

Elise S. Ahn, Ph.D.

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PROFILE

23 years of work in the higher education sector. 20+ years' experience in designing evaluations, along with managing and reporting on complex collaborative research and applied research projects in various international contexts including Türkiye, Kazakhstan, Sri Lanka, Botswana, Guyana, and throughout Central Asia and the EU. 20+ years reviewing international grants and scholarship applications for foundations, non-profit organizations, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). 14 years engaging in international education with a focus on policy analysis, teacher and administrator training, and project and partnership development. 9+ years in developing institution-to-institution capacity building and systems strengthening-focused partnerships globally with universities, NGOs, foundations, government ministries, and public institutions.

14+ years convening and coordinating campus-wide teams around work focusing on international education and capacity building. Managed large, diverse teams of academic and administrative staff in both U.S. and international contexts and completed various management and communication trainings. Areas of expertise include internationalization of (higher) education, sociology of language and education, migration, development, and program evaluation. 24+ years of writing for diverse audiences with an established publication record. Demonstrated ability to successfully develop and obtain funding for research and capacity building/enriching projects from both public and private funding bodies. Consistent evidence of progressive responsibility and leadership development throughout career.

EDUCATION AND SELECT AWARDS

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.)

Fulbright-Schumann Awardee (European Union)

U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship (Language: Turkish)

EMPLOYMENT EXPERIENCES

University of Wisconsin–Madison International Projects Office (IPO), *Founding Director* 2017–*present*

- Oversee staffing and management of the IPO team, along with partnership/project faculty advisors and directors, including budget and hiring oversight, communications strategy, staff professional development and strategic planning
- Successfully proposed and administered international projects and partnerships for UW–Madison generating over \$18 million USD in revenue
- Convened cross-campus multi-school/college groups involving over 440+ colleagues (faculty, staff, students) to develop and implement multidisciplinary capacity building and systems strengthening projects with an international focus spanning higher education administration, global health, engineering, entrepreneurship education and technology transfer, and environmental conservation
- Developed and contributed as evaluation project co-lead examining the impact of individual grantmaking at the Open Society Foundations from 1992–2003 (2022–2023)
- Convened and led the development of a 41 chapter scholar-practitioner volume on internationalization at UW (*Wisconsin in the World: Internationalization at the University of Wisconsin–Madison*), which involved representatives from 8 schools/colleges/divisions, 24 units, 3 student organizations, 5 community partners, and involved 90 contributors—see project page for endorsements from 3 U.S. ambassadors, thought leaders in the field, and faculty
- Collaboratively created a successful marketing and advocacy campaign regarding international engagement at UW–Madison focused on reaching different stakeholder groups
- Served on various campus-level strategic planning and review committees—General Data Protection Regulations, Higher Education Act 117, unit reviews, International Division dean's review, and International Division dean and vice provost and chief of staff search committees
- Served as elected co-chair of a UW shared governance committee focusing on campus diversity and climate issues (2022–2024), produced recommendations to the chancellor and provost's office resulting in an Indigenous student scholarship promise program, along with advocating in other key priority areas

- Co-facilitated an ad hoc working group as the UW representative which developed a white paper for the APLU Commission on International Initiatives regarding increased higher education engagement and USAID (2022)

Key accomplishments

- Expanded IPO's partners and the number of contracts in six years and diversified its partnership ecosystem to include U.S. federal agencies, foreign government ministries, foundations, and other higher education institutions
- Proposed a capacity building approach that adopted by the U.S. Embassy in Kazakhstan's small grants team regarding higher education capacity building
- Developed a theory of change regarding institutional partnership building approaches which was a finalist for the NAFSA Paul Simon Campus Internationalization Spotlight award (2021)
- Awarded the International Division staff excellence award (2020)

UW–Madison Educational Policy Studies Department, *Lecturer* 2021–present

UW–Madison Partnership with Nazarbayev University, *Project Manager* 2016–2017

KIMEP University, *Lecturer* Summer 2021

- Taught M.A. and Ph.D. level seminar on program evaluation

Edgewood College, *Adjunct Lecturer and Dissertation Writing Advisor* 2016–2021

- Taught doctoral level courses on topics like internationalization of higher education administration, privatization of public higher education, and research methods

University of Melbourne Center for Programme Evaluation, *Teaching Tutor* 2016–2018

- Team taught an on-line course on program evaluation practice

KIMEP University, *Assistant Professor/ Graduate Program Administrator* 2011–2016

- Administered the day-to-day operations for a graduate program in teaching English to speakers of other languages
- Reorganized the graduate program's operational and academic procedures and policies resulting in successfully matriculating students from the program starting from Spring 2012
- Coordinated preparation activities for three external graduate program reviews, which were awarded full international program accreditation by three different agencies
- Developed curriculum for and facilitated 30+ undergraduate and graduate seminars on topics including urbanization, globalization, global citizenship, research methods, writing, program evaluation and language/linguistics

Open Society Foundations, *Lecturer and Scholarship and Grants Reviewer* 2016–2019

- Facilitated a summer seminar on globalization and education for foundation scholarship recipients
- Reviewed grants for various scholarship and research grant competitions

SELECT GRANT/PROGRAM MANAGEMENT AND CONSULTING EXPERIENCES

Fulbright-Hays Graduate Research Program Award, *Grant Reviewer* 2023, 2024

American Councils for International Education, *Trainer* 2020, 2022

UNICEF Consultancy, *International Independent Evaluator* 2016

World Bank and Higher School of Education, *Primary Investigator* 2014–2015

U.S. Embassy Regional English Language Office, *Program Administrator* 2015

Norwegian Institute of International Affairs, *Co-Primary Investigator* 2014

International Research Exchange & Exchanges Board, *Grant Reviewer/ Interviewer* 2011–2013

U.S. Department of State (Uzbekistan), *Fulbright Grant Reviewer* 2011

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Additional Languages: Korean, Turkish, Russian and Kazakh (beginner) **Trainings:** Northwestern University School of Professional Studies courses (grant writing, project evaluation); UW–Madison Principles of Supervision and Management training; Big Ten Academic Alliance Professional Development Program; UW Kauffmann Seminar for emerging campus leaders; The UW Discussion Project