The STEP Signature Project in Education Abroad

Every student at Ohio State – no matter their major – can study abroad. An education abroad experience may be the single most important element of your academic career at Ohio State. It will help you gain critical thinking skills, technical expertise and global awareness, and will change your perspective about the world in which we live. In today’s changing economic marketplace, it is essential to gain international experience and learn about other cultures in order to actively participate and make a difference in our increasingly global society. Selecting education abroad as your STEP Signature Project will allow you to cultivate cross-cultural communication skills, gain confidence navigating an international setting, and gain an understanding of the international dimensions of your field of study, as well as become acquainted with the opportunities available in and the challenges facing the respective country.

Ohio State-approved Education Abroad Programs

The Office of International Affairs (OIA) administers education abroad programming at Ohio State, offering a variety of opportunities across the globe to fit your interests and academic plans, including:

- Winter/Spring Break programs
- Summer programs
- Semester or academic year programs
- Programs with internship, research and service-learning components

The program search engine (educationabroad.osu.edu) may be used to find programs based upon specific criteria, including subject, location, program length or time of year.

STEP students who wish to undertake their STEP Signature Project (any category) in an international location must do so via participation on one of the following Ohio State-managed international experiences:

Credit-bearing options

Approved Ohio State education abroad programming is carefully developed and/or selected by an academic unit in consultation with the Offices of International Affairs and Global Business. Ohio State study abroad programs yield graded credit, allow students to maintain enrollment, and retain access to use of their financial aid. In addition to strong academic oversight, all Ohio State-approved education abroad programming is administered with a high priority given to issues of student health and safety.

Office of International Affairs (OIA)-managed education abroad programs: http://educationabroad.osu.edu/

Fisher College of Business—Office of Global Business: https://fisher.osu.edu/global-opportunities/undergraduate

Non-credit bearing options

The Office of Student life develops and implements programs that foster student learning and development, enhance the educational experience, and prepare students for their chosen professions and to be contributing members of a diverse global society. Offerings are backed by
research and supported by data in order to respond to and anticipate evolving student needs. The Student Life staff is well-trained, and initiatives are designed to help students transition into and through college and prepare them for a lifetime of learning and contribution. Programming opportunities complement and enhance the academic curricula and help students overcome obstacles.

Buck-I-SERV: [http://buckiserv.osu.edu/](http://buckiserv.osu.edu/)

Buckeye Leadership Fellows Program: [http://blf.osu.edu/](http://blf.osu.edu/)

Office of Student Life—Outdoor Adventure Center: [https://recsports.osu.edu/facilities/outdoor-adventure-center-oac](https://recsports.osu.edu/facilities/outdoor-adventure-center-oac)

**STEP fellowship funds may not be used for international experiences sponsored by student organizations.**

**Deadlines**

Education abroad and international experiences require planning ahead. The deadline for submitting applications for education abroad is specific to your program of interest. Generally speaking, students should be prepared to submit the program application six months to one year in advance of the start of their desired program.

Please be aware that STEP students do not have special priority and must meet the same requirements as non-STEP peers. Please work with your STEP Faculty Member to identify alternate uses for your fellowship, should your first choice not be available.

**Next Steps**

- Talk to your STEP Faculty Member about how study abroad fits with your academic, career and life goals
- Attend a “Getting Started” session (Tuesdays, 2:30 – 3:30 p.m. OR Wednesdays 4:30 - 5:30 p.m. in 160 Enarson Classroom Building)
- Talk with the OIA Program Coordinator. Each program has a designated OIA Education Abroad Program Coordinator who may provide program-specific advising services throughout all stages of the study abroad process. Coordinators are available by appointment (call or email to schedule) and hold walk-in advising hours on Wednesdays from 1 - 4 p.m. in 140, Enarson Classroom Building.
- Send general study abroad inquiries to abroadadvisor@osu.edu
- For STEP-specific inquiries about study abroad, contact Jenny Kraft (.51)
- Complete your STEP proposal, pre-reflection document, budget and upload these to your STEP dashboard
A Completed Education Abroad Proposal will include:

- STEP Proposal
- Budget
- The STEP Signature Project Pre-Reflection Document

Fellowship Disbursement

For experiences occurring in the first 4-week summer session, the approved fellowship amount will post to your university statement of account by the time fees are due for that term and be applied toward the balance due. If your balance is less than the amount of your STEP fellowship and any other loans, grants, and/or scholarships you may receive for that term, you will be able to receive the excess balance (or “refund”). In order to access your refund, you will need to set up a direct deposit into your personal bank account otherwise the Bursar’s Office will mail you a check. You do not have to establish a bank account locally to use direct deposit; refunds may be electronically transferred to any bank in the United States. To set up direct deposit, go to buckeyelink.osu.edu. Once enrolled, the direct deposit service will continue every semester.

For experiences occurring during a later term, your fellowship will be disbursed approximately 45 days prior to the start of the experience.

Please note: Prior to disbursement of the fellowship, STEP administration will verify faculty certification of completion for all STEP program requirements and ensure that all budget guidelines have been followed. International experiences will also be subject to verification by OIA.

Project Reflection and Reporting Back

- Students will be asked to reflect on their project through a reflective essay they will post on U.OSU.
- Students will also be required to report back to the university by presenting at the STEP Expo or another approved public demonstration.