

## HOW TO...

### *Taking the first steps to effectively engaging study abroad alumni*

#### I. Initiate a Peer Ambassador Program

##### I. Determine Program Basics

- I. How big will the Peer Ambassador Program be? What are your staffing needs and do you have space to accommodate the Peer Ambassadors?
- II. Will this be a paid position or volunteers? If paid, where will the funding come from?
- III. Who will supervise the students? Will there be lead Ambassadors?
- IV. What will their responsibilities entail?
- V. What is the time frame for the position (how many hours per week/one semester or full year commitment, etc)?

##### II. Selection Process

- I. Applications, essays, interviews, requirements (GPA, program specifics, etc) or simple sign-up

##### III. Training

- I. Group training, individual training, conference calls, webinars
- II. Training materials (manuals, contracts, expectations, videos, release forms)

##### IV. Motivation

- I. Offer a scholarship or other monetary giveaway (free international flight, etc.) at the end of the year. Challenge – how to select the recipient
- II. Professional development opportunities
- III. Letters of recommendation
- IV. Social events
- V. Keep them involved and active! (Ex: assigned office hours, part of subcommittees, regularly scheduled meetings, etc.)

#### II. Plan a Regional Re-Entry Conference

##### I. First Steps

- I. Identify others who are interested in collaborating on the Re-Entry Conference planning and attendance

1. International education professionals, faculty members, non-profit organizations, third party providers, sponsors, returned study abroad students
  2. Identify leaders for planning and running the conference and assign responsibilities
  3. Contact international educators who have hosted a similar conference for ideas – you don't have to reinvent the wheel!
- II. Identify your participants
1. Will the conference be focused on undergraduates, graduates or both?
  2. Will it only be advertized to students at your university/region or can others attend?
- III. Identify your location
1. Pick someplace centrally located where students can easily attend
  2. Can you reserve enough space at this location? Is it flexible to change room availability based on conference participation?
  3. If not at your university, do you have a reliable on-site contact?
- IV. Identify your date
1. Will this be an annual conference? Will it be held once a year or once a semester?
  2. Consider student schedules - don't schedule during midterms or final exams!
  3. Consider study abroad programs – when are students returning from study abroad?
  4. Weekend or weekday? How long will the conference last? Will it be connected to other campus events (i.e. International Education Week)? Will there be pre or post conference events (i.e. networking receptions)?
- II. Proposing a schedule
- I. Topics of interest to study abroad returnees
1. Career skills (resume critiques, interview tips, job search strategies)
  2. International Opportunities (Peace Corp, Fulbright, international job search strategies, teaching or volunteering abroad, attending graduate school abroad)

3. Reverse Culture Shock
4. Campus Involvement Opportunities
5. Networking Opportunities (reception)
6. Poster fair and/or presentation opportunities for students

### III. Budget

- I. Conference registration costs
- II. Sponsorship
- III. Funding from study abroad office