SURVEY OF SUSTAINABILITY IN EDUCATION ABROAD
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INTRODUCTION

This report contains results from the 2021 Survey of Sustainability in Education Abroad. This survey is the first of its kind, soliciting feedback from the higher education community in order to help the field of study abroad advance its sustainability knowledge, performance and impact.

Given the inherent global nature of education abroad, professionals in the field face unique challenges and opportunities with regards to how they respond to climate change and other environmental and social crises. Participation in this survey provides vital insights into how the field is evolving and how best to address these and other critical challenges. Specifically, the survey was intended to offer state-of-the-field data on sustainability practices and policies, benchmark these practices to enable comparative and longitudinal research, incentivize continual improvement towards sustainable practices, and inspire action to address the impact our field has on the climate crisis.

The creators of this survey intend to re-issue it periodically in order to follow trends and progress within the field, but the next issue date has not yet been determined.
METHODOLOGY

The 2021 Survey of Sustainability in Education Abroad was created and distributed by Bound International, LLC in partnership with Earth Deeds. Bound International, founded in 2020, is a small business navigating the intersection of international educational mobility, environmental sustainability and technological innovation. Earth Deeds, founded in 2016, offers innovative online tools for understanding and then transforming carbon footprints through supporting sustainability projects.

The SurveyMonkey platform, a product of Momentive, Inc., was used to collect the data. Most questions were created using Likert Scales to scale responses though 10 questions included an open-ended “Other” text box and 3 other open-ended text boxes were included to solicit more information about general thoughts about sustainability and survey improvement. Links to the survey were first distributed and advertised on September 7, 2021. After initially closing on October 5, 2021, the deadline was extended to October 25, 2021 to accommodate institutions that expressed an interest to either fill out the survey or complete partial survey responses. Links to the survey were shared via various online platforms including LinkedIn, SECUSSA listserv, NAFSA Network, Twitter, Facebook, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) network, the AASHE Sustainability Tracking, Ratings, Assessment and Ratings System (STARS) community digest, the Community Colleges for International Development (CCID) newsletter and direct outreach to study abroad professionals that had expressed interest in the survey. Study abroad/student mobility directors, or those who have knowledge about Demographics, Office Management, Program Design & Operations, Student Learning and Perceived Barriers, were specifically targeted for survey completion.

Respondent names are kept confidential. Any identifying information about an institution, or organization, is not included in the report. Respondents were also given the opportunity to voluntarily share their contact information at the end of the survey in order to clarify a response, request permission to highlight a project or offer additional support. Bound International and Earth Deeds conducted email follow ups with those that shared their information.

Seventy-seven colleges, universities and third party providers began the survey and 61 completed the survey. The breakdown of responses per institutional, or organizational, type is listed in the Demographics section below.

LIMITATIONS

The majority of messaging and advertising about the survey likely reached more North American and European higher education audiences. Seventy-seven respondents are also not a representative sample of the approximately 25,000 colleges and universities throughout the world – a majority of which have study abroad, or student mobility, opportunities for their students.
**Anticipated Additions the Next Round**

As a result of the data and feedback within the 2021 Survey of Sustainability in Education Abroad, the following changes and inclusions will be considered for the next iteration of the survey:

- Collaboration with other key stakeholders
- More “internationalized” questions and terminology, including multiple languages, for ease of completion by non-U.S. and non-English-speaking audiences
- Track answers from repeat questions to monitor progress in key performance areas
- Add new questions based on open-ended comments from previous surveys and experiences within the field, to better measure sustainability performance

All changes and inclusions will be considered on the basis of whether or not they will make the survey more accessible, appeal to broader audiences and/or yield more critical and actionable data.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SURVEY**

The average percentage decrease in study abroad students since the pandemic (COVID-19) began for respondents is 82%.

Only 22% of institutions, or organizations, have environmental sustainability explicitly embedded into their Organizational Mission, Goals and Objectives and only 17% of institutions or organizations, have environmental sustainability explicitly embedded into their Organizational Policies. Most of the higher performance indicators (Full Implementation, Some Implementation or 100%) are taking place by institutions, or organizations, that have explicitly embedded environmental sustainability into their Organizational Mission, Goals, Objectives and Policies.

Approximately 68% of respondents do not track flight emissions for students, faculty or staff.

3% or less of respondents are utilizing a carbon tax, regardless of whether it is kept by the institution, or organization, or directed towards an outside investment.

While 66% of respondents are actively recycling most of the time, only 1/7th to 1/3rd are utilizing energy efficient utilities.

56% of respondents have either Fully Implemented or Somewhat Implemented virtual exchange programs (e.g. COIL, Mirror, etc.) as an alternative to travel.

While approximately 55% of respondents are hiring local faculty to teach abroad to some degree, only 33% of respondents have implemented efforts to support the local community/economy abroad otherwise.

52% of respondents do not include the term “U.N. Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs” in study abroad program titles or descriptions and 42% do not include the term “Climate Change”. Most survey respondents have the terms “Environmental Sustainability” and “Social Sustainability” in 25% of study abroad program titles or descriptions or less.
39% of respondents are Fully Implementing or Somewhat Implementing “climate change and carbon consciousness” into their pre-departure orientations and materials while only 6% of respondents reward study abroad students for being eco-friendly while abroad and only 22% of respondents encourage students to be carbon conscious about travel post-program.

36% of respondents indicated that Funding was Much or Very Much a barrier (the largest perceived barrier) and 35% of respondents indicated that Staff Time was Much or Very Much a barrier (the second largest perceived barrier).

**SHORT SUMMARY**

Overall, the field of study abroad has much room for improvement. Survey respondents demonstrated some consistencies in performance, as well as consistencies in lack of performance, that suggest a fairly slow integration of environmental, or social, sustainability into the foundational aspects of study abroad programming and management.

Private entities, such as third party providers, and private institutions typically perform better than public universities and community colleges in implementing sustainability initiatives within Office Management, Program Design & Operations and Student Learning.

A larger proportion of private institutions and/or organizations (versus public institutions) are implementing the following activities:

- Explicitly embedding environmental sustainability into Organizational Mission, Goals and Objectives; Job Descriptions, Roles and Responsibilities; Organizational Policies; Funding Requests and Data Collection
- Holding virtual meetings that earlier would have been held in person
- Incentivizing the use of public transportation by staff
- Tracking flight emissions for faculty, staff and students
- Purchasing carbon offsets
- Recycling
- Encouraging mid-length (9-16 weeks) or long term programs (17+ weeks) versus short-term programs (< 9 weeks)
- Considering sustainable practices when making accommodation or food choices on-site
- Selecting vendors that have high sustainability standards
- Utilizing goods and services that are locally-sourced and eco-friendly
- Using resources to strengthen collective assets such as local libraries, schools, health programs, or land and water conservation projects
- Supporting Climate/Environmental Justice by the local community abroad
- Rewarding sustainable initiatives led by community partners
- Putting the terms “Environmental Sustainability” and “Social Sustainability” into study abroad program titles or descriptions
- Including contrasting cultural norms and practices regarding the climate crisis, local and global and social and environmental impacts of program participation, cultural tourism and colonialism, and the U.N. SDGs into their pre-departure orientations and materials
- Encouraging students to walk or use a bicycle when feasible during the program abroad
• Providing opportunities for students to pursue sustainability-themed internships, community engagement initiatives, independent research projects and experiential or co-curricular activities
• Encouraging carbon conscious independent travel post-program
• Guiding student towards sustainability projects on their home campus/community
• Providing opportunities for students to articulate their experiences of sustainable development
• Experiencing lower barriers such as: staff interest/commitment, supervisor/boss interest/commitment, institutional/organizational interest/commitment, inclusion of study abroad into institution’s/organization’s sustainability efforts, partner institution/organization interest/commitment, knowledge, training or academic background of staff and staff time

These represent 39 out of 64 performance indicators within this survey.

Community colleges’ best performance indicators for Full or Some Implementation are: holding virtual meetings that earlier would’ve been held in person (60%), reducing the use of printed paper (80%), recycling (60%) and offering virtual exchange programs as an alternative to travel (60%). Community colleges generally perform lower than public institutions, private institutions and private organizations overall, but are considering or implementing some sustainability initiatives.

Public universities’ best performance indicators for Full or Some Implementation are: holding virtual meetings that earlier would’ve been held in person (86%), reducing the use of printed paper (64%), recycling (71%), offering virtual exchange programs as an alternative to travel (68%), hiring local faculty to teach abroad (61%), utilizing goods and services that are locally-sourced and eco-friendly (54%), encouraging the use of public transportation for independent student travel other types of transportation are available (57%), encouraging students to walk or use bicycle when feasible while abroad (54%) and providing opportunities to pursue sustainability-themed internships, community engagement initiatives, independent research projects and experiential or co-curricular activities (57%).

All institutions and organizations are more active in implementing sustainable activities internally (e.g. virtual programming, vendor selection) than implementing sustainable activities externally, or once students are en route or abroad (e.g. Scope 3 emissions tracking, carbon taxes for outside investments, incentives and rewards for partner/host sustainability initiatives, etc.).

Throughout the survey, the highest rate of Full Implementation of any single performance indicator by a survey respondent is 35% while the highest rate of Some Implementation of any single performance indicator by a survey respondent is 45%. Conversely, the highest rate of No Consideration to date of any performance indicator by a respondent is not only as high as 50%, but across all performance indicators, the percentage of No Consideration to date is between 23-50%. Fifty-three percent of survey respondents are either not using energy from renewable sources within their facilities or indicated that the information was not available, and one-third or less are using energy efficient utilities. This indicates that sustainability performance in study abroad, according to the indicators outlined in this survey, is fairly low. The only consistently high performance indicator is in recycling behavior (more than half of respondents are engaged in this activity 100% or 75% of the time).

Only half of respondents indicated that they were very interested in making education abroad more sustainable, with the rest saying they were either equally interested or only somewhat interested.
DEMOGRAPHICS

The following data reflects the characteristics of 77 survey respondents.

**FIGURE 1. Title/Position (select the option that best describes what you do)**

- Co-manages all sustainable development initiatives, including environmental and social at an education abroad provider: 1
- Higher Education Admissions and Recruitment: 1
- Manage all sustainability efforts at a company: 4
- Manages all academic affairs at a company: 9
- Manages a small portfolio of education abroad, or outbound student mobility, programs at a college/university: 17
- Manages all education abroad, or outbound student mobility, programs at a college/university: 31
- Oversees all international initiatives at a college/university: 10
- Manages Campus Internationalization programming: 1
- Manages a small portfolio of education abroad, or outbound student mobility, programs at a company: 1
- Manages a study abroad program abroad, on-site: 1
- Professor/Faculty/Academic Staff: 1
Sixty-three survey respondents (81%) were based in the United States.
FIGURE 3. Type of Institution or Organization (check all that apply)

The following image shows the different institutional, or organizational, characteristics of the respondents. Respondents were able to choose all descriptors that applied to their institution or organization.
The survey creators further reduced the type of institution or organization into 5 simplified categories for the purposes of analyzing trends among broadly understood institutional and organizational types. The assigned categories were indicated by the survey respondents and may have been one of a few identifying institutional/organizational characteristics.

**FIGURE 4. Simplified Institutional or Organizational Type**
FIGURE 5. Estimate the number of students your institution, or organization, sent abroad in the year preceding the pandemic (COVID-19)

One respondent sent approx. 7,000 students on short-term programs (<9 weeks)

A majority of survey respondents were sending under 1,000 students abroad per year, regardless of whether they were short-term programs, mid-length programs or long-term programs. Nine survey respondents were sending 1,000 – 7,000 students abroad per year.
FIGURE 6. Estimate the percentage decrease in the number of students your institution, or organization, sent abroad since the pandemic (COVID-19) began

The average percentage decrease in study abroad students since the pandemic (COVID-19) began = 82%

Thirty survey respondents reported experiencing a 100% loss of student participation since the pandemic began.
The following data reflects aspects of office management by 77 survey respondents.

Survey respondents were asked to use this legend when responding to several questions pertaining to management:

- NC = No consideration to date
- SC = Some consideration/interest/discussion, but no plans to date
- SP = Some planning, but nothing implemented to date
- SI = Some implementation
- FI = Full implementation
- N/A = Information not available

Some survey respondents did not make a selection, so these are indicated by a “BL” for Blank.

Level of performance is represented in a left-to-right direction, with Full Implementation being the farthest value on the right of each indicator. The percentage of Full Implementation is circled as a highlight (e.g. 22% of institutions, or organizations, have fully implemented explicitly embedding environmental sustainability into their organizational mission, goals and objectives).
Additional Comments from Respondents

“Future student projects and study abroad opportunities, physical modifications to premises (ex. new recycling bins, garden).”

“New initiative around sustainability and being a fair trade university. While it isn’t officially in the mission, goals or objectives yet, it is likely to be formalized more in the future.”
FIGURE 8. Environmental impacts from staff travel is minimized

Additional Comments from Respondents

“We pay carbon offsets for staff travel.”

“We are a rural campus in Central, PA. Public Transport does not exist and carpooling is not mandated in any way for faculty or staff.”

“Public transportation is not available.”

“Changing student trip travel to train vs. air.”

“We are a small rural campus. We have passed a new policy to prohibit idling of vehicles on campus. There is no public transportation available in this country.”

“Virtual meetings are mostly due to the pandemic. NJ has a tax save program for employees who use public transportation to commute.”
FIGURE 9. Efforts are made to account for Scope 3 emissions for staff, faculty and/or students (check all that apply)

- Flight emissions are tracked: 68% (None of N/A), 19% (Students), 25% (Faculty), 25% (Staff)
- Ground travel emissions are tracked: 82% (None of N/A), 9% (Students), 10% (Faculty), 15% (Staff)
- Carbon offsets are purchased: 82% (None of N/A), 12% (Students), 9% (Faculty), 15% (Staff)
- A carbon tax is imposed and retained by institution or organization: 96% (None of N/A), 1% (Students), 1% (Faculty), 3% (Staff)
“All accommodation has been built to NZEB (Nearly Zero Energy Building) standards.”

“Our plan is to give information on carbon offsets to students when mobility resumes so that they can make their own decisions.”

“We are working with our Office of Sustainability on a fee that would be used to purchase offsets. As the fee approval processes are complicated at our institution we plan to encourage student travelers to purchase offsets themselves as they are purchasing flights.”

“We were in the middle of a project to track this data right before COVID – but everything (including office staff an all study abroad and travel) has been cut.”

“We are planning to implement emission tracking as well as a carbon offset program, however those plans were put on hold as we have not had any travel take place since the start of COVID.”

“We have an insetting strategy for all internal emissions. International flights’ emissions to be offset (in the pipeline) when not possible to inset.”

“Some data collection is planned to look at this and consider some of the options listed here. No definite plans yet, though.”

“All carbon emissions are tracked and compensated for through insetting rather than offsetted through purchases.”

“Starting to look into this, but not currently doing any of the above.”
FIGURE 10. Percentage of energy and resource conservation measures are employed (approximate)

- **Extra study abroad fair materials are re-used or recycled:** 4%, 4%, 6%, 13%, 17%, 30%, 48%, 8%
- **Catalogues, brochures and giveaway items are recyclable or compostable:** 9%, 9%, 13%, 17%, 22%, 30%, 52%, 8%
- **Office uses electricity from renewable energy sources:** 23%, 12%, 13%, 17%, 22%, 30%, 48%, 8%
- **Office recycles glass and metal cans:** 8%, 3%, 8%, 13%, 17%, 30%, 48%, 8%
- **Office recycles paper:** 5%, 13%, 17%, 30%, 48%, 8%
- **Office has reduced use of printed paper:** 13%, 17%, 30%, 48%, 8%
- **Office uses EnergyStar or other certified energy efficient equipment and appliances:** 13%, 9%, 17%, 30%, 48%, 8%
- **Office has replaced standard bulbs with LED/ED bulbs:** 9%, 6%, 10%, 13%, 30%, 8%
FIGURE 11. Environmental sustainability is a factor when designing programs

Additional Comments from Respondents

“We have created a Developing Sustainable Programs guide for faculty.”

“These answers relate to my new program – virtual climate action internships.”

“We are headed towards more COIL offerings, but a new reporting structure into a different Dean has changed all that. She’s not interested in COIL and so…”

“Our abroad campuses (we own two, Dublin and Montreal) are both very much building sustainability into programs now, but we have been lacking to date. The push for this has definitely come from the abroad campuses, not the home institution.”

“Virtual exchange (COIL, Dual Immersion, cross registration in online classes with partner universities) is encouraged and growing – but NOT positioned as an alternative to travel.”
FIGURE 12. Efforts are made to support the local community/economy abroad

"So far this has depended entirely on the commitment of the specific program partners. Partners not chosen on this basis."

"We are not able to hire local faculty (mostly a tax issue) but we do work with locals for other services."

"We do not manage foreign partners in this regard. With incoming programs all of the above are incorporated into programming with visiting students."
FIGURE 13. Percentage of study abroad programs with the following terms in their titles or descriptions (approximate)

Additional Comments from Respondents

“This is just for the [Engineering Program].”

“We recently restructured our nomenclature to standardize program naming to include [third party program provider] and location in titles. (Just 1 program remains with environmental in the title, and this will also change with time.) This will allow more flexibility with changing academic offerings or additional foci. We rely on our state of the art searchable class database to easily access programs with related coursework and other marketing tactics to surface environmentally thematic options.”

“At the moment, we only offer 1-2 environmental/science faculty led course a year, so 25% was too high, but it’s not exactly 0% either.”

“Climate action’ rather than ‘climate change’ but close enough!”

“Our number would be more than 0 and less than 25 percent.”

“U.N. Sustainability Development Goals are often addressed through virtual programming in which we have participated in.”
Additional Comments from Respondents

“Check out our Study Abroad and SDGs website – [website]”

“Not very many but I do not feel the label is what counts…”

“There is certainly a push to increase these numbers.”

“Marine conservation and policies.”

“We send the majority of our students on bilateral exchanges. We do not create the foreign program.”

“There are 1-2 study abroad programs that focus on sustainability in the College of Engineering. Unfortunately that puts our percentage at significantly lower than 25%.”

“Goal is to increase these numbers over the next 5 years.”

“We just joined the UN SDGs and are about to starting talking about this with the faculty who lead our programs.”

STUDENT LEARNING

The following data reflects aspects of student learning initiatives by 77 survey respondents.

Survey respondents were asked to use this legend when responding to several questions pertaining to management:

NC = No consideration to date
SC = Some consideration/interest/discussion, but no plans to date
SP = Some planning, but nothing implemented to date
SI = Some implementation
FI = Full implementation
N/A = Information not available

Some survey respondents did not make a selection, so these are indicated by a “BL” for Blank.

Level of performance is represented in a left-to-right direction, with Full Implementation being the farthest value on the right of each indicator. The percentage of Full Implementation is circled as a highlight (e.g. 10% of institutions, or organizations, have fully implemented addressing climate change and carbon emissions in pre-departure materials and orientations).
FIGURE 14. The following topics are addressed in pre-departure materials & orientations

Additional Comments from Respondents

“The benefits of climate action for businesses (host companies).”

“[website for Ethical Community Engagement Pledge of Service].”

“This is certainly increasing and in 3 years we plan to have all of these at full implementation.”

“Most of these topics are addressed indirectly or implicitly included, whether the exact term listed here are used or not.”
Additional Comments from Respondents

“[Engineering Program] immersions.”

“Some of our community-engaged learning faculty-directed programs have sustainability themes with accompanying projects and activities.”

“Planning to incentivize carbon offsets for flights with a gift (reusable water bottle from local company?) “Social engagement track” on program (community garden, outreach).”

“We plan to engage with some academic partners to see what sustainable efforts students can join in the host community.”

“For programs that are focused around sustainability. This isn’t broadly available in all programs yet.”

“Depends pretty much on the program – semester in hands of program operators vs. short-term is under our control.”

“Many of our students participate in experiential programs which offer options to conduct research or complete an internship. Our short-term programs are field courses in which students gain hands-on field experience.”
“It is a core goal for our students to become involved in the community. We help them look for internships, which can but don’t have to have a focus on sustainability.”

“[website on sustainability philosophy].”

“We encourage students to consider their carbon footprint while abroad, and to take steps such as shopping for locally-produced food, use public transportation or walk, avoid flying off to another destination on a regular basis, etc.”

“Same as previous questions about programs abroad.”

“Some of our affiliated providers offer these types of activities and one of our faculty-led programs looks at sustainable engineering practices working with local partners on projects.”

“We have a few programs (about 5-10% of our portfolio pre-pandemic, but most are currently suspended since they occur in developing countries) with a focus specifically on social impact – both domestically and internationally.”

**FIGURE 16. Post program, students...**
The following data shows perceived barriers to make study abroad more sustainable by 77 survey respondents.

**FIGURE 17. Do you experience any of the following barriers to implementing sustainability within your programming?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Little</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Much</th>
<th>Very Much</th>
<th>BL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of study abroad in institution’s, or organization’s, sustainability efforts</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional/Organizational interest/commitment</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor/boss interest/commitment</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff interest/commitment</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student interest/commitment</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff time</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration with sustainability professionals/office</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge, training, academic background</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partner institution/organization interest/commitment</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Additional Comments from Respondents

“Basically has not been a priority unfortunately.”

“I feel like there should be a N/A response for this question.”

“It takes time and resources to enact all of these great initiatives. We are getting there slowly.”

“Our institution is very forward-thinking about climate action, but there are some things we don’t have the budget to do, such as purchasing carbon offsets with program funds.”

“The interest is there, but the logistical needs are still hard to meet/get support for.”

“We do not have sustainability professionals/office at our institution.”
LIST 1. In your opinion, what is needed by your office to build, or enhance, sustainable study abroad efforts?

"The value of sustainable study abroad must be recognized by our faculty, as study abroad at our institution consists primarily of faculty-directed programs."

"Additional funding and staff time."

"We are eager to dive into this work. Limited resources due to impacts of the pandemic will temper how fast we can evolve."

"time, funding, increase student interest"

"a unified approach that everyone signs on to and adheres to; making sustainability less of an afterthought"

"As a single person office covering all aspects of incoming, outgoing, risk, and immigration, I think the largest barriers are time, mental bandwidth, and funding (likely for more staff)."

"Funding, time, support, and staff to champion"

"ROI proposition"

"ressources and faculty engagement"

"We are charging full speed ahead!"

"More funding and partnerships with other institutions"

"1. A recognition that environmental sustainability is one part of the puzzle here, alongside social and economic. 2. An top-down approach, attached to KPIs"

"Greater commitment by universities to include sustainability and climate action in their strategic goals overall, and specifically as it relates to education abroad."

"Full commitment to introducing sustainability into all aspects of the office. From student mobility to energy and resources used in the physical office, such as the continued reduction of paper promotional materials."

"More information and easy implementation tools"

"Increased collaboration between universities larger sustainability goals and study abroad efforts."

"primarily a bit more time and more interest in the larger community/institution... BUT, there are so many needs in international education on campus, diverse participation and increased participation have always taken precedence in my mind. Our volume of international travel is so low... I’m not sure we’d want to discourage it..."

"Staff resource and institutional support. Walking the Walk!"

"Money. Our goal with programs, especially at a community college, is to keep costs low. Sustainable options like offsetting carbon emissions, incentivizing eco-conscious transportation, etc. often cost more and may not always be possible to build into program costs. We encourage students to do it independently and provide them with advice on how to be eco-friendly travelers."
LIST 1. In your opinion, what is needed by your office to build, or enhance, sustainable study abroad efforts? (continued)

"Continued collaboration with our Office of Sustainability; time to build the plans and put them into practice; support from upper administration"

"More time/staff to help and commitment by organization in time and $. Currently I am paid = 7 hours a week (3 credit hours of class release time) to run all study abroad programs for the college. Anyone else who helps is volunteering time. No budget for study abroad programs."

"we have many competing demands and interest."

"knowledge, time, funding, a staff member to focus on this"

"it is not an easy questions...I think we need to have students studying abroad in person again in a new sustainable format."

"A partnership with the Office of Sustainability."

"Professional development trainings from the field"

"Time and funding is always the biggest hurdle. We also hope to develop a sustainability scholarship for our students, but do not currently have the resources to do so."

"Funding and staff resources to devote more time and effort"

"Our efforts have been driven from the bottom-up. We would love an institutional commitment to sustainability and climate action. So far it hasn’t come."

"We need to encourage internationalization at home in order to be more inclusive and sustainable."

"We would need a greater programming effort and resources to develop a carbon offsetting program. We can also do more about considering environmental factors when designing our programs."

"Funding available, structural roadblocks, knowledge/training available, availability of sustainable local partners"

"Staff time is the biggest challenge. We have interested staff and faculty collaborating on this, but little time or funding for more support needed"

"more institutional support and more staffing"

"Economic sustainability (viability) of a small in-country office."

"Affordability, student & faculty interest, staff training/education."

"We are a small and understaffed office, so it is difficult for us to take on new projects. I think we would need additional staff and have a point person in our office who implements sustainability efforts. We also rely heavily on providers, who sometimes do not offer these types of programs."

"More outreach to faculty and partners"

"More knowledge and awareness of how to address sustainability in study abroad is needed."

"Knowledge, funding"
FIGURE 18. What is your personal interest in making study abroad more environmentally sustainable?

Other Responses

“Somewhat. I have the interest, but typically opt for lower hanging fruit.”
"We have all the pieces at [university] to realize sustainability in all of our international programs, but the funding. Students are somewhat of a barrier as well - many don't care as much as I would like."

"I am personally very committed to advancing the UN SDGs through education abroad. Thank you for conducting research on this important topic!"

"Congratulations on pulling this survey together. I can't wait to hear more about your findings!"

"I am proud of my colleague for asking me to complete the survey. I know enough for sure, to know that I'm not doing enough... and I made a conscious choice to skip environmental sustainability sessions at the last conference I attended... Just know that offering a full range of activities to even a small population in a context of understaffing is more challenging than my apparent commitment to environmental sustainability in my own life might be."

"We are currently in the beginning phases of creating a sustainability plan for our office to guide choices in the future"

"Just so you know, I completed this survey on behalf of the main college even though I am the campus director in Ireland. I did discuss with my campus-based colleagues before completing it, however."

"Our university is starting to move towards sustainability, but slowly moving that direction"
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