



**ANSWERING THE
GENERATION STUDY
ABROAD CHALLENGE**



A **CIEE** ACTION PAPER

ANSWERING THE GENERATION STUDY ABROAD CHALLENGE

Last March, the Institute of International Education launched Generation Study Abroad™ – a five-year initiative that aims to double the number of U.S. students studying overseas.

CIEE has embraced this challenge. Drawing on our 68-year history of innovation, practical solutions and sustained dedication to international learning and cultural exchange, we've pledged to address each of the main barriers to study abroad – cost, curriculum, and culture – with action-oriented programs.

We've started with a commitment to provide \$20 million in scholarships and grants, plus 10,000 free student passports by 2020. That's a solid beginning, but by no means the end of the story. We'll unroll more exciting programs over the next several years.

We're confident that the education community also will rally to meet IIE's challenge, and we'll work together swiftly and decisively. We hope you'll join us.



James P. Pellow
James P. Pellow, Ed.D.
President &
Chief Executive Officer



CIEE FOCUSES ON CREATING WAYS TO INCREASE PARTICIPATION IN STUDY ABROAD



Dr. Allan Goodman



At CIEE's annual conference in November in Baltimore, we hosted Dr. Allan Goodman of the Institute of International Education (IIE). With IIE's Generation Study Abroad™ initiative, Goodman has challenged the industry to increase the number of American students studying abroad to 600,000 by the end of the decade.

We invited our conference participants to be part of the solution. Guided by industry experts, many participants took part in a series of lively roundtable discussions to brainstorm about ways to help students surmount critical the barriers that prevent them from studying abroad: **COST**, **CURRICULUM**, and **CULTURE**. Discussion group participants were divided into three groups to focus on each of those three obstacles.

We're happy to share a summary of the results here. We hope the ideas generated in Baltimore spark more dialogue within our community and meaningful action that ultimately makes studying abroad an integral part of our educational system.

DISCUSSION POINT:

COST



BACKGROUND

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For many students and their families, the cost of studying abroad can be prohibitive, even when they recognize the immense educational and personal value of international learning. By making study abroad more affordable, we'll not only attract more students we'll attract a broader, more representative cross-section of the population, including students of diverse social and economic backgrounds.

The cost of a study abroad program is driven by many factors, including program length, location, travel expenses, number of students participating, and program design. Other cost components include faculty visits, excursions, and on-site infrastructure.

COST

THE CHALLENGE

How can members of the study-abroad community effectively address a multitude of cost factors to increase the number of students that go abroad, decrease overall program costs, and maintain a high level of program quality?



TO ADDRESS THIS QUESTION, 128 participants broke into 12 groups to strategize.



THE CHALLENGE

How can members of the study-abroad community effectively address a multitude of cost factors to increase the number of students that go abroad, decrease overall program costs, and maintain a high level of program quality?

THE SOLUTIONS

Increase Financial Aid/Scholarships

- Work with aid offices to create financial-aid packages earmarked for study abroad programs. Where applicable, change institutional policy to allow financial aid to apply to studying abroad, as well as on-campus study.
- Encourage schools to offer exchange-student scholarships, which ideally would be reciprocated by international academic partners.
- Encourage donors to make scholarships available to schools, rather than individuals, enabling groups to travel and study abroad.
- Publicize study abroad aid that's already available, and better encourage schools to take advantage of it.
- Broadly publicize government grants and subsidies for international study. Urge congressional representatives to support additional government funding for international learning exchange.

Enlist Donations

- Aggressively pursue corporate funding and scholarships for qualified students who need help to study abroad.
- Tap into crowdsourcing to fund individual students or to create a pool of funds for international study.
- Solicit donations from alumni specifically dedicated to study abroad programs. Encourage high-profile donors and businesses to create trusts or scholarship programs for international study.
- Encourage businesses to create financial-aid matching grants. Businesses with internship programs also might create internships abroad, perhaps with company-funded living expenses.



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THE SOLUTIONS (continued)

Reduce On-Site Costs

- Create more flexible, more cost-conscious programs; for example, offer economical housing alternatives, or rethink what's "required" on excursions.
- Consolidate staffing resources on-site by utilizing local personnel.
- Create customized programs with limited on-site services, or an à la carte menu of services that students can select based on needs, interests, and cost.
- Share university/community space to reduce facilities costs.

Reduce Travel Costs

- Partner with airlines, businesses, and alumni groups to create a mileage bank and solicit donations of frequent-flier miles for students in need.
- Provide airfare scholarships for students embarking on their first international experience.
- Make it easy and inexpensive for students to obtain passports. Simplify the passport application process by providing free passport photos at freshman orientation or when receiving student IDs.
- Offer scholarships to waive or reduce passport fees, or take advantage of available assistance such as CIEE's new program that will cover the cost of 10,000 new student passports.

THE SOLUTIONS (continued)

Develop More Flexible Programs

- Provide increased support for interdisciplinary programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences.
- Encourage both language and non-language majors to participate in for-credit language-exchange programs.
- Develop realistic, cost-aware guidelines for identifying costs and budgeting new programs, and disseminate this information on websites, at national conferences, and at other industry meetings.

Build Collaborative Financial Relationships

- Establish flexible partnerships with universities to reduce tuition costs for students studying abroad.
- Encourage four-year colleges to partner with community colleges to promote study abroad through coalition-building, seamless credit transfer, and shared administrative and academic resources.
- Reduce costs to students by getting the institution and provider to jointly underwrite a portion of study abroad expenses.
- Encourage providers to negotiate costs based on the number of students an institution sends abroad – the more participants, the lower the cost per student.



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HAVE ANOTHER IDEA TO SHARE?

We'd love to hear it, and so would your colleagues. Add your thoughts and become part of the conversation.

DISCUSSION POINT:
CURRICULUM



BACKGROUND

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Rigorous degree requirements, accreditation standards, rigid core curricula, lab requirements, and practicums often tether students to their home campuses and prevent them from taking advantage of study-abroad opportunities. Fortunately, many of these issues can be overcome, either on an institutional or case-by-case basis.

CURRICULUM

THE CHALLENGE

How can we work more closely with accrediting bodies, faculty, curriculum committees, and university and college administrators to increase the number of international and experiential opportunities available to undergraduates?



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THE CHALLENGE

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THE SOLUTIONS

Make it Easier to Transfer Credits

- Encourage providers and academic partners to establish a course-equivalency database, allowing certain study abroad courses to apply toward degree requirements.
- Establish a catalog of universal preapproved core and general education courses that can be completed abroad.
- Encourage larger universities to partner with community colleges to provide credits and support for study abroad.
- Develop a uniform way to transfer credits within the United States and extend this to study abroad courses.
- Encourage more cooperation among providers in the area of courses and curriculum.
- Work with key departments on campus – for example, STEM and pre-med – to match curricula with opportunities at international institutions.
- Use curriculum mapping to help identify cross-departmental study abroad opportunities, as well as to save time and money.
- Clarify guidelines and requirements for credit transfer, and audit courses students are taking to ensure credit is transferred to the home institution.

THE SOLUTIONS (continued)

Institute More-Flexible Programs

- Develop and promote accredited summer and short-term programs.
- Reduce language barriers by offering English courses in non-English-speaking countries.
- Encourage academic partners to give credit for service work such as Peace Corps or Red Cross work abroad.
- Take advantage of distance-learning technology to create customized programming that blends face-to-face and online learning, allowing students to fulfill certain requirements while abroad.
- Consider “gateway programs,” in which freshman go abroad before becoming involved in campus life.

Emphasize Postgraduate and Career Programs

- Where academically appropriate, include undergraduate abroad experience as a requirement for graduate-degree programs.
- Partner with career services offices to tailor study abroad opportunities that dovetail with employers’ desires for international business skills and experience.
- Partner with international nongovernmental organizations and other relief organizations to create for-credit internships that align with degree programs.



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THE SOLUTIONS (continued)

Build Study Abroad Into Curriculum

- Structure two-part degree programs – one part at a home campus and one at an international institution.
- Embed international experience into the degree-program requirements, and offer alternative curriculum maps, for example, “You can go to country ‘x,’ ‘y,’ or ‘z’ to fulfill this requirement.”
- Expand curricula to include a required summer session abroad.
- Establish full-credit internships or graduate school assistance for study abroad.

DISCUSSION POINT: **CULTURE**



BACKGROUND

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Without personal support and encouragement from family, peer groups, and trusted advisors, it's unlikely that any but the most highly motivated students would consider studying abroad. It's a big decision or it simply isn't on the radar.

To make study abroad the norm in higher education, we must enlist the help of key influencers along all students' paths, including middle and secondary-school educators, language teachers, guidance counselors, advisors, friends, family, and faculty.

CULTURE

THE CHALLENGE

How can we work more effectively with these influencers to ensure that more students consider study abroad a standard component of higher education? Which groups are the most important to influence? What do they need from us to help encourage students to participate?



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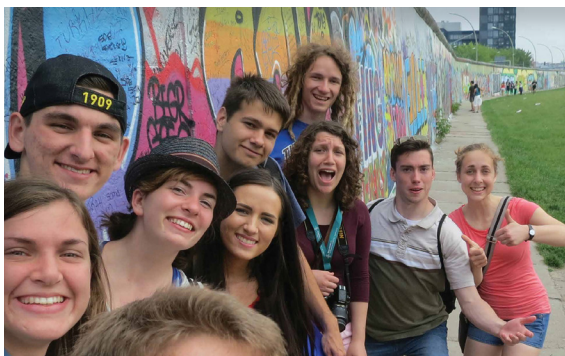
THE SOLUTIONS

Expose Students to the Idea Early

- Elementary school is not too soon for students to start hearing about study abroad through language courses, guest speakers, pen pals, and the Internet.
- High school summer abroad and exchange programs are a great way to make study abroad a regular part of student vocabulary.
- Actively support high school Upward Bound and Head Start programs as ways to gain international experience.
- Train high school counselors and freshman advisors to talk about study abroad in terms of “when” not “if.”
- Break stereotypes by directly addressing myths and fears about studying abroad.

Increase the Visibility of Study-Abroad Programs

- Work with the media to promote the personal and educational value of cross-cultural experiences.
- Encourage political leaders and public figures to actively champion study abroad.
- Make sure that study-abroad information is broadly disseminated campus-wide. For examples, situate the study abroad office in the student union or another central location, host a booth during orientation week, and make sure that study abroad is discussed during intro-level classes and in the school newspaper.
- Develop TED Talks about the value of international study experiences.
- Offer virtual tours of study-abroad programs.



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THE SOLUTIONS (continued)

Actively Enlist Advisors and Faculty Members as Advocates

- Encourage faculty who have done study abroad programs to get others involved.
- Encourage university presidents and other academic thought-leaders to publically support study-abroad initiatives.
- Inform and get every office on campus involved in study abroad by hosting events and training for advisors, career services, faculty, and financial-aid counselors.
- Encourage faculty members and advisors to work together to meet course requirements.
- Provide training for academic advisors, such as site visits and seminars with study-abroad office staff members, and consider additional incentives.
- Develop short-term, faculty-led programs that would appeal to STEM students and athletes.
- Empower advisors to discuss study-abroad costs. Educate them about available sources of financial aid.
- Reach out to nontraditional study-abroad audiences – minorities, commuter students, students at branch campuses, disadvantaged socioeconomic groups, and students with disabilities.

Get Family and Friends on Board

- Host orientation events to introduce parents to study abroad; include discussions about finances and available aid.
- Create opportunities for parents and friends to participate in the international experience via blogs, websites, social media, photo pages, etc.
- Offer incentives that encourage students to enroll in programs with friends.
- Create social media campaigns to increase awareness of international-study opportunities at campus and sorority/fraternity levels.



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THE SOLUTIONS (continued)

Provide Accessible Programs for Athletes

- Collaborate with the National Collegiate Athletic Association to ensure that athletes don't lose scholarships if they participate in study abroad programs.
- Educate coaches and athletes about sports opportunities abroad and encourage exchanges with international institutions.
- Invite athletes and physical education and sports management majors to investigate summer coaching and training opportunities abroad.

Recruit Study Abroad Alumni to Motivate Students

- Use alumni – preferably of diverse backgrounds – as peer advisors, mentors and study abroad ambassadors, at both college and secondary-school levels.
- Set up a “buddy system,” and have students who are studying abroad share experiences with potential participants via Skype, photo albums, and email.



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A large photograph of a group of hikers standing on a grassy hillside, looking out over a vast landscape. The hikers are silhouetted against the bright sky. In the background, there are rolling hills and a body of water under a sky filled with large, white clouds. The text "THE WORLD IS OUR CLASSROOM. JOIN US." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

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