STARTALK SUMMER INSTITUTE
FOR TEACHERS OF RUSSIAN • SUMMER 2014

Frequently Asked Questions

Application

When is the application due?
The application and resume/curriculum vitae, submitted via email to Evgeny Dengub at edengub@middlebury.edu, are both due by 5:00 pm on May 1, 2014.

When will we hear back?
You will receive a confirmation upon submission. Acceptance results will be announced via email on or before May 11, 2014.

Can I apply if I am not a US citizen or permanent resident?
Yes. The program is open to anyone currently teaching or planning to teach Russian in the United States.

Room and Board

Will housing be provided?
Yes. All participants will be staying in dorm rooms at the Davis School of Russian at Middlebury College, among Russian School students and instructors. Russian School housing includes a mix of single and double rooms. If you are selected as a participant, we will ask you to submit a rooming form, which will help us assign you to appropriate housing.

Can we find our own housing if we want?
It is strongly recommended that everyone stay in the dormitories, as 24/7 Russian communication is an essential part of the full language immersion experience.

Will meals be provided?
Yes. Three meals a day will be provided to all participants at a Middlebury College dining hall. For those who request it, special diet meals are readily available, including vegan, gluten-free, or kosher meals. Vegetarian options are provided at every meal. There are also several restaurants and cafes in town, however these expenses are not included in the funding.

What should we bring?
Summers can often be hot, you may want to bring a fan, especially if you plan to drive or take a train to Vermont. You will find a list of items provided in the dorm rooms here.
Logistics

When should I arrive and leave?
We ask that you arrive on **Sunday, July 20**, at any time of day, and depart on **Wednesday, August 6**, also at any time of day. All participants are required to take part in the introductory webinar prior to arrival (see details below).

How do we get to Middlebury, Vermont?
All participants will be offered reimbursement for transportation up to $250. Receipts and documentation must be saved and provided for reimbursement to occur. From the airport, transportation will be available at certain times throughout the day, although this may require you to wait for the next trip. In order to coordinate these trips, we ask that you send us your arrival and departure date and time as soon as possible, so that we can find the best times to meet groups at the airport.

If you do not want to join one of the groups, you can also find public transportation from the airport. Taxis are readily available, but because of the distance (about 35 miles or 1 hour), they can be expensive. A list of transportation options can be found [here](#).

Amtrak provides train service to Essex Jct., VT, as well as Port Henry, NY, and Rutland or Castleton, VT, from Washington DC, New York, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. You can find more details about the Amtrak routes to Vermont [here](#).

If you are driving to Vermont or renting a car from the airport, you will find driving directions [here](#). If you will have a car on campus, please [register](#) it ahead of time with Public Safety and park only in designated lots.

Language Pledge

What is the Language Pledge?
All Language School students agree to abide by the Language Pledge, a formal commitment to speak, listen, read, and write exclusively in the language of study throughout the summer session. It is the foundation of all of our intensive immersion programs. While some of the seminars may be held in English, we ask that participants speak Russian at all times outside of those specific seminars. This is crucial not only to the success of the Startalk Institute, but also to the other students attending the Russian School over the summer. Therefore, all communication with Russian School students, instructors, administrators, and fellow Startalk Institute participants must be only in Russian, even when off campus or after the working day.

Academics

Will I receive credit for participating in the Startalk Institute?
Yes. Participants will register for the course RUSS 6001, a non-degree Russian graduate course valued at one course unit of credit. One Middlebury course unit is typically treated as the equivalent of 3 credits (semester hours) when transferred.
What work will be expected of me?
Participants should expect a heavy workload. Because of the intensive nature of the program, we will assign roughly 3 hours of homework on a daily basis.

What is the webinar?
Before the beginning of the program, participants will be required to take part in a webinar. It will take place between two and three weeks before the program start date.
The purpose of this webinar is to familiarize participants with the foundational principles of second language acquisition and teaching pedagogy before the program, so that classroom time is not spent on this material. Participants will be assigned readings that should be completed before arriving at Middlebury.

Life at Middlebury

What is Middlebury like?
Middlebury is a beautiful, small, historic town in northeastern Vermont. It has cafés, shops, restaurants, bars, parks, libraries, and a post office, all within walking distance from campus. Just a short drive from campus, there are hiking trails, lakes, waterfalls, and larger grocery stores and pharmacies. Weather during the summer is typically warm, though rain is to be expected. It would be wise to bring an umbrella, close-toed shoes, and at least one waterproof jacket.

Is there a gym?
Yes, Middlebury College has a gym that is available to all participants of the Startalk Institute. There are several running tracks on campus, as well as an indoor pool.

Will we have free time?
Yes, evenings and weekends will be free, although you will have homework. During this time, you are strongly encouraged to socialize with other participants and Russian school students and instructors. But please follow the Language Pledge during these times as well.

What types of activities are available?
The Russian School has a rich cultural program available to all who wish to participate. On a weekly basis, students can watch Russian movies, participate in clubs (crafts, cooking, yoga, literature salons, poetry nights, etc.), play on the volleyball or soccer team, attend guest lectures, go to Russian parties, sing karaoke, and much more. As a teacher in training, it is strongly recommended that you interact with the Russian school students as much as possible (but only in Russian, of course).