

## OPPORTUNITIES TO ENGAGE PROFESSIONALLY OUTSIDE OF THE CLASSROOM

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Language teaching professionals have many opportunities for professional development that are outside of the classroom and school. Although the cost can sometimes limit participation in some organizations, local organizations and resources found on the Internet offer many ways to become involved where teachers can find options locally, internationally, and digitally.

This week's Teacher's Corner shares a comprehensive list of organizations, groups, and resources for language teaching professionals to engage and participate beyond their classrooms.

### PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Becoming a member in professional organizations is a great way for teachers to participate in professional development on a global level. Membership in the larger, international organizations can give access to publications and research, grant funding, and conferences and conventions that bring together professionals from all over the world. Smaller, regional organizations often offer the chance for teachers to connect with colleagues who understand the particular issues facing the schools, teachers, and learners in their region.

[TESOL International Association](#) is an international professional organization, and perhaps the largest on this list, that serves teachers, teacher trainers, researchers, and students in teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages.

[Local TESOL Affiliates](#) are listed on the TESOL website. Affiliate organizations are in almost every country around the world and provide a local connection for professionals.

[americanenglish.state.gov](http://americanenglish.state.gov)

[AAAL](#) is the American Association for Applied Linguistics. While the organization focuses on language acquisition issues for all languages, there is a significant amount of attention, focus, and research on English language teaching and learning.

[ACTFL](#), the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, provides a number of valuable resources and connections for teachers of all foreign languages. This would include professionals teaching English in foreign language settings.

[ILA](#) is the International Literacy Association and focuses on literacy education around the world.

[LESLLA](#), Literacy Education and Second Language Learning for Adults, brings together professionals interested in teaching adult language learners.

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### PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGE AND ONLINE LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

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Teaching and research exchange opportunities give teachers a chance to immerse themselves in new language teaching and learning contexts.

[The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs](#), in the U.S. Department of State, has a complete list of all of their exchange opportunities that are available to non-U.S. citizens. The programs below have differing application and qualification requirements so read the instructions carefully before applying:

- [American English Webinars](#) offers webinar programming for English language teachers around the world. Topics range from teaching strategies to classroom management to related research topics. Previously-recorded webinars can be found [here](#), and live ones are held on the [American English for Educators Facebook Page](#).
- The [American English E-Teacher Program](#) offers English teaching professionals the opportunity to take online university-level classes related to English language teaching and learning.
- The [Fulbright Foreign Student Program](#) offers young professionals and students opportunities to study and conduct research in the United States.

- The [Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship Program](#) is an exchange program for mid-career professionals from around the world to come to the U.S. to study and collaborate with professional colleagues.

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## ONLINE GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES

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Social media has made teacher collaboration even easier for English teachers everywhere. Teachers can join an online group and become a member in a professional teaching community. This list of resources shares a small portion of what is available to English teaching professionals.

- [American English for Educators on Facebook](#) is a Facebook page that provides selected content in a community forum for American English teachers.
- [Dave's ESL Café Teacher Forums](#) is part of Dave's ESL Café website, which is a longtime source of activities, lesson ideas, and professional teaching tips. The teacher forums are facilitated group discussions covering a range of English teaching topics.
- [TESOL Communities of Practice](#) are limited to TESOL members, but the main page is a great way to understand what Communities of Practice are online and how to find (or start) one that works for you.

If teachers in your area are unsure where to start, try some of the resources listed here or contact the [Regional English Language Officer](#) (RELO) from the U.S. Department of State in your area. RELOs can connect you to local professional organizations in your area. Additionally, consider submitting articles to journals such as [English Teaching Forum](#) as a way to become more involved in the field and build your professional résumé.