



**Association of International Education Administrators**  
*Leaders in International Higher Education*

**Message from AIEA's president, Susan Buck Sutton**

To those who first read this message at the AIEA Annual Conference in Washington D.C., I give a hearty “Welcome” and open invitation to converse with me and others of the AIEA leadership team any time you see us in the hallways and meeting rooms. To those who read this message from afar, I send my greetings and encouragement to follow what is new at AIEA through our website and publications, especially the forthcoming *Sage Handbook of International Higher Education* on which AIEA has collaborated with partner associations around the world.

To everyone, both near and far, I send my best wishes for a productive new year in pursuing the work we all hold dear. These are exciting times for our profession. As many have now pointed out, these are also defining times for our profession. The very term “internationalization” is under scrutiny; its meaning is shifting just as are the contexts in which it is invoked. New voices are joining the discussion, and seasoned veterans are reconsidering what this work is all about.

This is an on-going discussion, but one thing is already clear: the challenges facing those who lead international efforts should no longer be seen primarily as how to convince administrators, faculty, and funding agencies of the rightness of our cause. The challenges we face now also include reaching a deeper, self-reflexive analysis of what we have been doing, what impact it has had, and where it fits with the headlong rush our institutions are now making into international arenas.

This is difficult analytical work that asks international education administrators to recognize that we are not the only ones espousing internationalization any longer and to confront the inherent contradictions in some of the international goals now advanced. Of equal importance, this is work that also asks us to cut beneath our own rhetoric to assess what has really happened as a result of our programs and to envision new goals and directions, based not only on gains for individual institutions but also on how we can shape global networks of collaborative learning, research, and civic engagement.

In short, there is no more important task in front of us right now than thinking carefully about the meaning and purpose of our work. And there is no better way to approach this task than through on-going conversations with each other and with the many other constituencies now engaged in internationalization.

AIEA is proud to play a role in this process. Our Annual Conference, Regional Forums, Dialogues, and other meetings assemble international education leaders from around the world

for intensive conversation at the highest levels. Our programs of professional development, publication, and advocacy frame the nuts and bolts of leading internationalization with a broad, analytical, evidence-based approach. Even as I write this message, AIEA is reworking its strategic plan to fit our ever-shifting environment and conducting its third survey of the changing nature of international education leadership positions.

And, as the record of this last year shows, AIEA is eagerly pursuing its mission in partnership with other organizations, from those that generously sponsor our Annual Conference to sister international education associations in other parts of the world to the very influential American Council on Education with which we are coordinating our conference this year. We have much to learn from each other, and no better time to learn it than the present.