

**AED Colloquium on Diversity in Education Abroad: How to Change  
the Picture**  
***Challenging the Status Quo: A Plan for Action, A Call for  
Organizational Change***

1. Challenge U.S. colleges and universities to develop a thoughtful strategic plan for outreach and recruitment of students of color, and of limited financial means, in part by suggesting the following list of constructive steps to take:
  - a. Encourage institutional leadership to support an action plan for addressing diversity in education abroad and to make it an institutional priority. Couple that plan with making education abroad part of comprehensive campus internationalization. Tailor the plan to reflect the unique needs of each institution and its student body.
  - b. Design program offerings with participants of color (and of limited financial means) in mind so that programs are attractive to the broadest array of students.
  - c. Encourage campus and study abroad program entities, through collaboration with offices of student financial assistance, to design aid packages that will allow participants to study abroad in the summer and during the academic year.
  - d. Design program outreach and marketing so that it places special emphasis on student organizations and similar entities where diverse student populations are represented.
  - e. Diversify campus study abroad office and program provider staff, so that when a prospective participant comes to a presentation or visits the office, they will see someone who looks like them.
  - f. Design program materials and websites that are welcoming and representative of culturally diverse groups.
  - g. Consider multiple strategies for retaining interest and commitment of diverse populations, including clearly articulating the value the program can bring to the participant.
  - h. Encourage staff to develop a thorough understanding of the needs of students of color and how to connect those needs to a program's ability to meet those needs. Address personal issues that could be barriers to participation.
2. Research and compile information for a clearinghouse on financing of education abroad which AED would host on its website. Empower students to take responsibility for their education abroad financing with a tip sheet for students on how to better utilize funds and seek out cost-effective programs. Provide "student as consumer" materials

to more fully inform prospective participants of the options available for reasonably priced programs.

3. Establish an alumni group of ethnically diverse education abroad graduated returnees willing to talk with prospective applicants about the challenges they faced in studying abroad and the values they ascribe to that experience, and assist with their voluntary visits with students through a national programming effort.
4. Establish an education abroad teach-in (or appreciation) day each semester during which returnees discuss their study abroad experience, and share with prospective participants how such experiences informed, and even shaped, their academic and career trajectory.
5. Promote early (e.g., pre-collegiate) awareness of education abroad so that the concept is introduced at the secondary school level and as part of university marketing materials.
6. Find ways to encourage collaboration with other campus offices and units, including especially minority students affairs (or ethnic studies departments) and activities.
7. Encourage information sharing among education abroad professionals to gain from "best practices" experiences. For example, returnees might be required to "give back" by educating peers about their experiences and encouraging them to venture abroad. Such presentations could be built into the program curriculum.
8. Develop and advocate for a uniform data collection template that includes key demographic information about race, ethnicity, and student income group for national use to aid more comprehensive analysis of student participation rates, and to facilitate a national database on diversity in education abroad. Couple this data collection enhancement with a similarly uniform evaluation tool to elicit information about what was successful in the students' education abroad experience and what barriers were successfully overcome; ask for feedback on what if any effect the education abroad experience may have had on the students' evolving educational and professional goals; include demographic information as well as programmatic and academic data to facilitate comparative analysis.
9. Collect and disseminate more data on ethnicity from education abroad program applications to ascertain which types of program, study destinations, and subject matter are attractive to students of color and of limited financial means. Potential repositories of data include:
  - National level (i.e. Institute for International Education; NAFSA: Assoc. of International Educators; Forum on Education Abroad)
  - Sharing between like-minded and similarly situated institutions
  - Each campus (returning students and alumni, faculty, advisors)
  - Individuals (i.e. education abroad professionals)

10. Establish an annual institutional award to recognize and promote successful models for increasing diversity among study abroad participants that feature innovation and sustainable models for success.