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THE GLOBAL IMPACT EXCHANGE

A Quarterly Publication of Diversity Abroad

FALL 2019 EDITION

ATTRACTING, RECRUITING, AND
RETAINING DIVERSE TALENT IN
INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION



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PUBLICATION INFORMATION



The Global Impact Exchange

*A Quarterly Publication
of Diversity Abroad*

The Global Impact Exchange quarterly publication serves to advance domestic and international conversations around diversity, inclusion, and equity in global education with respect to the thematic focus identified each quarter.

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Fall 2019 Edition: **Attracting, Recruiting, and Retaining Diverse Talent in International Education**

Published October 2019

How do we find ways to help diverse talent feel welcome and retain them in our offices? How can we better articulate international education as an attractive and meaningful career path for young graduates from diverse backgrounds? Besides entry-level positions, what other entry points to the profession can be leveraged for those with transferable skills? How do we encourage agency among our staff and colleagues to avoid the unfair burden upon colleagues from diverse backgrounds to serve as a representative for their entire community?



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INTRODUCTION



By **WAGAYE JOHANNES**

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Like many other professions, the field of international education and cultural exchange is looking to attract, recruit, and retain diverse talent. But how?

Understanding the demographics of the field and the experiences of diverse professionals is key, as well as building inclusive excellence throughout the hiring and retention process. In this issue of the Global Impact Exchange, we invite you to explore questions relating to how we can attract, recruit, and retain talent in international education. How can we better articulate international education as an attractive and meaningful career path for young graduates from diverse backgrounds? How do we encourage agency among our staff and colleagues to avoid the unfair burden upon colleagues from diverse backgrounds to serve as a representative for their entire community?

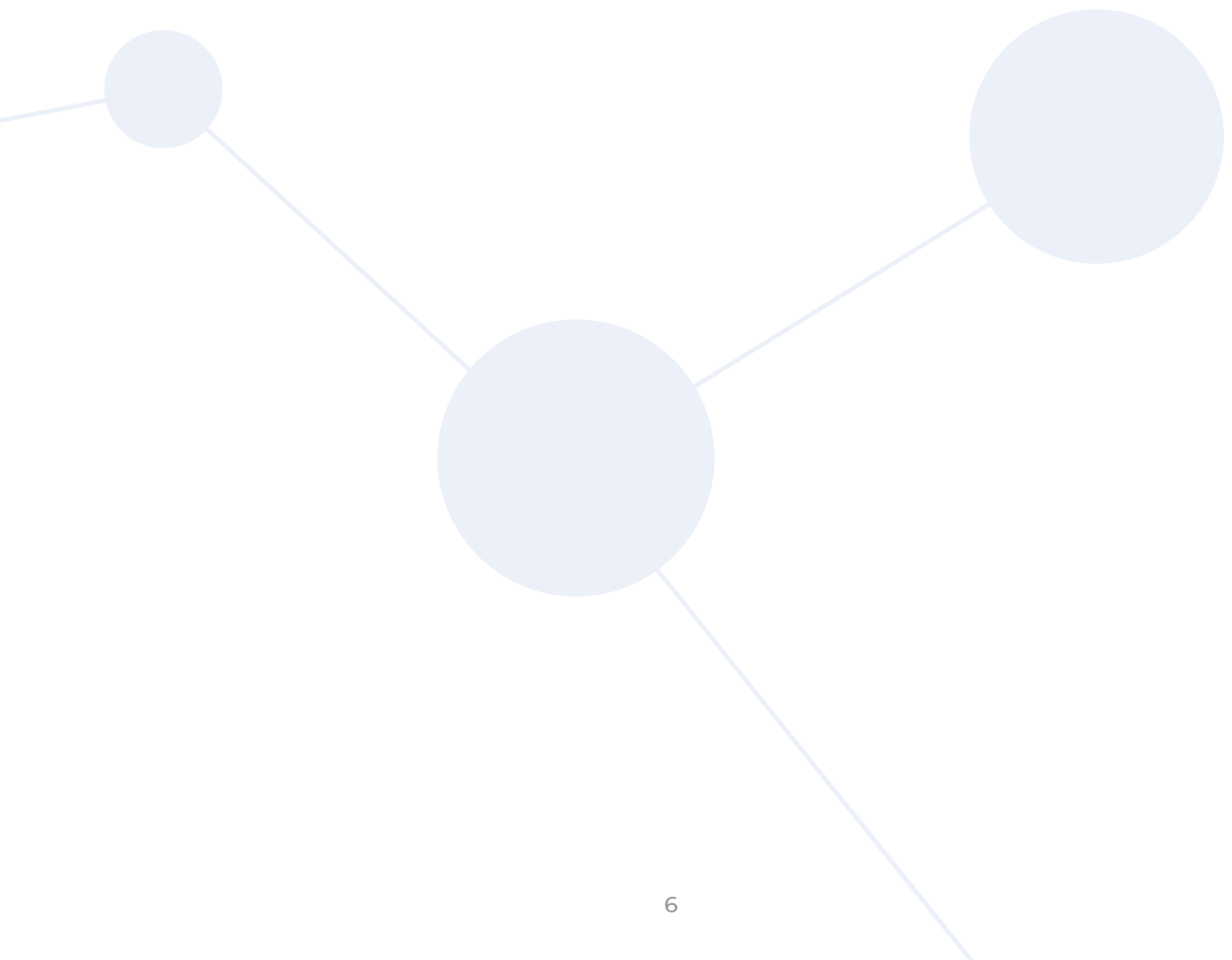
The authors in the following pages offer insight into how to diversify the pipeline of international education starting at the undergraduate and graduate levels; the important role that self-advocacy, allyship, mentorship, and building networks play in building career pathways; as well as concerns about tokenism and microaggressions. They also include recommendations on how to foster an inclusive community in our team, our office, and at the organizational/institutional level, and the need to explore networks where professionals of diverse backgrounds are seeking employment opportunities.

As the leading organization dedicated to advancing diversity and inclusive policies and practices in international education, Diversity Abroad has launched several initiatives to help the field make informed decisions on how we hire, develop professionals, and create inclusive employment practices in our offices, organizations, institutions, and ultimately the field. The annual [Survey on Diversity & Inclusion Among International Educators](#) provides data on the demographic composition of international education professionals, shedding light on who we are—our social identities, backgrounds, experiences, salaries, and much more. In light of the findings, Diversity Abroad brought together a group of global education colleagues with experience in conducting research on

inclusive hiring practices, recruiting staff/faculty from diverse backgrounds, and/or advocating to promote a culture of belonging for professionals from marginalized communities within higher education. The State of Diversity & Inclusion Among International Educators working group has developed and will continue to develop resources and tools to support inclusive recruitment, hiring, and retention practices in International Education.

The [International Education Diversity & Inclusion Certificate Program](#) offers professionals the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to champion diversity & inclusion initiatives. Similarly, [Diversity Abroad's Inclusive Excellence Program](#) is a comprehensive and collaborative three-year program that guides education abroad offices and organizations through the AIDE Roadmap, recognizes their success, and promotes continued growth, operational effectiveness, and progress toward inclusive excellence.

Thank you to the authors who contributed their perspective and expertise to this important topic. We hope this issue will inspire discussion in your offices and networks, and invite you to join the conversation on social media (@DiversityAbroad) and at the 8th Annual Diversity Abroad Conference.



DIVERSIFYING THE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PIPELINE: RECRUITING AND PREPARING STUDENTS FOR INTERCULTURAL WORK THROUGH GRADUATE PROGRAMS

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As the U.S. international education field becomes increasingly professionalized, graduate programs are emerging as a primary pipeline into the profession. When considering the question of diverse talent in our offices, we must also consider how diverse students are attracted to, recruited for, and retained in graduate programs in the field. A 2018 Diversity Abroad report showed that the demographic profile of professionals in the field mirrors that of education abroad students: overwhelmingly white (71%) and female (79%). Given these demographics—both the participants and the professionals

who work in it—graduate programs must be intentional in their recruiting to gain a diverse student population.

In this article, we discuss the role of graduate programs in diversifying the pipeline into the field. Additionally, we emphasize that graduate programs are ideal locations to train *all* students to be effective members of diverse teams and to work interculturally. This can aid in the retention of professionals from diverse backgrounds in international education and offset the burden on them to serve as a representative for their entire community.

Recruiting and Retaining Diverse Students

Diversity Abroad (2018) reported that 61.8% of survey respondents held a master's degree. Of the remaining, most held a bachelor's degree with some master's-level coursework. While there has not been any comprehensive data collected on international education graduate program demographics, Espinosa, Turk, Taylor, and Chessman (2019) found that graduate programs in education generally are majority white. Given these facts and the statistics of the professionals already working in the field, we can infer that these graduate programs are also overwhelmingly white and female. The need to diversify graduate programs is clear.

Individuals seeking to enter the international education field often receive advice to attend graduate school as a prerequisite to employment. Financially, graduate-level education is a significant commitment for many would-be students still carrying debt from their undergraduate education or who are not offered adequate financial aid from master's programs, which rarely provide full scholarships. These circumstances disproportionately burden students of color (Espinosa et al., 2019). On a personal level, a master's degree may not even be seen as an option for students who do not "see" themselves represented in graduate programs to begin with. Hurtado (2002) explained that compositional diversity acts as a symbol of an institution's commitment to diversity and found that increased enrollment of Hispanic students in universities also increased the perception that they were welcome. What message are graduate programs sending to those who choose to apply—and to not apply?

Once students are admitted to these programs, universities need to effectively retain them and facilitate their completion of the degree. White students currently make up over half the completion rates of master's degrees in the US (Espinosa et al., 2019). While ample research has been conducted on retention of diverse undergraduate students, more needs to be done to measure retention rates of diverse graduate students, particularly those in the white-dominated education field. To improve retention, universities should utilize alumni networks to facilitate conversations among students and alumni and assess whether the curriculum represents varied cultures and learning styles.

Students are often advised to attend conferences but are offered little support to access them, or to navigate them if they are able to attend. The Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey has recently developed an innovative

"Conference as Curriculum" program to address this (Peterson, 2019). However, the broader profession can do more to provide student-focused sessions or pathways at conferences and make networking accessible to students who cannot afford to travel to and attend professional events. This will help to provide viable pathways into a career for underrepresented populations of students who matriculate into graduate programs in the field.

While increasing student diversity is an important goal of graduate programs, intercultural learning is not guaranteed simply because diverse students are present. In the following section, we offer recommendations for how graduate programs can train *all* students to be culturally responsive in their international education work.

Critical Reflexive Practice in International Education

We argue that international education graduate programs should support students in wrestling with the topics of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Training should include students learning how to adopt critical reflexive practices they can later apply in their professional work. This is important considering the intercultural perspectives embedded in international education and globally focused work. To begin, we suggest that graduate preparation programs should infuse conversations related to positionality and reflexivity in their curriculum. Positionality is an understanding of how one stands in relation to the 'other' (Merriam et al., 2001). Reflexivity works alongside positionality and "is a way of emphasizing the importance of self-awareness, political/cultural consciousness, and ownership of one's perspective" (Patton, 2002, p. 64) in one's work. Together, these concepts help us to consider our responses to the world around us and those we encounter in our practice.

International education graduate programs serve as ideal locations for students to develop their critical lens, which promotes professional growth (Schön, 1983/2017). Landy et al. (2016) found six strategies for incorporating reflexivity into professional and graduate work: reflective writing, experiential learning, classroom-based activities, continuing education, online learning, and strategies that invoked the theories of Paulo Freire and/or Jack Mezirow. International education programs are well suited to adopt these critical reflexive strategies.

Jackson's (2019) Protocol, which uses contextual lenses to help students gain deeper insight and engage in reflective, evidence-based discourse about any given topic, can serve as a starting point for pedagogical design to incorporate these strategies. Incorporating reflexive writing in courses can assist students who are wrestling with their sense of identity and belonging in the world. Experiential learning allows students to become more immersed in the field beyond texts and lectures. Challenging classroom-based activities that allow students to experience breadth and depth in critical scenarios can safely model issues related to diversity and inclusion they will encounter professionally. For graduate students, continuing education can be in the form of webinars/seminars and other related co-curricular learning opportunities that require them to "see" themselves and their potential impact to the field. Online learning is a cost-effective mechanism for program faculty to leverage their existing international networks to develop initiatives that are mutually beneficial to their students and their global partners. Finally, drawing from the works of Freire and Mezirow can help students develop reflexive skills. Freire's scholarship offers guidance on developing critical consciousness while Mezirow's theory of transformative learning can serve as a foundation of a program's course of study. Incorporating these strategies can lead

to healthy and ethical intercultural exchanges for graduate students, preparing them for impactful professional work in international education.

Conclusion

Graduate programs offering an entry point to the field can position international education as an attractive and meaningful career path for diverse individuals. Both early-career and career-changing professionals can leverage their transferable skills to enter the profession via this pathway. Graduate programs also serve as training grounds, helping to socialize individuals to the profession. With this understanding, critical reflexive practices adopted in graduate programs and continued into professional work can foster the agency among staff and colleagues, regardless of their identity-based backgrounds, to have critical conversations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion that is necessary in international education.

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DATA-DRIVEN SUGGESTIONS FOR DIVERSIFYING THE EDUCATION ABROAD PROFESSION

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Attracting, recruiting, and retaining diverse talent in U.S. education abroad is a goal that many in the field have advanced in recent years. Workshops and sessions at recent professional conferences focused on promoting diversity in the field (The Forum on Education Abroad; Association of International Education Administrators), articles featured in recent relevant professional publications (West, 2019), and the existence of organizations like Diversity Abroad are examples of efforts towards this goal. But in this pursuit we often forget to ask two major questions: How will we know if the time and resources we spend are making a difference? Are our efforts having any effect?

In 2018 we surveyed U.S. education abroad professionals across the country, collecting 899 responses. Our survey explored the demographics of those working in our field, as well as the motivations drawing professionals to work in education abroad. Our survey, along with Diversity Abroad's *2018 Survey of Diversity & Inclusion Among International Educators*, provides the first demographic data related to U.S. education abroad professionals. Our data provide valuable knowledge related to the makeup of those in our field, and explore what motivations initially draw professionals to our field. These data offer key insights into how we can attract, recruit, and retain a more diverse workforce in U.S. education abroad.

Not surprisingly, our data found that the majority of U.S. education abroad professionals identify as

White (83.1%), female (79.0%) and heterosexual (80.7%). Further analysis of our data found that professionals identifying as female are younger and newer to the field than professionals identifying as male¹, who tend to be older and in the field for longer periods of time. This suggests older men in our field are retiring and being replaced by young women, potentially indicating the field could become even more predominantly female in coming years.

Our survey found U.S. education abroad professionals to be largely Christian (37.1%), with small numbers reporting a physical or mental disability (8.2%), and few active members of the military or veterans (0.8%).

¹ Comparing age and time in the field against gender identity, using Welch two-sample t-tests. Males in the survey were older than females in the survey, significant to $p = 0.040$. Using the same method, male respondents have worked in the field of education abroad longer than females, significant to $p = 0.008$.

A majority of education abroad professionals were not first-generation college students when they attended university (73.9%) and were not high financial need students (66.8%). Analysis of our data found that non-White professionals were more likely to be first-generation students and high financial need students than White professionals, at statistically significant levels.²

The vast majority (89.6%) of respondents to our survey studied abroad as undergraduate students, and over half (62.5%) studied abroad more than once. Over one-third (34.3%) studied abroad *more than twice*. This suggests that students who engage in study abroad more often as students tend to be more likely to pursue education abroad as a career.

Also related to professionals' experiences abroad as students, a significant number of U.S. education abroad professionals participated in host university, direct-enroll programs (42.8%), and a surprisingly large number (37.3%) lived in homestay accommodations abroad. The majority (81.0%) attended programs abroad lasting 10 weeks or longer. According to IIE's 2018 Open Doors report, 35.4% of students going abroad in 2016-17 participated in programs of 10 weeks or longer, meaning educational abroad professionals tend to go abroad for longer periods of time than other students.

These data suggest a connection between participating in longer programs abroad and working in this field as a career. The large numbers of homestay and direct-enroll participants in the U.S. education abroad field also suggest relationships between those program features and an interest in a career as an education abroad professional.

Given this data, studying abroad multiple times as a student, living in homestay accommodations, enrolling in host university study, and participating in programs of 10 weeks or longer are possible indicators of individuals who might become interested in education abroad as a career. Knowing this, to attract and recruit young professionals from diverse backgrounds to join our field, we should start by looking at students who fit some or all of this profile.

We also found many people currently working in U.S. education abroad decided to pursue the field very early on in their professional careers, and many chose this field while still *undergraduates*. Almost half of respondents to our survey (49.3%) decided to work in education abroad as an undergraduate student or within two years of university graduation. Over half (51.3%) of the respondents intentionally pursued a graduate and/or postgraduate degree specifically to make themselves stronger candidates to work in education abroad. Well over half (60.4%) of those currently in the field plan to stay in the field for the majority of their careers. Those identifying as female are more likely than those identifying as male to plan to stay in the field, at statistically significant levels.³

How can we use these data to develop more inclusive recruitment strategies? One strategy is to focus efforts on recruiting diverse study abroad alumni to work in our offices *before* they finish their undergraduate education, or as graduate interns. Our survey found that a significant number of professionals (17.5%) did not initially choose education abroad as a career but came back to it later in life because of an experience as a student peer advisor or graduate intern in an

² Comparing racial identity against self-reported first-generation student status, using Wilcoxon rank-sum test, significant to $p = 0.0002$.

³ Comparing gender identity against intention to stay in the field, using Wilcoxon rank-sum tests, significant to $p = 0.0097$.

education abroad office as a student. Our data suggest that hiring diverse talent needs to begin *before* entry-level professional positions—it starts at the undergraduate student position level, as so many of our peer advisors and graduate interns end up staying in the field or coming back to it later in life. Any strategy for attracting and recruiting diverse talent should include undergraduate and graduate student positions.

The University of Minnesota Learning Abroad Center's Global Leaders Internship program, founded in 2017, intentionally recruits diverse study abroad alumni, and the program has shown excellent participation rates among students from diverse backgrounds. Through the first three semesters of the program, over 28% of Global Leader interns have come from diverse backgrounds, showing significantly more diversity than the UMN study abroad population during the same time period (19%). This program gives students the unique opportunity to learn about careers in education abroad and exposure to the field, and gives them opportunities to meet Learning Abroad Center staff and build a community of professional contacts. In addition to developing valuable career skills, this program may encourage participants to stay in the field and work alongside us after graduation.

Another strategy for promoting diversity within our field is to recruit professionals from other departments around campus. Our data found a large number of professionals currently working in education abroad (23.4%) came to the field from a faculty appointment, another student affairs position, or other higher-education roles. The individuals around campus so vital in recruiting diverse student populations to study abroad might also make great candidates to work in education abroad offices.

Attracting, recruiting, and retaining diverse talent in U.S. education abroad is a worthwhile goal. But without baseline data of the backgrounds of those currently working in the field, it will be difficult to measure any progress towards this goal. Not only do our survey results provide some of this baseline data, but they also supply hints toward how we can use the data to be more intentional about attracting diverse talent to the field of education abroad.

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YOUNG PROFESSIONALS IN GLOBAL EDUCATION: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF INCLUSIVITY IN WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT

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The goal to make international education accessible, diverse, and inclusive is a call that extends to both students and professionals. As the generational makeup of the field shifts from Gen X (born between 1965-1979) to Millennials (born between 1980-2000), it is critical to understand who the international educators are and how to train and engage new talent. Retaining the upcoming generation through inclusive, equitable practices is key in unlocking the strategies to best recruit and support students participating in global programs.

Expanding on the [2018 Diversity Abroad Survey of International Educators](#), our 2019 survey asked specifically about the experiences of young professionals in international education. Three colleagues from different U.S. institutions collected anecdotal data that allowed respondents to self-disclose demographic information about race, ethnicity, gender, age, education level, sector of international education, institution type, and length of time in the field. The open-ended questions asked participants to share their motivations for joining the field, experiences advising, professional development opportunities, workplace challenges, and any additional remarks about their thoughts and feelings while working in the field. Responses were collected for two months, through distribution to the SECUSS-L Listserv, NAFSA groups, and personal networks. All responses are anonymous.

Age defined the initial understanding of “young” international educators, basing it on the Millennial generation. The average age of the over 70 respondents is 31; however, many participants identified as seasoned professionals new to international education. These responses reveal that “young” encompasses age in addition to career transitions.

Nearly 50% of survey participants work in study abroad at four-year institutions, limiting the responses to mainly outbound international program perspectives. Staff and outbound student demographics appear to be similar. Most responses came from self-identified white women, which aligns similarly to the demographic makeup of undergraduate students who study abroad (Institute of International Education, 2018). After this, the second highest number of responses came from self-identified Black, African, African American, or Afro-Caribbean women. Since participants were

asked to self-identify in an open-ended response, our results are skewed based on the responses provided. Thus, our survey has limitations. We did not explicitly collect data on sexual orientation, first-generation, country of origin, or disabilities. This survey research only serves as an introduction to future questions about the intergenerational and intersectional identities of international educators to further support our students.

Professionals in general have overwhelmingly joined the field because of their passion to make a difference in the lives of undergraduate students through the impact of international education. Their support extends from helping students navigate bureaucratic policies to facilitating reflection processes of students' study abroad experiences in order to translate the skills gained into practical career steps. Many are highly motivated professionals who devote themselves to developing confident global citizens. The Millennial study abroad professionals note that they want to support students like them to embark on academic international journeys. Some specifically identify the need to support students from historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups to study abroad in order "to have mentors and programs that focus on their needs and desires to pursue global engagement opportunities" (Diversity and Inclusion Professional, 25).

Professionals also cite the strong and friendly professional environment as a reason for working in the field, highlighting the absence of "fierce animosity, and everyone is very passionate about their work and it shows" (Study Abroad Professional, 24). Participation in professional development opportunities—conferences, webinars, workshops, and site visits—has helped to create belonging in the larger professional community. Others remain passionate about furthering intercultural learning activities, advancing inclusion

for disabled students, supporting international faculty, and ethically and inclusively engaging American and international students.

While many professionals describe the strengths of international education, they also shed light on the challenges faced by global educators. Our research uncovers nine of the most pressing challenges that new professionals face, including: 1) lack of mentorship, 2) tokenization and microaggressions, 3) building networks with other young professionals, 4) work-life balance, 5) pay vs. workload, 6) lack of funding for professional opportunities, 7) not being taken seriously because of age, 8) upward mobility, and 9) self-advocacy and empowerment.

A 26-year-old with one to two years' experience comments their challenges, which include "not being taken seriously, not many professional development opportunities, being at a predominantly white institution and the only Black woman in a 40-person office, not feeling invested in." This can hinder their ability to support students adequately. Challenges also include feeling frustrated by confusion about doctoral- or master's-level education needed for mobility, expensive professional development, or needing to quickly acquire knowledge about specific regions or programs. Other survey participants suggest a conflict between their passion for study abroad and the reality of daily work and long-term expectations. Our data suggests that rising professionals in international education are looking for current leadership to provide bias awareness training, career development workshops, mentorship opportunities, and equal compensation practices.

These challenges can prevent those new to the field from feeling confident in the environment and thus not be able to fully support students. Survey respondents reiterate common obstacles in student

advising, specifically lack of attention to email, stereotypes about locations and cultures, parental concerns, and demystifying the logistical process.

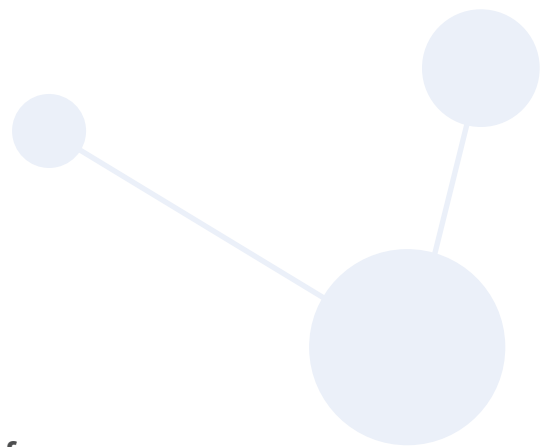
One 28-year-old professional details “concerns about being able to participate for students with disabilities/navigating accommodation requests” and “students wondering if students like them study abroad (race, ability, family status).”

Another educator realizes that while they are good empathizers and listeners, if they don’t look like or have similar lived experiences as many of their students, “this can be a barrier for students to see themselves as ‘someone who studies abroad’ or to even consider the possibility that this is for them.”

For young professionals looking to grow within the field, but facing some of the previously mentioned obstacles, it is important to be open to the many pathways of working in global education. Being able to talk about your own personal experiences, identities, ideas, successes or failures helps to facilitate a conversation about how young professionals are looking to grow within the field and support it. It is imperative to do some research and make connections in person or virtually, knowing that sometimes it can take more than just reaching out to one sole individual to look to for support or mentorship.

As we continue to support young professionals and students, and start at creating a diverse and inclusive international education field, we should think about the similarities and differences between the challenges that students and professionals face. Kate Patch, Senior Director of Global Initiatives at Grinnell College, believes that “mentorship of the next generation (of young, diverse professionals) begins at the undergraduate level through one-on-one advising before, during and after students participate on their program and by creating peer advising positions within

the education abroad office to help students make the transition and investment into the field.” If professional resources are limited, it is crucial to look to mentorship as a means of increasing inclusive global practices. Taking a step toward examining our own implicit bias and evaluating office and university structures to ensure young professionals have support to in return support students will be an effective start to create systemic change and accomplish the goal of creating accessible, diverse, and inclusive opportunities to both students and professionals.



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FOSTERING A CLIMATE OF COURTESY, RESPECT, AND DIGNITY

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You're at a job interview. They can't get your name right. Failing to pronounce it, they laugh—was that good-natured self-deprecation, or was it a mask for frustration that your name is so difficult? Will it set a bad tone for the rest of the interview if you address it? Has it already? If they don't seem to care, what does that say about their interest in you? You begin to wonder whether they really value diversity.

But what does it mean to value diversity? For us, it means building a culture of respect for people of varying backgrounds and embracing difference. However, difference can go unseen. Race is often immediately visible, but conflating skin color with background obscures ethnicity and overlooks a variety of other categories, such as national origin, religion, gender identity, orientation, age, and ability. For many of these groups, diversity is not always apparent, particularly to those in the majority, but inclusion requires a commitment to each. We all need to strive for awareness of our biases toward others, and normalizing this introspection contributes to an institutional culture of respect for difference. Creating an inclusive environment is not the sole domain of administrators—organizational culture is the product of all employees' actions, beliefs, and values—but administrators have additional power to ensure equal opportunity, particularly within recruitment and retention.

Recruitment entails a process of compounding subjective judgments, and those judgments are products of both conscious and subconscious perceptions. Studies investigating biases in

hiring have examined correlations between resume names and callback rates. While we should be concerned if such biases exist within our workplaces, we should not fall into the trap of assuming that diversity is signaled entirely through names. Furthermore, commitments to diversity are not satisfied once the resume screening process is complete.

A diversity statement that claims that the institution values diversity in hiring is not sufficient; search committees and administration must continuously exemplify those values. Applicants and employees from all backgrounds should be treated with courtesy, respect, and dignity. Unfortunately, this is often not the case—people from minoritized groups often disproportionately have their qualifications and experiences invalidated, get interrupted more frequently in conversation, and more. When a group is made to feel like outsiders, whether purposefully or accidentally, it erodes the culture of respect. Sadly, a comprehensive list of ways this can happen is beyond the scope of this article, but Turner, González, and Wood (2008) have compiled an extensive (though not exhaustive) list

of common obstacles to inclusion. Additionally, a recent meta-analytic study by Lui and Quezada (2019) outlines how overt and incidental prejudices can contribute to negative outcomes for those in the minority. Being aware of such disparities is a necessary first step in promoting equity in our own institutions.

Moreover, this commitment should exist at all stages, not just in hiring. People from marginalized groups should not be pigeonholed into becoming the token representative for their entire group, particularly if institutional policies are not in place to reward them for their work. For instance, faculty and staff are often expected to volunteer on diversity initiatives even when doing so is not incentivized for earning tenure or promotion. Professional development and advancement opportunities within the institution should be accessible to all employees, and a framework that fails to recognize the different ways minoritized employees contribute to institutional culture deprives these employees of equal opportunity. Equity requires policies that are flexible enough to take differences like these into account.

Getting a meaningful sense of your institution's climate can be challenging, particularly within larger organizations. Exit interviews may be a common place to ask questions about the climate, but these should never be the first opportunity for employees to voice their struggles. Performance reviews can be a great time not just to give feedback but also to get it—are our staff feeling as welcome as we hope? This should also be supplemented with climate studies that allow a broader perspective. Sometimes this will mean getting the bad news that we ourselves have been contributing to a problem, but this knowledge is necessary for fixing it. Actions and inactions that undermine the culture of respect must be addressed swiftly and consistently.

Fostering inclusivity is a process without end because organizations evolve dynamically as staff, faculty, and students change. Nevertheless, in an increasingly global society, it is work that must be done. Administrators must cultivate an inclusive organizational culture and set standards in which all employees can flourish.

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RACE, GENDER, AND THE PROFESSIONALIZATION OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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As the field of international education has expanded and professionalized, there has been a fragmentation in career pathways due to the increasingly complex regulatory environments, highly decentralized university structures, and the rise in global educational actors (Wiseman & Matherly, 2009). Yet this new professionalism has not reflected the growing diversity in higher education. The purpose of this essay is to identify pathways in international education career development, discuss some challenges faced by women in the field, and analyze the implications of these barriers on the persistent racial and gender disparity in international education leadership.

Drawing on the career experiences of four mid- to senior-level female-identified leaders in international education in the United States, including three Black women, this article explores the following questions. In the context of the lack of diversity in the field and the gender leadership gap, what motivated these women to pursue careers in international education? What challenges do they face in their roles, and how are they conceptualizing those challenges based on their gender and other intersectional identities? What resources and strategies have they found most effective to their career success? The essay outlines recommendations for developing inclusive leadership pathways for women and racial minorities in international education in U.S. higher education. Conversely, a better understanding of the persistent barriers, complexities, and challenges to inclusive leadership and the educational equality in the internationalized context of U.S. higher education animates questions of diversity and inclusion in U.S. higher education more generally.

Context

This paper draws on semi-structured interviews with four female international education professionals employed at a variety of U.S. higher education institutions, including a high-intensive private research university, an urban

comprehensive university, a private regional university, and a private historically black university. Ranging from six to 25 years in the field of international education, these leaders have a breadth of experiences as international educators, including immigration advising, international partnership development, exchange and onsite education abroad programming, student and

scholar advising, and internationalization strategic development and leadership. In addition to their long-term engagement as career professionals, each female leader is involved in high-level leadership roles in key professional organizations in the field. As a result, their perspectives are shaped by their own experiences as well as those of other female international educators they've known in the field.

Getting Started: Motivations of Early Career International Educators

One of the central findings from these interviews was that most of the women traced their early motivation and inspiration to pursue international careers or careers in international education to their international educational experiences during their undergraduate studies. Their study abroad and exchange destinations included Spain, the Dominican Republic, Belize, and South Africa. They credited those experiences with allowing them to courageously explore the depth and breadth of their passions, develop creative academic interests, as well as important affective skills such as care, compassion, empathy, and dedication.

Of particular note, all three women of color studied abroad and credited their passion for international education, culture, and global learning to those formative experiences. In addition, two of the women were career changers. One had a successful career in development diplomacy before returning to the US to work in higher education, while the other worked abroad as an international educator and consultant for several years before also returning to the US. Consider, for example, one of the participants who shared,

Having spent half of my life now moving in and out of the US with ease and anticipation, the challenge of dispelling the myth that Black folks, especially students, are not interested or able to do so is why I chose to return to the US and work at an HBCU, specifically. Empowering Black students, especially those who know no other reality than that of the US, to expand their understanding of self, country, and the meaning of life is a revolutionary action with an impact that is immeasurable. My first professional position was the management of a USAID fellowship program that led to a career abroad as a development diplomat. Yet, this position was mostly an opportunity to access the current role that I serve in. I feel it is an opportunity for all HBCUs to take on the responsibility of being proudly dedicated to promoting global learning opportunities to all students. Today, I am proud to see that study abroad is more discussed and recognizable on our campus.

Critical Mentorship

Due to the ambivalence and uncertainties they sometimes faced when navigating their career development, the interviewees noted that mentorship is critical to the career success of especially early career international educators. In particular, they cited the importance of identifying trustful mentors with whom one could build and maintain genuine relationships, and from whom they can also hope to gain experiences about the diverse areas within the field. For example, one interviewee shared that the multiple entryways to advance one's international career. For, she noted for professionals in administrative roles, it is important to seek opportunities to pursue advanced degrees or boost one's academic credentials through scholarly engagement, such

as teaching or publications, while for a researcher seeking to transition to an administrative career in international education, she noted the value of leadership and administrative skills and experience. In fact, as one interviewee noted, “No two [career] paths are the same, and one thing is for sure, career paths are not linear.” Due to the lack of visibility of women in leadership roles and the compounding lack of transparency about those leadership pathways, critical mentorship is vital to developing a robust pipeline and pathway for a more gender-inclusive and racially diverse cadre of international educators.

Challenges and Future Directions

Alongside the diverse opportunities and their inspiration for pursuing careers in international education, the interviewees also discussed two key challenges to women in international education. First, the participants described the challenge of imposterism some women might experience due to the underrepresentation of women and historically underrepresented groups in senior leadership. One of the interviewees remarked, “Disavow the notion of imposterism! If you’re given an opportunity, own it. Don’t ask anyone if you can take a seat at the table, just take a seat. Just remember to be prepared for what the role will entail.” A second challenge is work-life balance. Because women are seeking access to these selective and competitive opportunities, many are juggling full-time professional responsibilities with opportunities to learn and grow in the field. Some interviewees noted that as they sought to expand their skill sets, it was impossible to say no to new responsibilities. As a result, balancing work, life, and self-care was an enduring challenge.

In considering the similarities and differences in the career pathways and professional experiences of these four women in international education, the core findings from this study point to the importance of positive formative global learning opportunities and critical mentorship to the career success of women in international education. As the field seeks to increase the representation of women and minoritized individuals in leadership roles, there’s a continued need for greater transparency and access to professional development pathways, and more robust networking opportunities. Returning to the core questions that animated this study, the case and urgency for racial diversity and gender inclusion in international education is imperative—and needs to be reflected among professionals as well as students.

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CHANGE AGENTS AND STRATEGIC THINKERS WITH DISABILITIES: BUILDING THE PIPELINE OF TALENT

SUSAN SYGALL | CEO/Co-Founder - Mobility International USA

Where are all the disabled people?

Yes, we have seen progress in recruiting and accommodating people with diverse disabilities in all types of exchange programs, as we should.

But when I attend conferences focusing on international exchange, when I visit headquarters of international exchange programs, both large and small, I still ask myself the same question, *Where are all the disabled people—as staff, leaders, interns and consultants?*

Yes, there are some. As a CEO and wheelchair rider—I am one of “them,” and yes there are people who have non-apparent disabilities, which would not be visibly recognized. But considering that approximately 20% of the population of any country are people with disabilities—the question still sits deeply within my consciousness. I need to ask not only why, but what will we do to remedy the situation?

Here Are Some of My Thoughts

For too long disability has not been considered part of diversity. Disabled people have been left out of diversity initiatives, which are always striving to build the pipeline of leaders.

Disabled people have not seen images of themselves on recruiting materials for international exchange and social media, so young disabled people don’t grow up thinking “this is for me.”

Many disabled people are not encouraged to study foreign languages or participate in international exchange programs in their high school or university, so we don’t have the same competitive edge and exposure to get hired in the exchange field (Cordano & Soneson, 2009).

And yet, what more powerful way is there to change the face and policies of exchange organizations than to have disabled staff be in leadership positions and be the decision makers of an organization? Having a significant number of disabled staff who embrace their disability through a human-rights lens will build the pipeline of disabled leaders in the international educational exchange space, as participants and leaders.

So What Do We Need to Do? I Think It's A Multi-pronged Approach:

- Let's have more scholarships to recruit disabled people!
- Let's see more disability images in our promotional materials.
- Let's say you cannot talk about diversity if disability is not on the table.
- Let's get the message out to young disabled people that this career is for us.
- Let's budget for inclusion in the administrative budgets of our organizations and in every proposal so that when we hire a disabled person our organizations/institutions can accommodate what is needed, whether it be an accessible office, software, ASL interpreters, or anything else that is needed.
- Let's create paid internships that promote and mentor disabled people, which must be another strategy for early career professionals.

In my career, I have met thousands of disabled people in the United States and abroad who could and should be part of our exchange field. I often speak about “moving from inclusion to infiltration” because inclusion has been taking far too long. It's time for disabled people, of all ages and backgrounds, to infiltrate our international exchange field, and, likewise, the international exchange field needs to proactively and intentionally become allies with the global disability community to recruit the talent needed to make our field thrive!

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SUPPORTING STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION: THE ROLE OF FACULTY

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We discuss the need to support graduate international students and students of color in U.S. higher education, an often overlooked group for promoting international education. Drawing from our reflexive writing on our student experiences and our current roles as faculty in an international higher education program, we offer strategies that can foster a sense of inclusion and belonging for diverse students, create support mechanisms for them to succeed, and position them in the international education pipeline.

Reflexive Perspectives on International Education

Unpacking our experiences in international education as an international graduate student new to the United States and as a domestic undergraduate student of color who did not see studying abroad as a viable option allowed us to conceptualize potential opportunities for faculty engagement. Our insights helped us to unpack the role of faculty in constructing the program environment within which to best attract and retain diverse graduate students.

“No one explained to me what graduate education in the US entailed”

I started graduate school in the US as a “non-traditional-aged” international student, after 14 years in the workforce, in a program related to international education. The college education I received in my country of origin was characterized by an inflexible curriculum, professors we only saw

during classroom lectures and whose authority and infallibly we dared not question. No one explained to me what U.S. graduate education entailed. It was challenging for me to understand the expectations to *critically engage* with the readings and *participate actively* in the classroom. It did not occur to me to reach out to faculty for support, and I did not feel comfortable asking my much younger classmates for help. I watched silently as other students freely expressed themselves and, to my discomfort, challenged each other and even the professors in rapid conversations. The difficult course context and the constant navigation with the classroom process were exhausting. Being much older than the other students and having family commitments at home, I seldom socialized with my cohort, adding to my feelings of isolation. Eventually overcome by a sense of feeling overwhelmed, I decided to quit. I met with my advisor to share my decision and prepared myself to offer an excuse for leaving. At our meeting, to my utter surprise, the faculty praised me for “offering thoughtful and valuable insights” and encouraged me to share more in class. Together

we brainstormed ways to support my learning and participation. I did not drop out. After graduating I completed my PhD, and postdoc, and settled in academia. Perhaps if I had not met with the faculty that day, my narrative would have ended differently.

Demystifying Study Abroad

I first traveled outside of the United States for an academic purpose when I was a doctoral candidate. While a first-year student in my higher education doctoral program I had an epiphany that I could combine my academic training and practical experience in higher education with my personal connection to Haiti, my family's country of origin. Soon after, I infused my course of study with internationally centered classes and embedded international perspectives into my assignments. I completed a graduate certificate and research specialization with a global focus and selected doctoral committee members who could help me make sense of the global dimensions of higher education. I eventually traveled to Haiti to conduct my dissertation research on the Haitian higher education system. Now, I am a faculty member in an international higher education program.

However, my path to international education was not certain. As an undergraduate student, I did not participate in study abroad. It did not occur to me that I could. I only knew of two students of color who studied abroad, but despite their travels, I did not believe it was a true option for me. While I saw the signs advertising study abroad information sessions, I did not feel any connection to the opportunities and exciting experiences they depicted. In retrospect, I believe if I was introduced to study abroad in a more purposeful way I might have viewed an international component as an important complement to my collegiate experience. My time in Haiti as a doctoral student speaks to the important role of

heritage programming in study abroad (Pruitt, 2018). Doing so myself helped me to understand the role of faculty who can help to demystify the studying abroad experience for student populations who do not "see" themselves engaged in those types experiences.

Recommendations for Diverse Student Recruitment and Retention

Scholarship discusses the important role faculty play in internationalization (Amblee & Dhayanith, 2018; Criswell, 2015; Helms & Asfaw, n.d.; NAFSA, 2011) and supporting students in their international experience. Below we offer recommendations on how to engage students from diverse backgrounds in international education.

Representation Matters

Research has revealed a disproportionate ratio of non-white students (45%) to white faculty (24%) on U.S. campuses (Espinosa, et al., 2019). This counters existing research that conveys that faculty who share similar backgrounds with the students they teach can serve as mentors and role models to diverse students. Because graduate education is a pipeline to professional work in international education, the demographic of faculty members must reflect the diverse talent we hope to increase in the profession. However, demographic representation is not enough. All faculty must be able to connect with the diverse students that show up in their classrooms.

Adjusting Classroom Pedagogy

Adjusting classroom pedagogies to meet the needs of students is key. Meeting times or "office hours" on syllabi can be understood as "do not disturb me at this time." We suggest updating

language to reflect “scheduling a time to meet with the professor” rather than leaving it to students’ interpretation. Affirm students’ contributions in class and inquire if they need additional support, as they may not feel confident asking for help on their own. Clarify expectations by providing examples of critical engagement, active participation, group work, and self-assessment. Posting PowerPoint presentations beforehand allows non-native English speakers time to prepare for class discussions. Providing a recap/overview of lectures is another useful strategy.

Student-Centered Approach

Seeking to understand the cultural context of the international students and students of color we teach and advise is important. Providing informal time and space for faculty interaction with graduate students can work toward diminishing barriers students may feel about engaging with faculty, participating in class discussions, or engaging in co-curricular opportunities. Pairing first-semester students with more senior students can open opportunities for them to expand their social network of support. Creating a faculty learning group to address the needs of international students and graduate students of color can respond to the transition, sense of belonging, and persistence of this group.

Conclusion

Faculty play a critical role in developing a climate where diverse students can succeed and are prepared for professional work in our increasingly globally connected community. As such, international students and students of color, indeed all students coming onto our campuses today, expect faculty to bring an international perspective to their practice and be able to engage in culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Thus, we argue it is a mandate for faculty to take an active role in attracting, recruiting, and retaining diverse students in international education.



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BEYOND THE BUZZWORDS: A FRAMEWORK OF INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE FOR HIRING AND TRAINING

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Diversity and inclusion are buzzwords in the field of international education, with a primary focus on measuring compositional diversity (Sweeney, 2013). True inclusive excellence throughout staff hiring practices challenges international educators to move beyond simply increasing diversity to holistically address systemic practices. Staff retention is critical: all employees should feel that their identities, values, and contributions are welcomed and

celebrated. Developing a culture of inclusion that transcends the us/them dichotomy requires a cohesive dedication to advancing our practice, moving forward collectively in a journey of liberation for social justice.

Acknowledging the various dimensions of diversity, the following framework focuses primarily on racial identity, given the U.S. context of race as a primary systemic lens and experience from which most, if not all, U.S. Americans operate, consciously or unconsciously. Initially developed for program leaders on short-term high school exchanges abroad with The Experiment, the objectives for each area of the framework (Access, Awareness, Action) offer recommendations to any organization striving for inclusive excellence.

access
DIVERSITY of LEADER COHORT

Hiring for diversity is an industry trend, but the accessibility of positions in international education to people of color is critical for the participant experience. Although current international educators are 71% white (Lopez-McGee, 2018), Generation Z is the most ethnically and racially diverse generation ever (Levin, 2019). Staff of color serve as powerful role models

for students of color traveling abroad, increasing the amount of student support provided by staff (Lopez et al., 2016). Furthermore, a multicultural group of students led abroad by only white educators can instill a harmful power dynamic, especially if they are unaware of that power.

Evaluate language in recruitment materials and job descriptions.

Explicit language demonstrates that your organization is looking for applicants who are experienced with diverse student groups and who share the values of equity and inclusion. For example, The Experiment website states that “our leaders are aware of and committed to addressing bias, systemic inequalities, power, privilege, and oppression.”

Explore sources of recruitment that cater to applicants from underrepresented backgrounds.

The time-old narrative of “our team lacks diversity because people of color did not apply” fails to recognize the systemic nature of whiteness in our organizational structures. To build a multicultural team, we must be intentional in our recruitment efforts.

Incorporate identity-based questions and scenarios in interviews.

This conversation demonstrates organizational values and allows for the hiring team to evaluate racial competence as part of an applicant’s qualifications. Responses to identity-based questions reveal bias and level of comfort discussing power and privilege (The Management Center, 2019).

Hiring team evaluates and addresses personal unconscious biases and homogeneity.

Personal worldviews influence the team’s decision-making processes and evaluation of candidates. “White supremacy culture” (Jones & Okun, 2001) describes the pervasiveness of whiteness as a predetermined norm for society and organizations. Discuss the framework as it presents in team’s values, processes, and perceptions of candidate review, including communication styles. Participate in implicit bias testing. Consider and discuss the role of unconscious bias in decision-making. Mitigate bias by ensuring the hiring committee reflects diverse social identities.



Educators that model self-awareness around their identities garner more trust and respect from students (Bell, Goodman, & Varghese, 2016) and enhance their ability to work with multicultural groups (Lebold et al., 2014). Diving into discussions of race and racism as they manifest in our interactions, hiring practices, training spaces, and pedagogical processes acknowledges with honesty, and attempts to overcome, our racialized socialization.

Provide opportunities for staff to reflect on dominant and non-dominant social identities.

Staff will more effectively support diverse groups by undergoing a personal examination of power, privilege, and bias. Deep self-reflection and unlearning internalized oppression and domination is lifelong and individual work. If identity-related activities are provided for students during pre-departure or re-entry sessions, facilitators and staff members should participate beforehand.

Encourage staff to learn about historical and social forces of racism in U.S. society.

Developing a more nuanced understanding of racism as a system in society and institutions enables individuals to develop anti-racist practices. Self-education, especially for people of whiteness, enables staff to develop a shared understanding from which to develop educational practices. Provide team-wide trainings, develop a book club, and dedicate working hours to self-education and reflection.

Encourage staff to discuss racial/ethnic identities and related power dynamics, experience with students, and communication and facilitation styles.

Before processing identity-related incidents on program with students, staff should discuss their own identities and analyze how they may or may

not represent their students. It is important for team members to be aware of places where they do and do not hold power and privilege and how that affects their working relationship.

Encourage staff to process experiences within shared identity groups.

Folks may feel more comfortable sharing experiences with peers who share their racial and/or ethnic identities, and they may be closer to one another in identity development (Tatum, 2017). Most importantly, there is less likelihood that folks of color will need to exert emotional labor to support white folks' processing and fragility. Modeling the practice of affinity groups provides staff with a tool they can practice with student groups that have racial tensions or race-related incidents that arise abroad.



Dominant systemic practices center white supremacy culture (Jones & Okun, 2001), focusing on content and outcomes. When training staff to work with students, and one another, addressing our processes and approach to practicing equitable actions is vital to creating a socially just learning environment (Adams, 2016). Training all staff with an equity

lens contributes to an inclusive experience for everyone involved.

Provide tangible tools and “how-tos” for supporting students and staff in identity-related incidents abroad.

Once self-reflection and education become consistent, training can provide tangible, applicable skills for working with students abroad. Scenarios could include “how to” name and address microaggressions, have difficult conversations, and talk to your group about privilege, or “what to do when” students experience racism in-country, a student uses racial slurs, or the group is naturally segregating across racial lines.

Scaffold resources and training workshops with accessible language and scale.

While staff may not have had academic exposure to power, privilege, and oppression, a vast wealth of resources exists—which also creates potential for overwhelm. Provide a resource list that is succinct and easily digestible, and scaffold training topics and materials in levels for self-selection to avoid a “one size fits all” approach.

Weave topics of diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the structure and design of staff training. A holistic, smooth, and integrated approach gives staff more opportunities to learn, reflect, and make connections. Incorporate intersections of identity and power with various aspects of a sojourner's experience (health and safety, pre-departure, host family, re-entry, curriculum, group dynamics, etc.) while training staff on student support and program implementation. Furthermore, develop a focus on process in addition to content and consider power dynamics among training facilitators.

Incorporate theoretical groundings and nuanced perspectives into training topics.

Staff members' understanding of certain dynamics (for example, group segregation across gender or racial lines) is critical in their ability to address them. Explore training topics such as social justice education pedagogy (Adams, 2016), student identity development theories, whiteness and white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018), layers of culture (intragroup within the host country), and international perspectives of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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Co-Director of the 2iE-Penn State Centre for Collaborative Engagement in Burkina Faso, West Africa



Each year, Diversity Abroad celebrates institutions, organizations, professionals, and students who have developed inclusive practices that foster diversity and inclusion in international education and cultural exchange. Awardees are announced during the Awards Gala at the Annual Diversity Abroad Conference.

INSTITUTIONAL/ORGANIZATIONAL AWARD CATEGORIES

- ◆ Outreach, Marketing, and Recruitment
- ◆ Student Engagement & Support
- ◆ International Student Success
- ◆ Organizational/Institutional Champion

INDIVIDUAL PROFESSIONAL AWARD CATEGORIES

- ◆ Rising Star Award (2-10 years)
- ◆ Trailblazer Award (10+ years)
- ◆ Executive Leader Award

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT AWARD CATEGORIES

- ◆ Global Student Leadership Award - Graduate
- ◆ Global Student Leadership Award - Undergraduate

Nomination deadline is November 18, 2019

www.diversitynetwork.org/awards

2020 INNOVATION COMPETITION



Now in its 4th year, the Diversity Abroad Innovation Competition, sponsored by CAPA The Global Education Network, brings together professionals and students with creative and outstanding ideas and programs that advance diversity and inclusive excellence in global education.

Are you an innovator?

Is your campus
doing something
groundbreaking in
global education?



**INNOVATION
COMPETITION**



Win prize money for your idea! Selected presenters will be invited to pitch their idea for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place prizes during the opening plenary of the 8th Annual Diversity Abroad Conference.

Eligibility: Professionals, graduate, and undergraduate students are eligible to apply.

Application Deadline:
December 2, 2020

APPLY TODAY

Visit conference.diversitynetwork.org/innovation-competition for more information or contact us at conference@diversityabroad.org



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