
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL HANDBOOK: ENGAGING CONSTITUENTS ABROAD

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By

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FOREWORD

Higher education is about people: students, faculty, administration, alumni, families, communities and other friends who align to a college or university's mission, resources, and brand. Today, internationalization - the global agenda - on campuses around the world is an opportunity for an integrated strategy that supports international student and scholar recruitment, international academic partnerships, and the development of key regions where international alumni and friends are engaged in sustainable, meaningful and relevant ways to advance the global footprint of their university.

The growth of middle class families in Southeast Asia, China and India contribute to an increase in both undergraduate and graduate international student enrollment. Fluctuating state and federal funding for higher education has stressed budgets, and more colleges and universities are banking on balancing periodic or annual shortfalls in new ways, including incoming international tuition dollars. Advances in social media and other tools for communication support international dialogue and create more ways to build community abroad.

The increasing global diversification in higher education today needs strong advocates. Alumni, donors, institutional partners and other allies need to understand your institution's international story. That story is best told by traveling abroad.

The cost of doing business abroad varies by region and budgets need to be built to support these endeavors. A trip to London one year can cost more twelve months later given exchange rates. Agility with resources will provide the cushion you need to adequately engage others in a style that suits the country, the constituency and your agenda.

This handbook is designed to educate, inform, and motivate. Here is what you will find in it:

■ **Part 1 - Assessing Your Preparedness**

In this section, I offer an easy assessment tool called the International Travel Barometer, which asks key questions that gauge true readiness to successfully leverage all that is possible when representing your institution abroad.

■ **Part 2 - Overall Preparation**

This section urges readers to do their research on a destination and guides planners to prepare in advance for anything that can happen.

■ **Part 3 - Being Global: International Volunteer Management and Taking Your Institution on the Road**

Part 3 is all about alumni and the other volunteers who sustain any initiative of any size. Those new to, or interested in, developing international alumni chapters will find plenty of tactics and ideas to customize for their constituency.

■ **Part 4 - Going Global: International Events and Campaign Planning**

Part 4 encourages readers to educate others on all the facets of planning and executing an international trip, and I offer you several examples on how you can provide your entire shop with opportunities to contribute to the success of the event while you are on the road.

■ **Appendices**

The Appendices provide additional resources and checklists for handling international travel logistics, staying healthy when abroad, and for keeping all pertinent details organized.

I developed the International Travel Handbook for you recognizing that often, so much of what we learn by traveling and working abroad is never written down. Until now.

I hope this Handbook becomes a critical resource for your office and home.

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Chengdu, PRC

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PART 1. ASSESSING YOUR PREPAREDNESS: THE INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL BAROMETER

This handbook does not assume that all readers and their institutions are poised to jet off tomorrow to advance their agendas abroad. Readers need to first assess their overall readiness to embark on more global initiatives and travel.

There are more resources and relationships to leverage than just a budget and a locale when working abroad. Look beyond your own functional domain and think about the institution's overall international story and how that is projected today with key stakeholders:

- Can you describe (roughly) the international demographics that define your student and alumni body?
- Are you aware of what other offices are doing in terms of international engagement?
- Do you know which staff members are working abroad, what resources they have, and the nature of their relationships?

The *International Travel Barometer* will assess your preparedness by scoring your responses to a set of 10 questions that reflect on the international sources of information and resources. Your cumulative score will be discussed below on a sliding scale developed to highlight areas for further development and discussion.

Alumni, donors, institutional partners and other allies need to understand your institution's international story. That story is best told by traveling abroad.

This book will prepare you with everything you need to know to make your international travel successful:

- Assess your preparedness for international engagement with Gretchen Dobson's International Travel Barometer
- Review practical tips and case studies for managing international volunteers and international alumni chapters
- Walk through scenarios for developing effective international chapter events
- Get briefed on international community engagement, including solicitation trips and campaign tours
- Learn how to make the most of your trips abroad

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