



RACE, ETHNICITY & 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 your race and ethnicity 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**. Although there are some locations that are more welcoming, **students of color can and do study abroad all over the world**.

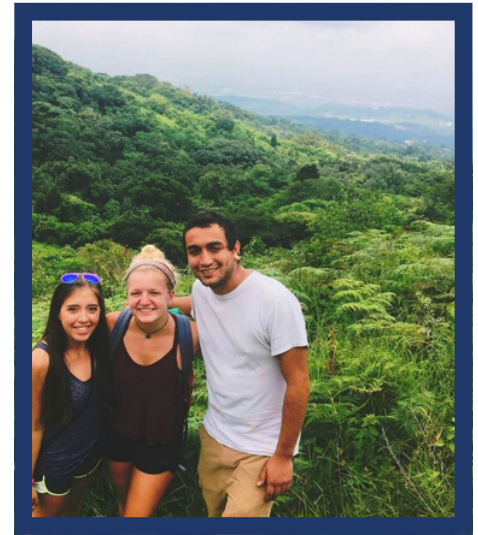
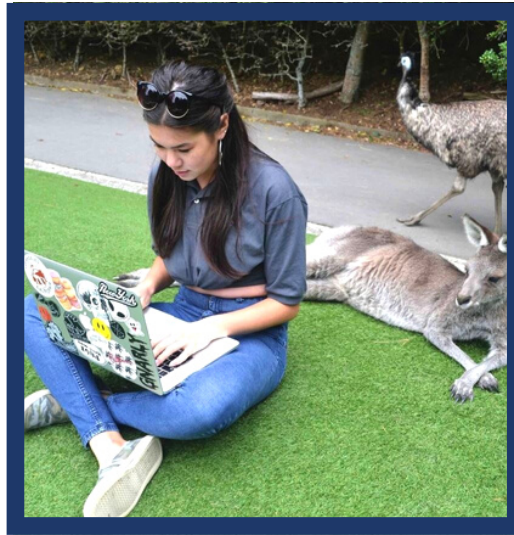
Spend time thinking about what it means to be your **gender, race and ethnicity in a new context**. This will better prepare you for your experience abroad.

AIFS offers **scholarships for students from underrepresented communities** in study abroad (including students of color). 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 and letting us know your locations of interest and if you would like to speak with a student from your same racial or ethnic background.

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 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 WHILE ABROAD

Are there laws or attitudes in your host country that affect aspects of your racial, national, or ethnic identity?

What is the demographic of your host community? What are the racial and ethnic majority or minority? Which groups have power and privilege? How does this compare to your home country and how might these affect how you are perceived in your host country?

How are people with the same racial, ethnic, or national identity as you treated in your host country?

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?

Has your host family housed students of your race or ethnicity before? Will there be other students with the same racial or ethnic background in your program? What support does the host university offer to visiting underrepresented students?

If you will be part of the racial or ethnic majority in your host country, how will that experience differ from your experience at home? What other intersections of your identity may take the foreground if your race or ethnicity is not in the minority (citizenship, first language, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.)?

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

Integrating yourself in the culture will make you stand out less, but keep in mind that if your appearance is different to the local majority population, your skin tone, hair, or other features may still be highlighted.

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.

Research the history of your host location to familiarize yourself with the region's ethnic and racial background. Understanding how this has changed over time may help you to contextualize some of the complex cultural dynamics you could encounter.

Research international student organizations on your host campus as well as clubs and organizations in your host community.

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

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