



## ADULT 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 an adult college student can be an important factor when deciding 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**. Adult college students can and do study abroad all over the world.

Spend time thinking about what it means to be **your age, gender, and ethnicity in a new context**. This will better prepare you for your experience abroad.

AIFS offers **scholarships for students from underrepresented communities** in study abroad (including mature students). Students can also utilize funds from outside sources, such as Diversity Abroad and the Fund for Education Abroad.

You can **connect with program alumni** through the AIFS student portal or by emailing [alumni@aifs.com](mailto:alumni@aifs.com) and letting us know your locations of interest and if you would like to speak with an adult student.

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

Please contact us at [studyabroad@aifs.com](mailto: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.



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER & TIPS

Do you have work, home, and /or family obligations that prevent you from studying abroad for an extended period of time?

Will you need to set up auto-pay, pay rent in advance, or find a solution to store your belongings if you are in a long-term program?

Will there be other adult students in your program? Are you comfortable interacting with students of different age groups?

How do people in your host country view adult students (sometimes referred to as mature or nontraditional students abroad)?

What skills do you want to gain or improve while you are abroad? How might this experience help with defining your life in a relevant and important way?

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

If you find something to be offensive, how should you react in your host country versus at home?

What housing options are available for your program?

Are there any physical limitations that you need to be mindful of when selecting a program?

Look into short term programs if you cannot afford to spend an extended period of time away from your family and can't take too much time off work.

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.

Be aware that there are different cultural norms abroad and that people you encounter may be less "politically correct" than you may expect.

Sometimes you might feel like you don't fit in, but remember not to isolate yourself from the rest of the group. Get to know the others and let them get to know you.

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

Don't go abroad expecting discrimination, but be prepared if an incident does arise.

Upon your return, take time to reflect on how your worldview has developed through participation in a study abroad program.