacy, and public conversation.

# WHO WE SERVE

- University of Iowa students, staff, and faculty
- International visitors
- K-12 educators and classrooms
- Immigrants
- Community leaders, professionals, and lifelong learners
- All who seek a deeper understanding of our world



# THE ICFRC TEAM

## STAFF



Peter Gerlach, PhD,  
Executive Director



James Dykeman,  
Director of Development & Communications

## INTERNS AND VOLUNTEERS



Nhelia Alemo,  
Intern



Sofia Manzano,  
Intern



Joe Kingsbury,  
Intern



Pratibha Khatri,  
Intern



Sofia Sabogal,  
Intern



Alex Cuevas,  
Volunteer

Featured below: Peter Gerlach, Executive Director (left);  
Sunday Goshit, Board President (right)



*"ICFRC reminded me that global issues are not far away. They live in our classrooms, our headlines, and our everyday decisions."*

— JOE KINGSBURY, '25-'26 INTERN

# 2025 COMMUNITY PARTNERS

FilmScene  
Frontier Co-Op  
GiveButter  
Humanities Iowa  
Iowa Arts Council  
Iowa City Human Rights Commission  
Iowa Economic Development Authority  
Johnson County Board of Supervisors  
Johnson County Livable Community  
MidWestOne  
Neumann Monson Architects  
Stanley Center for Peace and Security  
University of Iowa Department of Anthropology  
University of Iowa Center for Asian and Pacific Studies  
University of Iowa Center for Human Rights

University of Iowa Center for Inclusive Academic Excellence  
University of Iowa Center for Language and Culture Learning  
University of Iowa Department of History  
University of Iowa International Programs  
University of Iowa International Student Support and Engagement  
University of Iowa International Studies  
University of Iowa Native American and Indigenous Studies Program  
University of Iowa Office of Sustainability and the Environment  
University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art  
100Grannies  
Virtuous Togolese Women of Iowa

## LOCATIONS

Iowa City Public Library  
Des Moines Public Library  
University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art  
Iowa City Pedestrian Mall

Oaknoll Retirement Residence  
Old Capitol Museum Senate Chambers  
Iowa City Parks and Recreation

## PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

13  
co-hosted events



7  
new organizations engaged

Shared  
marketing, accessibility, and venue resources

# 2025 STRATEGIC HIGHLIGHTS & GUIDING PRIORITIES

## 2025 GOALS

- Advance programming on climate, peace, and global governance
- Create inclusive, student-centered pathways to leadership
- Expand donor and partner engagement

## STRATEGIC FOCUS AREAS

- Climate Justice and Resilience
- Democracy and Human Rights
- Student Engagement and Leadership

## 2025 METRICS

**23** public programs

**2** thematic series

**2,650** total attendees

**35** speakers

**18** collaborative partners

**5** interns and volunteers

**103** percent of fiscal year fundraising goal met



## STUDENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

ICFRC's commitment to accessibility and impact came alive in 2025 through intentional student involvement and deeper outreach to local audiences.

## IMPACT HIGHLIGHTS

- Panels with cross-generational and cross-cultural voices
- Free access via livestreams, captions, and program archives
- Outreach resources for educators and classrooms

## KEY ENGAGEMENT STATS

- 12 Spring events, 11 Fall events
- 2,650 total attendees (1,626 in-person, 1,024 online)
- Student Involvement: 5 interns, 2 University of Iowa student organization collaborations
- Community Engagement: 4 potlucks and cultural events, 8 partner collaborations

*"Global learning starts locally. ICFRC showed me that Iowa City is a place where global conversations belong."*

— SUNDAY GOSHIT



# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



## Technology and the Rise of Great Powers

January 29, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speaker: Ali Wyne

## US and European Foreign Policy: Global Challenges

February 19, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speaker: Erik Brattberg

## Global Neighbors: Welcoming and Supporting New Iowans in Des Moines

March 12, 2025 | Des Moines Public Library | Speaker: Hasso Ibelings

## When Archives Meet Authoritarianism

April 11, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speaker: Astrid Eckert

## Reclaiming Heritage: Leadership in Restitution and Repatriation in Iowa

May 1, 2025 | University of Iowa Stanley Museum of Art | Speaker: Amy Noel Green

## Flashpoint? Taiwan, China, and the United States

May 15, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speaker: Sara Newland

## Glocal Connections: Summer Gathering and Potluck

June 15, 2025 | Lower City Park, Shelter 12 | Community Event

# PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

## A Conversation with the Mandela Washington Fellows

June 18, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Panel of Mandela Washington Fellows

## Resettled: Life After Refugee Resettlement

August 11, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speakers: Kate Fitzgerald and Mary Ann Nelson

## Join and Thrive: Film Screening and Club Fair

September 7, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Collaborative event with Global Student organizations

## A Danish Nurse's Journey with MSF

September 17, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speaker: Anni Fjord

## A Togolese Celebration in Iowa

October 4, 2025 | Iowa City Pedestrian Mall | Virtuous Togolese Women of Iowa

## Kosovo's Cultural Survival Through Literature and Education

October 9, 2025 | Oaknoll Retirement Residence | Speaker: Vlora Konushevci

## Indigenous Strength: Food Sovereignty and Language Revitalization

October 13, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Speaker: Leah Slick-Driscoll

## Glocal at Iowa: Me - Iowa - the World

November 7, 2025 | Iowa City Public Library | Panel of UI students



# SERIES HIGHLIGHTS

## FALL 2025: BIG QUESTIONS CONFRONTING 2025

### What is Causing the Increasing Distrust in Healthcare?

Date: Friday, September 26, 2025

Location: Iowa City Senior Center

Speakers: Dr. Jeanine Abrons and Chief Lorenzo Sanford

This event explored declining trust in healthcare systems, with a focus on colonial legacies and marginalized knowledge. Speakers highlighted the role of cultural wisdom and community healing in restoring confidence in healthcare.

### Is the United States a Nation of Immigrants or a Deportation Nation?

Date: Friday, October 3, 2025

Location: Iowa City Public Library

Speakers: Dr. Adam Goodman and Dr. Lina-Maria Murillo

This conversation challenged the dominant narrative of the U.S. as a welcoming nation, tracing the history and consequences of deportation policies. Panelists examined legal structures and the activism that continues to shape immigrant justice.

### What are the Costs of Widespread Economic Inequality?

Date: Wednesday, October 29, 2025

Location: Iowa City Public Library

Speakers: Dr. Augusto Lopez-Claros and Dr. Todd Knoop

This program addressed the global rise in economic inequality and its impact on democracy, development, and stability. Speakers discussed the political drivers of inequality and proposed policy-based solutions.

### How Does Too Much Presidential Power Endanger Democracy?

Date: Friday, November 14, 2025

Location: University of Iowa Old Capitol Museum

Speaker: Dr. David Driesen

Focusing on global case studies, this event examined how concentrated executive power contributes to democratic decline. Dr. Driesen discussed the dangers of the "unitary executive" theory and lessons for the U.S.



# SERIES HIGHLIGHTS

## SPRING 2025: THE CHANGING CLIMATE SERIES

### Climate Change, Gender, and Biomass Cookstoves in India

Date: Friday, March 7, 2025

Location: Iowa City Public Library

Speaker: Dr. Meena Khandelwal

This presentation explored how cookstove interventions in India often overlook the lived experiences of women. Dr. Khandelwal emphasized the need for equitable, culturally informed approaches to climate adaptation.



### Green Architecture: Building for the Future

Date: Saturday, March 29, 2025

Location: Unitarian Universalist Society, Coralville

Speakers: Keith Porter, Sally Obernolte, and Deb Schoelman

A panel discussion and building tour showcased sustainable design in practice. Presenters highlighted how architectural innovation supports climate goals and strengthens local communities.



### Fostering Climate Resilience Together

Date: Friday, April 4, 2025

Location: Iowa City Public Library

Speakers: Rosalind Grant, Carolyn Van Meter, Dr. Martha Durr, Dr. William Gutowski Jr., and Dr. Linda Shenk

This event featured the CO-Learn team and their work in inclusive climate resilience across the Midwest. Speakers shared strategies from Indigenous knowledge, agriculture, and academic research.



### Well Earth: Spices and Sustainability in Business and Agriculture

Date: Wednesday, April 16, 2025

Location: Iowa City Public Library

Speakers: Alicia Simmons and Dr. Amy Colbert

This program focused on Frontier Co-op's Well Earth initiative and its support for sustainable supply chains. The discussion highlighted how ethical sourcing and business practices can advance environmental and community well-being.



# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

## FISCAL YEAR

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025



24-25



### THE NUMBERS

Revenue: \$75,860

Expenses: \$73,186

Surplus: \$2,674

2025 Ending Bank Balance: \$22,197

### DONOR BASE

Total Donors: 153  
Recurring Monthly Gifts: 42



Percent of Goal Raised: 103%

### STATEMENT

Fiscal transparency is core to our credibility. All financial decisions are aligned with our mission and our commitment to the public in the Iowa City area and beyond.

# LOOKING AHEAD: 2026 & BEYOND

- Resisting Global Tyranny series, Spring 2026
- Fall 2026 series: "The Disaffected Voter: Global Election Anxieties"
- Expand student internships
- Begin new civic dialogue project
- Outreach to rural Iowa communities



## GET INVOLVED



- Become a donor or program partner
- Volunteer or attend an upcoming forum
- Visit our digital Program Library (2020–present) for recordings and resources.

## WACA INVOLVEMENT

ICFRC is a proud member of the World Affairs Councils of America (WACA), a national network of international affairs councils. In 2025, Executive Director Peter Gerlach and Board Vice President Dimy Doresca represented ICFRC at the WACA National Conference in Washington, D.C., participating in high-level briefings, policy sessions, and peer exchange. Our membership ensures Iowa voices remain connected to global dialogue at the national level.



# DONOR LIST BY GIVING LEVEL



<b>\$5,000+</b>	<b>\$750 to \$999</b>	<b>\$250 to \$299</b>	<b>\$100 to \$149</b>	<b>Linda Meloy</b>
Humanities Iowa IAED / IA Arts Council Grant JC Board of Supervisors	Karin Franklin Polly and Armond Pagliai Keith Porter	Heide Bursch Karen Chappell Mary Sue and Kenneth Coleman Pete and Julie Damiano Miriam Gilbert Iowa City Human Rights Commission John Menninger Connie Mutel Jim Olson Stephen West Victoria West Carole and Bob Winkleblack Dave Wu	Constance Aldridge Dotty Becker Alan and Francisca Brody Elizabeth A Clothier Joan Cook Kelley Donham Sue Dulek Gene Savin and Susan Enzle Carmen Griggs Doris Hauser Margaret Heffron Walter B. Helms Jone Johnson Sarah Lande Elisabeth Leach S.C. and J.W. Locher Christine Luzzie Jerry Peck Barbara Price	Joe Barry Barbara Beaumont Adam Bibb Bentley Constance A. Berman Maureen Braddock Amy Brewster Peter Brokaw Casey Cook Susan Corbin-Muir Olivia Croskey Ann Marie Drop James Dykeman Ed Flaherty John Fuller Kurt Hamann Shelagh Hayreh Lucille Heitman Theresa D Ho Kenneth Hochstedler Brenda Howe
<b>\$2,500 to \$4,999</b>	<b>\$500 to \$749</b>	<b>\$200 to \$249</b>	<b>Christine Shea</b>	<b>Patricia Sueppel</b>
Alice and Ken Atkinson Erin Klitgaard Family Giving Fund Lynette Marshall and Jeffery Ford Meg and Bill Furlong IAED Iowa Culture Leadership Cohort Grant MidWestOne UI International Programs UI Libraries	100Grannies Jeanne Bancroft George and Rebecca Bergus Dimy Doresca Nancy M. Footner Frontier Co-Op GiveButter Patricia C. Koza Susan Loomis Michael Margolin Alexandra Hernandez Pardo Hazel Seaba Bruce Teague UI Anthropology Department UI Center for Human Rights UI International Studies UI Office of Sustainability and the Environment Brett Cloyd and Deb Venzke Kathryn Wittneben	Mary Gregg Caryl Lyons Natasa Deb Schoelman Joy Smith UI Center for Asian and Pacific Studies Marianne Weiss	Sondra L. Smith Virginia Stamler Joyce Summerwill Deema Totah Jenifer Vick Derek and Pam Willard	Michael Johannsen Mason Koelm Enisa Kuburas-Kazacic Mary Jo Langhorne David Leshtz Elizabeth Loeb Curtis Lundy Paul McAndrew
<b>\$2,000 to \$2,499</b>		<b>\$150 to \$199</b>	<b>Up to \$99</b>	<b>David Supp-Montgomerie</b>
Stanley Center for Peace and Security		Elizabeth Bergeron Brett Cloyd Nick and Kay Colangelo Lucy Gamon Peter and Katy Hansen Dennis Preslicka Joanna and Al Sinnwell Sharon Stalkfleet	Rima Afifi Ellen Alexander Kristi Abuissa Kirsten Kumpf Baele	Becky Svatos Ron Terrill Judith Trepka Joan Vanden Berg Mary Beth Versgrove Daniel Vorwerk Joel Wells Amanda West Jaeda Wilson
<b>\$1,500 to \$1,999</b>				<b>Kathy Maxey</b>
Rick and Jean Dobyns Kathryn Lasansky Carrie Z. Norton Liz and Alan Swanson				
<b>\$1,000 to \$1,499</b>	<b>\$300 to \$499</b>			
Robert Brooks Ken Brown Linda and Ed Farkas Barbara Beaumont and Kurt Hamann Donna Hirst Janet Lyness Dave Martin Kevin and Julie Monson Neumann Monson Architects Thais Winkleblack	FilmScene Sunday Goshit Margaret Kiekhaefer EunJung Kim Russelle Leggett James and Mary McCue Janice Weiner Gary and LaDonna Wicklund			

*"This is public diplomacy in action."*

— THAIS WINKLEBLACK

*"Global education is not a trend.  
It is a public good."*

— PETER GERLACH

## Iowa City Foreign Relations Council

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ICFRC is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization

**icfrc.org**

WHERE GLOBAL ISSUES AND LOCAL IMPACT MEET IN IOWA

