
Listserv Summary: SIO and International Travel

June 2014

An inquiry was made to the AIEA listserv regarding information on SIO international travel.

Summary of responses:

There were nine responses to this request. A summary of responses for each question is listed below:

- What is the frequency of your SIO's travel? (Number of international trips per year, domestic trips per year.)

Responses varied from 3 times a year to 10 for international travel, and 3 to 6 times a year for domestic travel.

- Does your SIO travel alone or with others? If/when traveling with others who do you travel with?

The majority of respondents travel with faculty or other administrators on international trips and often time alone on domestic.

- Approximately how much budget is devoted to SIO travel? Of this amount, how much does your institution provide and how much does your office cover from other revenues. (Approximates are fine, % would be sufficient in place of actual dollar amounts.)

Travel budgets for SIOs varied widely from a few thousand dollars up to \$120,000 per fiscal year, and seemed to be dependent on campus size and the institution's point in its internationalization process. The average budget was around \$20,000. How travel was funded also varied (ie. general funded, fee funded, or grant funded). Most international travel seems to be fee or tuition funded by programs such as international students services and education abroad. Most domestic and research travel seems to be funded by grants.

- What business is carried out during SIO travel at your institution? (ie. student recruitment, partnership development, project site visits, sponsor meetings, meetings with agents, etc.)

The majority of respondents listed partnership development and/or maintenance, student recruitment, sponsor visits, and off-site or program development.

- What is the overall, approximate budget of domestic/international travel for your international office from the most recent FY?

Responses varied widely from a few thousand dollars up to \$180,000 per FY, though the average seemed to be around \$30,000 per FY. Those universities that are in the internationalization process tend to travel more. Those that are not tend to travel less.

- Other information/data you may deem as important to this topic?

“SIOs need to travel - and the travel needs to strengthen international education/internationalization. The latter cannot happen without travel. International travel is best undertaken in most cases in partnership with faculty and/or relevant staff in the international office and other campus units.”

“It is extremely important to travel and make relationships as an SIO. However, in my opinion, travel must be strategic. There has to be a purpose.”

“When we have money, we also support student travel.”

“I find that with skype and the internet, I do not have to be physically present to do business, as in years past.”

“We give quite a bit of thought here to sustainability and have struggled to balance the need for travel with our sustainability goals. We haven’t been super successful, to be honest. The reality is that face to face meetings, and especially going TO a partner’s site in person, is tremendously valuable and, in some cases, frankly expected by our partners. Likewise, when I developed our Semester in () program a few years ago, it was essential that I visit in person and that other members of my campus go as well since we were trying to set up not only a student program but also a faculty-to-faculty research relationship.”