



worldoregon.org | 503.306.5252
1207 SW Broadway, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97205-2909

WorldOregon Seeks to Serve More Rural, Local Communities by Leveraging Federal Grants

WorldOregon, previously known as the World Affairs Council of Oregon, was founded in 1950 to connect Oregon with the world. Over the past 75 years, WorldOregon's mission to broaden and deepen public awareness, engagement, and understanding of international affairs has engaged Oregonians with the world, and with each other.

To that end, in collaboration with the U.S. Department of State, WorldOregon brings hundreds of international visitors to Oregon each year to connect, learn, and engage with local communities to strengthen cultural and economic ties. In FY2023 alone, WorldOregon hosted 361 global leaders through the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). The \$140,347 in federal funds we received to administer the program generated nearly **\$1.5 million** in local spending across Oregon's hotels, restaurants, transportation sector, and retail stores—an impressive **11-to-1 return on investment** for the local economy.

Additionally, the international visitors we bring to Oregon are often future leaders in private, public, and nonprofit sectors in key countries. They open doors for increased business and trade ties and meaningful people-to-people exchange. Importantly, our programs position Oregon as a shining example for thought leaders from around the globe.

WorldOregon requests \$500,000 in state funding this biennium to leverage federal funding and extend our work statewide. Our current federal funding is at great risk due to federal budget challenges and spending freezes. State funding is essential to help make these international connections statewide.

State funding would allow WorldOregon to leverage additional federal funding to expand our outreach and programming in rural and micropolitan areas. By partnering with local K-12 schools, small businesses, and community leaders, we can provide these communities with the same economic benefits and global exposure.

WorldOregon works extensively with state economic development partners such as Business Oregon, the Oregon Department of Agriculture, the Port of Portland, and Travel Oregon. We also work hand-in-hand with Oregon public and private universities and numerous local and regional partners from the private, public, and nongovernmental sectors.

The Legislature's investment in WorldOregon is a win-win-win: leverages federal funds, brings world-class opportunities to rural Oregon, and provides a meaningful economic boost to local communities.