

East Asia and Pacific

Regional EducationUSA Profile

Australia, Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, China, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Laos, Macau, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Mongolia, New Zealand, Palau, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Republic of Korea, Samoa, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Vietnam

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EducationUSA Advising Centers in the Region

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EducationUSA advising centers in East Asia and the Pacific (EAP) cover a wide geographic area and serve a diverse student population in terms of ethnicity, academic goals, financial need, and social and cultural background. Advising centers are located at an array of venues, including U.S. embassies and consulates, Fulbright Commissions, and American Corners, as well as local universities, libraries, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Three EducationUSA Regional Educational Advising Coordinators (REACs) cover this large region, and more than 80 EducationUSA advisers provide guidance and regional expertise to prospective students, U.S. higher education institutions (HEIs), and other stakeholders.

Regional Overview

The EAP region encompasses a quarter of the world's population and a wide range of religions, languages, and cultures. This region includes many of the top places of origin for international students in the United States. In AY 2018-2019, 537,181 students from this region attended U.S. universities and colleges. The region accounts for approximately 49 percent of all international students in the United States, and the number grows each year. Although AY 2018-2019 saw positive growth, the growth rate has slowed as competition for internationally mobile students has increased across the region and beyond.

Recent Trends

The region experienced tapered growth in AY 2018-2019 after a steady increase in student mobility over the previous five years. While interest in the American higher education sector remains high, affordability is a constant concern among students and families. In

addition, competition for international students is increasing, and there has been a rise in closer higher education options, specifically in China and Australia. The U.S. higher education sector faces a unique set of opportunities and challenges in meeting the ongoing demand for quality higher education while maintaining its position as the leading academic destination worldwide.

Countries and Areas in the Spotlight

Australia. With nearly three decades of uninterrupted economic growth and consistent development in the international education sector, Australia is a major sender and recipient of international students. The 2019 *Open Doors* report ranks Australia 30th in sending students to the United States and eighth in receiving U.S. study abroad students. Nearly 50 percent of Australian students in the United States are studying at the undergraduate level, with many drawn to the U.S. campus lifestyle, which contrasts with the commuter lifestyle of Australian universities.

Opportunities for athletic scholarships and sports programs at all levels of competition are popular among Australian students, and Australia is the fifth largest sender of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) eligible athletes to the United States. The graduate market in Australia is largely untapped and is an area that has growth potential, particularly given the number of international students pursuing undergraduate degrees in Australia and the substantial increase in the number of fully-funded Fulbright Scholarships being offered.

A well-planned recruitment schedule should leverage both Australia's proximity



to other growing markets in the region, including New Zealand and Indonesia, and opportunities for recruitment visits to countries in the region, such as Japan, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Vietnam, and others with direct flights.

Burma. According to *Open Doors* data, the number of Burmese students studying in the United States rose from 807 students in AY 2011-2012 to 1,773 students in AY 2018-2019, more than doubling over eight academic years. In 2019 alone, the number of Burmese students studying in the United States increased by 13 percent. Interest in community colleges has been a contributing factor to the rise of Burmese students pursuing higher education in the United States. With the growth of private colleges and universities in Burma in recent years, students have become increasingly focused on a broad spectrum of graduate offerings as well, with Master of Business Administration programs among the most popular.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) recently launched the Lincoln Scholarship Program to identify promising young Burmese leaders from diverse backgrounds. This program is expected to provide 100 fully-funded

Master's degree scholarships to U.S. institutions over the next three years. For students who self-fund, the perceived high cost of studying in the United States remains a barrier. Therefore, many self-funded students tend to seek less expensive options that are available within the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) region.

Cambodia. As Cambodia continues to enjoy rapid economic development, a larger proportion of Cambodian students are able to afford higher education abroad. The number of high-quality, private international high schools in Cambodia that prepare students to meet U.S. college and university academic entrance requirements is growing. Although interest is exceptionally high among students, affordability is the main barrier for student mobility to the United States. Regardless, the number of Cambodian students in the United States rose from 659 students in AY 2017-2018 to 685 students in AY 2018-2019, representing a 3.9 percent increase according to *Open Doors*.

More impressive is the year-after-year growth, which more than doubled the number of Cambodian students studying in the United States since AY 2011-2012. Much

of this growth is thanks to community college opportunities and four-year degree-granting institutions with strong 2+2 articulation agreements. These types of programs attract students' attention because of their access and affordability. *Open Doors* data confirmed that 29 percent of international students from Cambodia attended community colleges in AY 2017-2018. The top three host states for community college students from Cambodia were California, Texas, and Washington.

China. Once again, China remains the top sending country of international students to the United States, with interest in U.S. study from students at all levels. China witnessed a 1.7 percent increase in students studying in the United States according to AY 2018-2019 *Open Doors* data. While the year-after-year percentage increase in student mobility is slowing, the AY 2018-2019 total of 369,548 Chinese students shows that the United States continues to far outpace the closest competition. When looking at *Open Doors* data for the "Top 25 Places of Origin of International Students by Academic Level for 2018-2019," China sends the most students worldwide for undergraduate and graduate studies, and Optional Practical Training (OPT). Science,

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technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and business remain the most popular fields, but increasing numbers of Chinese students are choosing to study arts, education, and the humanities.

The number of Chinese students taking non-degree programs fell by 5.4 percent, likely as a result of increased competition from other countries. Chinese students interested in overseas education have more choices than they have had in the past, and foreign institutions are effectively courting them with shorter-term non-degree programs. British, Canadian, and Australian institutions in particular are a growing presence in China, recruiting more students and establishing partnerships with local schools that will likely draw increasing numbers of students away from the United States. It is more important than ever for U.S. institutions to continue to have a strong presence in China for recruitment purposes.

The number of Chinese students pursuing an undergraduate degree in the United States exceeded the number of graduate students for the fifth year in a row. This observation reflects two related trends: the growing number of students looking to study overseas as well as the continued growth of China's vast middle and upper classes. Graduate students often require, and secure, scholarships and third-party funding; most Chinese undergraduates are entirely self-funded students. There is an increase in the number of Chinese students taking advantage of OPT as a key step toward securing attractive jobs when they return home. Chinese families see overseas

study as an investment in future earnings, and a practical return on that investment is a top priority. The top five concerns for Chinese students studying abroad are campus safety, cost of tuition, job opportunities, perception of anti-Chinese sentiment in the United States, and college rankings.

Hong Kong. Although the number of Hong Kong students has fallen over the past two years, Hong Kong is still ranked 26th in sending international students to the United States. Traditionally, the majority of Hong Kong students considered only domestic institutions or a handful of well-known foreign universities, but due to increased levels of difficulty introduced into the Diploma of Secondary Education exam and a number of other factors, both prospective and currently enrolled students are seeking higher education options outside of Hong Kong. EducationUSA Hong Kong is seeing an increase in inquiries about various U.S. study options, including boarding high schools, community colleges, and institutions accepting transfer students.

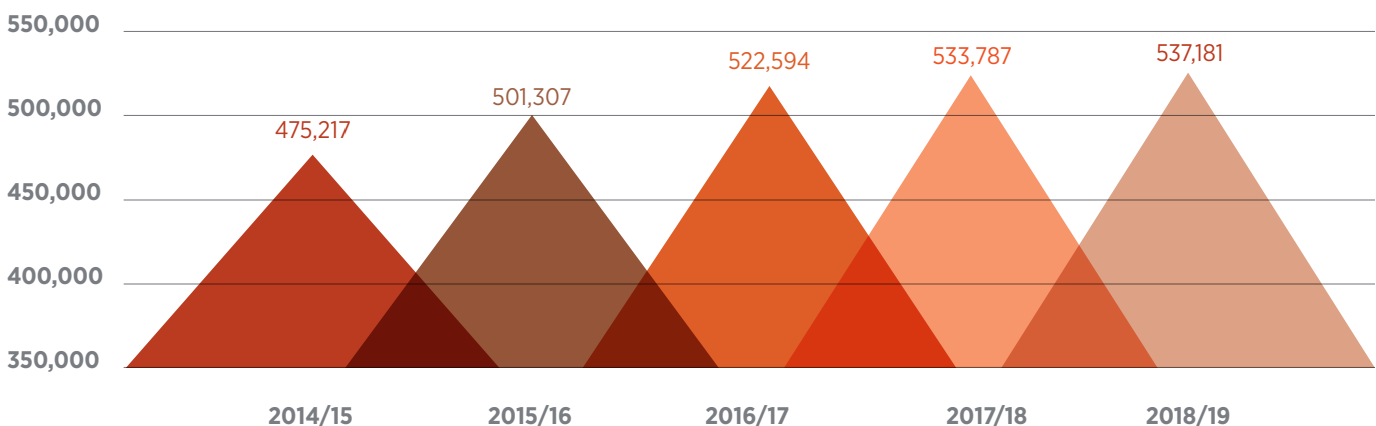
Nevertheless, the United States is not the only destination that will benefit from the current trends in Hong Kong. As residents of a former British colony, Hong Kongers are familiar with the UK education system and have favored the United Kingdom as the top destination for study abroad for many years. However, as more Hong Kong students seek to leave the city, the United States is in a good position to meet the growing demand with its wide range of college options, including community

colleges and short exchange programs that are highly flexible with their entry requirements.

Indonesia. Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world, with a population of more than 270 million, yet the total number of Indonesian students studying in the United States has remained relatively low, presenting significant potential for growth. As rapid economic growth continues, more Indonesian families are able to afford the cost of study abroad. With K-12 education infrastructure expanding across the country, a variety of alternative and nontraditional schools offering a blend of local and international curricula have emerged. It is important for U.S. institutions to explore and connect with the various types of Indonesian schools beyond international schools to fully tap into this enormous student market.

In AY 2018-2019, the number of Indonesian students in the United States declined by 3.4 percent, according to *Open Doors*. While student mobility numbers declined for both undergraduate and graduate study, the number of students undertaking OPT increased by 9 percent, continuing the growth curve from the prior year. The overall declining numbers are a result of a combination of factors, including varied eligibility for government scholarships, high tuition at U.S. institutions, and competition from other countries. Australia in particular is a strong competitor, because of its proximity to Indonesia, simplified college application process, and provision for

Student Mobility in the Region (Five-Year Trend)



international students to work in the country while pursuing their degree.

Japan. After years of steep decline, the number of Japanese students studying in the United States has steadied, and Japan is currently the eighth largest sender of international students to the United States. America is the top destination for Japanese students, followed by China, Taiwan, and the United Kingdom. The Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT) set a goal of sending 120,000 Japanese university students and 60,000 high school students overseas by 2020 through joint efforts by government, industry, and academia as part of the Japan Revitalization Strategy policy agenda. According to 2018 Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) data, 115,146 university students studied abroad, including in the United States in 2018.

According to MEXT, the number of high school students who studied abroad in 2017 on short-term programs rose by more than 10,000 from FY 2015 to reach approximately 47,000—a record since the ministry began conducting a survey on international exchange. The number of high school students who participated in overseas school trips also increased by about 15,000 during the same period, for a total of 179,910.

MEXT has implemented an array of projects, some in partnership with the private sector, to encourage universities to internationalize and to imbue the next generation of leaders with global competencies. The "TOBITATE! Young Ambassador Program," launched in 2014, is a scholarship program supported by the private sector (246 companies and associations) for study abroad of up to two years that includes a focus on practical training. A total of 5,116 university students and 2,685 high school students have studied abroad on this program as of 2019. Other key projects include the Top Global University Project, through which MEXT has selected 37 universities and allocated 10-year special budgets for supporting university reform toward internationalization from 2014 to 2023. The Inter-University Exchange Project, beginning in 2011, offers MEXT support to 10 Japanese universities that are developing or conducting international student exchange programs with partner

universities to increase the number of student exchanges through these quality-assured programs. The Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) program also launched in 2018, targeting study in the United States.

In addition, an increasing number of academic departments and disciplines at Japanese institutions are making overseas study compulsory, and universities are increasing their offerings of English language coursework and programs to increase English proficiency. Short-term university exchange programs and internships are growing areas of attention for future development in the Japanese market. The government also established a joint degree scheme for inter-university agreements in 2015.

Mongolia. According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mongolia, as of 2019 the United States was the third most popular destination for Mongolian students, behind the Republic of Korea and China. More than one-third (34.9 percent) of the Mongolian population is between the ages of 15 and 34. The Mongolian government has issued policy directives to support overseas education for Mongolian students and to invest in both traditional and high-tech industries to promote the country's socioeconomic development. In 2018, the Government of Mongolia spent approximately USD\$9 million on overseas higher education opportunities to fulfill human resource shortages in developing industries.

Since the mining boom in Mongolia started in 2008, parents have recognized English language skills as crucial for employment opportunities not only within Mongolia, but also in the global job market. As a result, high school students in Mongolia have a good understanding of standardized tests such as the TOEFL and the SAT, and there are many language training centers and schools with an American or international curriculum. Cost, availability of scholarships, and employment opportunities are major factors Mongolian students consider. The country is a promising market for community college 2+2 programs.

New Zealand. According to UNESCO, the United States is the most popular study abroad destination for New Zealanders, recently surpassing Australia. Student flow

from New Zealand to the United States is trending upward, with a 38 percent increase in the last five years. Much of the increase is attributed to students pursuing undergraduate degrees and OPT.

The opportunity to play sports on campus is a key driver for many undergraduate students. New Zealand is a top 10 sending country for student athletes to the United States and sends the second most student athletes to the NCAA per capita after Canada. New Zealand hosts two annual conferences that may interest U.S. institutions: the New Zealand International Education Conference in August and a Careers and Transition Education Association (CATE) conference in November.

Papua New Guinea. *Open Doors* showed an increase in AY 2018-2019 in the number of students from Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu studying in the United States. All three nations experienced a rise in undergraduate- and graduate-level students studying in the United States, and Papua New Guinea showed an increase in non-degree and OPT students as well. Steady projected growth in Papua New Guinea's gross domestic product (GDP) in the coming years suggests that more students may be able to afford to study abroad. Papua New Guinea students are also currently studying in Australia, China, India, New Zealand, Philippines, and Turkey. Many students consider Australia and New Zealand for their flexible application process and proximity to home.

Considering Papua New Guinea's population of more than 8 million, the growing U.S. presence in the South Pacific, and limited U.S. higher education recruitment presence to date, there are many opportunities for engagement. STEM, business management, theological studies, and education are popular fields of study, and local universities are searching for joint degree programs, research collaborations, and student and faculty exchanges with U.S. institutions.

Philippines. The number of students from the Philippines studying in the United States increased by 2.9 percent (to 3,320 students) in AY 2018-2019. The growth is mainly attributed to the 26.2 percent increase in the number of students enrolled in OPT. There was also healthy growth

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in the number of graduate students, representing a 6.6 percent increase, while the number of undergraduate students remained nearly flat, with a 0.7 percent decline. The number of students in non-degree programs sharply decreased by 34 percent, but non-degree students make up only 2.9 percent of all Filipino students in the United States. The Philippines is the second most populous country in Southeast Asia, with a population of almost 110 million, more than 50 percent of whom are under the age of 24, and English is the official language. The Philippines' recently completed transition from a K-10 to a K-12 education system and noticeable growth in schools offering AP and IB curricula have further expanded the pool of Filipino students ready to pursue international higher education opportunities. Given this opportune context for student recruitment, U.S. HEIs may wish to refocus their strategic enrollment efforts in the Philippines.

In-person engagement is important to students and parents in the Philippines. With competition from other countries on the rise, U.S. institutions are well-served by sustained recruitment strategies. China in particular is increasing the number of scholarships available to students from the Philippines. U.S. university alumni associations and coalitions, like CAUSE Philippines (the Coalition of American University Student Experiences: Philippines) are active, and student-led information sessions focusing on U.S. college applications are an effective way to reach student audiences. In addition to these university networks, nonprofit organizations such as College Admissions

Mentors for Peers in the Philippines (CAMP Philippines) and Kaya Collaborative (an organization that inspires Filipino-American millennials to contribute to the Philippines) are leveraging alumni of U.S. institutions to encourage more students to study abroad. Business and management, engineering and technology, humanities, social sciences, and communications, as well as health-related fields, remain top fields of study. The Philippine government, through its Commission on Higher Education, has prioritized the internationalization of the higher education system, with particular interest in increasing linkages and exchanges between U.S. and Philippine institutions. To this end, robust, ongoing collaboration between the U.S. and Philippine governments is supporting this goal.

Republic of Korea. The Republic of Korea is the world's number one per capita sender of students to the United States (and third in absolute terms, after China and India). According to 2019 statistics released by the Ministry of Education, the number of students from the Republic of Korea in the United States surpassed the number in China in AY 2018-2019. Affordability of a U.S. education, employability, and issues related to safety and security are common concerns among students from the Republic of Korea.

In 2020, the Ministry of Education launched a new project funding graduate programs that partner with U.S. universities to offer 1+1 dual graduate degrees, particularly in the fields of math, science, and special education. This program allows graduate students to study one year in

the Republic of Korea and one year in the United States and earn a Master's degree in both countries.

The Ministry of Education also announced its intention to increase the number of students from the Republic of Korea enrolled in higher education overseas, including in the United States, and to offer study opportunities for students from low-income households. The resulting short-term study program, called Paransadari, is managed by the Korea Student Aid Foundation (KOSAF, www.kosaf.go.kr). It offers students from the Republic of Korea the opportunity to participate in four-week programs or language courses at universities worldwide.

Opportunities for U.S. institutions to effectively recruit in the Republic of Korea lie in sustained engagement, diversification of outreach, active community college promotion, and mobilization of alumni and current students. The Republic of Korea is a premier market for e-sports, which are extremely popular locally. Outreach beyond the capital is lacking, and niche markets, such as visual and performing arts and sports, are strong areas of opportunity.

Taiwan. The total number of students from Taiwan enrolled at U.S. colleges and universities increased for the third year in a row in AY 2018-2019. Taiwan was the seventh largest source of international students in the United States for a fourth consecutive year. According to the 2019 *Open Doors* report, there were 23,369 students from Taiwan enrolled at U.S. institutions, an increase of 4.1 percent. During AY 2018-2019, the largest cohort

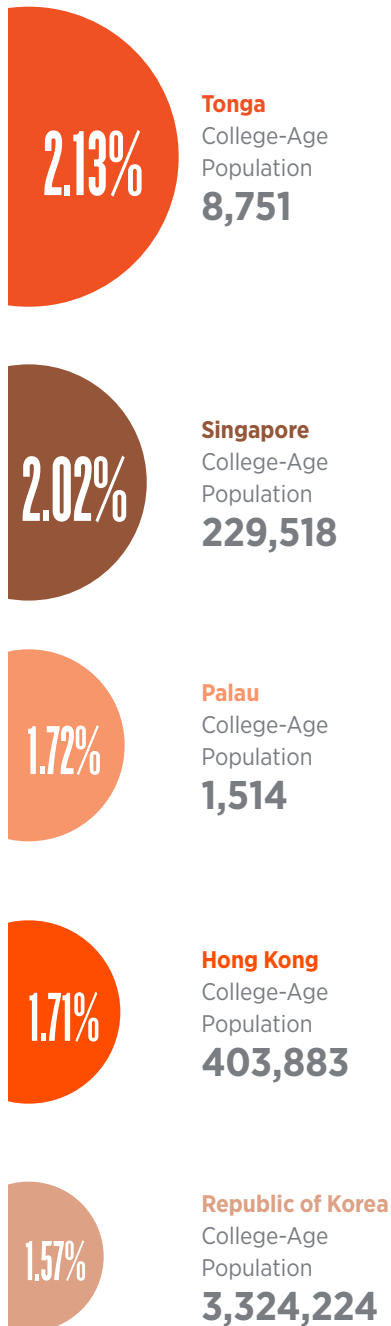
Five Countries of Origin (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, International Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2014/15	2018/19	%Change
Samoa	21	103	390.5%
Tonga	95	186	95.8%
Burma	1,067	1,773	66.2%
Cambodia	492	685	39.2%
Vietnam	18,722	24,392	30.3%

390.5%

Samoa has the largest percentage growth in the region over the last five years (**with over 100 students**)

Five Countries of Origin in the Region with Highest Per Capita College-Age Student Mobility to the United States



Source: UNESCO Institute of Statistics; Indicator: 2017 Population of the official age for tertiary education, both sexes

of students from Taiwan in the United States (40 percent) was enrolled in graduate study. More than 31.1 percent of all students from Taiwan in the United States were undergraduates, a 3.7 percent increase over the previous year. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, international students from Taiwan contributed USD\$902 million to the U.S. economy from 2018 to 2019.

On December 6, 2018, the Taiwan Cabinet approved a blueprint proposed by Vice President-elect William Lai to make Taiwan bilingual by 2030. The 2030 goal is the latest version of Lai's October 2018 policy to promote English as a second official language. Cabinet-level agencies and the National Development Council, which leads this plan, will focus on making information and services provided to foreign nationals available in English. An initial focus will be on launching English-only instruction for younger level students within the next 8-12 years and training teachers to use English as a medium of instruction.

Vietnam. Vietnam is the top Southeast Asian sender of students to the United States, with 24,392 Vietnamese students pursuing higher education at U.S. schools according to *Open Doors* AY 2018-2019 data. Since AY 2015-2016, Vietnam has held the rank of sixth place among country senders worldwide. Vietnam experienced a 0.3 percent increase in student mobility to the United States during AY 2018-2019—a much smaller percentage increase than the year prior, signaling a flattening growth trend. Business and management, along with STEM, are the top fields of study among Vietnamese students.

According to World Bank statistics, Vietnam's total population reached 97 million people in 2019. Considering that approximately 70 percent of Vietnam's population is under the age of 35, there is a keen focus on developing a well-trained labor force in the country. Education and training are top priorities for the Vietnamese government, which will require a labor force that is equipped with scientific, technological, and managerial skill sets. While many local universities may not have the capacity to fully commit to institution-wide partnerships, smaller-scale partnerships, such as student exchanges and faculty-led programs, may

prove mutually beneficial as a starting point for collaboration.

What to Expect in the Next Three to Five Years

- EAP has numerous established and emerging international education hubs, and internationalization is a major goal of many institutions in the region, particularly in countries facing low population growth and decreasing student numbers. Among the robust higher education offerings in EAP are English-based courses and degree programs, foreign branch campuses, and simplified processes for exchanges within the region and beyond. Generous scholarships and relatively inexpensive costs are major considerations for students when thinking about study abroad, whether for exchange or a degree. Australia, China, Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and New Zealand are countries that have proven themselves as prime destinations for international students seeking higher educational opportunities within the region.

- China's Ministry of Education publicly encourages the internationalization of Chinese higher education with calls to hire foreign faculty and matriculate more foreign students. The number of foreign students studying at universities on the Chinese mainland is approaching a half million, according to the latest figures from the Ministry of Education in Beijing. China has set a target to reach 500,000 foreign students by 2020. Attracting overseas talent is a major strategic goal in China's bid to shift from a manufacturing hub to an, "innovation

Regional Student Totals Top Five Countries of Origin

Country	2018/19	% Change
China, People's Rep of	369,548	1.7%
Rep of Korea	52,250	-4.2%
Vietnam	24,392	0.3%
Taiwan	23,369	4.1%
Japan	18,105	-3.5%

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- economy,” and the government allotted USD\$470 million to support international student recruitment in 2018.
- As the availability of English language training in the region continues to be a challenge for English as a Second Language (ESL) program recruitment in the United States, opportunities beyond the ESL classroom and programs that allow for a smooth transition into degree programs may attract students to the United States.
 - The Japanese government has implemented English language education reforms to foster students’ speaking, writing, listening, and reading skills and improve their communicative English language skills. Starting in April 2020, English will be an official subject in primary school beginning in the fifth grade, and secondary school teachers will be required to teach English classes in English. The Japanese government is also considering proposals to incorporate into university entrance exams tests to assess speaking and writing skills in addition to listening and reading, with the goal of establishing a new exam system policy by the end of 2020. These policies may lead to increased demand for communicative English language teaching programs.
 - Nine of the top 25 sending countries to U.S. community colleges, including the top four—China, Vietnam, Japan, and the Republic of Korea—are in the EAP region. The most recent *Open Doors* statistics show that EAP sends 47.6 percent of the total international community college population in the United States. Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, and the Pacific Islands are also promising markets for U.S. community colleges. The number of students from Kiribati and Tonga increased by 57 percent and 10 percent respectively, according to the most recently available statistics from *Open Doors*.
 - Government initiatives to develop human resources and promote globalization constitute an increasing trend across EAP. Many countries in EAP have international schools, International Baccalaureate (IB) schools, and other special purpose schools that have the potential to prepare students for academic programs abroad. School systems can follow an international curriculum or be a hybrid of international and ministry of education systems. High school counselor and teacher training at these schools will be an opportunity to increase local capacity to support students seeking to study abroad.
 - Internationalization of postsecondary as well as primary and secondary education is a growing trend in the region. Based on high demand, the number of private, bilingual K-12 schools in China with international curricula geared toward students who intend to study abroad at the secondary and postsecondary levels continues to grow. While the pool of potential students is growing throughout the country, the fastest growth appears to be in first-, second-, and third-tier cities. The number of dedicated Chinese international high schools (at which curricula preclude attending college domestically) increased from 549 in 2011 to 1,168 in 2018. There is an increasing number of these schools in first-tier cities (such as Beijing and Shenzhen) and second- and third-tier cities (such as Dongguan, Hefei, Nanjing, and Tianjin).
 - Demand for OPT programs will grow in the EAP region, and some institutions have mandated international experience for specific coursework and disciplines.
 - Student mobility from Southeast Asia to the United States is starting to level off after years of trending upward. Affordability is a key concern for students, and options such as community college programs are generating increased awareness and interest. With increased competition in the region, it is imperative that U.S. institutions prioritize in-person recruitment visits.
 - The Philippines’ integration into ASEAN has resulted in a national policy requiring local faculty to obtain graduate degrees in their fields, presenting an opportunity for U.S. institutions seeking students for advanced degree programs in an array of fields. The Commission on Higher Education (CHED) in the Philippines has prioritized the development of institutional partnerships that focus on community college initiatives and peace education. In addition, local institutions consistently express interest in practicum programs abroad and student exchanges.
 - An average of 1.5 million Vietnamese citizens have joined the global middle class each year since 2014, according to the World Bank, and Vietnam’s real GDP has been experiencing positive growth that is projected to continue through 2024. The names of many U.S. universities and colleges are becoming widely known due to joint programs with Vietnamese academic partners, in-country offices, and participation in education fairs. After 18 years of continued growth in the number of students pursuing higher education in the United States, Vietnam has many U.S. alumni who are keen to promote U.S. studies among their relatives, friends, and colleagues, and within their communities. The Vietnamese government has prioritized the improvement of higher education quality, increased budget allocations for education, liberalized private sector involvement, and invited foreign participation in the development of education and training services.
 - The Thai Ministry of Education plans to increase English language STEM education in secondary schools across the country. English language and STEM education are priorities for Thailand as the country moves toward its Thailand 4.0 initiative. Science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics (STEAM) education has also been identified as a national priority, and the arts have gained considerable interest from prospective students. Students in Thailand see ESL as a pathway to enter U.S. institutions. In addition, there has been an increasing number of 2+2 program agreements between Thai and U.S. institutions. Thai students’ interest in U.S. education is due in part to the opening of the ASEAN Economic Community, which has encouraged students to develop cross-cultural communication and English language skills.
 - The growing presence of the United States in the South Pacific, and the physical and soft infrastructure promised by the completion of a U.S. Marine base

by 2024, will increase mutual interest in Papua New Guinea, neighboring islands, and other parts of Oceania.

Virtual Engagement and Social Media Usage

Internet access and the use of smartphones have become both mainstream and affordable in EAP. EducationUSA advisers rely heavily on social media platforms to connect with students in all countries across the region. While the popularity of specific platforms varies by country, Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram are favored options in most EAP locations. China, where WeChat, Sina Weibo, and QQ Space dominate, serves as an outlier. High-speed internet is common in EAP and available in most homes, cafes, and restaurants, and many public spaces, especially in city centers. Both China and the Republic of Korea are leading the implementation of fifth-generation wireless systems (5G), with other countries, such as Thailand, following suit. The Thailand National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission announced that the country may soon be the first in the ASEAN region to fully adopt the 5G network.

U.S. institutions interested in reaching students virtually are encouraged to contact EducationUSA centers for guidance on the most effective strategies. U.S. schools are encouraged to add EducationUSA country teams on Facebook and other social media platforms so that centers can share content when appropriate. In addition, U.S. schools can always tag the main EducationUSA social media handles and the hashtags #EducationUSA and #EdUSA.

For U.S. HEIs that would like to highlight scholarship opportunities at their respective schools, EducationUSA recommends using the hashtag #ScholarshipAlert. In addition, schools may post their scholarship information on the EducationUSA website after they create accounts for their respective institutions.

Even emerging student markets in EAP are becoming increasingly connected via social media, and recent infrastructure upgrades have greatly improved internet speeds across the Pacific Islands.

Improved connectivity and COVID-related restrictions on gathering have resulted in expanded virtual engagement in the region. For example, American Spaces have recently hosted virtual sessions connecting U.S. HEIs, students and teachers, and local universities. The region is also seeing increased interest in online university degrees.

Online engagement strategies—such as webinars and virtual information sessions—are not as effective as in-person engagement, partly because of time differences and cultural factors, but if properly planned, there is potential for success. In addition to having convenient timing, webinars must be promoted far in advance through multiple channels. General informational sessions can be useful, but short sessions offering a specific takeaway to a targeted audience are most effective.

As high-speed internet penetration increases, so do opportunities for online promotion of events, engagement with

students through social media, and video outreach through platforms such as Facebook Live, Zoom, and Google. Video content is particularly appealing to international students in the EAP region, especially if the content includes current students and/or recent alumni from the region. For example, in Vietnam, YouTube has recently surpassed Facebook as the most widely used social media platform in the country. U.S. HEIs can highlight points of interest on campus, insights on student life, and engaging school activities that may appeal to prospective students. If schools are able to use a chat feature like Facebook Messenger or consistently track comments on video content via the comment box, representatives can better answer questions and provide guidance on promotional resources for students to further research.

Social media is an important communication tool through which Chinese students and parents obtain information about studying in the United States, but many popular social

U.S. Study Abroad

Top Five Receiving Countries in the Region

Destination	2017/18	% Change
China, People's Rep of	11,613	-2.5%
Australia	10,332	-0.7%
Japan	8,467	12.4%
Republic of Korea	3,929	4.2%
New Zealand	3,885	2.9%

Five Countries (with over 100 students) with Highest Percentage Growth, U.S. Students in the Region (Five-Year Trend)

Country	2013/14	2017/18	% Change
Indonesia	508	825	62.4%
Japan	5,978	8,467	41.6%
Thailand	1,919	2,482	29.3%
New Zealand	3,021	3,885	28.6%
Philippines	329	409	24.3%

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media platforms—such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube, as well as Google products—are blocked in China. EducationUSA encourages U.S. institutions to employ the Chinese social media equivalents of these blocked platforms to reach Chinese students and parents. The majority of the Chinese population is active on mobile devices, and WeChat and QQ Space are currently the most popular social media platforms available on smartphones. Sina Weibo also holds a strong market share among Chinese social media users. Livestreaming (for example, TikTok) is popular among young people in China, and content from many educational programs is streamed to reach the widest audience possible.

The use of Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube has grown in the Republic of Korea recently, but Naver is still the platform of choice for online searches and general information gathering. Kakao Talk and its suite of services is also widely used, and many U.S. institutions have taken advantage of Kakao Talk's useful outreach features, including the open chat room, which can be used to communicate with prospective and admitted students. Among Japanese students, the top social networking service is LINE, a text messaging platform that averaged over 80 million active monthly users in Japan in 2019. Twitter is the second most popular platform, followed by Facebook, and YouTube is the most popular video-sharing site. Instagram is steadily growing in popularity.

Many EducationUSA centers in EAP promote events through center or embassy websites, and some offer opportunities for U.S. institutions to connect with students virtually and archive videos of these engagements for future viewing on demand.

Successful Recruiting Strategies

- Provide detailed information about financial assistance. Most students rely on personal or family funds to study overseas. Target information about funding opportunities to specific student demographics by producing materials in local languages and highlighting opportunities relevant to their needs. It is important to be clear and transparent about anticipated costs to ensure that students can determine the feasibility of an educational opportunity and that the student and family have accurate financial information.
- Highlight campus safety and student services. Safety is a major concern for parents. Information on specific campus services may alleviate concerns and dispel misconceptions about U.S. campus life.
- Provide specific and updated information about student internships, work study, and other opportunities such as OPT and Curricular Practical Training (CPT), and connect them to employability with alumni testimonials. Graduate students are especially interested in gaining laboratory, research, and teaching experience. EAP students largely lack awareness of OPT and CPT opportunities, and best practices when seeking OPT.
- Community colleges should provide detailed information about articulation agreements, and both two- and four-year institutions should highlight 2+2 models as academically rigorous cost-saving options. When attending educational fairs in the region, community colleges should consider having a presence next to the four-year degree-granting institution with which they have an articulation agreement, so students have an opportunity to ask questions to both recruitment representatives and fully understand the power and benefits of the 2+2 model.
- Develop attractive, easy-to-navigate, mobile-ready websites and online resources for international students. Highlight funding opportunities for international students, as these are often difficult to locate on institutional websites. Consider country-specific landing pages in targeted markets.
- Target a wider range of EAP students in promotional materials. Representation of students and alumni from EAP is noticeably lacking in U.S. institution promotions and marketing materials. Create video testimonials to share success stories of alumni or currently enrolled international students. Content in the local language or with translated subtitles will resonate with the local population. EducationUSA centers may highlight this content on center social media pages.
- Recognize that in-person recruitment in the region is a must. Investment in sustained engagement over time builds trust and name recognition and is very important in Asian cultures, in which students and families are brand conscious and parents are deeply involved in the selection of institutions. In addition, it is helpful to have translated information either in print or as virtual resources, since parents may be less proficient in English.
- Participate in EducationUSA high school counselor training programs where offered. These programs can help build institutional relationships with influential local high school counselors and multiply the impact of outreach efforts as counselors share information with their students.
- Attend EducationUSA fairs, regional forums, and other programs to maximize engagement with students and EducationUSA advisers.
- Diversify outreach strategies and target second- and third-tier cities, underserved communities, and less commonly visited countries. Fiji, for example, has more than 60,000 high school students who receive instruction in English, yet it receives almost no U.S. higher education engagement.
- Target niche areas such as arts, law, sports, and STEAM. For many fields, a foreign degree, especially one from the United States, is highly valued. Other than Australia and New Zealand, sports recruitment in EAP is largely unexplored.

Institutional Partnerships

- Institutions in the region, particularly those seeking to diversify their campuses, are interested in both sending and receiving international students, American or otherwise. Region-wide, there are periodic conferences focused on various aspects of higher education. The annual Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE) conference is a major event focused on partnerships with institutions in the region, though in recent years it has been well-attended by universities from other regions as well.
- Most countries have local organizations comprised of HEIs and higher



education administrators. There may be local chapters of NAFSA, TESOL International Association (formerly Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages), technical colleges, and other organizations that offer contacts or hold events.

- Singaporean universities actively seek opportunities to build partnerships with foreign institutions. Singapore enjoys a strong partnership model predominantly with British and Australian universities, but the Ministry of Education is keen to explore innovative collaboration with American institutions as well. STEM and computer science programs tend to be popular areas of focus for university partnerships. When communicating with individual universities or Ministry of Education officials, U.S. institutions are encouraged to highlight specific features of their programs that not only address Singaporean market demand but also demonstrate an edge over competing institutions from other countries.

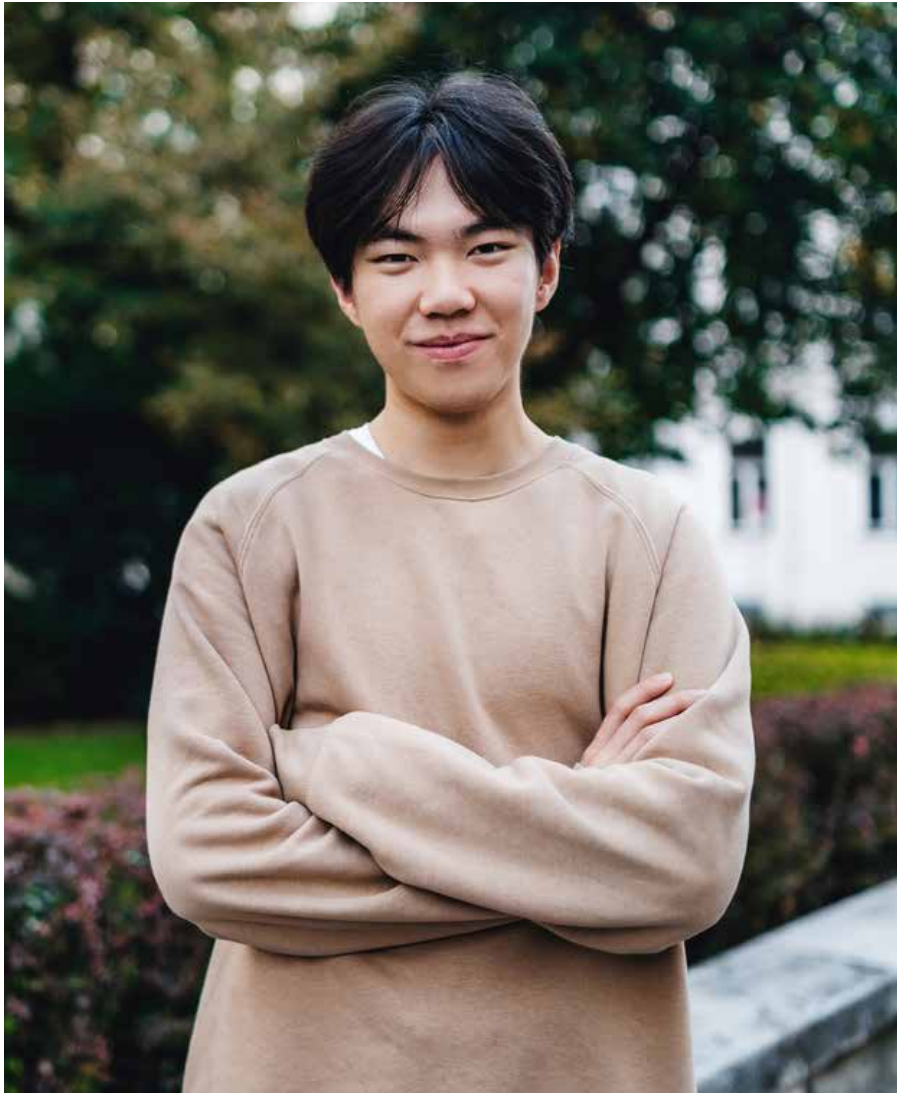
- Since education and training are top priorities for the Vietnamese government to ensure a well-trained labor force, U.S. institutions may wish to capitalize on this. As mentioned previously, while many local universities may not have the capacity to fully commit to institution-wide partnerships, smaller-scale partnerships (such as student exchanges and faculty-led programs) may prove mutually beneficial as a starting point for collaboration.

- Education exchange cooperation is gaining momentum in the Philippines, with local institutions consistently expressing interest in practicum programs abroad and student exchanges with U.S. colleges and universities. CHED has expanded its efforts to develop institutional partnerships with U.S. HEIs, focusing on community colleges and peace education. Notably, CHED sent delegations of government officials and Philippine university presidents to NAFSA in 2018 and 2019 to build new educational partnerships. Locally,

CHED has been closely collaborating with EducationUSA Philippines to conduct an annual seminar series on institutional partnerships for local university presidents and other high-profile stakeholders. U.S. institutions are encouraged to take advantage of recurring international and local opportunities to connect with CHED and Philippine institutions, and EducationUSA can serve as a point of contact.

- New Zealand hosts two annual conferences that may be of interest to U.S. institutions: the New Zealand International Education Conference (NZIEC) in August and a Careers and Transition Education Association (CATE) conference in November.
- In the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau, the highest level of education is a degree from a community college. As the college system and curricula are based largely on the U.S. model, U.S. institutions may wish to pursue transfer agreements. Scholarships are available

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for transfers, and students do not need a visa to work, study, or travel to the United States.

Foreign Government and Private Funding

Brunei. The government of Brunei continues to offer fully-funded scholarships overseas at both undergraduate and graduate levels. The age limit for potential graduate scholars has been lowered from 40 to 35. Most recipients of the government scholarships are required to work for the government for a minimum of six years following graduation, restricting them from participating in post-study work programs such as OPT.

In addition to scholarships, the government of Brunei has introduced a student loan program offering partial or full low-interest

loans with flexible repayment options. Successful loan applicants who perform at specified academic levels may also qualify for loan-to-scholarship-conversion benefits upon graduation. The government has designed loans to support high-performing students who have fallen just short of government scholarship criteria. The loan program also allows successful graduates to pursue work-study opportunities prohibited within the government scholarship programs.

Burma. The Lincoln Scholarship Program is funded by USAID and reserved for graduate studies in the United States. It will benefit approximately 100 young scholars over the next three years. The Lincoln Scholarship Program strives to recruit scholars of diverse ethnicities, religions, genders, and backgrounds, and

offers learning opportunities to acquire technical skills in fields of study such as economics, international relations, public health, and public policy. The aim of the Lincoln Scholarship is to promote a more stable, pluralistic, and prosperous society in Burma through a corps of new leaders (<http://www.thabyay.org/scholarship.html>).

Cambodia. While the Cambodian government does not actively provide funding to students studying abroad, several major scholarship initiatives are active in the country. Leading sources of funding for U.S. study include the Fulbright Fellowship, SHE-CAN (www.shecan.global), and the Open Society Foundations Scholarship Programs (www.opensocietyfoundations.org/about/programs/scholarship-programs).

China. More than 90 percent of the Chinese students studying abroad globally are self-funded, but the China Scholarship Council also offers government scholarships for Chinese and American students and faculty. This includes funding for Americans studying for a degree or academic credit in China and for Chinese students studying abroad. Although the official policy remains unchanged, it is expected that the Chinese Scholarship Council will shift its focus from Master's programs and increase scholarships for joint Ph.D. programs. The Chinese government has been increasing efforts to attract foreign students to its own institutions by providing full scholarships and financial support to international students around the globe. China gives preference to countries affiliated with the Belt and Road Initiative. The Chinese government's education scholarships are part of its broader effort to strengthen its economic base and expand its political influence in the region and around the world.

Indonesia. The Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (or LPDP, Lembaga Pengelola Dana Pendidikan) is a full scholarship from the Indonesian Ministry of Finance for all Indonesian citizens. LPDP aspires to be the best regional fund management institution to prepare future leaders and encourage innovation for a prosperous, democratic, and just Indonesia. The LPDP service program consists of scholarships, research funding, and fund management (investment). Official information about LPDP is subject

to change, and eligibility requirements for both students and approved institutions should be verified directly with the government office responsible for the program (lpdp.kemenkeu.go.id).

Japan. Japanese government scholarships are offered for degree programs and short-term study abroad under university exchange agreements. The TOBITATE! Young Ambassador Program scholarship is supported by 246 companies and associations in collaboration with MEXT and supports short-term study abroad for both high school and university students (tobitate.mext.go.jp/scholarship). The Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO) provides a comprehensive list of local government scholarships and other funding sources in an annual document and an updated resource online (bit.ly/JASSO). U.S. institutions are encouraged to contact JASSO and add their funding opportunities to this comprehensive list.

The TOMODACHI Initiative is a public-private partnership between the U.S.-Japan Council and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo, with support from the government of Japan. Established in the aftermath of the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake, TOMODACHI invests in the next generation of Japanese and American leaders through educational and cultural exchanges and leadership programs, as well as through scholarships for study abroad (usjapantomodachi.org).

In Japan, there are many opportunities for support from the private sector. Among them is the Yanai Tadashi Foundation, which offers full scholarships for Japanese students to seek higher degrees at top American and British institutions (the list of institutions is available here: <https://www.yanaitadashi-foundation.or.jp/scholarship/>). Another prominent opportunity is from the Keidanren Business Federation which offers scholarships for both high school and studying abroad for higher education through the United World College Japan National Committee, Keidanren Ishizaka Memorial Foundation and Crown Prince Scholarship (<https://www.keidanren.or.jp/japanese/profile/prince.html>).

Malaysia. The number of scholarships for U.S. study offered by Malaysian companies and government agencies has decreased, but major companies

such as Khazanah Nasional, Petronas, and Bank Negara continue to fund U.S. educational opportunities. Many of these scholarships are reserved for U.S. HEIs that are on an internal and unofficial “Top 50” list of institutions. The Majlis Amanah Rakyat (MARA) scholarship is reserved for Bumiputra students (Malay Muslim and associated ethnic groups). The Public Service Department (PSD) in Malaysia offers full scholarships to its National Scholars for undergraduate studies at top-ranked universities around the world, including those in the United States. PSD also offers stipends (80 percent tuition coverage) to select students for study overseas. Other scholarships include the Astro Scholarship Award, the Maxis What’s Next Scholarship, CIMB Bank Berhad, and Maybank Scholarship Programme. Certain faith-based organizations in Malaysia are also working toward providing partial scholarships for students who are applying to study the United States.

Marshall Islands, Micronesia, and Palau. The governments of these three countries, in partnership with the United States through Compacts of Free Association, provide scholarships for students to study abroad, often on the condition that they return home to work in their fields following completion of their degree. Students are eligible for U.S. federal funding, including Pell Grants, and are often able to apply for domestic scholarships.

Mongolia. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Science, and Sports (MECSS) supports study abroad opportunities for Mongolian students. MECSS also provides partial scholarships for graduate (Master’s and Doctoral) students accepted to institutions listed in the *Times Higher Education World University Rankings* Top 500 list and QS World University Rankings. According to the Mongolian Education Loan Fund, MECSS will select 60 to 70 Master’s and Doctoral students for this scholarship program and provide USD\$16,000 per year (www.mecss.gov.mn/scholarship).

Philippines. The Philippine-American Educational Foundation, or Fulbright Commission in Manila, is a nonprofit, bi-national organization responsible for the administration of the prestigious Fulbright Scholarship Program, Hubert H. Humphrey Fellowship, and other educational

exchange initiatives. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis to Philippine and American students, teachers, scholars, and professionals to study, teach, lecture, and conduct research in the United States and the Philippines (fulbright.org.ph/scholarship-programs).

Republic of Korea. KOSAF provides financial assistance to students through grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study programs. The foundation (www.kosaf.go.kr) administers more than 1,000 scholarships for short-term overseas summer programs. It also offers up to 50 scholarships for qualified students from low-income households; these come with up to USD\$60,000 per year for four-year degree programs.

In addition, the Korea Foundation for Advanced Studies provides funding for students to study in the fields of social science, natural science, computer science, and information technology-related disciplines at the graduate level (bit.ly/KFAS-Scholarship). The Mirae Asset Park Hyeon Joo Foundation provides one year of undergraduate scholarships for exchange programs (bit.ly/MiraeAssetScholarship). The Government Scholarship for Overseas study offers students up to USD\$40,000 per year to pursue a graduate degree in the United States (bit.ly/KorGovOverseasStudySchol).

Singapore. Singapore has a long history of providing both government and private sector scholarships for overseas study. These scholarships typically cover the full cost of tuition and fees and include a living stipend and airfare. They also often require students to attend highly ranked universities overseas.

Among the well-known scholarship programs in Singapore are the Public Service Commission Scholarship, Ministry of Defense Scholarship, A*STAR Scholarship, and Singapore-Industry Scholarship. However, dozens of other organizations—such as the Land Transport Authority and Singapore Press Holdings (brightsparks.com.sg)—also offer scholarships.

Taiwan. Taiwan’s Ministry of Education (MOE) and other institutions provide study abroad scholarships for Master’s and Doctoral degree-seeking students (www.scholarship.moe.gov.tw/). The Foundation

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for Scholarly Exchange (FSE) administers the Fulbright Program in Taiwan. More information about FSE, including information about funding opportunities for Taiwan students to study in the United States, is available online (www.fulbright.org.tw).

In 2019, under the Taiwan Elite Scholarship, the MOE began selecting 100 outstanding Taiwan Master's students to undertake Doctoral programs at the top 100 universities in the world. The Ministry has budgeted USD\$1.7 million for this scholarship program and planned to send the first Master's student cohort abroad in 2019. The Ministry will also increase internship opportunities in Taiwan and abroad. With the support of governments and enterprises, the MOE will send the students abroad for yearlong internships. Considering the falling numbers of Doctoral students, the MOE plans to provide awardees annual stipends of USD\$7,000 for research and encourage professors to form new start-up companies to engage with students. This initiative has been well-received, and the MOE has received more than 300 applications to date.

Thailand. The Thai government provides more than 500 scholarships per year to Thai citizens under the Royal Thai Government Scholarship Program. The organization hosts its education fair annually in November (www.ocsc.go.th).

Vietnam. The Vietnamese government has taken great strides to improve the quality of higher education in Vietnam. Two new scholarship programs targeting Master's and Doctoral-level study have replaced previous government initiatives.

Project 2395 is a professional development training program that will take place from 2021 to 2025 and expand human resources in science and technology. This scholarship initiative, managed by the Ministry of Science and Technology, will train approximately 200 experts and 80 research groups abroad, and provide postdoctoral education to about 200 individuals and 300 government officials in science and technology management.

Project 89 covers a scholarship period from 2019 to 2030 and aims to fund 10 percent of university lecturers in Ph.D. programs



(7 percent overseas and 3 percent in-country); lecturers in Master's programs at universities of art, culture, and sports (both in-country or overseas); short administrative capacity-building courses for local higher education institutional staff with managerial responsibilities; and local lecturers on curriculum development, modern teaching methods, scientific research, foreign languages, and information technology.

The Science and Technology Scholarship Program for Overseas Study for Master's and Doctoral degrees is a new private scholarship offered in Vietnam. It is funded by Vingroup and managed by VinUniversity. Vingroup is a joint stock company in Vietnam with a mission to find talented students who have the ability to lead and advance the development of science and technology in Vietnam in the future. From 2019 to 2030, Vingroup will offer up to 100 full scholarships per year for Master's and Doctoral degree programs to Vietnamese students who want to pursue study in key fields in countries with leading science and technology programs, such as Australia, France, Israel, Japan, Russia, Singapore, the Republic of Korea, the United Kingdom, and the United States. (<https://scholarships.vinuni.edu.vn>)

Regional Economics and Market Demand

Brunei faces ongoing economic challenges. Its oil reserves are estimated to run out within two to three decades. The nation's high unemployment rate has become a top concern among Bruneian youth, and the government is paying more attention to technical and vocational education, as these programs are more employability-focused and shorter than a typical undergraduate degree program. U.S. community colleges stand to benefit from the trend of Bruneian students as these students more closely consider their options and return on educational investment.

China's Ministry of Education publicly encourages the internationalization of Chinese higher education, with calls to hire foreign faculty and matriculate more foreign students. The number of foreign students studying at universities on the Chinese mainland is approaching the half-million marker, with 492,185 students in AY 2018-2019, according to the latest figures from the Ministry of Education in Beijing. China is striving to attract more international students as part of a strategic shift from a manufacturing hub to an innovation economy.

With the Malaysian government seeking to develop a pool of highly skilled workers needed in the nation's pursuit

of its fourth industrial revolution, there has been an increase in interest among Malaysian students in STEM graduate studies—particularly artificial intelligence, robotics, and big data. In 2018, the Malaysian government announced its intention to focus future policy efforts on technical and vocational education and training, along with STEM education. Following this trend, U.S. HEIs may want to highlight the strength of American research programs that lead in these fields. While STEM and business will remain the dominant fields of choice for Malaysian students seeking to study in the United States, other subject areas—such as art, design, and social

science—are becoming increasingly popular as well.

U.S. Study Abroad in the Region

The EAP region includes five of the top 25 destinations for U.S. students: China, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea. China is the seventh largest recipient of U.S. study abroad students and the number one receiving country in EAP overall. While China and Australia saw a decline in the number of U.S. study abroad students, the number of U.S. students in EAP increased by 1.25 percent overall from AY 2016-2017 to AY 2017-2018.

The Northeast Asia and the Pacific sub-region saw a 2.3 percent increase in U.S. study abroad. Australia and New Zealand remain strong receivers. These two countries continue to grow in popularity worldwide as study abroad destinations as their governments strengthen international education offerings. The Republic of Korea increased 4.2 percent over the past year, hosting 3,929 U.S. students, and has also emerged as a top recipient of U.S. students. Its popularity will continue to rise as the wave of interest in the Republic of Korea popular and traditional culture increases. Ongoing momentum from the 2018 PyeongChang Olympics will also contribute to this trend. Japan and Hong Kong, popular destinations for U.S. study abroad, also saw gains. Japan had an increase of 12.4 percent, with 8,467 students, and Hong Kong had a 13.3 percent increase, with 1,859 students from AY 2016-2017 to AY 2017-2018.

According to 2019 *Open Doors* data, Southeast Asia experienced a 4.2 percent decrease in U.S. study abroad to the region. This is a reversal of strong increases from 2017, when countries like Burma, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam all saw an increase of American students interested in study abroad opportunities. Only Indonesia and Vietnam showed positive growth in the U.S. study abroad sector for AY 2017-2018, with a sharp 48.6 percent increase in Indonesia and a 7.1 percent increase in Vietnam. In Vietnam, most American students chose short-term exchange programs lasting only one to four weeks, since there are still only a small number of Vietnamese HEIs that have the capacity to create exchange programs for international students. Although Thailand had a 10.2 percent decline in U.S. study abroad for AY 2017-2018, it still hosted the largest number of U.S. students in Southeast Asia (approximately 2,482 students).

In 2019, the U.S. Embassy in Malaysia received a Study Abroad Engagement Grant from the USA Study Abroad Branch at the U.S. Department of State to carry out capacity-building projects to promote U.S. study abroad.

Best and Worst Times of the Year to Interact with Students (Face-to-Face and Virtually)

Spring and fall are the best times to visit most countries in the EAP region. Visitors should consider the lunar calendar, religious and cultural events, and diverse academic calendars within the region. Each year, the specific dates of holidays and exam periods can shift, so please check with local EducationUSA offices or your school counterparts to ensure availability and a productive outreach itinerary.

The EducationUSA Southeast Asia Fair Tour has become a staple event in the region and takes place each spring. Although the exact dates are subject to change, the fair events usually take place during February and March across multiple cities and countries in Southeast Asia.

Recruitment travel can be scheduled outside of high-traffic seasons; however, it is best to plan ahead and do extensive promotion well in advance.

Times to avoid travel:

- The date of the Lunar New Year (February 12 in 2021) changes according to the lunar calendar, and the surrounding days will be a season of closures and heavy holiday travel in much of the region.
- In April, Songkran holidays are celebrated in Laos and Thailand, Chaul Chnam Khmer or Songkran is celebrated in Cambodia, and Thingyan is celebrated in Burma.
- Ramadan (fasting month) and a vacation period afterward of approximately two weeks are considerations in countries with large or predominantly Muslim populations, such as Brunei, Indonesia, and Malaysia.
- Chuseok, or Autumn Festival, holidays in the Republic of Korea, China, Taiwan, and other celebrating countries are major closure and travel seasons.
- Major exam periods for high school students in the Republic of Korea are in mid-spring and fall (dates vary from year to year).
- Winter break for high schools takes place from late December to late February in the Republic of Korea; advanced planning and promotion are advised to ensure an audience during this period.
- In Australia, avoid mid-April (around Easter), early to mid-July, late September to early October, and late December to the end of January.
- For the southern Pacific islands avoid late November to the end of January (all schools are closed for summer holidays).
- In Japan, Golden Week (the first week of May) and Obon (the second week of August) holidays are popular times for Japanese domestic and international travel.