



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION *INITIATIVES*

At AIFS, we believe in the power of international exchange to bring the world together and want to support all students as they change the way they see their world; no matter their gender, race, religion, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation. We offer resources to help participants and their families throughout their study abroad journey.

As we have increased our commitment to inclusive practices for all students, we are continuing to develop materials and opportunities for students to feel supported throughout their international education experiences. We have a website dedicated to resources for students of diverse backgrounds as they prepare for their international sojourns.

To ensure that all AIFS staff feel comfortable engaging in conversations with student participants on topics related to diversity and inclusion, we are providing focused training and additional professional development opportunities. We are also reviewing and updating all marketing and informational materials, including our pre-departure handbooks and on-site orientation materials, to ensure they include language and resources focused on enhancing the understanding and importance of cultural diversity.

This piece goes into greater detail about some of our recent efforts as well as our plans for the future. Should you have any questions or want to learn more about our inclusive practices, please contact Angela Manginelli, our Director of Alumni & Diversity Initiatives at alumni@aifs.com.





STUDENT ACCESS FORMS

Included on the student resources website are forms for students who require accommodations while abroad. We ask participants to download and complete the appropriate form(s) and return them to their Admissions Officer, who works with our staff on-site to determine what accommodations we can make. The forms were created from templates provided by Mobility International USA, the clearinghouse for students with disabilities going abroad.

- » Autism / Autism Spectrum
- » Blind / Low Vision
- » Systematic or Chronic Health Condition
- » Deaf / Hard of Hearing
- » Learning Disability / ADHD
- » Intellectual Disability
- » Physical Disability

These student resources can be found by visiting www.aifsabroad.com/student-resources

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION SITE SURVEY

To expand access to and match students with programs that can best accommodate their needs, we asked our Resident Directors and on-site staff to complete a comprehensive survey in July 2018 on the possibilities and limitations in serving students from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds in study abroad at their program site.

Our goal was to gain a better understanding of the current environment in our program locations, which will allow us to understand the opportunities we have going forward. The data was assembled into an internal document to be used by Admissions Officers, Field Staff, members of the Marketing Team, and Resident Directors as they engage in conversations with prospective students and our university partners.

The survey was comprised of 96 questions (Likert scale, short and long-answer), including attitudes of the host culture toward different communities, and was completed by 34 AIFS sites. The goal is to survey the sites at least once every two years to ensure we have accurate information to share with colleagues, partner institutions and interested students.

The survey allowed us to identify three key areas where we can make a significant impact through intentional outreach:

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

Providing information in the selection and pre-departure process, as well as having resources available in-country (when possible), will allow students from marginalized backgrounds to make informed decisions about the study abroad experience as well as feel more comfortable to connect with on-site staff to address any issues they might encounter during their time abroad.

Starting with summer 2019, all pre-departure handbooks will include a section on diversity and inclusion abroad and mental health and wellness abroad, with site-specific information to help prepare students in advance of their program.

ON-SITE ORIENTATION

Once students arrive in-country, we have an opportunity to provide additional context on how the host culture receives different communities, help to manage the expectations of all students, better navigate challenging situations, including group dynamics, and emphasize to participants that our staff on-site are available to assist with any concerns a student has while abroad.

NEWSLETTERS

By ensuring our on-site staff include information for underrepresented populations, it will provide useful information for students as well as allow opportunities for dialogue within the larger group.



RESIDENT DIRECTOR WORKSHOP

AIFS alumni programs and our diversity and inclusion efforts were discussed at the Resident Director's Workshop, November 11-14, 2018 in London. It was a great opportunity to provide insight and context on the perspective US students bring with them abroad, highlight what support US campuses offer to students of diverse backgrounds and have a dialogue as a staff on opportunities to increase inclusive practices on-site.

Based on the College Division survey we conducted in spring 2017, we knew that our staff wanted more information and resources for supporting students with disabilities and LGBTQ students abroad. An overview of terminology and best practices were provided and we will be providing additional information through a series of online modules on underrepresented communities in the year ahead.

AIFS ALUMNI AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Each year we collaborate with our partner institutions to select 40-50 students to participate in our Alumni Ambassador program. Participants must complete their application and be approved by their home institution, AIFS Resident Director, Admissions Officer and the Alumni Team. Once accepted into the program, students commit to the program for the school year and provide 80 hours of outreach on their campuses and online. In August, we bring the students selected to be Ambassadors for the following school year to Stamford, CT for a 2.5-day training. At training, we provide an opportunity for students to learn about all AIFS programs, review best practices and talk about potential barriers for participation in study abroad, especially for students from underrepresented communities.

As a Generation Study Abroad partner with a commitment to increasing awareness and access for marginalized students, this year we asked our Alumni Ambassadors to do intentional outreach to members of two different underrepresented communities in study abroad at their campuses. Our aim is to make sure that students from these communities are aware of and recognize that study abroad is available to them, as well as provide support and resources to them throughout their study abroad continuum.

Examples of programming and outreach our Ambassadors have completed this year include:

- » Black and Queer Abroad Info Session
- » Full STEM Ahead Info Session
- » Global Mental Health: The Importance of Psychology and Study Abroad Info Session
- » Studying Abroad: It's Possible for All Info Session
- » Being a Black Man Abroad Info Session
- » Office hours in Multicultural Center, TriO office, LGBTQ+ office, Financial Aid Office
- » Meeting with underrepresented student groups on campus (ex: Latinx Student Union, Black Student Association, Spectrum, Asian American Student Association, Muslim Student Association, National Association of Black Accountants)
- » Tabling in STEM departments / buildings
- » Outreach to transfer students, student athletes and commuter students
- » Global cafe session focused on LGBTQ friendly locations,
- » Connecting with Gender Studies departments
- » Freshman Seminar courses
- » Continued 1:1 outreach and conversations

If you are interested in learning more about our Alumni Ambassador program, please visit www.aifsabroad.com/alumni/ambassador or email alumni@aifs.com with your questions.



ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Starting spring 2018, AIFS is now offering grants for recipients of the Fund for Education Abroad scholarship, the Boren Award, and to students who receive the GI Bill. This additional funding will provide greater access to study abroad opportunities for students from underrepresented communities. To review all scholarships and grants, visit www.aifsabroad.com/financial-aid

DIVERSE COMMUNITIES ASK ALUMNI PROGRAM

We know that prospective students like to speak with other students and acknowledge that students from underrepresented backgrounds often have specific questions related to their identities that could best be answered by their peers from those communities.

In 2018, we created an option in our "Ask Alumni" sign-up form for students to indicate if they would be willing to discuss their experience as a member of any of the following communities: high financial need, first generation college student, ethnicity, race, religion, LGBTQ, disability. Interested students can sign up on the AIFS alumni website by visiting www.aifsabroad.com/alumni/share

PRESENTATIONS

There are several opportunities at the national conferences this spring to learn more about how AIFS is creating more inclusive programs for all students.

Global Student Leadership Summit (Diversity Abroad Conference)

"Maximizing Your Skillset: Elevator Pitches, Interviews, and Leveling Up"

Monday, March 4th

10:30 am – 11:45 am ET

Angela Manginelli, *Director of Alumni & Diversity Initiatives, AIFS Study Abroad*

Forum Conference

"Doing the Work: Creating Systemic Change to Support Underrepresented Students"

Friday, March 29th

11:15 am – 12:30 pm MT

Angela Manginelli, *Director of Alumni & Diversity Initiatives, AIFS Study Abroad*

MaRaina Montgomery, *Howard University*

NAFSA Conference

"Doing the Work: Creating Systemic Change to Support Underrepresented Students"

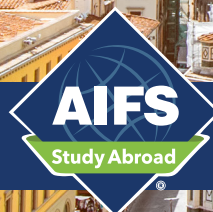
Tuesday, May 28th

2:30 pm – 3:30 pm ET

Angela Manginelli, *Director of Alumni & Diversity Initiatives, AIFS Study Abroad*

MaRaina Montgomery, *Howard University*

Dr. LaNitra Berger, *George Washington University*



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