



Credit: Ksenija Keivanzadeh, International Visitor Liaison

# Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study

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**GLOBALTIES > U.S.**  
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# Executive Summary

International exchange programs are a critical public diplomacy tool to support the building of strong international alliances. According to the U.S. Department of State, exchange programs directly contribute to both U.S. prosperity and security by building mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries. As just one example, one in three world leaders in 2019 was an alumni of a U.S. Government exchange program.<sup>1</sup>

Exchange programs have long been a way to humanize foreign affairs and build trust to deepen U.S. alliances. Yet an often-overlooked dimension of this work is the impact within the United States as global leaders participating in these programs spend time in U.S. communities nationwide. Research from Global Ties U.S. shows that federal spending on international exchange programs in the more than 80 communities we support has a 5:1 economic return on investment, meaning that it spurs greater spending to support these programs within the U.S. economy.<sup>2</sup> We also know through countless stories from our nationwide Network of nonprofit organizations that these visits also create something deeper. This study set out to quantify what that local impact is.

In 2022, Global Ties U.S. conducted a national survey of U.S. citizens who serve as local diplomats within their cities by representing the United States to the thousands of global leaders who visit their communities each year on exchange programs, primarily through the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). These U.S. citizen diplomats are the hosts of these global leaders, in both small towns and mega-cities, and those who take time to share their expertise and/or a meal with them. We refer to these citizen diplomats as resources (subject-matter

experts) and volunteers (hospitality hosts). This last year alone (FY 2021), 7,553 volunteers contributed 135,268 hours of service to connect more than 4,400 exchange participants with their U.S. counterparts. We wanted to know the outcomes of that time spent and how participating in these exchange programs from the U.S. perspective impacted these local communities.

Through this first-ever Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study, we found that community members who host these international leaders gain in global knowledge and cultural competence. Their work also creates greater opportunities for communities to come together and work together. Consistent with our knowledge of the economic return on the federal investment, we found that these international exchange programs also provide workforce development opportunities. Specifically, our findings reveal:

## Participating in international exchanges increases global knowledge and cultural competence.

- 86% of survey respondents agree that they have learned a great deal about the country and culture of international visitors.<sup>3</sup>
- 84% report that they learned more about international affairs and issues generally through their interactions with international visitors.
- 88% say that they are more likely to consider different cultural perspectives when evaluating issues and challenges.
- 80% agree that their comfort level has increased when encountering cultural differences.

<sup>1</sup> [https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/eca\\_fact\\_sheet\\_2019.pdf](https://eca.state.gov/files/bureau/eca_fact_sheet_2019.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-dMMh1GhfurApmdvf\\_bHDNDSTPKgVR\\_k](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1-dMMh1GhfurApmdvf_bHDNDSTPKgVR_k)

<sup>3</sup> Percentages are a combination of respondents who selected agree or strongly agree.

### International exchanges encourage local civic engagement and deepens community inclusion.

- 79% of survey respondents have a greater appreciation for different cultural groups in their local communities.
- 77% say they are more likely to participate in events or activities in their local community that are sponsored by groups reflecting a national heritage different from their own.
- 58% are more likely to become more engaged with a local or community issue.

### Hosting international exchange programs can generate economic impacts and workforce development in U.S. communities.

- 80% of survey respondents say that international exchange programs enhance the image of their community as a good place to live.
- 77% agree that participation in these programs has enhanced the prestige of their organization or strengthened their personal reputation.

- 66% have learned new skills that help them to do their job better.
- 58% believe that international exchanges improve the ability of the local community to attract international investment.

### Engagement with international exchange visitors increases international connectivity.

- 32% of survey respondents have stayed in touch with international friends or business contacts they made through their participation in international exchanges.

We also found that the citizen diplomats who participate more frequently in international exchange programs emphasize these benefits more strongly. The more one engages, the greater the impact.

This study's findings show that international exchange programs help participants gain skills and resources that will allow them to thrive in a globalized economy, while simultaneously encouraging them to engage more deeply in their own local communities.

Credit: Lulu Bonning,  
San Diego Diplomacy Council



# The Report

Background

Methods

Results

Discussion

Next Steps



Credit: Jonathan Christ, International Visitor Liaison



Credit: Brianna Ramsey, Global Ties Detroit

## Background

Each year, thousands of outstanding global leaders visit the United States on the flagship U.S. Department of State-sponsored International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) and scores of other educational, cultural, and professional exchange programs. They meet with their counterparts in business, politics, and/or civil society; have dinner and attend cultural events with local volunteers; and travel to U.S. cities big and small to gain a deeper understanding of the incredibly rich diversity of the United States.

For more than 60 years, Global Ties U.S. has led the Network of 90+ nonprofit organizations that provide the domestic infrastructure for IVLP and other U.S. public diplomacy activities. Serving all 50 U.S. states, the members of the Global Ties Network work to shatter stereotypes and build the trust between nations that is critical for solving global challenges. The 80+ Community-Based Member organizations of the Global Ties Network span the United States, from big cities to smaller towns. They also work closely with eight National Program Agencies based primarily in Washington, DC that coordinate and implement exchange programs: American Councils for International Education, Cultural Vistas, CRDF Global, FHI 360, Institute of International Education, Meridian International Center, Mississippi Consortium for International Development, and World Learning.

As part of and alongside a broader set of organizations and companies that comprise the educational and cultural exchange community in the United States, these nonprofits have for decades connected international leaders with their U.S. counterparts and created relationships and opportunities as local hubs for global engagement.

It has been established that exchange programs have transformational effects on international participants. Alumni have been honored with prestigious awards like the Pulitzer and Nobel Peace Prizes; while others have gone on to be heads of state or lead international organizations. More than 90% of IVLP alumni say they communicate more accurate information about the United States to people in their home countries because of their experience in U.S. communities. We also know from

prior Global Ties Network surveys we've conducted that there are economic and social impacts here at home. In FY 2021, Global Ties Network members reported a 5:1 return on the investment made in their communities through federal exchange programs. That same year, the Global Ties Network engaged more than 7,500 volunteers in their work and volunteers contributed over 135,000 hours of service to their local communities. Preliminary findings from a prior study developed with the University of Southern California (USC) Center on Public Diplomacy had pointed to socio-cultural benefits to local communities. Until now, though, we had not created a comprehensive assessment of the benefits for U.S.-based international exchange practitioners and their communities.

We set out to explore more deeply whether and how local people and organizations who meet with exchange participants derive benefits from that experience, and in what ways. We surveyed 679 people from 58 local organizations in 37 states to understand the impact participation in international exchanges has had on them and their communities. The community-based organizations that engaged in the survey represented every region of the country, from coast to coast, and included both large and small nonprofits, with decades of combined experience hosting international visitors through exchange programs.

The Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study focuses on the direct impact of international exchanges in U.S. communities. We define impact as resources that enable community members to operate more effectively in a global environment. Below we describe the process through which participation in international exchanges should produce benefits in four categories of impact, visualized in Chart 1:

### Global Knowledge and Cultural Competence

Interaction with international visitors should enable U.S. practitioners to be better informed about other countries and international affairs. This experience is also expected to improve cultural

sensitivity, appreciation of diversity, and cross-cultural communication skills.

### Civic Engagement and Community Inclusion

Involvement in international exchange activities and events should foster deeper connections between U.S. practitioners' and their community, and encourage increased participation in civic-minded activities, like volunteering or engaging in local issues.

### Economic Impacts and Workforce Development

Engagement with international visitors should enable U.S. exchange practitioners to develop global business connections and provide opportunities to improve the local workforce through professional capacity-building and knowledge sharing.

### International Connectivity

Participation in programs and events with international visitors should allow U.S. practitioners to connect to larger social networks, building international as well as local social networks.

## Methods

In order to capture and estimate how exchange programs impact local communities, Global Ties U.S. launched a multi-year evaluation project to help understand the direct impact on host communities of international exchanges and to provide evidence of the difference Community-Based Member (CBM) organizations are making locally.

Global Ties U.S. fielded its first national survey on the local impact of international exchanges in February 2023, building on exploratory studies carried out in partnership with the USC Center on Public Diplomacy. The Community Impact Study assessed attitudes and self-reported behaviors related to participation in international exchange programs and activities. The study questionnaire focused on the four categories of impact described above, which were identified through a review of



Chart 1: The benefits of international exchange programs for U.S. communities were measured by four categories of impact: Global Knowledge and Cultural Competence, Civic Engagement and Community Inclusion, Economics Impacts and Workforce Development, and International Connectivity.

the literature on cultural exchange, and supported by pilot surveys, interviews, and focus groups with members of the Global Ties Network.

To collect a nationally representative picture of our Network, we shared a survey with international exchange practitioners across the country. Based on input from CBMs, we relied on each organization to independently distribute the survey to their members. As a result, our response rate reflects that some CBMs shared the survey widely, whereas others were more targeted in who they invited to take the survey. Given CBM concerns around the privacy of their mailing lists, this Study relied on convenience sampling rather than a random sample of members. CBMs reported distributing the survey to approximately 15,465 members across the Network and the survey had a 4% response

rate.<sup>4</sup> Despite this relatively low response rate, the size of our sample is more than sufficient to give us confidence that the results are representative of the Network.<sup>5</sup>

While we asked CBMs to share the survey specifically with IVLP volunteers and professional resources, many of these respondents have also been involved in other exchange programs and we expect that they may not differentiate between the impacts of IVLP versus other exchange experiences. Further details about survey administration can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Key Aspects of the 2023 Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study

Sample	IVLP volunteers and professional resources who have engaged with international visitors in the last two years
Invitation	Emails (from CBMs)
Survey mode	Online
Sample size	Approximately 15,465
Responses	679 (523 complete and 156 partial responses)
Response rate	4%
Fielding Period	February 27 – April 15, 2023

The survey was largely comprised of questions asking respondents to indicate their level of agreement with statements grouped thematically around the categories of impact described above. In addition to these Likert-style questions, respondents were also asked about the intensity of their participation in international visitor programs and events, as well as social connections formed and ongoing communication with visitors. The survey also included standard demographic questions.

## Survey Response

In Phase 1 of the Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study, we received 679 survey responses. Of these responses, 523 completed the entire survey while 156 partially completed the survey. Some of the partially completed surveys include responses to only one or two questions, whereas others responded to all but the demographic questions. There are 58 CBMs represented in these responses. Respondents were located in 37 states, covering every geographic region in the United States, giving us confidence that these findings represent the national Global Ties Network. Of these respondents, 61% reported that they primarily engaged in international exchange activities and events in a professional capacity, for example, through professional programming, business meetings, or consulting. The other 39% indicated that they participated as volunteers, in activities like home hospitality dinners, chaperoning, or other social events.

To better understand the demographic composition of responses, we asked a range of voluntary self-identification questions. The data indicate that the majority of respondents are highly educated, with 69% having received a postgraduate degree. Respondents are also more likely to be white (84%) and female (60%). The average age of respondents was 57 years old.

## Limitations

Given the breadth of the Global Ties Network and the desire of CBMs to maintain control over communications with their members, we relied on CBMs to distribute the survey. As a result, survey administration, including targeting, outreach, and follow-ups, may not have been consistent across the network. This approach also meant we had to rely on convenience sampling rather than taking

<sup>4</sup> To encourage more buy-in, we allowed CBMs to disseminate the survey to their own networks. While some sent targeted emails to the intended audience, others included the link in newsletters to large mailing lists, which accounts for the inflated sample size. Additionally, seven organizations with 14 total responses, failed to supply information about the number of members with whom they shared the survey.

<sup>5</sup> To obtain a confidence level of 95% that the true values of members' opinion are within a +/-5% margin of error of reported values, we would only require a sample size of 385, which we have exceeded.



a random sample of the population. Despite these limitations, the size of our sample gives us confidence that our findings are generalizable to the Network as a whole.

Additionally, based on the timing of the survey, we know that the findings are affected by the impacts caused by COVID-19. Many CBMs temporarily

paused in-person programming, and many of these organizations reported engaging less, due to health risks. As a result, the level of participation indicated in this study is likely less than it would be in a typical year. This is intended to be a multi-year survey, so we look forward to comparing these results to future years when programming is back at pre-pandemic levels.

## Results

Overall, we find that participation in international exchanges is associated with benefits to the local community in each of the assessed categories.

### Global Knowledge and Cultural Competence

The largest impacts reported in the survey were in increased global knowledge and cultural competence. International exchanges increase U.S. citizens' understanding of international affairs and other cultures by giving them the opportunity to interact with visitors from around the world. For example, in response to the statement, "I learned a great deal about the country and culture of international visitors whom I have met," 36% of survey respondents said they agree and 50% strongly agree.<sup>6</sup> These findings were also supported by experiences detailed qualitatively in the survey. According to one respondent:

"I have always been fascinated with other cultures. Without the financial means to travel as much as I would like, it is great to be involved with IVLP. The world comes to me!"

Across 10 questions related to knowledge and culture, survey respondents on average agreed that they had benefited in these areas due to their participation in international exchange activities and events.<sup>7</sup> Further bolstering this finding, one respondent noted:

"Entertaining international visitors has aided my perspective on the world and helped me be a better and more competent listener to international affairs in the news."

This global knowledge and cultural competency carries into other aspects of their lives. Given the statement, "I am more likely to consider different cultural perspectives when evaluating issues and challenges," 41% of survey respondents said they agree and 47% strongly agree.

In qualitative responses, many survey respondents, some of whom self-identified as parents and educators, also reported that they have shared the knowledge they gained with their children and students, improving opportunities for local youth to thrive in a globalized environment. For example:

"I am a professor and I am able to share stories of meeting amazing people from around the world with my students. Sometimes the people I meet with Zoom into my classes. What I learn, I am able to share and it expands all our worlds."

### Civic Engagement and Community Inclusion

The study also shows that engaging in international exchange strengthens local community integration, as U.S. community members develop a stronger

<sup>6</sup> More detailed results can be found in the Appendix.

<sup>7</sup> Where responses are coded "3 – Neither agree nor disagree," "4 – Agree," and "5 – Strongly agree," the average of these responses was 4.13

sense of civic pride and appreciation of diverse cultural groups in their own communities. As one respondent said:

“Fellow participants in the program gain a greater appreciation for our region, and it enhances civic involvement, appreciation, and pride.”

While members of this population are likely already active in their local communities, 30% of survey respondents said they were more likely to volunteer in their local community, and 23% said they were much more likely to volunteer, as a result of their participation in international visitor programs and activities. Engagement with international visitors may also encourage more diverse community involvement; 45% of respondents said they were more likely to participate in events or activities sponsored by groups reflecting a national heritage different from their own and 32% said they were much more likely. One respondent provided the following illustration:

“I am now a volunteer teacher of English as a second language in my community.”

The majority of respondents also indicated that they had gained skills or experiences that made them better able to contribute to their local community, with 39% agreeing and 32% strongly agreeing.

## Economic Impacts and Workforce Development

The study suggests that participating in international exchange programs and events increases economic opportunities by elevating the image of the local community and raising the prestige of local businesses. When asked whether international exchange programs enhanced the image of their community as a good place to live, 44% of survey respondents agreed and 36% strongly agreed. Moreover, 48% agreed and 29% strongly agreed that participation in international visitor programs had enhanced the prestige of their organization or strengthened their personal reputation.

According to respondents, international exchange also strengthens the local workforce through sharing best practices and professional development opportunities, as those who interact with the visitors receive a chance to engage with their international peers, which isn't normally accessible locally. Many qualitative responses also emphasized the benefits of knowledge-sharing and creating links with international nonprofits and advocacy groups. One respondent detailed the positive impact for their organization:

“The international visitors program has allowed my smaller non-profit to have open discussions with practitioners we would normally not have the opportunity to speak with about important human rights initiatives. We have a better understanding of how other cultures view human rights issues and interventions. We are often limited as we serve primarily local clients, but the program has offered professional connections internationally.”

## International Connectivity

Social ties are both an outcome of participation and also appear to have a multiplier effect on the benefits seen in other areas. Among survey respondents who self-identified as volunteers, 40% said they had developed a close personal friendship with an international visitor. For professional resources, 19% reported that they had formed a business relationship with visitors. Based on responses to these questions, as well as how frequently participants communicate with these contacts, we constructed a Social Ties Index, indicating three levels of social ties.<sup>8</sup> Those with Strong Ties (16%) had formed a close personal or business relationship, and communicated once a month or more; those with Moderate Ties (29%) had a close personal or business relationship, and communicated few times a year or less; and those with Weak Ties (55%) reported no close personal or business relationships. Across all categories of impact, those with strong ties generally agree more strongly with statements about benefits to participation than the average response.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Developed by the USC Center on Public Diplomacy.

<sup>9</sup> The “Indices by Social Ties Index” table in the Appendix provides a more detailed breakdown.

The lasting connections that participants form allow them to continue exchanging ideas with international visitors and bringing new perspectives to their local communities. As one respondent explained:

“We have been hosting international guests through multiple programs for over 20 years. They have opened our eyes and horizons in many ways and have made us realize what a small world we live in. We have visited a number in their home countries and had nothing but positive experiences. We wish that more of our fellow citizens could have the same opportunity.”

## Participation

As detailed above, survey respondents reported knowledge, cultural, civic, community, and economic gains as a result of engagement with international exchanges. The study also suggests that those who participate more emphasize these benefits more strongly.

Respondents who participate in more events per year agree more strongly that they have seen a positive impact from their engagement with exchanges. There is a small but statistically significant relationship between participation and each of the opinion scales described above. In other words, moving from participating in an event less than once a year to once a year would be expected to increase responses, on average, by 0.15 - 0.20 points (in a 1-5 scale). For example, holding all else equal, someone who participated less than once a year might agree that they've learned a lot about

the countries and cultures of international visitors, while someone who participates several times a week might strongly agree. Or, someone who participates once a year might report no difference in their likelihood of volunteering in their local community, whereas someone who participates several times a week might say they were more likely to volunteer.

Respondents who engage in more intimate social events, like home hospitality dinners, report stronger benefits from participation than those whose engagement is limited to professional events. In most categories of impact, volunteers reported higher levels of agreement with the scale questions than professional resources (with some exceptions in the economic impact and professional development scales). However, not all of these differences are statistically significant.<sup>10</sup>

Many professional resources, however, indicate a desire for deeper engagement. In qualitative comments, these professional resources noted that they did not feel they were able to spend as much time with visitors as they would like, which may be a partial driver of the different levels of impact reported by volunteers and resources. There is not a statistically significant difference in reported levels of participation between volunteers and resources. However, volunteers do, on average, report stronger ties (as measured by the social ties index, described above). This suggests that there is a difference in the depth or intimacy of interactions with visitors.

<sup>10</sup> In the knowledge, culture, and civic participation questions, the higher mean score for volunteers than for resources was statistically significant. For the community scales, only question 2 had a statistically significant difference of means. In the economic impact questions, resources had a higher mean than volunteers on question 3 and volunteers averaged higher than resources on question four. These were the only statistically significant differences for the economic impact questions. In the professional development questions, the higher mean scores for resources on questions 2, 4, 5, and the composite index were statistically significant. More details are available in the Appendix.

## Discussion

The findings from the Global Ties U.S. Community Impact Study confirm our expectations that international exchanges create benefits for U.S. communities. Respondents on average agree that they have strengthened their global knowledge and cultural competence, they have expanded their civic engagement and bolstered community inclusion, they have experienced economic and workforce development benefits, and they have formed social ties and increased international connectivity as a result of their engagement with international visitor programs and activities.

We also see that those who participate more frequently or engage more deeply with visitors report higher levels of agreement about the positive impacts of participation. One-on-one interactions in exchange events like home hospitality dinners appear to facilitate formation of stronger social ties than more structured contact, for example, in some professional programming events. The formation of personal relationships, based on in-depth communication with international visitors, appears to strengthen the impact of exchanges.

## Next Steps

Phase 2 of the Community Impact Study will take place in 2024. It will encourage even broader engagement by Community-Based Member (CBM) organizations of the Global Ties Network.

Over time, we expect our findings to point to steady and important indications of local impact of international exchanges, underscoring the value of these programs in building both stronger alliances globally and stronger communities here at home.



# Appendix



Credit: Habeba Elshimy, Student



Credit: Brianna Ramsey, Global Ties Detroit

The following tables provide a summary of scores for Likert-style questions asked in each category of impact. Higher numbers indicate more agreement, within a range of 1-5. In each table, the total mean is presented as well as the group means for volunteers (V) and resources (R). Asterisks show where the group mean is statistically significantly different than the overall mean.

### Global Knowledge

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your involvement and participation in international visitor activities and programs?	Mean N≈622	V Mean N≈248	R Mean N≈374
1. I learned a great deal about the country and culture of international visitors whom I have met.	4.31	4.54*	4.17
2. I have a deeper understanding of U.S. foreign policy because of my interactions with international visitors.	3.78	3.89*	3.72
3. My friends, family, and/or colleagues have learned a great deal about other countries and cultures through my involvement in international visitor programs.	3.92	4.27*	3.69
4. I have learned more about international affairs and issues generally through my interactions with international visitors.	4.18	4.32*	4.10
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.05</b>	<b>4.25*</b>	<b>3.92</b>

Values: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

\* indicates statistically significant difference in means

### Cultural Competence

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your involvement and participation in international visitor activities and programs?	Mean N≈605	V Mean N≈239	R Mean N≈366
1. I am better able to discuss cultural differences from an informed perspective.	4.22	4.44*	4.07
2. I am more likely to consider different cultural perspectives when evaluating issues and challenges.	4.32	4.49*	4.21
3. My ability to differentiate between similar cultures has improved.	4.11	4.27*	4.01
4. I am more aware of how my own culture influences the way I see people from other countries.	4.23	4.35*	4.16
5. In situations where I encounter cultural differences my comfort level has increased.	4.20	4.38*	4.09
6. I feel more comfortable explaining my values to people from other countries.	4.15	4.26*	4.07
<b>Average</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>4.36*</b>	<b>4.10</b>

Values: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

\* indicates statistically significant difference in means

## Community Inclusion

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your involvement and participation in international visitor activities and programs?	Mean N≈588	V Mean N≈235	R Mean N≈353
1. I have a better understanding of my local community's needs.	3.64	3.68	3.61
2. I have a greater appreciation for different cultural groups of my local community.	4.10	4.20*	4.04
3. I have greater pride in my local community.	4.00	4.06	3.96
4. I am more willing to work with other members of my community on local issues or problems.	3.91	3.98	3.86
5. I have gained skills or experiences that make me better able to contribute to my local community.	3.99	4.06	3.94
6. My attachment to my local community has been strengthened.	3.79	3.79	3.79
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>3.96</b>	<b>3.87</b>

Values: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

\* indicates statistically significant difference in means



### Civic Engagement

Question: Due to your involvement and participation in international visitor programs and activities, are you more or less likely to engage in each of the following activities?	Mean N≈575	V Mean N≈230	R Mean N≈345
1. Participate in events or activities sponsored by groups reflecting a national heritage different from my own.	4.09	4.17*	4.04
2. Participate in interfaith activities.	3.64	3.72*	3.59
3. Have a lengthy conversation with a non-native English speaker.	4.02	4.10*	3.97
4. Attend a lecture/workshop/campus discussion on global issues.	4.07	4.17*	4.01
5. Volunteer in my local community.	3.75	3.85*	3.68
6. Become more engaged with a local or community issue.	3.80	3.90*	3.73
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.90</b>	<b>3.98*</b>	<b>3.84</b>

Values: 1 (Much Less Likely) – 5 (Much More Likely); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

\* indicates statistically significant difference in means

### Economic Impact

Question: How much do you agree or disagree about the economic impact of international visitor programs on your community? International visitor programs and activities...	Mean N≈543	V Mean N≈221	R Mean N≈322
1. Improve the ability of the local community to attract international investment.	3.74	3.71	3.75
2. Enhance the ability of local businesses to export goods and services overseas.	3.56	3.51	3.60
3. Help create jobs in the local community.	3.45	3.37	3.50*
4. Enhance the image of the community as a good place to live.	4.14	4.24*	4.07
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.72</b>	<b>3.70</b>	<b>3.73</b>

Values: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

\* indicates statistically significant difference in means

## Workforce Development

Question: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your involvement and participation in international visitor activities and programs?	Mean N≈421	V Mean N≈121	R Mean N≈300
1. I have learned new skills that allow me to do my job better.	3.83	3.79	3.84
2. Participation in international visitor programs has enhanced the prestige of my organization or strengthened my personal reputation.	4.02	3.82	4.10*
3. My co-workers and colleagues have learned a great deal about other countries and cultures through my involvement in international visitor programs.	3.85	3.75	3.89
4. I gained access to unique professional development opportunities that I wouldn't have had otherwise.	3.65	3.49	3.71*
5. My involvement in international visitor programs provides me unique business opportunities that I wouldn't have had otherwise.	3.47	3.24	3.56*
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.76</b>	<b>3.62</b>	<b>3.82*</b>

Values: 1 (Strongly Disagree) – 5 (Strongly Agree); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

\* indicates statistically significant difference in means

The following tables present data on participation in exchange events. Questions were phrased differently for volunteers and resources, with volunteer questions asking about the individual's participation and resource questions inquiring about the individual as well as other members of their organization. The wording for both questions is included below.

### Social Network/Participation

Question	Mean N=553	V Mean N=227	R Mean N=326
During the last 12 months, how often have you/members of your organization attended, participated, or volunteered in these international visitor programs and activities?	2.85	2.92	2.80

Values: 1 (Less than once a year) – 6 (Several times a week); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

Question	Mean N=555	V Mean N=228	R Mean N=327
During the last 12 months, how many times <u>have you hosted</u> an international visitor(s) for dinner as part of a home visit?/During the last 12 months, how many times has your organization hosted international visitor(s)?	2.22	1.97	2.39

Values: 1 (Never) – 4 (5 or more times); V= Volunteers, R= Resources

The Social Ties Index, developed with the USC Center on Public Diplomacy, draws on the following questions:

### Social Ties Index

Questions
During the last 12 months, have you/your organization developed any <u>close personal friendships or relationships /a formal business or professional relationship</u> (e.g. import, export, consulting, joint projects, cooperative agreement, etc.) with any of these international visitors you met through these international visitor programs and activities?
In general, how often do you/does your organization communicate (e.g. in person, Skype, telephone, email, social media, texts, etc.) with this friend/contact?

From responses to these questions, we categorized respondents as having either weak, moderate, or strong ties, based on whether they have formed relationships with visitors and how often they communicate. The table below shows the percentage of respondents in each category overall and also broken into volunteers (V) and resources (R).

Index	% N=433	V % N=177	R % N=256
<b>Weak Ties = No Close Personal/Business Relationship</b>	55%	21%	78%
<b>Moderate Ties = Close Personal/Business Relationship, Communicate Few Times a Year or Less</b>	29%	55%	10%
<b>Strong Ties = Close Personal/Business Relationship, Communicate Once a Month or More</b>	16%	23%	12%

The next set of tables present cross-tabulations of the social ties index and average scores for the categories of impact scales. In each category, the table includes the average score across questions with 5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest. Asterisks indicate that the average score for a social ties index category is statistically significantly different than the mean score for that category of impact.

### Indices by Social Ties

Index	Weak Ties	Moderate Ties	Strong Ties	Mean
N≈	238	124	71	433
<b>Global Knowledge</b>	3.96*	4.15	4.25*	4.05
<b>Cultural Competence</b>	4.16	4.19	4.48*	4.20
<b>Community Inclusion</b>	3.81*	3.82	4.16*	3.90
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	3.80*	3.87	4.17*	3.90
<b>Economic Impact</b>	3.59*	3.67	3.93*	3.72
<b>Workforce Development</b>	3.66*	3.44*	4.06*	3.76

\* indicates a statistically significant difference from the mean ( $p \leq 0.05$ )

The following two tables show the cross-tabulations of social ties and impact separated by volunteers and resources.

### Indices by Social Ties (Volunteers)

Index	Weak Ties	Moderate Ties	Strong Ties	Mean
<i>N</i> ≈	38	98	41	177
<b>Global Knowledge</b>	4.40*	4.23	4.35	4.25
<b>Cultural Competence</b>	4.51*	4.32	4.55*	4.36
<b>Community Inclusion</b>	3.99	3.86	4.19*	3.96
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	3.91	3.90	4.19*	3.98
<b>Economic Impact</b>	3.61	3.63	3.93*	3.70
<b>Workforce Development</b>	3.67	3.30*	3.83	3.62

\* indicates a statistically significant difference from the mean ( $p \leq 0.05$ )

### Indices by Social Ties (Resources)

Index	Weak Ties	Moderate Ties	Strong Ties	Mean
<i>N</i> ≈	200	26	30	256
<b>Global Knowledge</b>	3.88	3.88	4.10	3.92
<b>Cultural Competence</b>	4.10	3.74*	4.39*	4.10
<b>Community Inclusion</b>	3.78*	3.68	4.12*	3.87
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	3.78	3.74	4.13*	3.84
<b>Economic Impact</b>	3.59*	3.82	3.93	3.73
<b>Workforce Development</b>	3.66*	3.72	4.27*	3.82

\* indicates a statistically significant difference from the mean ( $p \leq 0.05$ )

The final group of tables considers other forms of participation, like traveling, receiving visitors, and hosting or attending dinners with visitors. The tables show the average score in each category of impact for participants who do and do not engage in these types of activities.

### Indices by traveling/receiving visitors

Questions
During the last 12 months, have you/anyone from your organization traveled internationally to visit any of the international friends/professional or business contacts that you met through international visitor programs and activities?
During the last 12 months, have any of the international friends/professional or business contacts that you met through these international visitor programs and activities traveled to the United States to visit you/your organization?

Index	No	Yes	Overall Mean
<i>N</i> ≈	430	120	550
<b>Global Knowledge</b>	4.08*	4.26*	4.05
<b>Cultural Competence</b>	4.19*	4.43*	4.20
<b>Community Inclusion</b>	3.86*	4.10*	3.90
<b>Civic Engagement</b>	3.85*	4.11*	3.90
<b>Economic Impact</b>	3.69*	3.82*	3.72
<b>Workforce Development</b>	3.68*	4.05*	3.76

\* indicates that the difference between groups is statistically significant ( $p \leq 0.05$ )

**Indices by hosting/attending dinners**

Questions
During the last 12 months, have you/anyone from your organization traveled internationally to visit any of the international friends/professional or business contacts that you met through international visitor programs and activities?
During the last 12 months, have any of the international friends/professional or business contacts that you met through these international visitor programs and activities traveled to the United States to visit you/your organization?

Index	No	Yes	Overall Mean
<i>N</i> ≈	47	180	227
<b><i>Global Knowledge</i></b>	4.23	4.36	4.25
<b><i>Cultural Competence</i></b>	4.32	4.40	4.36
<b><i>Community Inclusion</i></b>	3.97	3.98	3.96
<b><i>Civic Engagement</i></b>	3.93	4.00	3.98
<b><i>Economic Impact</i></b>	3.77	3.69	3.70
<b><i>Workforce Development</i></b>	3.54	3.63	3.62



Credit: Habeba Elshimy, Student

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