



FIRST-GEN STUDENTS & STUDYING ABROAD



At AIFS, we want to support all students in their study abroad journey, regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation. Everyone has a complex identity, and being a first-generation college student can be an important factor when deciding if you want to study abroad and on a study abroad location. We encourage you to use the information here as you review your options in order to select the location that will be the best fit for you.

Use the questions on the other side of this handout and the Student Resources section of the AIFS website to help you **research locations** that best fit your needs and interests.

Remember that **everyone's experience is unique**. First-generation college students can and do study abroad all over the world.

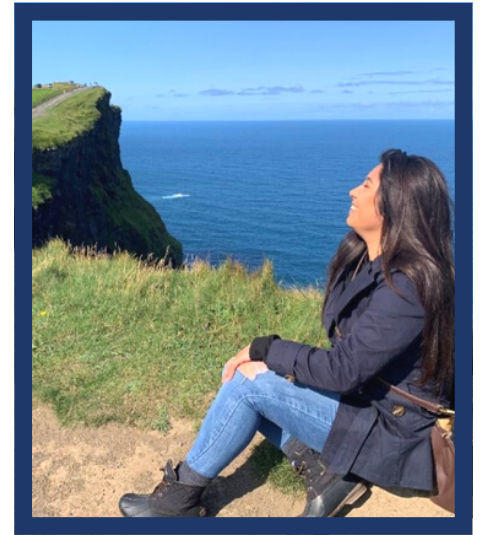
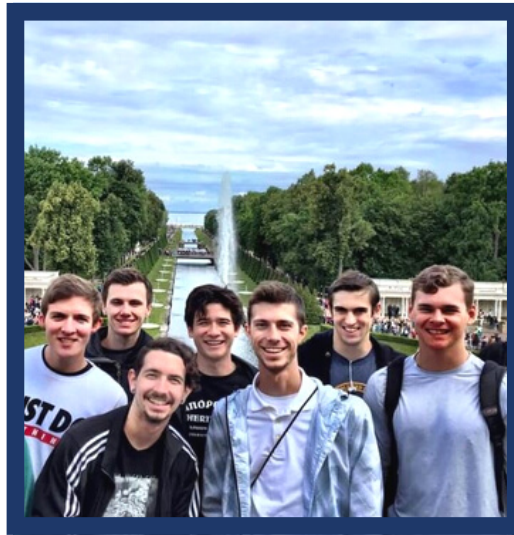
Funding is available for studying abroad. AIFS offers **scholarships for students from underrepresented communities** in study abroad (including students who are first-gen). You can also utilize funds from outside sources, such as Diversity Abroad and the Fund for Education Abroad.

Determine the best way to **present the idea of studying abroad to your parents and family**. Consider what concerns they might have and ways you can ease their fears.

You can **connect with program alumni** through the AIFS student portal or by emailing alumni@aifs.com and letting us know your locations of interest and if you would like to speak with others who also identify as first-generation college students.

Please **contact us** at studyabroad@aifs.com or at (800) 727-2437 so we can discuss your specific interests and needs for your time abroad. We look forward to hearing from you.

Additional information and resources can be found on our website at <https://www.aifsabroad.com/student-resources.asp>.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER & TIPS FOR GOING ABROAD

What is your inspiration for going abroad? *This can include for heritage reasons, a book or movie you enjoy, or wanting to explore a subject comparatively to how you understand it in the U.S. context.*

Do you need to get a passport? *The steps to follow and application can be found online at USA.gov. Your study abroad office might offer assistance with this process as well.*

Have you ever flown on a long-haul flight?

Do you need to secure extra funding? *Talk with your study abroad office and financial aid office to understand how your financial aid package will apply to study abroad and what additional funding sources exist at your campus and online. Keep in mind that scholarship deadlines often fall before program deadlines, so start planning as soon as possible.*

What sort of support structures will help you be most successful throughout the study abroad experience?

How will you introduce the idea of studying abroad to your family? How will you continue the conversation if they are not supportive at first?

Are there stereotypes in your host country about the different aspects of your identity?

What other intersections of your identity may take the foreground if your first-generation status is not recognized in the host country (race, citizenship, first language, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.)?

The study abroad application process involves a fair amount of paperwork and can be a bit daunting for all students, but rest assured your program Admissions Officer can provide assistance and answer any questions you might have along the way.

AIFS staff in-country are there to support you, so don't be afraid to ask for help. They can provide insight into local cultural norms, connect you with resources in your host community and assist you if you experience challenges.

Create a budget plan to help with being fiscally responsible while abroad. Make sure to include day-to-day spending and incidentals. Be comfortable saying no to your peers if you are unable to join an activity that does not fit in your budget.

Although a social identity for many U.S. college students, first-generation status is not as common at universities abroad, so you will likely not find support specifically for that aspect of your identity. However, many universities have support structures in place in addition to the AIFS staff on-site.

Remember that all of your life experiences will be great training for any difficulties you might face while abroad. You have the means to navigate this experience successfully and doing so will better prepare you for your career and life ahead.

Utilize your network of friends, both abroad and at home, and your host family, if applicable.