

EVALUATION SUMMARY



Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Policy and Evaluation

Impact of International Exchanges on a U.S. Community: Greater Cincinnati, Ohio

The purpose of the evaluation was to test methodology and collect baseline data to assess the impact of federally funded international professional exchange programs on the U.S. hosts of these programs and on the broader local community. The Greater Cincinnati area was used as a test case.

Key Findings

➤ Impact on the Community

- 90 % of U.S. host respondents surveyed reported that hosting foreign visitors helps increase the perception of the Greater Cincinnati area as an international city/region
- 42 % agreed that local stores, restaurants, printers, airlines, buses, etc. gain business from exchanges
- 74 % agreed that exchanges send a sense of volunteerism back to other countries

➤ Impact on the Individual Host

- 84 % of U.S. host respondents surveyed reported they developed a better understanding of foreign relations
- 66 % agreed that participation in exchanges is a life-changing experience
- 25 % of respondents saw the potential for long-term business relationships

➤ Developing and Sustaining International Relationships

- 53 % of U.S. host respondents surveyed have maintained contact with the foreign exchange visitors they hosted
- 77 % agreed exchanges promote interaction between U.S. institutions and institutions of different countries
- 85 % agreed that participation in exchanges promotes international friendship and peace

➤ U.S. Government Involvement and Foreign Policy

- 72% of U.S. host respondents reported that public money should support international exchange programs
- 55% reported that government sponsorship of exchange programs gives greater credence to the programs and demonstrates that the United States, as a whole, is interested in the development and stability of other nations.

Project Information: The International Visitors Council of Greater Cincinnati, Ohio, in consultation with Camille P. Schuster, Ph.D. and George Vredevel, Ph.D., conducted the pilot study from November 1999 through April 2001. Based on interviews with 32 U.S. hosts, the evaluators developed two pilot questionnaires and distributed each to 1,518 U.S. host respondents. The combined response rate for the long-form and short-form questionnaires was 17 percent.

Program Information: International professional exchange programs bring together foreign exchange visitors with their professional and business counterparts in the United States for practical training or internship experiences and opportunities to exchange information, knowledge, practices, experiences and cultures. These exchanges are also designed to promote mutual understanding between the people of the United States and people of other countries.

Contact Information: For more information regarding this pilot study evaluation, or to request a copy of the 116-page two-part report, please contact the Office of Policy and Evaluation by phone at (202) 632-6325 or by email at ecaevaluation@state.gov, or by mail at State Annex 5, 2200 C Street NW, Washington, DC 22301.

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