

EVALUATION SUMMARY



Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Office of Policy and Evaluation

Tibetan Scholarship Program

The purpose of the evaluation was to document the outcomes and impact of the Tibetan Scholarship Program (TSP) between 1988 and 2002 and to assess the degree to which the TSP has been meeting its goals of: a) strengthening the Tibetan Refugee Community by providing selected individuals with new skills and professional knowledge; b) imparting and applying these new-found skills and ideas to directly assist the Tibetan Community in exile; and c) fostering mutual understanding between American citizens and Tibetan Scholars.

Key Findings

- **Professional capabilities and capacities**
 - 92% of the alumni believed that their Tibetan Scholarship experiences led to a professional expertise they otherwise would not have developed.
 - 100% of the grantees found the experience to be valuable.
- **Putting new knowledge to use**
 - 96% of Alumni reported that they are better able to contribute to the political/social/economic development of the Tibetan community as a result of their Tibetan Scholarship experiences.
 - 88% of participants reported that they have a greater sense of social responsibility to their communities as a result of their Tibetan Scholarship experience.
- **Networks and sharing of expertise**
 - 97% of TSP alumni reported sharing their experience and new knowledge gained, usually with colleagues (70%), and acting as a resource for colleagues (62%).
- **Mutual Understanding**
 - 92% of the Tibetan Scholarship Program participants believe they have a better understanding of the principles and workings of a democracy as a result of their Program experiences.
 - 84% of participants found that Americans are interested in learning more about Tibet.
 - 66% of respondents learned "a great deal" about the American way of life and all learned at least something. They also learned about important aspects of the American educational system (94%); the American economy (99%); U.S. foreign policy and Tibet (97%); the treatment of minorities in the U.S. (96%); and the U.S. way of life (100%).

Project Information: In the spring of 2003, SRI conducted a series of focus groups and interviews at an annual conference of Fulbright Alumni in Dharmasala, India, (home of the Tibetan community in exile), at the Tibetan Children's Village School, and at the Tibetan High-Level Scholarship Committee. SRI also conducted a survey of all TSP alumni who had received grants between 1988 and 2002. The total population of grantees from 1988-2002 was 255. Updated contact information was available for only 162. Despite using a variety of data collection techniques – regular mail, web, and e-mail, only 70 alumni completed the survey, for a response rate of 43%. This relatively low response rate is due to the geographic dispersion of the Tibet population in exile, and the poor postal and communication infrastructure.

Program Information: The Office of Academic Programs, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, administers the TSP and manages it through a cooperative agreement with the Tibet Fund, a non-profit, New York-based institution created in 1981 by Tibetan immigrants and U.S. citizens. Since inauguration of the TSP in 1988, the Tibet Fund has received annual grants of approximately \$500,000 from the U.S. Department of State to manage the program. The Tibet Fund itself contributes about \$110,000 annually to the TSP. The TSP has supported 255 Tibetan students and professionals since its inception. It seeks to award approximately 70% of its scholarships for two-year degree candidates with the remainder for one-year certificate candidates.

Contact Information: For more information regarding this evaluation, or to request a copy of the 53-page report, please contact the Office of Policy and Evaluation at (202) 632-6325, by email at ECAevaluation@state.gov or by mail at State Annex 5, 2200 C Street NW, Washington, DC 22301.

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