



Why You Should Study Abroad

YOUR GUIDE TO STUDY ABROAD

2021-2022 ACADEMIC YEAR



Why You Should Go Abroad

- 3 Introduction
- 4 Benefits of Global Experiences
- 6 Get the Financial Support You Need
- 8 How Will You Be Perceived Abroad?
- 10 Take Your Next Steps to Study Abroad



Brought to you by DiversityAbroad.com

Sponsored by IES Abroad

Copyright © 2021 by Diversity Abroad. All rights reserved.

The world is getting smaller. To thrive in it, you should know how to navigate across various cultures, communicate in one or more languages other than your native language, and interact with people different from you. To truly excel in this increasingly global society, you should consider spending time in another country during your college or university career.

Studying abroad allows you to immerse yourself in another culture, learn or enhance language skills, launch lifelong pursuits, make lasting friendships, and gain an invaluable edge in an increasingly competitive global job market. While studying abroad, you can earn college credit by enrolling in courses that fulfill general graduation requirements or specific major- or minor-related requirements. Additionally, community based learning, internship, and volunteer opportunities are available. Best of all, you can have this invaluable life experience and still graduate on time!

More than ever, many U.S. undergrads like you are exploring the inextricably linked aspects of their own identities in relation to their perceived place and potential in modern U.S. society. Venturing beyond our borders can be powerful as the next step on your own personal journey of heightened or budding self-awareness. Studying abroad can underscore how the intersections of your race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomics, country of origin, and other identities may influence how others around the world engage with you.



Disclaimer: With the unpredictability of COVID-19 and the impact it has had across the world, please be mindful to take into consideration how COVID-19 protocols and restrictions may impact you and the country you hope to explore abroad.

Benefits of Global Experiences



Benefits of Global Experiences | Students who study, intern, volunteer, or work abroad discover that stepping outside of their cultures and immersing themselves in another country's cultures influences their careers, increases their self-confidence, enhances their intercultural understanding and engagement, and builds lifelong friendships.

Ignite Your Education / Academic Benefits | After studying or interning abroad, most students view their educational interests, as well as the privileges of learning, through a very different lens. Studying abroad often leads to new academic interests, an even stronger dedication to academic studies, and a reinforced commitment to world language study. Students often return as strong advocates for increased access to learning beyond the classroom for all students. Studying abroad also gives you a competitive edge when applying to graduate school programs.

Launch Your Career / Professional Benefits | Your experiences abroad can greatly influence the career path you choose. Including global experiences like study or intern abroad programs on your résumé can enhance your employability across a wide range of professional sectors — even in careers that are not obviously “global” (i.e., elementary school teacher or veterinarian). More and more employers seek candidates who have successfully navigated new and diverse communities, are knowledgeable of current events around the world, and can work effectively in an increasingly interconnected global workplace.

Not only are internships abroad an ideal way to experience local culture in the workplace and improve foreign language skills, but they provide unique experiences that can strengthen your résumé, making you more marketable in the eyes of employers, both in the United States and abroad. Having a study abroad or internship experience gives you an advantage over your peers who do not have comparable overseas experiences.

Become a Global Citizen / Personal Benefits | Students who have studied abroad often cite their personal growth — like increased global awareness and the ability to think and live as a global citizen — as one of the most important and life-changing outcomes of their experience abroad. The opportunity to better understand your cultural values and beliefs in a new context is truly invaluable.

For more information on leveraging study abroad for graduate school admissions, visit DiversityAbroad.com/graduate-school. For more information on career opportunities after study abroad, visit DiversityAbroad.com/jobs.

Studying Abroad Will Change Your Life

According to nearly 4,000 study abroad alumni*:

96%

Indicated that studying abroad increased their self-confidence

94%

Stated that the experience continues to influence their interactions with people from different cultures

95%

Stated that study abroad has had a lasting impact on their view of the world

90%

Said that studying abroad influenced them to seek out a greater diversity of friends

87%

Claimed that studying abroad influenced subsequent educational experiences

76%

Reported that they acquired skill sets that influenced their career path

*Findings from the [IES Abroad Alumnae/i 50-year Longitudinal Study](#).

Get the Financial Support You Need



Financial Support

Studying abroad can be affordable! Alumni survey by IES Abroad showed that 60% of students receive aid to study abroad. Regardless of whom you study with, take advantage of all these forms of aid for study abroad:

Federal & State Aid

All federal aid can be used for study abroad (it's the law!). Depending on where you live and go to school, state and institutional financial aid can be used. Contact your financial aid office or study abroad office to find out more.

Scholarships & Grants

Millions of dollars in aid are available for study abroad. Visit DiversityAbroad.com for a complete directory of scholarships (diversity-related scholarships are particularly highlighted) and speak to your study abroad office to discuss further funding opportunities (ex. institutional awards).

Personal Fundraising

Another way to help finance your study abroad experience is through personal fundraising. Not only is it a way for you to earn money, it also gets your friends and family involved in your study abroad plans.

Crowd-Source Funding

Crowdfunding is a creative way to use your network to raise money for your experience abroad. These online platforms, like KickStarter, allow you to create fundraising campaigns to tell your story and use social media tools to promote your fundraising campaign to family, friends, and other people in your network.

Study Abroad Loans

After you've exhausted other ways of financing your study abroad, student loans are a great way to cover additional costs. While scholarships and grants are gifts, study abroad loans must be repaid with interest. Loans shouldn't be your first means for financing study abroad but should be an option. Remember, just like your education at your home school is an investment, your study abroad experience is an investment in your future with many benefits.

Important Links

Diversity Abroad Scholarships
DiversityAbroad.com/scholarships

IES Abroad Scholarships
IESabroad.org/study-abroad/scholarships

FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)
Studentaid.gov

Boren Awards for International Study
BorenAwards.org

Gilman International Scholarship Program
iie.org/gilman

Fund for Education Abroad
FundforEducationAbroad.org

How Will You Be Perceived Abroad?



Perceptions Abroad

Regardless of race, religion, gender, physical disability, or sexual orientation, there is a possibility that you will encounter discrimination abroad, just as you may face discrimination on your home campus or in your hometown. However, most underrepresented students report having positive experiences abroad and say people are interested in them and their culture because they are different from the American image often portrayed in the media. Don't let the possibility of discrimination stop you from experiencing the lifelong benefits of going abroad.



Questions You Should Ask Before Going Abroad

- What universal or local stereotypes exist that could affect how my ethnic group, race, or other aspect of my identity may be perceived in my host country?
- What are my preconceived notions about the people in my host country? Are they valid? How can I challenge those thoughts?
- How should I react if I find something to be offensive?
- If someone asks something I perceive as insensitive, does that mean they have bad intentions or are they just curious and inquiring in a way that may be okay in their culture?
- What can I do to influence the way people of my ethnicity are perceived in my host country?
- How will my being a member of a majority or minority group in my home country influence my experience abroad?
- Does my program have support staff who will understand and help me through any racial or discriminatory incident I may face?
- Do I have any friends or peers at my school who I can talk to about diversity abroad who also share my background and have already studied abroad?
- Are there any students from my host country at my campus who I can talk to?

Have more questions about diversity while studying abroad? Get more detailed information by visiting DiversityAbroad.com/article/diversity-and-inclusion-abroad-guide

Take Your Next Steps to Study Abroad

1. Talk with your academic advisor. Discuss your academic goals and graduation requirements with your advisor to ensure that you can successfully fit study abroad into your academic plan.

2. Visit your study abroad office. Meet with your on-campus study abroad advisor to find the right program for you—one that fits your academic, personal, and career goals.



3. Research and select your program. Select the location, program, and time you want to go abroad. Inquire about the diversity-related support on-site and what types of scholarships are available. Make sure you feel comfortable with the student services provided and that safety and crisis management are high priorities for the program provider.

4. Research funding opportunities.

Visit DiversityAbroad.com, as well as your study abroad office, for information about the many diversity, merit-, and need-based scholarships available for study abroad.

5. Research Health & Safety Protocols.

Ensure that you are aware of what actions need to be taken to ensure that your health and safety is supported in the host country. Check out the US Department of State website for special considerations for different identities, vaccination requirements and/or evacuation policies for the country you are interested in visiting.

6. Apply for your passport. Make sure you apply for your passport as soon as possible. Passport processing is taking longer than usual due to recent changes in regulations.

7. Contact your financial aid office.

Verify whether all of your financial aid will support your study abroad experience. All federal aid can be used for study abroad. Depending on where you live and go to school, state and institutional financial aid can be used, but some schools place limits on what campus scholarships will cover.

7. Plan your budget. Use the estimated fees and student expenses that program providers offer to determine in advance how to maximize your budget abroad. In addition to program cost, you must think about your lifestyle and what other fees you may incur abroad (e.g., traveling, souvenirs, dining). These estimates will help you anticipate the cost of living while you are abroad. Visit IESabroad.org/study-abroad/financing-study-abroad for budget ideas and money saving tips.

8. Prepare for an adventure. Get ready for a life-changing experience with study abroad.

Brochure Sponsors



Diversity Abroad strives to equip the next generation of young people from diverse and underserved backgrounds with the skills and experience to compete in the 21st century global marketplace by having equitable access to meaningful global education opportunities. In addition to developing and advancing diversity and inclusive good practices in international education and cultural exchange, Diversity Abroad recruits, supports, and matches young people from diverse backgrounds to global education programs, graduate school programs, and career opportunities.

Learn more at DiversityAbroad.com.



IES Abroad offers more than 140 study abroad programs in Africa, Asia Pacific, Europe, and Latin America for college students, and has educated more than 150,000 students since 1950. From our headquarters in Chicago to our 85+ locations, we work toward the common goal of providing once-in-a-lifetime educational adventures. As a not-for-profit organization, IES Abroad is known for superior student services, quality academic programming, and an active Initiative to Diversify Education Abroad (IDEA) to attract more underrepresented students to study abroad. We are dedicated to enabling as many students as possible to study abroad, which is why IES Abroad commits more than \$6 million in aid each year, including diversity scholarships. We are proud that our students are as diverse and exciting as the countries where they study.

Learn more at IESAbroad.org.



diversityabroad

DiversityAbroad.com

Follow Us: @DiversityAbroad

