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**U.S. Department of State**

**English Language Programs**

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### **Sophia Romanic selected by U.S. Department of State for Prestigious Virtual English Language Teaching Fellowship**

The U.S. Department of State announced the selection of Westcliff University alumna Sophia Romanic for a virtual fellowship, engaging with English language learners and teachers online in Ukraine at Zaporizhzhya National University. Romanic is among the first to be selected for the Virtual English Language Fellow Program, a new program created for the 2020-2021 academic year.

Sophia graduated summa cum laude from Westcliff University in 2016 with her M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL). Her experience teaching abroad through the Hungarian Ministry of Education at an international kindergarten and bilingual high school in Budapest, Hungary inspired her to pursue graduate studies in TESOL and then, in 2019, to begin her Ph.D. in Applied Linguistics at Hellenic American University in Athens, Greece. Sophia continues to work in distance education as an Assistant Professor with the Westcliff University College of Education as well as in course development, instructional design, and one-to-one tutoring with international adult IELTS and business English students. Her project in Ukraine will focus on working with the ZNU Foreign Languages Department introducing English courses for students majoring in all fields to make the graduates more competitive in the job market. She will be teaching communicative English and writing to undergraduate students, English for Academic Purposes to graduate students, conducting weekly speaking clubs focused on American culture, and participating in a regional training webinar for 700 in-service teachers and professors across Eurasia.

The English Language Fellow Program is the premier opportunity for experienced teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) to enact meaningful and sustainable changes in the way that English is taught abroad, and is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) with funding provided by the U.S. government. Through projects developed by U.S. Embassies in more than 80 countries, Fellows work with local teachers, students, and educational professionals to improve the quality of English language instruction offered at prestigious universities, other academic institutions, and cultural centers.

Since 1969, the English Language Fellow Program has sent thousands of TESOL scholars and educators abroad to promote English language learning, enhance English teaching capacity, and foster mutual understanding between the U.S. and other countries through cultural exchange. These projects are challenging and the teachers selected represent the best of the U.S. TESOL community.



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Due to the global pandemic, in-person Fellow assignments overseas are temporarily paused. The new Virtual English Language Fellow program was created to allow American TESOL professionals to continue to share their expertise internationally and to gain international professional experience even at a time they are unable to travel. These projects provide unique opportunities to continue to serve partner institutions abroad, to foster cultural exchange in a new way, and to offer professional development for program participants.

English Language Fellows are among the more than 50,000 individuals participating in U.S. Department of State exchange programs each year. The Fellow Program is administered by the Center for Intercultural Education and Development at Georgetown University.

For further information about the [English Language Fellow Program](#) or the U.S. Department of State, please visit our [website](#) or contact us by e-mail at [ECA-Press@state.gov](mailto:ECA-Press@state.gov).