



A Better, More Peaceful Understanding of Waste

No lead-in needed for this one. The **Department of State is spending \$90,000 to promote better understanding between the U.S. andwait for it....the United Kingdom.**

According to the grant solicitation, the successful recipient shall make sub-awards of between \$250 and \$40,000 to facilitate among other things, student and faculty exchange, speakers, and film and art programs.¹ We do not recommend sharing *The Patriot*.

The U.S. Embassy in London justifies this grant under the Mutual Educational and Cultural Exchange Act of 1961, quoting, “to enable the Government of the United States to increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries... and **thus to assist in the development of friendly, sympathetic, and peaceful relations between the United States and other countries of the world.**”²

Promoting peaceful relations? While it is true that the United States and the United Kingdom had a rocky start to our relationship, after more than a century of alliance it is probably safe to say we are on pretty good terms with our friends across the pond. **You might even say we have a “special relationship,”** as Winston Churchill did in his famous 1946 “Iron Curtain” speech and has been repeated by leaders from both countries ever since.³

Don’t take our word for it, **according to the same Department of State that is funding this project, “The United States has no closer ally than the United Kingdom...** Bilateral cooperation reflects the common language, ideals, and democratic practices of the two nations.” In other words, they are our best friend and we have a lot in common.

In fact Britons seem to already have a favorable opinion of our two nations’ relationship. A 2010 survey found 66 percent of Britons had a favorable opinion of the U.S. and 62 percent consider us to be their strongest ally.⁴ This is pretty remarkable when you consider that Canada and Australia are still *Commonwealth Realms*– autonomous nations that still recognize the Queen of England as their monarch.

With the internet, YouTube, and 24-hour news, if anything, we probably understand each other more now than ever before. Not to mention that approximately **4 million Brits (6 percent of their population) visit the United States each year**⁵ and 3 million Americans visit the UK.⁶ Heck, even the NFL is playing American football in the UK and talking about a team based there.⁷

At least we’re not paying to send Brits to Space Camp...We Hope.

¹ *Promoting a Better Understanding of the United States through American Studies*, U.S. Embassy – London; London, United Kingdom, January 2016. Funding Opportunity No: DOS-London-PD-2016-01

² Ibid

³ *A Point of View: Churchill and the birth of the special relationship*, British Broadcasting Company- Magazine, London, United Kingdom, March 2012 <http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-17272610>

⁴ INBODEN, WILLIAM AND ARONSSON, LISA; *Obama and the 'Special Relationship'*, The Wall Street Journal; New York, NY; May 2010

⁵ *2014 Market Profile: United Kingdom*; National Travel and Tourism Office, U.S. Department of Commerce – International Trade Administration; Washington, DC. 2014

⁶ *Travel trends: 2014*; United Kingdom Office of National Statistics, Newport, South Wales, United Kingdom. 2014

⁷ Breer, Alber, *London team by 2022? NFL continues to forge forward in U.K.*; NFL.com; New York, NY. October 2015