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Social Development Canada

Exploring barriers to accessing study and work abroad opportunities

Final Report

Prepared for Employment and Social Development Canada

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Exploring barriers to accessing study and work abroad opportunities

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Prepared for Employment and Social Development Canada

Supplier name: Phoenix Strategic Perspectives Inc.

January 2021

This public opinion research report presents the results of qualitative research conducted to explore barriers to accessing study and work abroad opportunities for traditionally underrepresented post-secondary students.

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Executive Summary

Phoenix Strategic Perspectives (Phoenix SPI) was commissioned by the Learning Branch of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) to conduct qualitative public opinion research (POR) in support of the Department's Outbound Student Mobility Pilot.

1. Research Purpose and Objectives

Studies have found that studying abroad increases employability (Universities UK International, 2017) and has a positive impact on the development of requisite skills, including adaptability and communication skills (Canadian Bureau for International Education, *A World of Learning*, 2014). To encourage more Canadian students to study or work abroad as part of their post-secondary studies, Budget 2019 announced the Outbound Student Mobility Pilot. Led by ESDC, the goal of the pilot is to help Canadian post-secondary students gain the skills needed to succeed in a global economy through study and work abroad opportunities.

To support the pilot's design and success, research was needed to better understand barriers to study and/or work abroad opportunities for Canadian students. The Learning Branch of ESDC commissioned Phoenix SPI to conduct POR to help build a better understanding of the barriers that traditionally underrepresented students encounter when it comes to studying or working abroad. The purpose of the research was to explore awareness, habits, attitudes, and behaviours related to study and/or work abroad opportunities, including barriers faced by traditionally underrepresented students.

2. Methodology

A qualitative research approach was used to meet the objectives. Specifically, 12 online focus groups and 20 in-depth, one-on-one telephone interviews were conducted with the target population: Canadian undergraduate university and college students, 18 years of age or older, attending a designated Canadian post-secondary institution. The target population was segmented into two groups: students who had participated in a study or work abroad program and students who had not participated in such a program, but who were interested in doing so. The research was designed to include students from a variety of backgrounds, including students traditionally underrepresented in post-secondary education (i.e. students from lower income households, students with disabilities, and Indigenous students).

Third-party intermediaries, such as Universities Canada (UnivCan), Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan), the National Educational Association of Disabled Students, Indspire and various Canadian post-secondary institutions, were engaged to promote the study to potentially eligible students using online and social media advertisements. Recruitment started in early March 2020. By mid-March, recruitment was put on hold due to COVID-19 and resumed again in September 2020. The focus groups and interviews were conducted between September 7 and November 5, 2020.¹ All participants received an honorarium in appreciation of their time. More details about the methodology can be found in the [Appendix: Technical Specifications](#).

¹ One interview was conducted in March (on March 26, 2020) prior to work stoppage due to COVID-19.

3. Limitations and Use of the Research Results

This research was qualitative in nature, not quantitative. Qualitative research is designed to reveal a rich range of opinions and interpretations rather than to measure what percentage of the target population holds a given opinion. As such, the results provide an indication of participants' views about the issues explored, but they cannot be generalized to the full population of students who participated in study/work abroad programs or who are interested in participating in such programs. With the foregoing in mind, the results of this research will be used by ESDC to inform policy approaches to increase the participation of underrepresented students in the new Outbound Student Mobility Pilot.

4. Key Findings

The opportunity to travel abroad was most often identified as the main (or key) factor motivating post-secondary students to want to take part in study or work abroad programs.

When asked why they wanted (or would like) to take part in a study or work abroad program, research participants frequently mentioned the opportunity to travel. They often used expressions like 'a great opportunity', 'a unique opportunity', 'the opportunity of a lifetime', and 'a once in a lifetime opportunity' to describe it. Not only does this afford students the opportunity to travel internationally, it also allows them to do so in a 'safe', 'structured', or 'supervised' environment (e.g. through an international study program) and, for many, to travel at a period in their life before they take on responsibilities, such as a full-time job and a family.

Students identified a number of benefits they hoped or expected to derive from being involved in a study or work abroad program. These included benefits both to themselves on a personal level and to their academic studies and/or career plans.

The benefits research participants identified that pertain to their character as individuals included: life skills development, such as independence, initiative, self-confidence, and learning to interact with people cross-culturally; better self-understanding, including being able to recognize their personal strengths and weaknesses; and personal growth, such as widening their horizons by discovering new interests and acquiring a new perspective on things by travelling abroad.

When it came to their academic or professional selves, students mentioned benefits, such as acquiring a deeper understanding of their field of study or work by experiencing it in a different setting/seeing it from a different perspective; making professional connections and enhancing their employability; acquiring or improving career-related skills, such as language skills; and strengthening their CV with the ability to reference experience working/studying abroad.

Finances, administrative issues, and culture shock were identified by students as the main factors complicating the decision-making process vis-à-vis considering to participate in a study or work abroad program.

Financial considerations were routinely identified as important when it comes to taking part in a study or work abroad program. Such considerations were typically part of the thought process informing the decision whether or not to apply for the program, with program participants routinely identifying them as a key factor informing their decision, and non-participants routinely identifying them as a key factor in dissuading them from taking part.

Other barriers or difficulties complicating the decision-making process included administrative challenges and apprehensions about culture shock. Looking first at administrative challenges, students pointed to the complexity of the administrative and logistical requirements, which were sometimes compounded by a perceived lack of institutional support. Such complexities were routinely associated with three specific issues: choosing courses at the host institution; applying for a VISA; and finding housing abroad, with participants often observing that they had to deal with these issues on their own or with little assistance from their institution or the host institution.

Although mentioned by fewer students, concern and anxiety about encountering cultural barriers when studying or working abroad was a complicating factor in the decision-making process for a number of research participants. This was routinely associated with a potential language barrier and uncertainty about the extent to which they would be able to get by speaking English.

Students collectively identified a variety of barriers or obstacles resulting from COVID-19 that someone might face when it comes to being involved in a study or work abroad program.

After discussing challenges and barriers to accessing student and work abroad opportunities, research participants were asked to consider the impact of COVID-19. Challenges and barriers related to the pandemic include the curtailment or cancellation of program; travel restrictions (e.g. countries closing their borders/no longer issuing VISAs, as well as institutions withdrawing from international exchange programs); new and/or additional program or travel requirements (e.g. more stringent requirements to obtain VISAs, mandatory vaccination should a vaccine be available, imposition of travel restrictions while in host countries); and financial strain, such as increased travel costs (assuming travel to other countries is permitted), as well as job loss and/or a lack of employment opportunities (resulting in loss of income to finance participation in a study or work abroad program).

Most research participants were of the opinion that awareness of study/work abroad programs is relatively widespread among students, but that this awareness is general in nature.

When asked to consider what could be done to ensure students are aware of study and work abroad programs, research participants tended to focus on the channels used to disseminate information, including social media, student emails, kiosks/booths at key events (e.g. orientation week, international fairs), and advertising in high traffic areas on campus. It was also suggested that this information should be disseminated early during recruitment efforts in high schools, during campus visits by prospective students, and during the very first weeks of the school year. Finally, to ensure study and work abroad opportunities remain top-of-mind for students throughout their academic career, more frequent dissemination of information was identified as something that would help. The two preferred channels were social media and email.

5. Conclusions and Implications

In the minds of students involved in this research, the opportunity to travel is a key attraction of study/work abroad programming. Looking ahead, the direction that study/work abroad programs take in the post-pandemic environment will need to address two key challenges, both of which are related to travel.

First, to the extent that post-secondary institutions turn to online delivery, or consider doing so in the post-pandemic environment, one challenge will be to highlight the benefits and advantages of a program shorn of one its key attraction (i.e. the opportunity to travel). Potential advantages of an

online approach, or virtual mobility, include its capacity to address, perhaps even eliminate, key barriers to participation in the program identified by students: financial barriers, apprehensions about culture shock, anxiety/fear of loneliness, and concerns about delayed graduation or falling behind in one's domestic course of study while abroad. The question in the absence of travel will be the extent to which eliminating such barriers at the price of eliminating the travel component makes participation in the program more or less attractive. With this in mind, particular attention should be paid to the perceived advantages and positive aspects of virtual mobility when it comes to encouraging students to consider and access study and work abroad opportunities.

Second, if and when the travel component of study/work abroad programs is relaunched in a post-pandemic environment, the challenge will be to develop tools, resources and services to address specific concerns expressed by students about such programs. This includes concerns about being abroad during a new outbreak, and concerns about additional administrative requirements related to international travel in general and study/work abroad programs in particular.

Addressing concerns about being abroad during a new outbreak will be particularly important for two key reasons: loneliness/homesickness was one of the most frequently identified drawbacks about their experience abroad, and anxiety/fear was identified as one of the most important potential barriers to participation. Such concerns would undoubtedly be heightened or enhanced if apprehensions related to a new outbreak, such as being quarantined abroad and not being able to get back home, were not adequately addressed.

Concerns about additional administrative requirements will also be important to address. One of the most frequently identified 'complicators' in the decision-making process was the complexity of administrative and logistical requirements. Given students' perceptions that existing requirements are complex, and that students are often left to deal with them on their own, it will be essential to try to find ways to minimize potential complications resulting from any additional administrative or logistical requirements in a post-pandemic environment.

6. Contract Value

The contract value was \$112,805.66.

Introduction

The Learning Branch of ESDC commissioned Phoenix SPI to conduct qualitative POR in support of the Department's Outbound Student Mobility Pilot. Phoenix SPI is pleased to present the results of the research in this report.

1. Background and Objectives

Studies have found that studying abroad increases employability (Universities UK International, 2017) and has a positive impact on the development of requisite skills, including adaptability and communication skills (Canadian Bureau for International Education, *A World of Learning*, 2014). Studying or working abroad can also help students develop strong international networks and deepen their understanding of economic regions of importance to Canada.

Despite the potential positive outcomes of studying abroad, few Canadian students study or work abroad compared to peer countries (Study Group on Global Education, 2017). Canadian students report facing a number of barriers to studying abroad, including cost (financial and opportunity), and non-financial barriers, such as concerns regarding whether credits will transfer or whether an experience abroad will delay graduation (Canadian Bureau for International Education *Special Feature on Education Abroad*, 2016). Underrepresented students may face additional barriers, such as the added costs of traveling from rural/remote areas, or the need for specialized equipment for students with disabilities. There is little available research, however, on the barriers to accessing study and work abroad opportunities for traditionally underrepresented students attending post-secondary institutions in Canada.

To encourage more Canadian students to study or work abroad as part of their post-secondary studies, Budget 2019 announced, as part of the Government of Canada's new International Education Strategy (IES), the Outbound Student Mobility Pilot, with \$95M in funding over five years. Led by ESDC, the goal of the pilot is to help Canadian post-secondary students gain the skills needed to succeed in a global economy through study and work abroad opportunities. The Department is working with Universities Canada and Colleges and Institutes Canada to develop and deliver the pilot via contribution agreements, taking into consideration new circumstances in light of COVID-19.. Fifty percent of the new pilot funding will go towards projects supporting traditionally underrepresented students. This includes students from low-income families, Indigenous students, and students with disabilities.

To support the pilot's design and success, research was needed to better understand barriers to study and/or work abroad opportunities for Canadian students. The Learning Branch of ESDC commissioned Phoenix SPI to conduct POR to help build a better understanding of the barriers that traditionally underrepresented students encounter when it comes to studying or working abroad. The purpose of the research was to explore awareness, habits, attitudes, and behaviours related to study and/or work abroad opportunities, including barriers faced by traditionally underrepresented students.

The results of this research will be used to inform policy approaches to increase the participation of underrepresented students in the new Outbound Student Mobility Pilot. Specifically, this research project will be used by the Learning Branch to: 1) inform policy service design and implementation, and strengthen recommended policy options; 2) identify interventions that could be scaled-up/expanded

through current programming/new initiatives; and, 3) develop a knowledge base and lessons learned on new and innovative ways of delivering services.

2. Methodology

Twelve online focus groups and 20 in-depth, one-on-one telephone interviews were conducted with the target population: Canadian undergraduate university and college students, 18 years of age or older, attending a designated Canadian post-secondary institution. The target population was segmented into two groups: students who had participated in a study or work abroad program and students who had not participated in such a program, but who were interested in doing so. The research was designed to include students from a variety of backgrounds, including students traditionally underrepresented in post-secondary education (i.e. students from lower income households, students with disabilities, and Indigenous students).

Recruitment for this research started in early March 2020 and was undertaken through the support of third-party intermediaries. Third-party intermediaries, such as Universities Canada, Colleges and Institutes Canada, the National Educational Association of Disabled Students, Indspire and various Canadian post-secondary institutions, were engaged to promote the study to potentially eligible students using online and social media advertisements. These advertisements (examples can be found in the [Appendix: Recruitment Ads](#)) directed interested students to an online recruitment screener, which was used to identify students who met the research criteria. By mid-March, recruitment was put on hold due to COVID-19.

Recruitment resumed in September 2020 (to coincide with the 2020-21 academic calendar year). The focus groups and interviews were conducted between September 7 and November 5, 2020.² Participants had the option to participate in their official language of choice. In total, 100 students participated in the research. Focus group participants received an honorarium of \$150 and interview participants an honorarium of \$100 in appreciation of their time. More details about the methodology can be found in the [Appendix: Technical Specifications](#).

3. Note to Readers

- **Limitations of the Research:** This research was qualitative in nature, not quantitative. Qualitative research is designed to reveal a rich range of opinions and interpretations rather than to measure what percentage of the target population holds a given opinion. As such, the results provide an indication of participants' views about the issues explored, but they cannot be generalized to the full population of students who participated in study/work abroad programs or who are interested in participating in such programs.
- **Presentation of Findings:** For the most part, the views of students traditionally under-represented in post-secondary education (i.e. students from lower income households, students with disabilities, and Indigenous students) did not differ from those of other students. For this reason, the findings from the in-depth interviews and focus groups are reported in aggregate, with differences noted in the text where relevant.

² One interview was conducted in March (on March 26, 2020) prior to work stoppage due to COVID-19.

Detailed Findings

1. Background/Contextual Information

This section includes background and contextual information about **program participants** (i.e. students who have taken part in a study and/or work abroad opportunity through their post-secondary institution), and **non-participants** (students who have expressed interest in taking part in a study and/or work abroad opportunity through their post-secondary institution).

Participants:

Students more likely to study than work abroad; most said their program related to their studies

Program participants were somewhat more likely to have studied abroad than worked abroad, while a few described the program in which they took part as including both study and work.

Most of those who studied abroad described their studies as ‘transferable’ or ‘for credit’, meaning that successful completion of their studies/courses abroad counted towards fulfillment of requirements in their program of study. This was the case for all university students who studied abroad. The situation of college students was different in the sense that, while some described their study abroad as ‘for credit’, others described it as a faculty member-led study abroad tour that was not credited to their program.

Most participants who worked abroad described their work experience as fulfillment of a program requirement (i.e. they are enrolled in a co-op program that includes a mandatory work term). The work term could be completed either in Canada or abroad, and they chose to complete it abroad. A few participants who worked abroad described their work experience as an international internship opportunity or work abroad option that counted towards credit, but which was not mandatory. In some instances, the work abroad experience was paid, while in others (including the non-mandatory internship opportunity and work abroad option) it was unpaid.

Among participants who worked and studied abroad were ones who had been accepted into a special international program that included a ‘for credit’ work and study component, and ones enrolled in a study program that includes a ‘practicum’ to be completed in Canada or abroad. In each case, the work component was described as unpaid.

University students typically spend more time abroad than college students

There was a noticeable difference between university and college students in terms of the duration of their study/work abroad program. University students described the length of time they spent abroad in terms of months. The duration ranged from two and half months to 12 months, with most saying they were abroad between four and six months. Moreover, university students who spent less than three months abroad explained that they were obliged to return early because of the pandemic.

By comparison, nearly all college students described the length of time they spent abroad in terms of days or weeks, with the duration ranging for the most part from just over one week to six weeks. Only a few college students said they stayed abroad longer than this, the longest term being a 10-month work placement.

Location of study/work terms mainly in western Europe

Program participants were most likely to have gone to a western European country, and most of those who did not went to a far-eastern country (i.e. China, Japan, Hong Kong, South Korea), or Australia and New Zealand. Individual participants went to other locations, including the United States, Africa, Cuba, and Latin America.

Most program participants obtained first choice among locations

Most program participants said that the country they visited for their study/work abroad program was their first choice. Those who did not obtain their first choice explained why by identifying one of the following reasons:

- *Limited options/possibilities:* Their post-secondary institution offers no opportunity to study or work in the country that would have been their first choice.
- *Limited number of placements/opportunities:* They did not obtain their first choice because the country in question is a popular destination, resulting in a competitive process in which a number of students vie for a limited number of placements.
- *Cost/financial considerations:* The costs associated with studying or working in the country of choice were high or too high. Consequently, less expensive options/possibilities had to be considered.
- *Scheduling issues:* The opportunity to study in the country of choice did not align well with their plans/goals/priorities (e.g. it would have required them to be abroad during the summer months when they would typically find employment to save for the following year's school fees).

Some participants explained that they had no choice (i.e. their study abroad possibility was limited to one location).

Various factors affect choice of a country

A variety of factors affected or influenced participants' choice of a country in which to study and/or work, and they often identified more than one factor influencing their choice. The following reasons were routinely identified:

- *Cultural/linguistic familiarity/similarity:* Many participants said that their choice was influenced by a desire to study and/or work in a country similar to Canada in terms of culture and/or language. Some explained that this was their first experience travelling abroad, doing so on their own, and/or doing so for an extended period of time. Going to a country similar culturally or linguistically would add a dimension of familiarity to the experience that would be re-assuring/comforting and that would facilitate integration into a new learning and/or work environment. Not surprisingly, this most often translated into a desire to study and/or work in a country where English is spoken or understood. However, some pointed to their fluency in another language as a factor that influenced their choice of a country (e.g. they chose to go to Spain because their knowledge of Spanish would facilitate their integration).
- *Long-standing interest in a country:* Many said they chose a country because of a long-standing interest in it because of its history, its culture, or family/ancestral ties, resulting in it being a place they have always wanted to visit.
- *Program-related considerations:* Many identified considerations related to their program or specific field of study to explain their choice of a country. Such considerations included the following:

- The country is directly related to their academic or professional interests (e.g. they are studying Spanish so they chose Spain, they are studying English literature so they chose England, they are interested in German philosophy so they chose Germany, they are interested in Japanese cuisine so they chose Japan).
- The country provides an opportunity to enhance/expand knowledge in their field of study by providing a comparative perspective (e.g. studying marine biology/bio-diversity in Australia, studying Indigenous cultures in New Zealand and Australia, understanding work culture in Japan, studying food harvesting techniques in Latin America, studying education in Finland).
- The country provides a unique study/research opportunity (e.g. conflict study in Rwanda, the condition of members of the LGBTQ community in Senegal, access to primary literary and historical sources not available elsewhere).
- Exploring possibilities for graduate work (e.g. meeting experts in their field, making connections/networking).
- *Career-related considerations:* Many students also identified considerations related to career advancement and professional development, including the following:
 - Making potential work-related connections, exploring networking opportunities, exploring work-related opportunities.
 - Acquiring a better understanding of a specific culture/society with an eye on potential business opportunities (e.g. the cultural determinants of consumer preferences).
 - Enhancing career-related skills (e.g. choosing Japan in the hope of enhancing knowledge of Japanese, which is an advantage as a translator; choosing Japan to enhance expertise in Japanese cuisine, which is an advantage as a chef).
 - Enhancing knowledge of one's field through comparative experience with an eye on improving employability (e.g. enhancing one's expertise in social work, health care administration, tourism, the hospitality industry).
 - Acquiring a competitive advantage in being able to include international study and/or work experience on one's CV. With this in mind, a few participants added that they chose countries where professional and academic standards are similar to Canada's (e.g. countries whose degrees/certification are recognized in Canada).

A number of other factors influencing choice of a country were identified less frequently, including the following:

- The reputation of host institutions.
- Word-of-mouth/positive feedback from former participants.
- The climate and/or natural beauty of a country (e.g. Australia).
- Friends/acquaintances applied to go to a country, increasing the possibility of going somewhere where one might know people.
- The costs associated with certain destinations (i.e. choosing a less expensive destination).
- The possibility of a longer stay (e.g. choosing a country where one can stay for twelve months instead of three).
- Few/fewer people applying for a particular country, resulting in a better chance of being accepted.
- Limited options/possibilities in terms of partnership programs (e.g. institution offers limited options in terms of study/work abroad opportunities and/or transferability of credits).

- A desire to improve language skills/learn a language (e.g. francophone students wanting to improve their knowledge of English).
- Parents living in the country in question/family connections.
- A desire for a different/uncommon experience.

As noted already, some participants explained that they had no choice, and as a result their choice of a country was determined for them.

Non-participants:

Students wishing to study/work abroad interested in same locations as participants, for similar reasons

All non-participants expressed at least moderate interest in taking part in a study and/or work abroad program, and most indicated that they are very interested in such an opportunity. While most expressed a desire to study abroad, some expressed the desire to work abroad. Some non-participants volunteered that their level of interest has diminished to some extent as a result of the pandemic, but not to the point of no longer being interested in taking part.

Like program participants, most students interested in studying or working abroad expressed a desire to go to a country in western Europe, relatively few expressing interest in other areas. The complete list of countries to which participants went and that non-participants are interested in going to can be found in the [Appendix: Travel Destinations](#). Non-participants were also similar to participants in terms of factors affecting or influencing their choice of a country in which to study and/or work (see above).

Nearly all non-participants say their institution offers an opportunity to study/work abroad

Virtually all non-participants said that their post-secondary institution offers students the opportunity to study/work abroad, but a couple specified that their institution does not offer such opportunities in their specific program. A couple said that they are unsure whether their institution offers such opportunities because they have been unable to find such information to date.

Familiarity with the study/work abroad program offered through their post-secondary institution tends to be relatively limited, ranging for the most part from basic awareness that the program exists to awareness of certain basic facts, including the following:

- Participants pay Canadian tuition fees at their host institutions not international tuition fees.
- Applicants must maintain a certain grade point average in order to qualify for the program.
- Financial assistance is available.
- Applicants are responsible for finding courses that transfer for credit and finding lodgings.
- Participants need to obtain a travel VISA.
- Costs can vary depending on the location.
- It is important to understand what is offered when (e.g. co-op opportunities are not offered until the second year).
- The institution offers a list of its international partners.
- The options/opportunities can vary by program of study.
- The duration of the program can range from one semester to a full year.
- There are deadlines for application submissions.

A few indicated that they are very familiar with the application process, having applied for the program in the past, while a few others said they are quite familiar with the program, having done extensive online research about it.

Non-participants had investigated opportunities, at least to some extent

Most non-participants indicated that they have taken at least some kind of action in relation to possible participation in a study or work abroad program. This includes the following:

- Speaking with an academic advisor or program coordinator to explore options given one's degree program (e.g. co-op opportunity, internship, practicum) and/or academic requirements.
- Exploring their institution's study/work abroad program website to look for information such as countries they can travel to, academic requirements, legal requirements (e.g. VISAs, passports, application forms).
- Picking up basic information about the program at a kiosk/booth.
- Taking part in an information session or looking for scheduled information sessions.
- Signing up for email updates/newsletter about the program.
- Speaking to former participants.
- Speaking with foreign exchange students in their institution about their experience.
- Writing a draft essay on reasons for wanting to take part in the program (required for application).
- Exploring the website of certain host institutions.
- Sending an email to the program/study abroad office for more information.
- Contacting student services for assistance finding transferable courses.
- Exploring co-op possibilities/opportunities with international partner institutions.
- Visiting Government of Canada websites for information about travel requirements and advisories.
- Exploring travel/tourism websites and reading blogs to collect general information about travelling/working abroad.

A few non-participants indicated that they have not taken any action or further action because the program is on hold as a result of COVID-19.

2. Considerations and Challenges Related to Study/Work Abroad

This section includes feedback from participants and non-participants on issues informing their decision-making regarding participating in a study/work abroad program.

Outreach activities and word-of-mouth – main source of awareness of study/work abroad programs

Program participants first learned or found out about the opportunity to study/work abroad in various ways, but they were more likely to have received initial information at or through their post-secondary institution than to have actively sought it out themselves upon arrival. Those who received such information as opposed to actively seeking it typically obtained it through an outreach/communications event, or through word of mouth.

Routinely identified **outreach/communications events** included the following:

- A first-year/freshman information/orientation session.
- A kiosk or booth during a school fair/international fair.
- Posters/advertising in common areas or on the institution's website.
- Social media channels.
- Unsolicited emails and/or newsletters from their institution.
- In-class presentations by program representatives and/or former participants.

Routinely identified sources by way of **word of mouth** included the following:

- Encounters with former program participants.
- Friends, classmates, acquaintances.
- Staff/personnel (e.g. professors, academic advisors, co-op program coordinators) informing students about such opportunities and/or actively encouraging them to apply.
- Foreign exchange students.

Some participants said they first became aware of the program through exploring/browsing their institution's website in a general way (i.e. they were not looking for information about study or work abroad opportunities).

Participants who actively sought out such information explained that they knew about the existence of such programs prior to arriving at their institution. These students became aware of such opportunities because of institutional recruitment efforts in their high school or because of an older sibling or acquaintance who had taken part. As a result, they began searching for such information once they arrived at their institution.

Students identified a number of reasons for wanting to take part in a program

The opportunity to travel abroad was most often identified as the main factor or a key factor motivating students to want to take part in study/work abroad programs. Students often used expressions like 'a great opportunity', 'a unique opportunity', 'the opportunity of a lifetime', and 'a once in a lifetime opportunity' to describe it. Variations on this theme included the following:

- The opportunity to travel within the country in which the host institution is situated.
- The opportunity to travel to surrounding regions/countries.

- The opportunity to travel at a period in one's life when one is able to take advantage of it (e.g. when one is young, or before commitments and responsibilities such as a full-time job and a family).
- The opportunity to travel while studying and/or travel while working.
- The opportunity to travel in a 'safe', 'structured', 'supervised' environment (e.g. through an international study program, with housing/amenities provided at a host institution, accompanied by a faculty member from one's post-secondary institution).

In addition to travel, program participants and those interested in a study/work abroad program collectively identified a variety of other reasons to explain their interest in such a program, with many identifying more than one motivating factor. Routinely identified motivating factors included the following:

- *The opportunity to study abroad:* Another frequently identified motivating factor concerned the opportunities/advantages afforded by or linked to studying abroad. Variations on this theme included the following:
 - The opportunity to experience a new learning environment and acquire a broader perspective in one's field of study (e.g. getting a different perspective on similar issues).
 - The opportunity to study abroad while paying domestic tuition fees.
 - The opportunity to have international study credited to one's degree.
- *The opportunity to experience life away from home:* Students frequently identified the opportunity to experience life away from home as a motivating factor, often using the expression 'stepping out of their comfort zone' to describe this. It was sometimes observed that the study/work abroad program provides a safe/secure environment in which to do this.
- *The opportunity to develop life skills:* While this was sometimes associated with experiencing life away from home, the opportunity to develop life skills was often identified independently as a motivating factor. Routinely identified life skills included independence, initiative, self-confidence, social skills, and the ability to adapt to a new setting.
- *Career-related interests:* A number of students identified career-related factors as motivating their interest in such programs. Examples included the following:
 - These programs provide an opportunity to combine work and study in an area of career interest.
 - International experience can enhance employability (e.g. by learning new techniques/acquiring skills/gaining work experience).
 - International experience looks good on a CV and can give one a competitive advantage in the domestic and/or international job market.
 - These programs provide an opportunity to acquire or deepen understanding of a region of the world, with an eye on potential future work/employment opportunities.

Other motivating factors included being persuaded by a friend or professor/academic advisor to apply, wanting an opportunity to improve language skills, and exploring graduate studies opportunities. Regarding graduate studies, the point here was that studying abroad provides an opportunity to explore study options/opportunities in another country, and international study experience looks good on an application for graduate work.

Perceived benefits of participating in a study/work abroad program are similar to motivating factors

Participants and non-participants routinely identified a variety of benefits they hoped or expected to derive from being involved in a work or study abroad program. Not surprisingly, the benefits identified were similar to, or related to, the factors that motivated them to want to take part in such a program. These benefits included the following:

- *Life skills development:* Routinely identified life skills students hoped to develop or improve as a result of participating in a study/work abroad program included independence, initiative, self-confidence, learning to work with/interact with people cross-culturally, and the ability to integrate into a new setting. Some students spoke more generally about maturing and becoming more responsible as benefits they hoped to derive from such an experience.
- *Better self-understanding:* As noted earlier, students frequently spoke about ‘stepping out of their comfort zone’ as a factor motivating them to want to take part in such a program. Linked to this, they often identified a better understanding of themselves as a benefit they hoped to derive from a study/work abroad opportunity. Examples included understanding their strengths and weaknesses, and testing themselves in terms of how they cope with or adapt to new circumstances/challenges.
- *Personal growth/widening horizons:* Sometimes associated with a better self-understanding, but often identified separately, students often spoke about personal growth and/or widening their horizons as benefits they hoped to derive from a study/work abroad program. Examples included discovering new interests, acquiring a new perspective on things, and better inter-cultural understanding.
- *Better/deeper understanding of one’s field of study or work:* Improving knowledge of their field of study was often identified as a potential benefit. Participating in a study/work abroad program would hopefully contribute to this by giving them study/work experience in a different setting, as well as exposing them to new/different issues and/or a different perspective on similar issues.
- *Career-related benefits:* Given that career-related interests were a motivating factor for many students, it is not surprising that many identified career-related advantages as a benefit they hoped to derive from this type of international experience. Specific benefits in this regard included the following:
 - Making potential connections/networking for work and/or further study.
 - Acquiring or improving employment-related skills and knowledge (e.g. language skills, deeper understanding of another country/region/culture with an eye on enhancing employability and/or potential work/business opportunities).
 - Strengthening one’s CV/enhancing employability through the ability to reference international experience. In this regard, it was observed that an undergraduate degree has become a bare minimum to employability so that the ability to reference international experience can give one a competitive advantage.

While it may be self-evident, it is worth emphasizing that these benefits, and particularly the first three, were routinely associated with travel abroad. In other words, the experience of travel was the ‘sine qua non’ or necessary condition for the realization of these benefits.

A number of factors informed students' decision-making

Not surprisingly, participants and non-participants considered a variety of factors when thinking about the possibility of studying and/or working abroad. In describing the thought process that informed their decision to apply or not for the program, they routinely focused on the following types of considerations and associated questions:

- **Program-related considerations:** Program-related considerations ranged from consideration of basic issues, such as what is available through one's institution, to logistical considerations related to the course of study at home, to weighing potential advantages and disadvantages of participation on one's course of study.
 - Considering options/possibilities (e.g. what is available in one's program, in what years, in what countries): Questions generated by such considerations included the following: where can I realistically apply given that I want to be able to get by using English?; how long can I/should I go abroad?; which courses are for credit and do they interest me?; and should I apply now or wait? (e.g. are there more or fewer options in certain years, is this my only/last opportunity?).
 - Logistical considerations related to one's course of study at home: The key consideration in this regard was coordinating study abroad with one's course of study at home. Questions generated by such considerations included the following: do the schedules/semesters at home and abroad line up?; how should one coordinate courses at home and abroad? (e.g. how many courses should one take abroad, and should one take electives or core courses?); and is it possible to coordinate study at home with study abroad if one is doing a double-major?
 - Weighing potential advantages and disadvantages of participation on one's course of study: The main consideration in this regard was whether participation in the program would delay graduation or set one back in terms of falling behind in one's course of study. The concern over falling behind was articulated by college students for whom taking part in the program might require taking time off from school (e.g. a two-week period during a semester of study at their institution).
- **Career-related considerations:** Career-related considerations typically focused on the potential benefits resulting from a study/work abroad program. Questions generated by such considerations included the following: what options/opportunities are most likely to be advantageous/beneficial in terms of advancing my career or employment opportunities?; which opportunities are available in countries whose professional degrees/certifications are recognized in Canada?; how does a co-op placement in Canada compare to a co-op placement abroad in terms of enhancing employability; and should I consider courses that will appear on a transcript as 'pass/fail' instead of as a grade?
- **Financial considerations:** Financial considerations were routinely top-of-mind among the students who participated in the research. Such considerations typically took two forms:
 - Reflections on program costs: These included reflections on the overall cost of participation in the program; reflection on the possibilities and limits of participation given one's financial situation (e.g. can I realistically afford to go and/or can I realistically go where I would like to go?, will I be able to travel once there?); consideration of financing options (e.g. to what extent will my personal savings cover expenses?); am I eligible for financial assistance and if so how much?; and considerations related to budgeting (e.g. how to plan/prepare to meet the costs associated with my destination of choice?).
 - Reflections on loss of income resulting from participation in the program: This involved cost/benefit considerations—specifically, balancing the advantages of participation against the

financial disadvantages resulting from loss of income and/or employment (e.g. having to leave work/a job or being unable to take on a summer job). One variation on such considerations involved weighing the advantages of an unpaid internship abroad against the advantages of a paid internship in Canada.

- *Program-related logistics/administrative considerations:* These types of considerations focused on issues related to the application process ('getting one's ducks in a row' in the words of one participant). This typically included reflections related to the following:
 - What do I need to do and when? (e.g. application requirements and deadlines, VISA applications, finding courses, looking for lodgings).
 - The time and effort to be invested in the application process (and in some instances whether the investment is worth it).
 - The kind of help/assistance/support available in terms of guiding one through the application process.
 - Is my GPA high enough to secure admission to the study abroad program?
- *Considerations related to personal relationships/responsibilities:* These types of considerations mainly took two basic forms:
 - Concerns or apprehensions about being away from family members and/or partners for an extended period of time: This usually included concerns about the adverse effect participation in the program might have on a relationship, and apprehensions about what might happen to family members (e.g. elderly parents, grandparents) during one's absence.
 - Arrangements related to domestic issues/responsibilities: This usually involved having to consider/contemplate arrangements on the domestic front during one's absence. Examples included arrangements related to one's place of residence (e.g. subletting an apartment, breaking a lease), and provisions for care (i.e. arranging for pet care, finding a caregiver for a family member). Related to finding a caregiver were considerations about how long one could realistically spend abroad given one's role as a primary caregiver. One variation on the theme of domestic arrangements involved consideration of whether or not family members (i.e. a spouse and children) could realistically accompany a student abroad.

On occasion such considerations took the form of apprehensions regarding potential parental disapproval of participation in the program.

- *Considerations related to health:* These types of considerations were most likely to be identified by students with a disability, and they related mainly to the issue of mental health in general and coping with anxiety in particular. They usually manifested themselves as concerns about loneliness, home sickness, culture shock, fear of failing/doing poorly, and questions about the extent to which supports would be in place to deal with these issues. In a few instances, considerations related to health concerned the extent to which host institutions would have proper accommodations in place for persons with a physical disability.
- *Considerations related to personal safety/security:* This was a limited concern that expressed itself most often as anxiety about the unknown/unforeseeable (e.g. what if I get sick?; what if something goes wrong?) That said, in a few instances it presented itself as concern over personal safety. This included concern as a member of the LGBTQ community in a place where members of this community's rights are not recognized, concern over political protests taking place in one's destination of choice, and concerns over crime rates in various locations.

Uniqueness of opportunity and financial resources – key factors facilitating decision-making process

Program participants collectively identified a variety of factors facilitating their decision-making process or making it easier, but two factors were identified most often. One was the unique opportunity offered by such a program. As noted earlier, among the main factors motivating students to want to take part in a study/work abroad program were the unique opportunities it afforded, including the opportunity to travel abroad, to study abroad (while paying domestic fees), to experience life away from home, to develop life skills, and potential career-related advantages.

Students who participated in study/work abroad programs often emphasized these same things as factors facilitating their decision-making process. The other factor was having (or the prospect of having) sufficient financial resources (including receipt of financial aid) to defray the costs associated with participating in the program. Others routinely identified ‘facilitators’ included the following:

- *Support/assistance from their post-secondary institution and/or host institution:* This included such things as the following:
 - well organized/user-friendly/informative websites.
 - easy/relatively easy application process and assistance/support during the application process.
 - assistance/orientation when looking for lodging/housing.
 - the prospect of training/information sessions prior to departure.

A few participants with a disability said that their decision-making process was facilitated by reassurances received from the host institution regarding accommodations, while another said that the decision-making process was facilitated by having been assigned a designated contact person in his/her institution’s study abroad office and at the host institution.

- *Prospect of studying/working abroad where English is spoken/understood:* As noted earlier, many students said that their choice of a country to study/work in was influenced by a desire to study and/or work in a country similar to Canada in terms of culture and/or language. Perhaps not surprisingly, therefore, many also identified the prospect of being able to work/study in a country where English is spoken or understood as a factor facilitating their decision-making process.
- *Prospect/possibility of being accompanied by friends/colleagues:* The prospect or possibility that they would be studying or working abroad with friends or acquaintances from their post-secondary institution was a factor facilitating the decision-making process of a number of program participants. In the case of some college students, a facilitating factor was the fact that they would be accompanied by a professor from their institution.
- *Speaking with/hearing from previous participants:* Many participants said that one of the factors facilitating their decision-making process was the experience of talking with previous program participants who often spoke positively of their own experience and could answer questions. The previous participant in question was sometimes a sibling, friend, or acquaintance.

Facilitators in the decision-making process identified by smaller numbers of participants included previous experience travelling abroad, including having travelled to the country in question before; meeting students from host institutions; speaking with foreign students studying at their post-secondary institution; understanding/speaking the language of the country where they would be studying/working; and the schedule/timing of program coordinating well with the study schedule/semester system at their post-secondary institution (e.g. studying abroad during the summer term, trip abroad taking place during an inter-session break at college).

Finances, administrative issues, culture shock/barriers – main factors complicating decision-making

Barriers, challenges, or difficulties complicating program participants' decision-making process tended to be the mirror or inverse image of those factors that facilitated the process. This included:

- **Financial factors:** Just as one of the main facilitators was sufficient financial resources, the most frequently identified complicating factor involved financial considerations resulting from limited resources, financial constraints, loss of income, and uncertainty regarding financial aid (i.e. whether they would qualify for it and when they would receive it).
- **Administrative challenges:** In a similar way, just as institutional support/assistance was a frequently identified facilitator in the decision-making process, one of the most frequently identified 'complicators' in the decision-making process involved the complexity of the administrative and logistical requirements, which were sometimes compounded by a perceived lack of institutional support. Such complexities were routinely associated with three specific issues: finding/choosing courses at the host institution; applying for a VISA; and finding housing abroad, with participants routinely observing that they had to deal with these issues on their own or with little assistance. Specific challenges/complications associated with each included the following:
 - **Finding/choosing courses at the host institution:** This included difficulty finding information about courses; lack of clarity/missing details about transferable courses (e.g. does a course transfer for credit or not?; does a course register on the transcript as a grade or as 'pass/fail'?); out-of-date information about equivalent/transferable courses; and lack of guidance in terms of course choice (e.g. how many courses to take/what is manageable, whether to take electives and/or core courses).
 - **Applying for a VISA:** This included lack of clarity about timelines (i.e. not knowing how long the process would take and consequently not knowing how long in advance to apply), having to resubmit an application, delays in submitting an application because of delays in confirmation of successful application from institution, and having to apply out of province.
 - **Finding housing abroad:** This included not being sure where to look, difficulty assessing/choosing a place from abroad (i.e. sight unseen), lack of details regarding accommodations (e.g. what is provided/included), and difficulty finding lodgings in the vicinity of the host institution.
- **Apprehensions about culture shock/cultural barriers:** A number of program participants identified concern or anxiety about culture shock or encountering cultural barriers as a complicating factor in their decision-making process. This was routinely associated with a potential language barrier and uncertainty about the extent to which they would be able to get by speaking English.

Complicators in the decision-making process identified by smaller numbers of program participants included the following:

- No experience travelling abroad, including making travel arrangements. This manifested itself as general anxiety over what one has not done before, and speculation about what might go wrong.
- Apprehensions about being away from home for an extended period of time. Although this was mentioned by participants from various audiences it tended to be emphasized more by Indigenous participants, with some explaining that this was the first time they were away from home for an extended period.
- Being the first person/one of the few in one's institution to take part in the program or applying to a specific host institution, and therefore the inability to interact with previous participants and ask them questions. This was also identified mainly by Indigenous participants.

- Parents expressing apprehensions about travel abroad for an extended period of time.

Program participants were usually able to adequately address/resolve problems/complications related to the application process. The one that was most frequently addressed, at least to some extent, was financial and it was addressed through receipt of some form of financial assistance.

Views of non-participants regarding ‘pros’ and ‘cons’ of applying for a study/work abroad program are varied

For their part, non-participants were asked which considerations or factors have been most influential in terms of encouraging them to consider applying for a study/work abroad, and which have been most influential in terms of discouraging or dissuading them from applying.

In terms of factors most influential when it came to encouraging them to consider applying for a study/work abroad, non-participants’ views mirrored those of program participants and particularly in two respects. Non-participants were similarly likely to emphasize the uniqueness of the opportunity afforded by such programs, and for reasons similar to those given by program participants (discussed above). As well, like program participants, they frequently identified the possibility of financial assistance/funding opportunities as influential in terms of encouraging them to consider applying for a study/work abroad.

In terms of factors most influential in discouraging them to consider applying for a study/work abroad program, non-participants’ views also mirrored those of program participants in some key respects. Like program participants, they frequently identified financial considerations, though they tended to stress it more than participants as well as place more emphasis on loss of income or having to leave/quit work as a ‘dissuading’ factor. They also mirrored program participants in identifying concern or anxiety about culture shock or encountering cultural barriers as a ‘dissuading’ factor. Finally, like program participants, some non-participants identified the application process as a ‘dissuading’ factor (and for similar reasons).

However, non-participants also differed from participants in some key respects. One was by placing more influence on domestic issues as ‘dissuading’ factors. This included being discouraged by parents over security concerns, family-related responsibilities in terms of caregiving, and the need to make accommodations abroad for a spouse and children. Additional ways in which non-participants differed from participants was in identifying low marks/grades and lack of options for study/work abroad as ‘dissuading’ factors. Regarding the latter, it was sometimes observed that the only opportunities, or most of those available, were in the first year/freshman year. Finally, and not surprisingly, COVID-19 was identified exclusively by non-participants as a dissuading factor. This is discussed below, in the section titled [Potential Barriers](#).

Many non-participants said they made inquiries about supports or resources available to address challenges, particularly inquiries about financial assistance and the application process. Typically, they obtained information about possible sources of financial assistance/funding options. Some of those who did not look for information explained that they did not do so because the program is on hold because of the pandemic, or because they have not fully committed to applying yet. Some others said they have not done so because they have challenges that cannot be addressed (i.e. a low GPA, lack of options/limited possibilities, inability to take spouse and children abroad).

A variety of information/tools/resources consulted as part of decision-making process

Program participants and non-participants identified a variety of sources consulted as part of their decision-making process, but they relied primarily on information/resources provided by their own post-secondary institution. The most frequently identified institution-based source of information/resources was their institution's website, or the website of the international study/study abroad program. In addition to the institution's website, participants routinely identified two other institution-based sources of information:

- *Specific individuals within their institution:* This included the study abroad coordinator/program director or a representative of that office, faculty/program coordinators/supervisors, academic advisors, and professors/instructors (including professors who would be accompanying students in the case of college programs).
- *Outreach activities/information sessions:* This included information packets/program brochures obtained at an information fair, information sessions about the study/work abroad program (in-person or online), and information from previous participants included in experience reports, travel blogs, and testimonials.

Frequently identified resources/sources of information outside participants' post-secondary institution included the following:

- *The website of the host institution* (often accessed through a link provided by the student's post-secondary institution).
- *Previous participants with whom they have a personal connection* (e.g. a sibling, friend, acquaintance).
- *Google/internet search engine*, typically used to find information related to travel in general and/or their destination of choice (e.g. cost of living information, travel-related information, information about air fares, information about how to budget).
- *Government of Canada websites* (unspecified), typically for information related to passports, VISAs, and travel advice/advisories.

Other sources of information consulted as part of the decision-making process included parents, relatives living in the destinations of choice, students and professors from host institutions, and international exchange students at their post-secondary institution. Some Indigenous participants said that they consulted their band councils for information about possible funding.

Non-participants who consulted or spoke with individuals said the discussions tended to focus on the following: the pros and cons of participating in the program, the requirements/timelines/deadlines, financing/costs, and potential options/possibilities available through their institutions.

Most feel adequately informed about the study/work abroad program

Most students felt that their institution has provided or given them sufficient information/tools/resources about the study/work abroad program, but program participants were more likely to say this, or to state it in an unqualified way, than non-participants. Non-participants were not necessarily more critical in this regard, but they were more likely to be uncertain or qualified in their assessment, sometimes noting that they have not yet sought much information or committed

themselves fully into looking into this to judge properly. In this respect, it is worth keeping in mind that program participants were able to answer this question retrospectively (i.e. with the benefit of hindsight and after having been through the entire process from start to finish).

Specific reasons given to explain satisfaction in this regard included the quality of the information, the ease of access to the information, and the assistance/guidance/orientation provided by the information. Examples of reasons why students were satisfied are provided below. Examples preceded by an asterisk (*) were identified exclusively by program participants.

- Clear, comprehensive, detailed, up-to-date information on the institution's website and/or the website of host institutions.
- Well organized, user-friendly websites (post-secondary institution and host institution).
- Detailed information about timelines/deadlines, application requirements, and financial assistance.
- Prompt/automatic responses/replies to emails/queries.
- Access to former participants who could answer questions and provide relevant information based on their experience in the program.
- Guidance/assistance throughout the process (e.g. applying for a passport, applying for a VISA, finding lodgings), including support/guidance from faculty members (e.g. academic supervisor).
- Information offered proactively (e.g. travel advice, budgeting).
- *Receipt of a comprehensive checklist to help guide applicants through the application process.
- *Prompt confirmation of key steps in the application process (i.e. application approval, confirmation of financial aid).
- *Receiving a list of all students travelling to the same host institution (described as a way to acquaint participants with one another and facilitate information exchange between them).
- *Pre-departure workshops/seminars/orientation sessions (often facilitated by former participants and sometimes including representatives from host institutions).
- *Required/mandatory meeting with study abroad office representative/program director.
- *Receipt of a pre-departure kit. The types of things included in this kind of kit were important contacts, information on culture shock, and travel tips (e.g. protecting valuables), among others.

Those who felt that they were not/are not sufficiently informed about the study/work abroad program offered through their post-secondary institution explained why by referring to difficulty finding/getting information, lack of guidance/assistance, and missing, incorrect, vague, or conflicting information. Some observed that they were sufficiently informed, but that it was not easy to find what they needed or that it took time to find it/get it. Examples of reasons why students were dissatisfied are provided below.

- Being left to oneself/lack of guidance/orientation, particularly concerning finding lodgings and finding courses, but also regarding VISA applications and co-op positions.
- Not being proactive with information/guidance (e.g. not being informed about difficulty exchanging foreign currency in host country).
- Lack of clarity regarding transfer of credits/creditable courses.
- Lack of details on how courses are taught at the host institution/course requirements.

- Difficulty finding information on course timetables.
- Missing/not receiving important information about a language requirement.
- Conflicting information between post-secondary institution and host institution regarding application deadlines/timelines.
- Slowness/tardiness in replying to queries and delays in receiving confirmation (e.g. not hearing about financial aid and acceptance into a residence until just prior to departure).
- Information trickling off in later years (i.e. information about the program is provided mainly in first year).
- Lack of information-sharing between institution's campuses (i.e. attending a smaller campus of an institution whose main campus seems to be the focus of information/awareness-raising about the program).

Widespread awareness of financial support

General awareness of financial aid was widespread among participants and non-participants. Only a relatively small number of students expressed lack of awareness about this, and they were more likely to be non-participants. Specific things known about financial support included the following: the amounts available; what is covered (e.g. air fare); details regarding the application process (e.g. how to apply, deadlines); the various types of financial support (e.g. scholarships, bursaries); the conditions/eligibility criteria (e.g. maintaining a minimum GPA, proof of financial need); and the different sources (e.g. post-secondary institutions, Government of Canada, commonwealth scholarships).

Pre-departure support mentioned by many when asked about other types of supports

Program participants were much more likely than non-participants to express awareness of additional (i.e. non-financial) supports available to participants in study/work abroad programs. Types of support identified most often concerned some form of pre-departure support. The most frequently identified type of support was a pre-departure information/training session, sometimes described as mandatory. Additional types of pre-departure support identified less frequently, all identified by program participants, included the following:

- Pre-departure psychological support.
- An 'acclimatization' tool kit which includes coping strategies.
- Training session on cultural issues/cultural awareness.
- An online module on how to prepare for travel abroad.
- Meetings with the international program coordinator (described by a few as mandatory)
- Access to counsellors.

Some program participants and non-participants identified more informal or less official sources of support including academic advisors, professors, and former participants.

Some program participants also identified resources/services/information provided by or through their institution, including the following:

- Emergency contact numbers.

- Access/link to the Government of Canada *Registration of Canadians Abroad* service.
- Assistance finding lodgings.
- Travel insurance assistance provided by/through the institution (in this case a university).

One non-institutional resource identified was the Canadian Federation of Students' Students Working Abroad Program (SWAP).

Financial assistance – main pre-requisite needed to allow non-participants to take part in program

Non-participants collectively identified a variety of things that would have to be in place or available to them in terms of supports, resources or tools that would realistically allow them to take part in such a program. That said, the single most frequently identified type of support was financial support/aid. Other frequently identified types of supports/tools/resources included the following:

- Guidance/assistance throughout the application process, including assistance finding courses, applying for VISAs and finding lodgings.
- Information sessions organized by their institution, with a focus on providing a full breakdown of costs, identifying all potential sources of financial assistance, and specifying timelines well in advance so as to facilitate planning.
- Fulsome pre-departure sessions with a focus on dealing with problems adapting/integrating into a new setting (e.g. cultural barriers/culture shock, anxiety, loneliness).
- Contacts abroad in case of emergencies.
- Good support systems on location/in host institution, including access to mental health services.

Less frequently identified supports, resources or tools that would realistically allow non-participants to take part in such a program included the following:

- More options after the first year of study.
- Support for students with low GPAs, including guidance on how to improve their grades so they can qualify for study/work abroad programs.
- The ability to work abroad while studying (i.e. earn an income).
- Ensuring that study abroad sessions do not interfere with work/a job at home.
- Finding a caregiver for a family member, to stand-in for them during their absence.
- The ability to take family members (i.e. spouse and children) on the study/work abroad program.

3. Program Experience

This section reports on issues related to participants' experience studying and/or working abroad, augmented by feedback that non-participants received from people who have taken part in such a program.

Overall positive impressions of study/work abroad experience

All those who took part in a study/work abroad program described the overall experience as positive or very positive, and non-participants described similar overall assessments from people they know who have taken part in such programs. Not surprisingly, participants sometimes qualified their positive assessments by identifying things they needed to adapt to or adjust to (see details below), but overall their experience met or exceeded their expectations, some describing the experience as life changing.

Travel and experience top list of positive aspects of experience

Program participants identified a number of positive aspects of their experience abroad (i.e. what they liked), but the following were identified most often: the ability/opportunity to travel; the experience of a new/different culture and learning more about the culture; discovering new interests; and meeting people/making friends/acquaintances.

Other routinely identified positive aspects of the experience abroad included the following:

- Numerous events/outings and/or opportunities to meet people.
- The study program (e.g. new learning, exploration of issues from a different perspective/in comparative context).
- Opportunities to network/establish connections/make contacts.
- Supports/orientation/guidance provided/available through host institution.
- The organization/running of the program in general (e.g. well organized/well structured).
- A good work experience (e.g. good work conditions, good pay, time-off, sick days, collegial work environment).

Additional things participants liked about their experience abroad included the following:

- Learning more about oneself/personal growth/development of life skills.
- The general way of life/laid back attitude in the country/location in question.
- Acquiring a new perspective on things in general.
- The weather and/or natural beauty of the country/region.
- The lower cost of living in the country in question.

In response to this question, some participants focused on benefits they derived as a result of the experience rather than on things they liked during the experience itself. This included study-related benefits (i.e. the experience contributing to getting accepted into a study program in Canada) and career-related benefits (i.e. transferable skills, work experience abroad, potential job opportunity abroad, and the experience contributing to the securing of job in Canada).

Homesickness and culture shock top list of negative aspects of experience abroad

Participants collectively identified a number of things they disliked about their experience abroad, but the only ones identified with any frequency were loneliness/home sickness (e.g. not meeting people, being the only person from one's institution, missing friends, family, partners), and some culture shock/difficulty integrating adapting to a new environment, in part because of a language barrier. However, participants who identified these often added that they were things they experienced mainly at the beginning of their stay abroad, and gradually got over or learned to cope with.

Other negative aspects of the experience were identified by individual participants or no more than a small number. These covered a range of things which are organized thematically to facilitate their review.

Program-related issues:

- A limited selection of courses in English.
- The course load being too challenging
- Course work not being challenging enough.
- Classes beginning too early in the morning.
- The travel itinerary being too unstructured/not focused enough on skills acquisition.
- Travel fatigue (i.e. travel from city to city as part of the program losing its appeal over time).
- Not obtaining the specific internship placement desired.

Residence/lodging-related issues:

- The residence being far from the institution.
- Having to stay in a student residence.
- Having a messy roommate.
- Having to purchase merchandise/supplies for a relatively short period of time (e.g. bed sheets).

Difficult/bad/negative experiences:

- Feeling unsafe/insecure at times (e.g. being followed, having to walk through unsafe areas).
- Being robbed.
- Being hospitalized as a result of an accident.
- Dislike of the work culture in Japan.
- Experiencing sexual assault.
- The low value of the Canadian dollar, resulting in increased cost of living.
- Having to return early because of pandemic, including having to complete the program online.

Homesickness and culture shock – main challenges, difficulties, barriers encountered

Program participants often re-emphasized things about their experience they did not like when asked more specifically if they encountered or experienced any challenges, difficulties, or barriers during their study/work abroad opportunity. Here again, the only challenges identified with any frequency involved dealing with loneliness and culture shock/difficulty integrating adapting to a new environment. Such challenges also tended to be the ones identified by non-participants on the basis of feedback received from friends/acquaintances who took part in a program. Some students with a disability observed that challenges, such as loneliness and culture shock, can be more difficult for persons with a mental health condition because the anxiety caused by loneliness and culture shock can exacerbate their condition.

All other specific challenges, difficulties, or barriers were identified by individual program participants or no more than a few participants/non-participants and included the following:

- Difficulty meeting people.
- Having to live in a student residence again.
- Having to find new lodgings as a result of a fire.
- Having to work from residence in Japan as a result of COVID-19.
- Suffering an injury and being hospitalized.
- The need to budget.
- Difficulty opening a bank account and/or exchanging money.
- Having to be vigilant/careful regarding food and water consumption.
- Occasionally being followed at night.
- Limited academic resources at the host institution as a result of it being a very small institution.
- Completing the program online at home as a result of the pandemic.
- Problems with a work VISA.
- Problems with the transfer of credits (e.g. post-secondary institution losing credit transfer sheet, argument over transferability of credits for certain courses).

For the most part, people were able to address these challenges and/or resolve them, often by coping with them or getting used to them. This was typically the case, for example, when dealing with loneliness and culture shock (e.g. eventually getting over it and/or developing coping strategies). A few individual participants said that their problem was either not addressed adequately or only addressed with difficulty or after their return to Canada. These included the following:

- An incident of sexual assault (described as not resolved and not properly addressed/investigated at the time).
- An incident of robbery (described as not properly addressed because the host institution seemed more preoccupied with issues of liability than with the stress/anxiety of those robbed).
- An incident of hospitalization in which there was a requirement to pay for treatment up-front (ultimately resolved but only after the return to Canada).
- Non-recognition of transferable credits by the home institution (ultimately resolved but only after much effort and argument).

Almost everyone received funding and described it as ‘critical’ and/or ‘helpful’

Nearly all program participants said they received some form of financial assistance through the program as part of their study/work abroad experience. Many of those who received financial assistance described its impact as crucial, observing that they would not have taken part in the program without it, or would have taken part but not in their place of choice which would have been too expensive (e.g. London).

A number of others described the impact as helpful or very helpful. Examples of how financial assistance helped included the ability to travel while abroad, the ability to live ‘beyond hand to mouth’, and the ability to cope with the high cost of living (compounded at times by the lower value of the Canadian dollar). A small number described the impact of the financial assistance they received as limited, either

because the amount was described as relatively small, or because they had saved up in anticipation of taking part in the program and financed it mainly out of their own resources.

Most of those who did not receive financial assistance said having it would have helped by allowing them to travel more/take advantage of their opportunity abroad or would have afforded them more peace of mind regarding their financial situation. On the other hand, a couple said it would not have made a big difference to them: one because of sufficient personal savings, and the other because he/she was receiving an income through a paid internship.

Widespread awareness of additional supports abroad

Nearly all program participants said they were aware of additional support available to them as part of their experience abroad. Those identified most frequently related to mental/psychological well being, and they included periodic check-ins with a representative of the home institution, and counselling services available in the host institution. Most other types of support identified were ones provided through the host institution and designed to help students acclimatize/integrate into their surroundings. This included orientation/information sessions (often upon arrival), periodic/scheduled social events/outings/trips, a 'buddy' program designed to help international students meet people, and access to a local guide. In one instance, the host institution had an elder in residence as a potential resource for Indigenous participants.

Additional resources identified by individuals or no more than a few participants included host families, an app for medical assistance, access to a health centre, networking opportunities provided through the European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) program, Canadian consular services contacts, emergency contact numbers, the international student community, and staff/professors at the host institution. One participant identified relatives in the host city as a form of support, while another identified other Canadian employees in the company in which he/she was working.

Participants were most likely to use the check-in service with their post-secondary institution and 'socializing type' services provided by the host institution. Those who used these services said there were no barriers to accessing them, and usually described them as useful/helpful, particularly as regards coping with loneliness, home sickness, and culture shock. One participant who used counselling services provided by the host institution described them as not very helpful because the counsellor did not know how to relate and did not provide any helpful advice. Another participant involved in a co-op placement stopped using the weekly check-in with the host institution, explaining that they were not particularly helpful. A few participants who stayed with host families described their experience as enjoyable, adding that this option was less expensive than staying in residence or off-campus housing.

Program participants who did not use services of which they were aware identified no barriers to doing so, usually explaining that they did not access them because they did not need them.

Most felt their program was not missing anything

Most program participants indicated there was nothing or nothing important missing from the program in which they took part. While a variety of things were mentioned, none was identified with any frequency. Organized under headings corresponding to three phases of the program, things viewed as missing included:

Pre-departure phase:

- Help/assistance applying for a VISA.
- Help/assistance finding lodgings/accommodations.
- Limited choice/options in transferable courses.

Study/work abroad phase:

- Courses not challenging enough.
- Insufficient mentoring/orientation from host institution.
- Lack of hands-on experience during travel tours to various locations.
- Insufficient check-ins from home institution (identified by an Indigenous participant)
- No transfer service for things purchased abroad.
- Insufficient number of days off from work (only 2 days off for 1 ½ months of work)
- No one else from home institution for support.

Return phase:

- No debrief on work placement after return.
- Nothing to deal with/address return culture shock.

A variety of things were identified when participants were asked to point to what they wish they had known before they went abroad or what they would do differently

With the benefit of hindsight, a number of program participants identified things they learned as a result of their experience that they wish they had known before they went abroad, or things they would do differently if they had the chance to redo the program.

Things that they wish **they had known** before included the following:

- Not to worry too much about culture shock because one eventually gets over it.
- More knowledge about the climate in their destination so as to have brought more adequate clothing.
- What to do if one gets sick abroad.
- The cost of extra luggage charged by airlines.
- What to do when an airline loses your luggage.
- More details about the schedule/amount of free time available, so as to have been better able to plan travel/trips in advance.

Things they would **do differently** if they had the chance to redo the program included the following:

- Renew their passport earlier.
- Apply for VISA earlier.
- Start looking for residence/lodging earlier.
- Learn more about the culture of the host country in advance.
- Choose a different institution in the country because the one they went to was too isolated, something that increased their travel costs.
- Choose to do elective courses instead of core courses to keep the course load lighter while abroad.
- Take a reduced course load to allow more time for travel.
- Go earlier in their degree when there are more options/possibilities.

- Take language courses in advance, which would have made it easier to make contacts/network.
- Go for full year instead of one term, given the time and effort invested in planning/logistics.
- Travel more/try to meet more people.
- Select a different housing arrangement (lived with a host family but in retrospect would have preferred his/her own place).

Advice to prospective program participants

Asked if they had any advice they would give to someone considering taking part in such a program, participants offered the following:

- Start saving money early to help finance the trip.
- Start planning early, anticipating that things will take longer than expected.
- Explore/learn about all possibilities for financial aid.
- Learn about the culture in your host country and your host city well in advance of your departure.
- Plan to go for more than one semester if possible.
- Make sure your classes transfer back (i.e. read the fine print).
- Make a budget including provisions for emergencies.
- Build up physical stamina/resilience if your program involves working outdoors.
- Doublecheck all dates and deadlines.
- Don't overpack.
- Take advantage of all opportunities/everything offered abroad.
- Make connections/get to know people as much as possible.
- Try to learn the language.
- Connect with professors abroad if interested in graduate work/research.
- Remember that you represent your institution.

Main benefit/advantage derived from taking part in program mirror benefits/facilitating factors

After discussing their experience working and/or studying abroad, program participants were asked to identify the main benefit/advantage derived from taking part in this program. Most of the main benefits participants derived from participation in the program were the same or similar to ones they hoped or expected to derive. They included the following:

- **Acquiring/improving skills:** Program participants routinely identified skills they felt they had acquired or improved as a direct result of participation in their study/work abroad program. This included independence, self-confidence, interactive/relationship skills, work-related skills (e.g. integrating into a work team, attention to detail), and budgeting skills. A few participants who said they developed budgeting skills emphasized the importance of the latter given the cumulative costs associated with the program.
- **Better self-understanding:** Many participants said they learned more about themselves through participation in the program (i.e. self-knowledge). Specific examples included the discovery of new interests, clarity/focus regarding what interests them in their current field of study, greater certainty regarding possible further study, and greater certainty/direction regarding their career path.
- **Personal growth:** Many participants felt they had grown or matured in general as a result of their study/work abroad program and the travel and life experience it afforded them. Some said the experience provided them with a new or different perspective on things in general.

- *Better/deeper understanding of field of study or work:* Many felt they had improved/enhanced their knowledge in their field of study and/or work because study abroad exposed them to new/different issues, and/or different perspective on similar issues.
- *Career-related benefits:* Career-related benefits derived from the study/work abroad experience included making contacts/networking, acquiring international work experience that makes one more marketable (e.g. deeper knowledge of a market/region/country), and the ability to list international study/work experience on one's CV, thereby acquiring a competitive advantage in terms of employment (i.e. vis-a-vis those who do not have such experience). One participant was confident that he/she obtained a job in Canada in part as a direct result of a work/study abroad program.
- *Making new friends/life-long friends.* Working or studying abroad provided an opportunity to meet people from different backgrounds.

4. Potential Barriers

This section reports on potential barriers to participating in a study or work abroad program.

Financial situation - most important potential barrier to participation in study/work abroad program

There was virtual consensus among program participants and non-participants that a person's financial situation is one of the most important potential barriers to someone taking part in a study/work abroad program. Moreover, there was a widespread impression that financial issues are the most important potential barrier (i.e. more important than other barriers). Explanations of the importance of financial issues focused on the following:

- The ability to finance the study/work abroad opportunity is the necessary condition or most basic requirement for participation (the 'foot in the door' in the words of one program participant).
- The cumulative costs associated with a study/work abroad are high, and while financial assistance is available, it only covers a portion of the costs.
- In order to fully take advantage of the experience abroad, it is necessary not only to be able to pay for the basics (e.g. round-trip ticket, food and lodgings) but also to have enough money to finance activities while abroad (e.g. travel/tourism activities, entertainment).
- The financial costs associated with a study/work abroad program extend beyond the ability to finance the trip itself, and such costs can have long-term implications/repercussions. For example,
 - participation may involve or require borrowing money/taking on debt that has to be repaid (e.g. a bank loan, a line of credit, borrowing from parents/family members).
 - participation may result in the depletion or exhaustion of savings, leaving little or no financial cushion in place. As one non-participant put it: 'I could take part in the program but at the cost of starting from zero when I get home'.
 - participation may involve forgone or lost income (see below).
 - individuals may have pre-existing financial obligations (see below).

Examples of financial barriers or obstacles someone might face when it comes to taking part in such a program included the following:

- *Costs associated with the program itself:* It was often noted that there are numerous costs directly associated with taking part in such a program and that their cumulative effect can be to render the possibility of participation very difficult not to say impossible for potential applicants. Such costs include the following:
 - Application fee.
 - Passport application (if one does not have a valid passport or its expiration date is approaching).
 - Application for a VISA (with additional costs for travel, meals, and lodgings if one is required to apply out of province).
 - Travel and medical insurance.
 - Round-trip ticket to one's destination (more expensive for far away destinations).
 - Tuition fees.
 - Room and board abroad.
 - Food and transportation.
 - New/different cellphone plan.

- Wherewithal to travel in/from host country (identified as important in order to fully take advantage of the opportunity).

It was also observed that costs during one's stay abroad can increase as a result of factors, such as the cost of living where one is studying/working (e.g. London, U.K.), the exchange rate/value of the Canadian dollar, and the distance between one's residence and the host institution (i.e. increased transportation costs). In discussing costs directly associated with the program, former participants occasionally observed that it is important that prospective participants have a clear and comprehensive understanding of such costs and learn to budget/develop a budget. Specifically:

- *Loss of income resulting from participation in the program:* In addition to costs directly associated with the study/work abroad program, students often identified loss of income resulting from participation in the program as a potential financial barrier. Examples included having to quit/take leave of a job or part-time job in order to take part in the program, missing out on a job opportunity during one's absence, inability to take on a part-time job during the summer if one is abroad during that time, and difficulty finding a part-time job if one returns from the program in mid-to-late summer. It was noted that such loss of income can be particularly serious for students with loans/debts, students who depend on work/part-time work to pay tuition, and students who may have expended all or most of their savings to defray the cost of participating in the program.
- *Pre-existing financial burdens/obligations:* In some instances, financial barriers include costs that continue to be incurred in Canada while one is abroad. Examples include rent (unless one is willing/able to give up or sublet one's unit), car payments, mortgage payments, business expenses (e.g. overhead), contributions to RRSPs and RESPs (if one has children), supporting dependents.

Variety of non-financial barriers to participation in study/work abroad program viewed as important

While students emphasized the importance of financial barriers and typically considered them the most important, they also routinely identified important non-financial potential barriers to participation in such a program. These included the following.

- Apprehensions about culture shock/cultural barriers, including concerns about studying/working in an environment where English is not understood or not the main language.
- Anxiety/fear of loneliness and concerns related to being away from home for an extended period of time/missing one's family.
- Dealing with all the logistics and administrative issues/the investment of time and effort required of applicants (e.g. VISA application, finding lodgings, finding transferable courses, trying to coordinate study abroad with one's regular course of study at home).
- Dealing with a mental health issue or a physical disability (identified mainly by participants with a disability).
- Delayed graduation, a barrier that was seen to have financial implications in the sense that a delay in graduation could result in having to pay additional tuition fees.

Other potential barriers considered among the most important included lack of awareness of the program; lack of information/difficulty finding information about the program; low grade point average (GPA); limited number of options/opportunities for study/work abroad in one's program; and numerous applicants for a limited number of positions.

A number of barriers or obstacles resulting from the pandemic were identified by students

Students collectively identified a variety of barriers or obstacles resulting from the pandemic that someone might face when it comes to taking part in such a program. The perceived impact of these barriers or obstacles was that they would adversely affect the possibility of taking part in the program, as well as interest in so doing. They included the following:

- ***Curtailment/cancellation of program:*** Some students experienced first-hand the impact of the pandemic on curtailing or cancelling participation in the program. This included program participants having to return to Canada early/prior to completing their program and having to complete the program online, as well as prospective participants having their trips cancelled or facing the prospect of doing it online as their only option. Potential losses/limitations associated with this included the following:
 - loss of opportunity to take part in the program as a result of being in one's final year of study.
 - loss of transferable credits because the program was shortened/not completed.
 - loss of money due to non-refundable expenses (e.g. VISA application).
 - Limitations associated with online delivery of the program. This included loss of the following opportunities: the travel experience/opportunity to travel, the opportunity to meet people/make friends, and the opportunity to establish connections/networks. It was also observed that a modified online version of the program could affect its quality as a result of potential technical problems and time zone differences (e.g. having to go online very early in the morning or very late at night). One participant who began the program in-person but completed it online described the online version as well set up but not comparable to the in-person experience.
- ***Travel restrictions:*** Some students felt that a potential barrier or obstacle resulting from the pandemic could be travel-related restrictions. Examples included countries closing their borders/no longer issuing VISAs, as well as institutions withdrawing from international exchange programs. Less draconian measures might include more stringent restrictions/quotas on the number of foreigners accepted into a country or into such programs. Such restrictions could result in fewer opportunities for participation in such programs.
- ***New/additional program/travel requirements:*** Some students were of the opinion that a potential barrier or obstacle resulting from the pandemic could be the creation/addition of a new layer of administrative requirements related to international travel in general and participation in the program in particular. Examples included more stringent requirements to obtain VISAs, mandatory health checks prior to departure and upon arrival in the host country, vaccination (should a vaccine be available), imposition of travel restrictions while in host countries (e.g. social bubbles), liability waivers with host institutions, and additional laws/regulations individual countries might put in place.
- ***Financial strain:*** The pandemic was also seen as exacerbating potential financial strains that could result in restrictions on the program and/or the ability take part in the program. Examples of potential financial strain due to COVID-19 included the following:
 - increased travel costs (assuming travel to other countries is permitted).
 - job loss/lack of jobs resulting from the pandemic, and as a result loss of income/revenue to finance participation in the program (e.g. a potential participant may have been counting on a part-time job to help finance their participation, a job that may no longer be available as a result of the pandemic).

- governments and post-secondary institutions shifting priorities and redirecting resources to deal with the effects of COVID-19, potentially resulting in reduced financial aid/assistance for such programs.

Varied concerns about taking part in the post-pandemic environment

Students identified the following potential concerns someone might have about taking part in such a program in a post-pandemic environment:

- *Fear/apprehension about being abroad during a new outbreak/subsequent wave of COVID-19:* This was the most frequently identified potential concern someone might have about taking part in such a program in a post-pandemic environment. In this regard, a few students referenced their own experience trying to get home from abroad during the first wave, while others referenced the experience of acquaintances who were obliged to make arrangements to return early. This concern tended to express itself concretely in the following ways:
 - how easy or complicated will it be to return home in the event of another wave/outbreak?
 - will people be allowed to return home or might they be obliged to stay in their host country for an indefinite period of time?
 - If someone is obliged to stay in the host country for an extended period of time, what arrangements will be made to accommodate them and who will pay for these accommodations?
 - what happens if someone gets sick abroad during an outbreak (e.g. what is the health system like in the host country?, is it possible to purchase health insurance that covers COVID-19?, who will pay/how will they pay the health care costs if they contract COVID-19 and require treatment/hospitalization?).
 - what restrictions will be placed on program participants in their host country (e.g. will there be quarantines, social bubbles, travel restrictions)?
 - how would the program be affected by an outbreak (e.g. would it be cancelled/modified?, would participants be re-imbursed/compensated if the program were cancelled?, would credits be transferred if the program were shortened?).
- *Additional set of considerations when deciding whether to apply:* According to some students, the post-pandemic environment may burden potential applicants with an additional set of considerations that could complicate their decision-making process, perhaps to the point of lessening interest in the program. Such considerations include the kinds of questions identified above, as well as additional ones that might have an impact on where they might consider going (e.g. how did various countries handle the pandemic?), or whether they should consider going (e.g. because of family/parents expressing concern or disapproval related to travel abroad in the immediate post-pandemic environment). According to one student, the extent to which such considerations could dampen interest in the program depends on how each potential participant ponders the uncertainties of the post-pandemic environment and answers the question: do I want to invest time and effort in applying if there is a possibility that the program will be cancelled or curtailed?
- *Limited options/possibilities for participation:* Some participants opined that potential participants might have concerns, apprehensions, or less interest about taking part in the program if options in the post-pandemic environment are more limited. Examples of such limitations included participating countries/institutions limiting their offerings/involvement (e.g. only offering an online

option), reducing/limiting the number of applicants they will accept, and limiting the amount of time someone may spend in the country/institution.

- ***New set of requirements to meet in order to take part:*** In this regard students re-iterated points they made earlier regarding the creation/addition of a new layer of administrative requirements related to international travel in general and participation in the program in particular (e.g. stringent requirements to obtain VISAs, mandatory vaccination, imposition of travel restrictions while in host countries, liability waivers with host institutions, and additional laws/regulations individual countries might put in place). There was a sense that such requirements might spill over into the post-pandemic environment.
- ***Possible xenophobia:*** A few participants identified possible xenophobic feelings as a concern in the post-pandemic environment. They explained that even after the pandemic has passed, many people may have apprehensions for some time about welcoming ‘foreigners’ in their country, something that could adversely affect a study/work abroad experience.

Near consensus that pandemic will adversely affect interest in travel to non-traditional countries

Nearly all participants were of the opinion that the pandemic would adversely affect interest in travelling to non-traditional countries as these might be perceived as less safe. Some, on the other hand, felt that this would not necessarily be the case for the following reasons:

- Young people in general tend to feel invincible and consequently the pandemic would not adversely affect interest in travelling to a non-traditional country if interest existed in the first place.
- Interest would probably not be adversely affected unless the Canadian government actively discouraged travel to such countries. In other words, if the government does not discourage or prohibit such travel there is no reason not to go.
- People interested in travelling to such countries would likely consider how these countries fared during the pandemic (e.g. what was the infection rate?; how effectively was the spread of the virus contained?). In this regard a few participants said they would probably be less likely to go to the United States than certain ‘non-traditional countries’.

On a personal level, most non-participants said that the pandemic has adversely affected their own level of interest in the program, at least to some extent. Indeed, some non-participants volunteered this at the very beginning of their focus group session/interview when asked how interested they are in taking part in such programs. Reasons given to explain the decline in interest included the following:

- Uneasiness about travelling, especially in the immediate aftermath of the pandemic, when things in general are still uncertain and there is the possibility of a subsequent upsurge in the virus.
- Concern about investing time and effort in planning/applying for the program if there is uncertainty about it going ahead.
- Limited interest in doing the program online, which may be the only option available for the foreseeable future.
- The belief that their opportunity has passed, given that they are in their final year of their program.
- Worries/apprehensions expressed by parents.

Non-participants who said that the pandemic has not adversely affected their own level of interest in the program gave the following reasons to explain why: hope/optimism about a vaccine, the fact that

they still have a few years to take part in the program, and increased vigilance on their part (e.g. taking precautions, following rules/regulations/recommendations). A couple of non-participants expressed their continued interest in conditional terms, specifying that their interest would not be adversely affected if they were certain that they could get back to Canada quickly should there be a problem.

Students had difficulty identifying potential advantages programs such as these might bring in a post-pandemic environment

Perhaps not surprisingly, students tended to have more difficulty identifying potential advantages that study/work abroad programs could have in a post-pandemic environment. At the very least, the potential positive impact such programs could have in the post-pandemic environment was not immediately self-evident. That being said, the following potential advantages were identified:

- Such programs could contribute to international cooperation/exchange, something that will be important in the post-pandemic environment where cooperation will be vital to ensuring everyone's health and safety. It was noted in this regard, that there is a danger of falling into an 'everyone for themselves' frame of mind in the post-pandemic environment, and viewing international affairs as a zero-sum game in which there are winners and losers. Study/work abroad programs could help counter such a tendency.
- Such programs could be a good vehicle for sharing knowledge about how different countries responded to COVID-19 (e.g. what worked/what did not work). This would be particularly useful in the field of public health.
- The post-pandemic environment will be altered in many ways as a result of the pandemic. Training and education in various fields (e.g. public health, tourism, hospitality) will inevitably need to incorporate new learning and adapt to the reality of a 'new normal'. Study/work abroad programs could be a good vehicle to help prepare young people for the new reality resulting from the pandemic.
- Such programs could play a role in a return to normalcy by helping re-launch international travel as well as work exchange opportunities for individuals in foreign countries.

5. Suggestions to Facilitate and Increase Participation

This section presents suggestions offered to facilitate and increase the participation of students in study and work abroad programs.

Improved supports, financial assistance, more opportunities, and correcting misconceptions – main suggestions to facilitate and increase participation in study/work abroad opportunities

Numerous suggestions were made to facilitate and increase the participation of students in study and work abroad opportunities. Suggestions related to supports and tools, financial assistance, international opportunities, program-related misconceptions, and program-related communications³. Specifically:⁴

- **Improved/additional supports/tools:**
 - More guidance/assistance in general throughout the entire application process, including:
 - assistance with VISA applications.
 - assistance finding accommodations.
 - assistance finding equivalent/transferable courses, for example complete up-to-date lists of transferable courses by year of study, and examples of scenarios (e.g., *student X went to university x and took y number of courses ...*).
 - pairing up applicants with former participants who can guide/advise them.
 - Providing a step by step guide or checklist for applicants to follow.
 - Ensure up-to-date information on transferability of credits/transferable courses.
 - Ensure clarity about semester alignment (i.e. how the semester system in host institutions aligns with the system in the applicant's post-secondary institution).
 - Provide important information on potential destinations (e.g. cost of transportation/travel, cost of living in general, the banking system/financial transactions, currency exchange).
 - Provide training sessions/workshops to deal with culture shock.
 - Introduce students going to the same host institution to each other well in advance of their departure.
 - Allow accredited course(s) to be registered as a grade as opposed to registering as 'pass/fail'.
- **Financial assistance:**
 - Increased financial support/funding from institutions and governments.
 - Less stringent conditions on qualifications for financial assistance (i.e. having to prove financial need).
 - Financial compensation for travel costs incurred in the course of applying for a VISA if one is obliged to apply from another city/province.

³ In order to avoid repetition, suggestions concerning ways to increase/publicize awareness of the program and ways to make information available to students are identified in the section on Communications, where students were asked specifically about these two issues.

⁴ Suggestions made specifically or primarily by Indigenous participants are identified by a single asterisk (*), and suggestions made specifically or primarily by students with a disability are identified by a double asterisk (**).

- Provide list of all possible sources of financial assistance.
- Provide a breakdown of typical costs associated with participation in the program so applicants have a clear idea of what they need to cover/budget for.
- **Expand/increase opportunities:**
 - *Provide more opportunities, thereby making the application process less competitive.
 - *Provide more opportunities for Indigenous students.
 - **Provide more opportunities for students with a disability.
 - Provide more opportunities in certain fields of study (i.e. science, engineering, architecture).
 - Provide more options to complete core/required courses abroad (i.e. in addition to electives).
- **Encouraging participation/addressing misperceptions about the program:**
 - Emphasize benefits of the program and encourage application.
 - Emphasize that participants pay domestic fees for their stay abroad.
 - **Encourage students with a disability to apply for the program.
 - **Reassure students with a disability regarding accessibility issues/accommodations.
 - Emphasize availability of financial assistance.
 - Emphasize that participation is possible for all students (i.e. dispel misperception that participation in the program is for a select few).

A number of suggestions offered for how to motivate students to study or work in non-traditional countries

Asked specifically what could be done to motivate or encourage students to study or work in non-traditional countries (e.g. countries other than the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany), students routinely proposed the following:

- Emphasize/publicize/highlight these opportunities.
- Highlight/explain advantages/benefits associated with a study/work abroad program in such countries (e.g. what makes the experience unique).
- Emphasize any financial incentives (e.g. cost of going to such countries is lower).
- Address potential misconceptions about such opportunities (e.g. institutions being less reputable, less value-added to one's transcript or CV) while also addressing possible concerns about them (e.g. concerns about health, safety, transferability of courses/credits).
- Provide cultural awareness/sensitivity training in order to address concerns about culture shock.
- Provide incentives (e.g. assistance with costs, finding accommodations, paid co-ops/work opportunities).
- Have previous participants talk about their experience/provide testimonials.
- Have representatives from host institutions in these countries give presentations.

- Provide a list of resources/supports/tools available to participants during their time studying/working abroad (i.e. make it clear that they will be well supported).

Similar culture and ability to speak English – main reasons students are more likely to be attracted to certain countries

Non-participants collectively identified various reasons to explain why students are more likely to be attracted to countries like the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France, and Germany in terms of study/work abroad opportunities. However, the most frequently identified reasons were cultural similarities and the ability to communicate in English because it is the main language or because it is understood enough that one can 'get by' using it. These factors make such countries attractive by injecting an element of familiarity into the experience of travelling to a different country. This facilitates integration/adaptation by minimizing cultural barriers and culture shock.

Other routinely identified reasons explaining the attraction of such countries included the following:

- The impression that such countries are safer/more secure/more politically stable.
- The prestige/reputation of post-secondary institutions in such countries, including the impression that academic standards are higher/better in these countries.
- The impression that such countries offer more study/work opportunities in a variety of programs,
- The impression that it is easier to apply for programs in these countries because of long-standing connections/relations between post-secondary institutions in Canada and those in these host countries.
- The impression that such countries facilitate additional travel (e.g. studying/working in a European country give one easy access to the rest of Europe).
- Personal and/or cultural ties to these countries (e.g. relatives, ancestors, friends).
- Human rights issues/concerns (e.g. such countries are more likely to respect human rights, such as the rights of members of the LGBTQ community).
- Opportunities in such countries are more likely to be publicized, perhaps because they tend to be popular destinations.
- Because these countries are more attractive/popular, students are more likely to consider them if they want to travel abroad with friends/acquaintances. In other words, people who go to a non-traditional country may be more likely to be unaccompanied by people they know.

6. Communications

This section reports on communications-related issues, including perceptions about the extent of awareness of such programs among students, the best way to ensure awareness of such programs, and the best ways to provide or make available information about such programs to students.

General impression that awareness of programs is relatively widespread, but knowledge of them is not

Although there was some difference of opinion on the issue, most students felt that awareness of study/work abroad programs is relatively widespread among students, at least in their own post-secondary institutions. That being said, there was also a widespread impression that awareness tends to be general. In other words, students tend to know that such programs exist, but they probably do not know much about them until and unless they begin looking for information. It was also suggested that, while many students know the program exists, some may be unsure that participation is a possibility for them given their circumstances. In other words, some may feel that the opportunity is available to a select few.

Students offer a number of suggestions to ensure students are aware of international opportunities

Participants routinely identified the following ways of ensuring that students are aware of such opportunities:

- *Employ effective communications channels:* This includes social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram), student emails, kiosks/booths at key events (e.g. orientation week, international fairs/Go Beyond Borders fairs), and advertising in high traffic areas on campus (e.g. videos on screens/TVs, posters in common areas, bookstore, ads on login pages/portals). Regarding the use of social media, it was suggested that this could include blogs and posts in the form of testimonials from previous participants.
- *More frequent/regular dissemination of information:* This would help ensure that awareness remains top-of-mind/on students' radar screens. A specific suggestion in this regard was to target students specifically by year, i.e. inform them about the possibilities available in their specific year.
- *Disseminate information early:* This includes providing such information during recruitment efforts in high schools, during campus visits by prospective students, and during the very first weeks of the school year.
- *Enlist support of faculties, departments, and programs to disseminate information:* The thinking here was that faculties, departments, and programs tend to have more interaction with students and therefore their communications networks should be used to help increase awareness. A frequently identified suggestion in this regard was to enlist the support of faculties to schedule short presentations about the program in classes, in coordination with professors. Some Indigenous participants added that Indigenous student centers should also be enlisted to help raise awareness of study/work abroad opportunities.

Additional ways of raising and extending awareness focused on generating interest in and curiosity about the program. Participants explained that increased interest and curiosity would motivate or encourage students to seek out information about the program, which, in turn, would increase and spread awareness of international opportunities. Specific ways of generating interest and/or curiosity included the following: ensuring that information about the availability of financial aid is disseminated

and emphasized; addressing possible concerns, apprehensions, and misconceptions about the program (e.g. through FAQs); providing as much detail as possible about costs; and emphasizing that having a disability is not an impediment to participation.

A variety of suggestions were offered to provide or make information available

When it came to ways to provide or make information available to students, the following suggestions were made:

- Make the information easy to access/find, mainly by providing a user-friendly one-stop/centralized site that includes all the key information regarding the program, including links to host institutions and relevant Government of Canada sites (e.g. information about and application forms for passports and VISAs).
- Be proactive by emailing a package or newsletter to students that includes key information (e.g. application form, timelines, requirements, financial aid). It was observed that this would help generate interest and motivate students to look for more information.
- Encourage students to contact the Study Abroad Office at their post-secondary institution (or its equivalent, and to visit the website).
- Use social media to provide key information as well as testimonials/blogs from former participants (e.g. 'dos and don'ts', 'remember to ...').
- Use departmental/faculty level information dissemination/distribution networks.
- Have former participants and/or program representatives give in-class presentations early in the session in first year/introductory classes, which tend to have larger numbers of students.
- Schedule periodic sessions/seminars (e.g. in-person, online) to provide information and provide students the opportunity to ask questions. These could include program representatives and former participants.
- Provide the opportunity for prospective applicants to 'pair up' with former participants who can provide key information/share their experience, and answer questions.
- Provide a specific contact person/contact information for anyone with specific questions, desiring more information, or experiencing problems regarding application for the program.

Appendices

1. Technical Specifications

In total, 100 students took part in this qualitative research. The research included online focus groups and in-depth, one-on-one interviews. Specifically: 12 virtual focus groups were conducted, six with each of the main audiences—students who had worked/studied abroad and students who had not, but would like to if they had the opportunity; and 20 in-depth telephone interviews were conducted with students with disabilities and Indigenous students who had worked/studied abroad and students who had not, but would like to if they had the opportunity. The focus groups and interviews were conducted between September 7 and November 5, 2020.⁵ All steps of the project complied with *The Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research*.

The following design specifications applied to the **focus groups**:

- Participants were paid an honorarium of \$150.
- Ten participants were recruited for six to eight participants to show per focus group.
- Third-party intermediaries were engaged to promote the study to potentially eligible students using online and social media advertisements.⁶ These advertisements directed interested students to an online recruitment screener, which was used to identify students who met the research criteria.
- Recruitment assistance was provided by Universities Canada (UnivCan), Colleges and Institutes Canada (CICan), National Educational Association of Disabled Students (NEADS), Indspire, and various Canadian post-secondary institutions.

West	Ontario	Quebec	Atlantic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • University of Victoria • Mount Royal University • Bow Valley College • Lethbridge College • University of Alberta • University of Calgary • University of Saskatchewan • University of Regina • University of Manitoba 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheridan College • George Brown College • Ryerson University • University of Windsor • Western University • York University • Brock University • University of Guelph • University of Ottawa 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Université de Montréal • Université du Québec à Montréal • Université du Québec à Chicoutimi • Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières • École Nationale d'administration Publique 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dalhousie University • Saint Mary's University • St. Francis Xavier University • University of PEI

- All participants were: in receipt of a student loan or grant; and/or indicated they received funding to participate in their study/work abroad program (or would need funding should they apply for such as program).
- The distribution of focus groups was as follows:
 - Language: 3 French focus groups and 9 English focus groups.
 - Study/work abroad participation:

⁵ One interview was conducted in March (on March 26, 2020) prior to work stoppage due to COVID-19.

⁶ Recruitment of the target population was identified as a key challenge during the research design. Although reliable incidence rates were not available to inform the design, it was understood that this population is low incidence. Traditional methods of recruitment for qualitative research would not be sufficient to recruit this population. Instead, third-party intermediaries were engaged to promote the study.

- 6 focus groups with program participants, including one group with Indigenous students who studied/worked abroad.
 - 6 focus groups with students who had not participated in a study/work abroad program.
- Type of post-secondary institution:⁷
 - 6 focus groups with college students.
 - 6 focus groups with university students.
- iTracks' video/web online platform was used to host the groups.
- All sessions were video recorded. Participants were informed of this during recruitment and reminded of the recording by the moderator in advance of the discussion.
- Each group lasted two hours.

The following design specifications applied to the **interviews**:

- Participants were paid an honorarium of \$100.
- All interviews were conducted by telephone.
- Interviews averaged 35 minutes and were conducted in the individuals' official language of choice.
- The 20 interviews were conducted as follows:
 - Five interviews were conducted with Indigenous students: one with a student who participated in a study/work abroad program and four with Indigenous students who had not done so.
 - Fifteen interviews were conducted with students with disabilities (physical and/or cognitive), including students with mental health concerns. Half the interviews were completed with students who had participated in a study/work abroad program and half with students who had not done so.

⁷ This is approximate because several groups were mixed, i.e. included both college and university students.

2. Recruitment Ads (English, French)

2a. Print or Email Recruitment Advertising

RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS NEEDED

Have you participated in or considered participating in a study or work abroad program?

The Government of Canada is conducting a research study about study and work abroad opportunities.

If you or someone you know participated or considered participating in a study or work abroad program through a post secondary institution, you/they might be eligible for the research study.

Research participants will be asked to take part in one of the following:

1. a two-hour online focus group **OR**
2. a 40-minute telephone interview

Students who qualify and participate in a discussion group or interview will receive a **cash honorarium**.

To see if you qualify for the study, please click the link below and complete the online questionnaire.

[LINK]

This research study is being conducted by Phoenix Strategic Perspectives (Phoenix SPI), a Canadian public opinion research firm, on behalf of the Government of Canada, and specifically the Learning Branch of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).

À LA RECHERCHE DE PARTICIPANTS POUR UNE ÉTUDE

Avez-vous déjà participé ou songé à participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger?

Le gouvernement du Canada mène une recherche sur les possibilités d'études et de travail à l'étranger.

Vous pourriez prendre part à la recherche si vous avez déjà participé ou songé à participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger par l'entremise d'un établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire. Si c'est le cas d'une personne que vous connaissez, cette personne pourrait aussi être admissible.

Les participants devront prendre part à l'une des trois activités suivantes :

1. Un groupe de discussion en ligne qui durera deux heures **OU**
2. Une entrevue téléphonique de 40 minutes

Les étudiants admissibles qui participeront à un groupe de discussion ou à une entrevue recevront une **prime en argent**.

Afin de déterminer si vous êtes admissible pour participer à l'étude, veuillez cliquer sur le lien ci-dessous et remplir le questionnaire en ligne.

[LIEN]

Cette recherche est réalisée par Phoenix Strategic Perspectives (Phoenix SPI), un cabinet canadien de recherche sur l'opinion publique, pour le compte du gouvernement du Canada, plus précisément de la Direction de l'apprentissage d'Emploi et Développement social Canada (EDSC).

2b. Social Media (or Other Online) Recruitment Advertising

IMAGE OPTION 1



IMAGE OPTION 2



TEXT

Have you participated in or considered participating in a study or work abroad program?

You might be eligible for a Government of Canada research study. Participants will be asked to take part in a two-hour focus group **OR** a 40-minute telephone interview.

Students who qualify and participate will receive a **cash honorarium**.

To see if you qualify for the research study, please click on the link below and complete the online questionnaire to confirm your eligibility.

[LINK]

Avez-vous déjà participé ou songé à participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger?

Vous pourriez être admissible pour participer à une recherche du gouvernement du Canada. Les participants devront prendre part à un groupe de discussion en ligne de deux heures **OU** à une entrevue téléphonique de 40 minutes.

Les étudiants admissibles qui y participeront recevront une **PRIME EN ARGENT**.

Afin de déterminer si vous êtes admissible pour participer à l'étude, veuillez cliquer [ici](#) et remplir le questionnaire en ligne.

[LIEN]

3. Recruitment Screener (English, French)

A. Landing Page

Thank you for your interest in this research study. This short online questionnaire will take no more than 5 minutes to complete. The purpose of the online questionnaire is to confirm the eligibility of individuals interested in participating in this research study.

Background information

- This research study is being conducted by Phoenix Strategic Perspectives (Phoenix SPI), a Canadian public opinion research firm, on behalf of the Government of Canada, and specifically the Learning Branch of Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC).
- The research is designed to help ESDC better understand issues related to accessing study and work abroad opportunities for Canadian students.

About the research study

- The research, which will take place in October and November 2020, involves group discussions and interviews.
- The discussions will last up to 2 hours and the interviews will last up to 40 minutes.
- People who qualify for the research and take part will receive a cash gift to thank them for their time.

How does the online questionnaire work?

- Your decision to complete the questionnaire is completely voluntary and confidential.
- Your decision on whether or not to participate in the research will not affect any dealings you may have with the Government of Canada, now or in future.

What about your personal information?

- Your personal information will be collected by Phoenix SPI in accordance with the applicable provincial privacy legislation or the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA).
- Phoenix SPI supports and strictly adheres to the Standards for the Conduct of Government of Canada Public Opinion Research, industry standards and guidelines for Internet and other types of research. To view Phoenix SPI's privacy policy, please [click here](#).

Need to contact us?

PROGRAMMING NOTE: "Contact us" will open a new window that will contain the following:

For more information about this research, contact Phoenix SPI by email at research@phoenixspi.ca or by telephone at 1-844-960-1700.

Phoenix SPI
1678 Bank Street, Ste. 2
Ottawa, ON K1V 7Y6
www.phoenixspi.ca

B. Eligibility Screener

1. Are you a Canadian citizen at least 18 years of age or older?

No	THANK/TERMINATE
Yes	CONTINUE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE - AGE: Thank you for your interest. To be eligible for this research study you must be 18 years of age or older.]

2. In which of the following age categories do you belong? [RECRUIT A MIX BY AGE]

18 to 24
25 to 29
30 to 34
35 to 39
40 or older

3. Do you, or a member of your household or immediate family, work in any of the following fields?

- a. Marketing research, public relations firm, or advertising agency
- b. The media (i.e., radio, television, newspapers, magazines, etc.)

Yes	THANK/TERMINATE
No	CONTINUE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – INDUSTRY: Thank you for your interest. Unfortunately you are not eligible to participate in this study.]

4. Which best describes your gender? [RECRUIT A MIX]

Female
Male
Prefer to self-describe: [TEXT]
Prefer not to say

5. Are you **currently** enrolled in a program of study at a Canadian post-secondary institution? [RECRUIT A MIX]

Yes, at a university	SKIP TO Q6
Yes, at a college, institute, cegep or polytechnic	SKIP TO Q6
No	CONTINUE TO Q5a

5a. Prior to the Covid-19 global pandemic, were you enrolled in a program of study at a Canadian post-secondary institution?

Yes, at a university	CONTINUE
----------------------	----------

Yes, at a college, institute, cegep or polytechnic
No

CONTINUE
THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – PSE: Thank you for your interest. We are currently looking for participants who are enrolled in a program of study at a Canadian post-secondary institution.]

6. Have you participated in a study or work abroad experience as part of your post-secondary studies?

Yes SKIP TO Q9 **[STUDENTS WITH INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE]**
No CONTINUE TO Q6a

6a. Were you planning to participate in a study or work abroad experience, but could not due to Covid-19 travel restrictions?

Yes SKIP TO Q9 **[CONSIDERED/INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE]**
No CONTINUE

7. Are you interested in participating in a study or work abroad program as part of your post-secondary studies?

Yes SKIP TO Q8
No CONTINUE TO Q7a

7a. Prior to the Covid-19 global pandemic, were you interested in participating in a study or work abroad program as part of your post-secondary studies?

Yes CONTINUE
No THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – PSE_2: Thank you for your interest. We are currently looking for participants who are interested in studying or working abroad.]

8. Have you done any of the following...? [please select all that apply]

Spoken to a mentor/counsellor/advisor/fellow student about applying for an internship or co-op abroad as part of your studies
Spoken to a counsellor/advisor about completing part of your studies abroad (e.g., semester or year abroad, study tour, summer courses, class trip)
Applied for an international study program via your university or college
Applied for a work/intern program abroad via your university or college
Searched online for information about study or work abroad experiences
None of the above

[IF YES TO ONE OR MORE = **CONSIDERED/INTERESTED IN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE**]

[IF NONE OF THE ABOVE = THANK/TERMINATE]

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – PSE_2: Thank you for your interest. We are currently looking for participants who are interested in studying or working abroad.]

9. Do you currently receive any of the following? [please select all that apply]

A student loan (provincial, territorial, federal and/or Indigenous organizations)

A student grant (provincial, territorial, federal and/or Indigenous organizations)

None of the above

CONTINUE TO Q10 (Q10a for those with international experience, Q10b for those without)

Prefer not to answer

CONTINUE TO Q10 (Q10a for those with international experience, Q10b for those without)

[IF YES TO A LOAN AND/OR GRANT= **LOW INCOME AND SKIP TO Q11**]

10. a. Did you require funding support (e.g., grants, loans, scholarships) in order to study or work abroad?

No, I did not require funding

I received funding, but I would have participated even if I hadn't received the support

I received funding and I would not have been able to participate without the support

10. b. Earlier you indicated that you are/were interested in participating in a study or work abroad program as part of your post-secondary education. Thinking about your current financial situation, would you be able to study or work abroad without receiving some type of funding support, such as grants, loans, or scholarships from the government, an Indigenous organization, or your school?

I do **not** require funding

I **might** require funding

I **definitely** would require funding

11. Do you identify as...? [please select all that apply]

...an Indigenous person (First Nation, Métis or Inuit)?

SKIP TO Q13

...a person with a disability?

CONTINUE

None of the above

THANK/TERMINATE **IF** "DID/DO NOT

REQUIRE FUNDING AT Q10a/b"

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – NON-RESP: Thank you for your interest. Unfortunately you are not eligible to participate in this study.]

12. What is the nature of your disability? Do you have... [please select all that apply]

...a physical disability that is long-term or causes limitation in daily activities

...a cognitive disability that is long-term or causes limitation in daily activities

...a mental health condition that is long-term or causes limitation in daily activities

Other [please specify]:

13. In which province or territory do you live?

British Columbia
Alberta
Saskatchewan
Manitoba
Ontario
Quebec
New Brunswick
Nova Scotia
Prince Edward Island
Newfoundland and Labrador
Yukon
Northwest Territories
Nunavut
Prefer not to say

C. Industry Screening

We have a few final questions for you.

1. Have you ever attended a discussion group or taken part in an interview on any topic that was arranged in advance and for which you received money for your participation?

Yes	CONTINUE
No	GO TO CONSENT

2. When did you last attend one of these discussion groups or interviews?

Within the last 6 months	THANK/TERMINATE
6 months to under 2 years	CONTINUE
2 or more years	GO TO CONSENT

3. How many discussion groups have you attended in the past 5 years?

Fewer than 5	GO TO CONSENT
5 or more	THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATION MESSAGE – INDUSTRY_2: Thank you for your cooperation. We already have enough participants who have a similar profile to yours, so we are unable to invite you to participate.]

D. Consent

IF NONE OF THE ABOVE AT Q11.

1. The focus groups we'd like to invite you to participate in will take place online using an online platform and webcams . You will be required to access the platform via a weblink and to participate

using your webcam. The platform will be accessible via a mobile device or a laptop/desktop environment. How comfortable would you be participating in this type of discussion?

Very Comfortable	CONTINUE
Fairly Comfortable	CONTINUE
Not Very Comfortable	CONSIDER FOR INTERVIEWS
Very Uncomfortable	CONSIDER FOR INTERVIEWS

2. Participants will be asked to voice their opinions in front of others. How comfortable would you say you are doing this in English (English screener) / French (French screener)?

Very Comfortable	CONTINUE
Fairly Comfortable	CONTINUE
Not Very Comfortable	CONSIDER FOR INTERVIEWS
Very Uncomfortable	CONSIDER FOR INTERVIEWS

3. The discussion group will be recorded. These recordings are used to help with analyzing the findings and writing the report. The results from the discussions will be grouped together in the research report, which means that individuals will not be identified in any way. Is this acceptable?

Yes	CONTINUE
No	THANK/TERMINATE

4. There may be some people from Employment and Social Development Canada who have been involved in this project observing the online session. They will not take part in the discussion. Is this acceptable?

Yes	GO TO INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE
No	THANK/TERMINATE

[TERMINATING MESSAGE: Thank you for your cooperation. We already have enough participants who have a similar profile to yours, so we are unable to invite you to participate.]

E. Invitation to Participate

1. ONLINE FOCUS GROUPS:

We would like to invite you to attend the online focus group session where you will exchange your opinions in a moderated video session with others. The discussion will be led by a researcher from the public opinion research firm, Phoenix Strategic Perspectives. The group will take place on [DAY OF WEEK], [DATE], at [TIME]. It will last up to two hours. Information regarding how to participate will be sent to you by email in the coming days. You will be asked to log into the online session 15 minutes prior to the start time. People who participate will receive \$150 to thank them for their time.

- i. Are you willing to participate?

Yes	CONTINUE
-----	----------

No THANK/TERMINATE

- ii. May I have your contact information so that we can send you information related to the online focus group?

First name:

Last Name:

Daytime phone number:

Evening phone number:

Email:

EXIT MESSAGE: Thank you very much for your time and willingness to participate in this research.

EXIT LINK:

2. INTERVIEWS:

We would like to invite you to participate in a telephone interview which will be conducted by a researcher from the public opinion research firm, Phoenix Strategic Perspectives. It will last up to 40 minutes. We will contact you to schedule a date and time that works best with your schedule for the interview. People who participate will receive \$100 to thank them for their time.

- i. Are you willing to participate?

Yes

No THANK/TERMINATE

- ii. May I have your contact information to schedule the telephone interview?

First name:

Last Name:

Daytime phone number:

Evening phone number:

Email:

EXIT MESSAGE: Thank you very much for your time and willingness to participate in this research.

A. Page d'accueil

Nous vous remercions de votre intérêt à participer à cette étude. Vous aurez besoin d'au plus cinq minutes pour répondre à ce bref questionnaire en ligne, qui a pour but de confirmer l'admissibilité des personnes intéressées à prendre part à l'étude.

Renseignements généraux

- L'étude est réalisée par Phoenix Strategic Perspectives (Phoenix SPI), un cabinet canadien spécialisé dans la recherche sur l'opinion publique, au nom du gouvernement du Canada, plus précisément de la Direction générale de l'apprentissage d'Emploi et Développement social Canada (EDSC).
- L'étude vise à aider EDSC à mieux comprendre les enjeux liés à l'accès des étudiants canadiens aux possibilités d'études et de travail à l'étranger.

À propos de l'étude

- L'étude, qui se déroulera en octobre et en novembre 2020, comprendra des discussions en groupe et des entrevues.
- Les discussions dureront au plus deux heures et les entrevues dureront au plus 40 minutes.
- Les personnes admissibles qui participeront à l'étude recevront une somme forfaitaire en guise de remerciement pour leur temps.

Répondre au questionnaire en ligne

- Vous êtes tout à fait libre de répondre ou non au questionnaire et vos réponses demeureront confidentielles.
- Votre décision de participer ou non à l'étude n'aura aucune incidence sur vos rapports actuels et futurs avec le gouvernement du Canada.

Qu'en est-il de vos renseignements personnels?

- Vos renseignements personnels seront recueillis par Phoenix SPI conformément aux lois provinciales applicables en matière de protection des renseignements personnels ou à la *Loi sur la protection des renseignements personnels et les documents électroniques* (LPRPDE).
- Phoenix SPI appuie et respecte à la lettre les Normes pour la recherche sur l'opinion publique du gouvernement du Canada, ainsi que les normes et les lignes directrices de l'industrie pour la recherche au moyen d'Internet et d'autres types d'études. Pour consulter la politique de confidentialité de Phoenix SPI, veuillez [cliquer ici](#).

Besoin de communiquer avec nous?

NOTE DE PROGRAMMATION : « Contactez-nous » permettra d'ouvrir une nouvelle fenêtre qui contiendra le texte suivant :

Pour obtenir de plus amples renseignements au sujet de cette recherche, veuillez communiquer avec Phoenix SPI par courriel à l'adresse research@phoenixspi.ca ou par téléphone au 1-844-960-1700.

Phoenix SPI
1678, rue Bank, bureau 2
Ottawa (Ontario) K1V 7Y6
<https://phoenixspi.ca/fr/acceuil.html>

Commencer

B. Questionnaire d'admissibilité

1. Êtes-vous un(e) citoyen(ne) canadien(ne) âgé(e) d'au moins 18 ans?

Non
Oui

REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE
CONTINUER

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – ÂGE : Merci de votre intérêt. Cependant, pour participer à l'étude, vous devez avoir au moins 18 ans.]

2. À quelle catégorie d'âge, parmi les suivantes, appartenez-vous? [RECRUTER DES PARTICIPANTS DE DIVERS GROUPES D'ÂGE]

18 à 24 ans
25 à 29 ans
30 à 34 ans
35 à 39 ans
40 ans ou plus

3. Travaillez-vous dans l'un ou l'autre des domaines suivants ou est-ce qu'un membre de votre foyer ou de votre famille immédiate y travaille?

- a. Une entreprise de recherche en marketing, un cabinet de relations publiques ou une agence de publicité
b. Les médias (p. ex., radio, télévision, journaux, magazines, etc.)

Oui
Non

REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE
CONTINUER

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – INDUSTRIE : Merci de votre intérêt. Malheureusement, vous n'êtes pas admissible pour participer à cette étude.]

4. Parmi les options suivantes, laquelle décrit le mieux votre genre? [RECRUTER DES PERSONNES DES DIVERS GROUPES]

Femme
Homme
Je préfère me décrire comme suit : [TEXTE]
Je préfère ne pas répondre

5. Êtes-vous **actuellement** inscrit(e) à un programme d'études d'un établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire au Canada? [RECRUTER DES PARTICIPANTS DES DIVERS GROUPES]

Oui, à une université
Oui, à un collège, un institut, un cégep ou une école polytechnique
Non

PASSER À Q6
PASSER À Q6
PASSER À Q5a

5a. Avant la pandémie de la COVID-19, étiez-vous inscrit(e) à un programme d'études d'un établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire au Canada?

Oui, à une université

CONTINUER

Oui, à un collège, un institut, un cégep ou une école polytechnique

CONTINUER

Non

REMERCIER/METTRE FIN
AU QUESTIONNAIRE

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – EPS : Merci de votre intérêt. Nous sommes actuellement à la recherche de participants qui sont inscrits à un programme d'études d'un établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire canadien.]

6. Avez-vous participé à une expérience d'études ou de travail à l'étranger dans le cadre de vos études postsecondaires?

Oui

PASSER À Q9 **[ÉTUDIANTS AYANT UNE EXPÉRIENCE INTERNATIONALE]**

Non

CONTINUER À Q6a

6a. Aviez-vous l'intention de participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger, mais n'avez pu le faire en raison des restrictions de voyage découlant de la COVID-19?

Oui

PASSER À Q9 **[INTÉRESSÉ À UNE EXPÉRIENCE INTERNATIONALE]**

Non

CONTINUER

7. Êtes-vous intéressé(e) à participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger dans le cadre de vos études postsecondaires?

Oui

PASSER À Q8

Non

PASSER À Q7a

7a. Avant la pandémie de la COVID-19, étiez-vous intéressé(e) à participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger dans le cadre de vos études postsecondaires?

Oui

CONTINUER

Non

REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – EPS_2 : Merci de votre intérêt. Nous sommes actuellement à la recherche de participants qui sont intéressés à étudier ou à travailler à l'étranger.]

8. Avez-vous fait l'une ou l'autre des choses suivantes...? [veuillez sélectionner toutes les réponses qui s'appliquent]

Parlé à un mentor/conseiller/autre étudiant au sujet d'une demande pour un stage ou un stage coopératif à l'étranger dans le cadre de vos études

Parlé à un conseiller concernant la possibilité de faire une partie de vos études à l'étranger (p. ex., un semestre ou une année à l'étranger, un voyage d'études, des cours d'été, un voyage avec la classe)

Présenté une demande pour un programme d'études international par l'entremise de votre université ou de votre collègue
Présenté une demande pour un programme de travail ou de stage à l'étranger par l'entremise de votre université ou de votre collègue
Cherché en ligne de l'information au sujet des possibilités d'études ou de travail à l'étranger
Rien de tout cela

[SI LE PARTICIPANT RÉPOND OUI À AU MOINS UNE OPTION = **INTÉRESSÉ À UNE EXPÉRIENCE INTERNATIONALE**]

[SI LE PARTICIPANT RÉPOND « RIEN DE TOUT CELA » = REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE]

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – EPS_2 : Merci de votre intérêt. Nous sommes actuellement à la recherche de participants qui sont intéressés à étudier ou à travailler à l'étranger.]

9. À l'heure actuelle, recevez-vous l'un ou l'autre des soutiens financiers suivants? [veuillez sélectionner toutes les réponses qui s'appliquent]

Un prêt étudiant (organisme provincial, territorial, fédéral et/ou autochtone)

Une bourse étudiante (organisme provincial, territorial, fédéral et/ou autochtone)

Aucun soutien financier

CONTINUER À Q10 (Q10a pour les personnes ayant une expérience internationale, Q10b pour les personnes qui n'en ont pas)

Je préfère ne pas répondre

CONTINUER À Q10 (Q10a pour les personnes ayant une expérience internationale, Q10b pour les personnes qui n'en ont pas)

[SI LE PARTICIPANT RÉPOND OUI À UN PRÊT ET/OU UNE BOURSE = **FAIBLE REVENU ET PASSER À LA Q11**]

10. a. Aviez-vous besoin d'un soutien financier (p. ex., bourse d'études, prêt) pour étudier ou travailler à l'étranger?

Non, je n'avais pas besoin de soutien financier

J'ai reçu un soutien financier, mais j'aurais participé même sans obtenir d'aide

J'ai reçu un soutien financier et je n'aurais pas pu participer sans obtenir une telle aide

10. b. Vous avez indiqué plus tôt que vous étiez intéressé(e) à participer à un programme d'études ou de travail à l'étranger dans le cadre de vos études postsecondaires. Si vous réfléchissez à votre situation financière actuelle, diriez-vous que vous seriez capable d'étudier ou de travailler à l'étranger sans recevoir un soutien financier comme une bourse d'études ou un prêt du gouvernement, d'un organisme autochtone ou de votre établissement d'enseignement?

Je n'ai **pas** besoin de soutien financier

Je **pourrais** avoir besoin d'un soutien financier

J'aurais **assurément** besoin d'un soutien financier

11. Vous identifiez-vous comme...? [veuillez sélectionner toutes les réponses qui s'appliquent]

...une personne autochtone (membre d'une Première Nation, Métis ou Inuit)?

PASSER À Q13

...une personne handicapée?

CONTINUER

Aucune de ces catégories

REMERCIER/METTRE

FIN

AU

QUESTIONNAIRE SI LE PARTICIPANT RÉPOND « JE N'AVAIS/N'AI PAS BESOIN D'UN SOUTIEN FINANCIER » À LA Q10a/b.

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – NON-RÉP. : Merci de votre intérêt. Malheureusement, vous n'êtes pas admissible pour participer à l'étude.]

12. Quelle est la nature de votre handicap? Avez-vous... [veuillez sélectionner toutes les réponses qui s'appliquent]

...un handicap physique à long terme ou qui vous freine dans vos activités quotidiennes

...une déficience cognitive à long terme ou qui vous freine dans vos activités quotidiennes

...un trouble de santé mentale à long terme ou qui vous freine dans vos activités quotidiennes

Autre [veuillez préciser] :

13. Dans quelle province ou quel territoire habitez-vous?

Colombie-Britannique

Alberta

Saskatchewan

Manitoba

Ontario

Québec

Nouveau-Brunswick

Nouvelle-Écosse

Île-du-Prince-Édouard

Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador

Yukon

Territoires du Nord-Ouest

Nunavut

Je préfère ne pas répondre

CONTINUER À LA SECTION C. CONTRÔLE DE L'INDUSTRIE

C. Contrôle de l'industrie

Nous avons quelques questions à vous poser pour terminer.

1. Avez-vous déjà pris part à un groupe de discussion ou à un entretien sur un sujet quelconque qui était organisé à l'avance et pour lequel vous avez reçu de l'argent pour votre participation?

Oui
Non

CONTINUER
PASSER AU CONSENTEMENT

2. À quand remonte votre dernière participation à l'un de ces groupes de discussion ou entretiens?

Dans les six derniers mois
Six mois à moins de deux ans
Deux ans ou plus

REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE
CONTINUER
PASSER AU CONSENTEMENT

3. À combien de groupes de discussion avez-vous pris part au cours des cinq dernières années?

À moins de cinq
À cinq ou plus

PASSER AU CONSENTEMENT
REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE – INDUSTRIE_2 : Merci pour votre coopération. Comme nous avons déjà suffisamment de participants ayant un profil semblable au vôtre, nous ne pouvons pas vous inviter à participer.]

CONTINUER À LA SECTION D. CONSENTEMENT

D. Consentement

SI LA PERSONNE A RÉPONDU AUCUNE DE CES CATÉGORIES À LA Q11.

1. Nous aimerions vous inviter à participer à un groupe de discussion en ligne dans une plateforme numérique, à l'aide de webcams. Un lien Web vous permettra d'accéder à la plateforme et d'y participer en utilisant votre webcam. Vous pourrez vous servir d'un appareil mobile, d'un ordinateur de bureau ou d'un ordinateur portatif pour vous connecter. Dans quelle mesure seriez-vous à l'aise de participer à une discussion de ce genre?

Très à l'aise	CONTINUER
Assez à l'aise	CONTINUER
Pas très à l'aise	PRENDRE EN CONSIDÉRATION POUR UN ENTRETIEN
Très mal à l'aise	PRENDRE EN CONSIDÉRATION POUR UN ENTRETIEN

2. Nous demanderons aux participants d'exprimer leurs opinions devant les autres. Dans quelle mesure seriez-vous à l'aise de le faire en anglais (questionnaire en anglais) / en français (questionnaire en français)?

Très à l'aise	CONTINUER
Assez à l'aise	CONTINUER
Pas très à l'aise	PRENDRE EN CONSIDÉRATION POUR UN ENTRETIEN
Très mal à l'aise	PRENDRE EN CONSIDÉRATION POUR UN ENTRETIEN

3. Le groupe de discussion sera enregistré. Les enregistrements seront utilisés pour analyser les résultats et rédiger le rapport. Les constats issus des discussions seront regroupés dans le rapport de recherche, ce qui veut dire que les participants ne seront identifiés d'aucune façon. Est-ce que cela vous convient?

Oui	CONTINUER
Non	REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE

4. Des représentants d'Emploi et Développement social Canada qui ont participé au projet pourraient observer la séance en ligne. Ils ne prendront pas part à la discussion. Est-ce que cela vous convient?

Oui	ALLER À L'INVITATION POUR PARTICIPER
Non	REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE

[MESSAGE POUR METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE : Merci pour votre coopération. Comme nous avons déjà suffisamment de participants ayant un profil semblable au vôtre, nous ne pouvons pas vous inviter à participer.]

CONTINUER À LA SECTION E. INVITATION À PARTICIPER

E. Invitation à participer

1. GROUPES DE DISCUSSION EN LIGNE

Nous aimerions vous inviter à participer à un groupe de discussion en ligne afin d'exprimer vos opinions dans le cadre d'une discussion vidéo animée par un chercheur de Phoenix Strategic Perspectives, un cabinet spécialisé dans la recherche sur l'opinion publique. Le groupe se tiendra le [JOUR DE LA SEMAINE] [DATE] à [HEURE]. Il durera au plus deux heures. Dans les prochains jours, vous recevrez par courriel des renseignements concernant la façon d'y participer. On vous demandera de vous connecter en ligne 15 minutes avant le début de la séance. Les participants recevront 150 \$ en guise de remerciement pour leur temps.

- i. Désirez-vous y participer?

Oui	CONTINUER
Non	REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE

- ii. Pourrais-je avoir vos coordonnées pour qu'on puisse vous faire parvenir de l'information ayant trait au groupe de discussion en ligne?

Prénom :
Nom :
Téléphone (jour) :
Téléphone (soir) :
Courriel :

MESSAGE DE CLÔTURE : Merci beaucoup d'avoir accepté de participer à cette étude et d'y consacrer de votre temps.

LIEN DE CLÔTURE :

2. ENTRETIENS

Nous aimerions vous inviter à participer à un entretien téléphonique qui sera réalisé par un chercheur de Phoenix Strategic Perspectives, un cabinet spécialisé dans la recherche sur l'opinion publique. L'entretien durera au plus 40 minutes. Nous communiquerons avec vous pour fixer la date et l'heure qui vous convient le mieux pour l'entretien. Les participants recevront 100 \$ en guise de remerciement pour leur temps.

- i. Désirez-vous y participer?

Oui	
Non	REMERCIER/METTRE FIN AU QUESTIONNAIRE

- ii. Pourrais-je avoir vos coordonnées pour fixer la date et l'heure de l'entretien téléphonique?

Prénom :

Nom :

Téléphone (jour) :

Téléphone (soir) :

Courriel :

MESSAGE DE CLÔTURE : Merci beaucoup d'avoir accepté de participer à cette étude et d'y consacrer de votre temps.

4. Moderator's Guide (English, French)

4a. Students who participated in study and/or work abroad programs

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Introduce moderator/firm and welcome participants to the focus group.

TECHNICAL CHECK; CONFIRM SOUND AND VIDEO QUALITY.

- Thanks for attending/value your being here.
- Tonight, we're conducting research on behalf of the Government of Canada.
- We will be seeking your opinion on issues related to accessing study and work abroad opportunities for Canadian students.
- The discussion will last approximately two hours.
- Describe focus group.
 - This is a "virtual round table" discussion.
 - My job is to facilitate the discussion, keeping us on topic and on time.
 - Your job is to offer your opinions. There are no right or wrong answers.
 - Everyone's opinion is important and should be respected.
 - We encourage you to speak up even if you feel your opinion might be different from others.
- Explanations.
 - Comments treated in confidence.
 - Anything you say during these groups will be held in confidence.
 - Our report summarizes the findings but does not mention anyone by name.
 - Your responses will in no way affect any dealings you have with the Government of Canada.
 - The session is being recorded. The recordings remain in our possession and will not be released to anyone, even to the Government of Canada, without your written consent.
 - Recording is for report writing purposes/verify feedback.
 - Observers.
 - There are people from the Government of Canada involved in this project who will be observing tonight's online session.
 - Purpose: oversee the research process and see your reactions first-hand.
- Any questions?
- Roundtable introduction: Please tell us your first name.

Context/background (15 minutes)

What you all have in common, and the reason you are here tonight, is that each of you has participated in a study and/or work abroad program through the post-secondary institution you attend. We are going to discuss a variety of things related to your experience, but I'd like to begin with a few general questions, just to get things started.

1. Did the program you took part in involve working or studying abroad? IF WORK, QUERY WHETHER WORK WAS PAID OR UNPAID AND FOR CREDIT (I.E. THROUGH THE PARTICIPANT'S POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION PROGRAM)

- How was the study abroad related to your program of study?
 - How was the work abroad related to your program of study?
2. Where did you go for your study/work term abroad? Was this your first choice? If not, what was your first choice and why didn't it work out?
 3. Why did you choose to go where you did? What factors affected your choice of a country?
 4. How long were you abroad as part of your study/work program?

Decision-making process (40 minutes)

I would now like to talk about your experience leading up to your decision to apply for a study/work term abroad. First ...

5. How did you learn or find out about the opportunity to study/work abroad)? [LISTEN FOR ACTIVELY SEEKING INFORMATION VERSUS RECEIVING/BEING GIVEN INFORMATION]

Probe: - sources of awareness/information about study/work abroad opportunities

6. Why did you want to take part in such a program? What factor(s) motivated you to want to study/work abroad?
7. What benefits, if any, did you hope or expect to derive from that experience?

Probe: - increased employability, networking, skills development, deepened understanding of other regions

8. Can you describe the thought process that informed your decision to apply for the program? What did you consider when thinking about the possibility of studying/working abroad? [USE FLIPCHART TO RECORD RESPONSES]

Probe:

Everyone—

- program considerations (e.g. credit transfer, delayed graduation)
 - financial considerations
 - personal relationships
 - non-school related commitments/responsibilities
 - health/personal safety
 - available options/possibilities (e.g. country options available)

Probe:

Students with disabilities—

- accessible facilities/accommodations
- access to learning technologies and assistive devices
 - accessible public places in the location
 - general attitudes towards persons with disabilities

- need for transportation and whether it's accessible

Probe:

Indigenous students—

- general attitudes towards Indigenous people
- cultural diversity

9. [ADJUST FORMULATION BASED ON FEEDBACK TO PREVIOUS QUESTION] Did you have any apprehensions or concerns about taking part in the program? If so, what?

ROTATE NEXT 2 QUESTIONS:

10. Did any factors facilitate your decision-making process or made it easier for you? If so, what?

11. Were there any barriers, challenges, or difficulties that complicated your decision-making process? If so, what? [BE ATTENTIVE TO CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY MEMBERS OF SPECIFIC SUBGROUPS]

Probe: - key barriers, if any, to taking part in program

IF CHALLENGE(S)/BARRIER(S) IDENTIFIED:

12. Were you able to address this/these challenge(s)? If so, how? If not, why not?

13. What information/tools/resources did you access/consult as part of your decision-making process?

Probe: - did you rely on information provided by their institution?
- did you reach out for advice or guidance to help them make this decision?

14. Do you feel you were adequately informed about the study/work abroad program by your post-secondary institution? In other words, did they provide, or give you access to, sufficient information/tools/resources about the program? If so why? If not, why not?

Probe: - perceived shortcomings (e.g. missing, incorrect, vague, conflicting information)

15. Were you aware that financial support is available for study/work abroad opportunities? [HAND COUNT]

IF AWARE OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE:

16. Tell me what you know about it.

Probe: - sources of information

17. Were you aware of any other supports available to participants in study/work abroad programs? If so, what?

Program experience (40 minutes)

I would now like to shift the focus and discuss your experience studying and/or working abroad.

18. Overall, how would you describe your experience studying/working abroad? Why do you say that?

Probe: - did the experience meet, exceed, fall short of expectations?

19. What did you like about the experience? ASK TIME PERMITTING OR IF NOT COVERED AT Q18

20. Was there anything you disliked about it? ASK TIME PERMITTING OR IF NOT COVERED AT Q18

21. Did you encounter or experience any challenges, difficulties, or barriers during your study/work abroad opportunity? If so what? [BE ATTENTIVE TO CHALLENGES IDENTIFIED BY MEMBERS OF SPECIFIC SUBGROUPS] Were you able to address this/these challenge(s) adequately? Why/why not?

22. [ADJUST WORDING BASED ON PREVIOUS FEEDBACK] Earlier I asked if you were aware that financial support is available for study and/or work abroad opportunities. Did anyone receive financial support/funding through the program as part of their study/work abroad experience? [HAND COUNT]

23. For those of you who received financial support, what impact, if any, did this have on your experience? Would you have taken part without financial assistance? Why/why not?

24. For those of you who did not receive financial support, what impact, if any, do you think financial assistance would have had on your experience?

25. What other supports/tools, if any, were available to you as part of your experience abroad?

Probe: -Host families
-Mentors/mentorships
-Pre-/post-departure training including safety
-Cultural awareness training
-Skills development workshops

26. Did you use any of these supports/tools during your stay abroad? [HAND COUNT]

For those who did:

27. What did you use and why?

28. What is your impression of the support(s) you used?

Probe: - any barriers to accessing supports?

For those who did not:

29. Is there any particular reason why you did not use any of the available supports/tools?

Probe: - any barriers to accessing supports?

Thinking of the program in general ...

30. Based on your experience, what, if anything, was missing from this program? For example, did you have any needs, expectations, or requirements that were not met? [BE ATTENTIVE TO ANY SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES]

31. Is there anything you learned as a result of your experience that you wish you had known before you went abroad? If so what? ASK TIME PERMITTING

32. If you had the chance to redo the program, what, if anything, would you do differently? Why is that?

33. What advice, if any, would you give to someone considering taking part in such a program?

34. What would you identify as the most important potential barriers to someone taking part in a study/work abroad program such as the one you took part in? [BE ATTENTIVE TO ANY SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES]

[ADJUST WORDING BASED ON EXTENT TO WHICH FINANCIAL BARRIERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED]

Coming back to the issue of finances

35. How important a factor is a person's financial situation when it comes to whether or not they take part in such a program? Are financial issues more or less important than some of the other barriers we've discussed? Why do you say that? ASK ONLY IF NOT IDENTIFIED AT Q34

36. What are some of the financial barriers or obstacles someone might face when it comes to taking part in such a program? BE ATTENTIVE TO FINANCIAL BARRIERS LINKED TO COVID-19 (E.G. INCREASED TRAVEL COSTS/AIR FARE, FINANCIAL STRAIN DUE TO LOSS OF INCOME/INADEQUATE FINANCIAL AID, ETC.)

Probe: - housing-related expenses in home country while abroad
- supporting dependents in home country while abroad
- additional school fees for abroad program
- living expenses while abroad

[ADJUST WORDING BASED ON EXTENT TO WHICH COVID-19/THE PANDEMIC HAS ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED]

[Coming back to / turning to] the issue of COVID-19/the pandemic ...

37. What are some of the barriers or obstacles resulting from the pandemic that someone might face when it comes to taking part in such a program?

- Probe:
- financial strain (due to COVID-19)
 - travel restrictions/limits on possible countries one can visit
 - health (e.g. pre-existing health condition)
 - lack of family support/approval of travel

38. And, what about concerns...? What concerns might someone have about taking part in such a program in the post-pandemic environment?

Probe:

In general—

- program restrictions/quality of programs/modified programs
- health concerns
- personal safety

During a 2nd wave—

- being quarantined abroad
- having difficulty getting home
- having a program cancelled
- getting sick

39. All things considered, what was the main benefit/advantage you derived from taking part in this program? PROBE RE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IF NOT MENTIONED

40. What suggestions would you make in order to facilitate and increase the participation of students in study/work abroad opportunities? Please think broadly in terms of anything that could help improve awareness of and access to such opportunities. [BE ATTENTIVE TO ANY SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES]

- Probe:
- missing supports/tools
 - motivators/facilitators to encourage participation
 - impressions/perceptions adversely affecting desire to participate

41. [ADJUST WORDING BASED ON WHERE PARTICIPANTS STUDIED/WORKED ABROAD] Can you think of ways to motivate or encourage students to study or work in non-traditional countries (e.g. countries other than the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany)? Do you think COVID-19 will affect students' decisions to study in non-traditional countries, as they may be perceived as less safe?

Coming back to COVID-19 again...

42. Can you think of any advantages programs such as these might bring in a post-pandemic environment? [WAIT FOR TOP-OF-MIND RESPONSES BEFORE USING THE PROMPT] Put another way, how might programs such as these contribute to international recovery?

- Probe:
- re-establishing global connections
 - helping students to build skills
 - encouraging a return to normalcy

Communications (10 minutes)

The last few questions have to do with communications issues.

43. In your opinion, how widespread is awareness of programs such as the ones you took part in?

PRIVILEGE Q.45 OVER Q.44 IF PRESSED FOR TIME

44. What would be the best way to ensure that students are aware about study/work abroad opportunities offered through their post-secondary institutions?

Probe: - best/most effective communications channels

45. And what would be the best way to provide or make available information about such programs to students? In other words, once they are aware that such programs exist what would be the most effective way(s) to communicate information to them?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

We've covered a lot tonight and I really appreciate you taking the time to come and share your opinions. I'm going to leave the room now to check with the observers to see if there are any last questions for you. When I come back, I'm going to ask whether any of you has last thoughts that you want to give the Government of Canada about this topic.

MODERATOR WILL LEAVE THE ROOM AND CHECK WITH OBSERVERS TO SEE IF THERE ARE LAST QUESTIONS.

Thank you very much for your time. This concludes the discussion group.

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Présenter le modérateur/le cabinet et souhaiter la bienvenue aux participants du groupe de discussion.

VÉRIFICATION TECHNIQUE; CONFIRMER LA QUALITÉ DU SON ET DE L'IMAGE.

- Merci d'être présents/nous apprécions que vous soyez ici.
 - Ce soir, nous menons une recherche pour le compte du gouvernement du Canada.
 - Nous désirons obtenir votre opinion sur des questions liées à l'accès aux occasions d'étudier et de travailler à l'étranger pour les étudiants canadiens.
 - La discussion durera environ deux heures.
- Décrire le groupe de discussion.
 - Il s'agit d'une discussion de type « table ronde virtuelle ».
 - J'ai la tâche de faciliter la discussion et de veiller à ce qu'on s'en tienne au sujet tout en respectant le temps qui nous est alloué.
 - Vous avez la tâche de fournir vos opinions. Il n'y a pas de bonnes ou de mauvaises réponses.

- L'opinion de chaque personne est importante et doit être respectée.
- Nous vous encourageons à faire part de votre opinion même si vous croyez qu'elle est différente de celle des autres.
- Explications.
 - Les commentaires seront traités de manière confidentielle.
 - Tout ce que vous direz dans le cadre de ces discussions sera traité de manière confidentielle.
 - Notre rapport présentera un résumé des constats, mais ne mentionnera le nom d'aucun participant.
 - Vos réponses n'auront aucune incidence sur vos rapports avec le gouvernement du Canada.
 - La séance sera enregistrée sur bande audio-vidéo. Nous conserverons l'enregistrement et nous ne le remettrons à personne, pas même au gouvernement du Canada, sans votre consentement écrit.
 - L'enregistrement servira à rédiger le rapport et à vérifier les commentaires reçus.
 - Observateurs
 - Des représentants du gouvernement du Canada participant au projet observeront la séance en ligne de ce soir.
 - Objectif : superviser le processus de recherche et observer directement vos réactions.
- Des questions?
- Tour de table pour les présentations : Dites-nous votre prénom.

Contexte/renseignements généraux (15 minutes)

Le point que vous avez tous en commun, et qui est la raison pour laquelle vous êtes ici ce soir, c'est que chacun d'entre vous a participé à un programme d'études et/ou de travail à l'étranger par l'entremise de l'établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire que vous fréquentez. Nous allons discuter de plusieurs aspects liés à votre expérience, mais j'aimerais commencer par quelques questions générales.

1. Le programme auquel vous avez participé visait-il du travail ou des études à l'étranger? S'IL S'AGIT DE TRAVAIL, DEMANDER SI LE TRAVAIL ÉTAIT RÉMUNÉRÉ ET S'IL COMPTAIT POUR DES CRÉDITS (P. EX., PAR L'ENTREMISE DU PROGRAMME D'ÉTUDES POSTSECONDAIRES DES PARTICIPANTS).
 - Quel était le lien entre les études à l'étranger et votre programme d'études?
 - Quel était le lien entre le travail à l'étranger et votre programme d'études?
2. Où êtes-vous allé(e) pour votre session d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Est-ce qu'il s'agissait de votre premier choix? Si ce n'est pas le cas, quel était votre premier choix et pourquoi est-ce que cela n'a pas fonctionné?
3. Pourquoi avez-vous choisi l'endroit où vous êtes allé(e)? Quels facteurs ont influencé votre choix de pays?

4. Combien de temps avez-vous passé à l'étranger dans le cadre de votre programme d'études/de travail?

Processus décisionnel (40 minutes)

J'aimerais maintenant vous parler de votre expérience ayant mené à votre décision de présenter une demande pour participer à une session d'études/de travail à l'étranger. Tout d'abord...

5. Comment avez-vous su que cette occasion d'études/de travail à l'étranger existait? [ÉCOUTER POUR SAVOIR SI LES PARTICIPANTS ONT CHERCHÉ DE MANIÈRE PROACTIVE À OBTENIR DES RENSEIGNEMENTS OU ONT REÇU DE L'INFORMATION]

Explorer : - sources d'information au sujet d'occasions d'études/de travail à l'étranger

6. Pourquoi vouliez-vous participer à un tel programme? Quel(s) facteur(s) vous a/ont motivé(e) à vouloir étudier/travailler à l'étranger?
7. Quels sont les avantages, s'il y a lieu, que vous désiriez retirer de cette expérience ou auxquels vous vous attendiez?

Explorer : - amélioration de l'employabilité, développement de compétences, réseautage, meilleure compréhension d'autres régions

8. Pouvez-vous décrire le processus de réflexion ayant mené à votre décision de présenter une demande dans le cadre du programme? Lorsque vous réfléchissiez à la possibilité d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger, à quoi pensiez-vous? [UTILISER UN TABLEAU À FEUILLES MOBILES POUR INSCRIRE LES RÉPONSES]

Explorer :

Tout le monde—

- considérations liées au programme (p. ex., transfert de crédits, obtention du diplôme plus tard)
- considérations financières
- relations personnelles
- engagements/responsabilités sans lien avec les études
- santé/sécurité personnelle
- options disponibles/possibilités (p. ex., options de pays)

Explorer :

Étudiants handicapés—

- installations accessibles/mesures d'accommodement
- accès aux technologies d'apprentissage et aux appareils d'assistance
- espaces publics accessibles à cet endroit
- attitudes générales envers les personnes handicapées
- transport requis et son accessibilité

Explorer :

Étudiants autochtones—

- attitudes générales envers les personnes autochtones
- diversité culturelle

9. [MODIFIER LA FORMULATION DE LA QUESTION SELON LES COMMENTAIRES EN RÉPONSE À LA QUESTION PRÉCÉDENTE] Aviez-vous des craintes ou des préoccupations concernant votre participation au programme? Si c'est le cas, quelles étaient-elles?

ALTERNER L'ORDRE DES DEUX PROCHAINES QUESTIONS :

10. Est-ce que certains facteurs ont facilité votre processus décisionnel ou vous ont rendu la tâche plus facile? Si c'est le cas, lesquels?
11. Est-ce que certains obstacles, défis ou difficultés ont rendu votre processus décisionnel encore plus compliqué? Si c'est le cas, lesquels? [PORTER ATTENTION AUX DÉFIS SOULEVÉS PAR LES MEMBRES DE SOUS-GROUPES PARTICULIERS]

Explorer : - principaux obstacles, s'il y a lieu, à la participation au programme

SI DES DÉFIS/OBSTACLES SONT SOULEVÉS :

12. Avez-vous été en mesure de surmonter ce(s) défi(s)? Si c'est le cas, comment? Si ce n'est pas le cas, pourquoi pas?
13. Quels sont les renseignements/outils/ressources que vous avez consultés ou auxquels vous avez eu accès pour prendre votre décision?

Explorer : - vous êtes-vous fié(e) aux renseignements fournis par l'établissement d'enseignement?

- avez-vous tenté d'obtenir des conseils pour vous aider à prendre une décision?

14. Selon vous, avez-vous reçu suffisamment d'information au sujet du programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger par l'entremise de votre établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire? Autrement dit, l'établissement a-t-il fourni ou mis à votre disposition suffisamment de renseignements/d'outils/de ressources au sujet du programme? Si c'est le cas, pourquoi? Si ce n'est pas le cas, pourquoi pas?

Explorer : - lacunes perçues (p. ex., renseignements insuffisants, incorrects, vagues ou contradictoires)

15. Saviez-vous que du soutien financier était offert pour la participation à des occasions d'études/de travail à l'étranger? [COMPTER LES MAINS LEVÉES]

SI LES PARTICIPANTS SAVAIENT QU'IL EXISTE DU SOUTIEN FINANCIER :

16. Dites-moi ce que vous savez à ce sujet.

Explorer : - sources d'information

17. Connaissiez-vous d'autres types de soutien offerts aux participants des programmes d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Si c'est le cas, lesquels?

Expérience du programme (40 minutes)

J'aimerais maintenant aborder un autre aspect et discuter de votre expérience d'études et/ou de travail à l'étranger.

18. De manière générale, comment décririez-vous votre expérience d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Pourquoi dites-vous cela?

Explorer : - est-ce que cette expérience a répondu en tout ou en partie à vos attentes ou les a surpassées?

19. POSEZ SI LE TEMPS LE PERMET OU SI NON COUVERT À LA Q.18 Qu'avez-vous aimé de l'expérience?

20. POSEZ SI LE TEMPS LE PERMET OU SI NON COUVERT À LA Q.18 Y a-t-il quelque chose que vous n'avez pas aimé?

21. Avez-vous fait face à des défis, des difficultés ou des obstacles pendant vos études/votre travail à l'étranger? Si c'est le cas, quels étaient-ils? [PORTER ATTENTION AUX DÉFIS SOULEVÉS PAR LES MEMBRES DE SOUS-GROUPES PARTICULIERS] Avez-vous été en mesure de surmonter adéquatement ce(s) défi(s)? Pourquoi/pourquoi pas?

22. [MODIFIER LA FORMULATION DE LA QUESTION SELON LES COMMENTAIRES REÇUS] J'ai demandé tout à l'heure si vous saviez que du soutien financier était offert pour des occasions d'études et/ou de travail à l'étranger. Est-ce que certains d'entre vous ont reçu du soutien financier dans le cadre de leur programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger? [COMPTER LES MAINS LEVÉES]

23. Si vous avez reçu du soutien financier, quel impact, s'il y a lieu, ce soutien a-t-il eu sur votre expérience? Auriez-vous participé si vous n'aviez pas obtenu de soutien financier? Pourquoi/pourquoi pas?

24. Si vous n'avez pas reçu de soutien financier, quel impact, s'il y a lieu, ce soutien aurait-il eu, selon vous, sur votre expérience?

25. Quels autres types de soutien/d'outils, s'il y a lieu, vous ont été offerts dans le cadre de votre expérience à l'étranger?

Explorer :
-Familles d'accueil
-Mentors/mentorats
-Formation avant et après le départ, y compris sur les mesures de sécurité
-Formation de sensibilisation culturelle
-Ateliers de développement des compétences

26. Avez-vous utilisé l'un ou l'autre de ces types de soutien/d'outils pendant votre séjour à l'étranger? [COMPTER LES MAINS LEVÉES]

Pour les personnes ayant répondu oui :

27. Qu'avez-vous utilisé et pourquoi?

28. Quelle est votre impression des types de soutien que vous avez utilisés?

Explorer : - des obstacles pour accéder aux types de soutien?

Pour les personnes ayant répondu non :

29. Y a-t-il une raison particulière pour laquelle vous n'avez pas utilisé l'un ou l'autre des types de soutien/d'outils offerts?

Explorer : - des obstacles pour accéder aux types de soutien?

En réfléchissant au programme en général...

30. Selon votre expérience, que manquait-il, s'il y a lieu, à ce programme? Par exemple, aviez-vous des besoins, des attentes ou des exigences auxquels il n'a pas répondu? [PORTER ATTENTION AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES SOUS-GROUPES]

31. POSER SI LE TEMPS LE PERMET Y a-t-il quelque chose que vous avez appris de votre expérience et que vous auriez aimé savoir avant d'aller à l'étranger? Si c'est le cas, qu'est-ce que c'est?

32. Si vous aviez la chance de participer de nouveau au programme, que feriez-vous de différent, s'il y a lieu? Pourquoi?

33. Quels conseils, s'il y a lieu, donneriez-vous à quelqu'un qui envisage de participer à un tel programme?

34. Selon vous, quels sont les plus importants obstacles possibles pour une personne qui participe à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger comme celui auquel vous avez pris part? [PORTER ATTENTION AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES SOUS-GROUPES]

[MODIFIER LA FORMULATION DE LA QUESTION SELON LA MESURE DANS LAQUELLE DES OBSTACLES FINANCIERS ONT DÉJÀ ÉTÉ SOULEVÉS]

Revenons à la question des finances...

35. POSEZ SEULEMENT SI NON IDENTIFIÉ À LA Q.34 À quel point la situation financière d'une personne est-elle importante lorsque vient le temps de participer ou non à un tel programme? Les questions financières sont-elles plus ou moins importantes que certains autres obstacles dont nous avons parlé? Pourquoi dites-vous cela?

36. Quels sont certains des obstacles financiers auxquels une personne peut être confrontée lorsqu'il s'agit de prendre part à un tel programme? PORTER ATTENTION AUX OBSTACLES FINANCIERS LIÉS À LA COVID-19 (P. EX., COÛTS PLUS ÉLEVÉS POUR VOYAGER/BILLET D'AVION PLUS CHER, DIFFICULTÉS FINANCIÈRES EN RAISON D'UNE PERTE DE REVENUS/AIDE FINANCIÈRE INSUFFISANTE, ETC.)

- Explorer :
- les frais liés au domicile dans le pays d'origine pendant le séjour à l'étranger
 - la subsistance des personnes à charge dans le pays d'origine pendant le séjour à l'étranger
 - les frais de scolarité supplémentaires pour le programme à l'étranger
 - les frais de subsistance pendant le séjour à l'étranger

[MODIFIER LA FORMULATION SELON LA MESURE DANS LAQUELLE LA COVID-19/PANDÉMIE A ÉTÉ MENTIONNÉE]

[Revenons à/parlons de] la question de la COVID-19/pandémie...

37. Quels sont certains des obstacles auxquels une personne qui désire participer à un tel programme pourrait être confrontée en raison de la pandémie?

- Explorer :
- difficultés financières (en raison de la COVID-19)
 - restrictions liées aux voyages/choix plus limité de pays où aller
 - santé (p. ex., antécédents médicaux)
 - famille n'appuie/n'approuve pas le voyage

38. Et qu'en est-il des préoccupations...? Quelles préoccupations pourrait-on avoir relativement à la participation à un tel programme dans un contexte post-pandémie?

Explorer :
En général—

- restrictions des programmes/qualité des programmes/programmes modifiés
- préoccupations liées à la santé
- sécurité personnelle

Pendant une deuxième vague—

- être en quarantaine à l'étranger
- avoir de la difficulté à revenir à la maison
- annulation du programme
- devenir malade

39. Tout compte fait, quel était le principal avantage de votre participation à ce programme? EXPLORER LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DE COMPÉTENCES SI NON MENTIONNÉ

40. Quelles seraient vos suggestions afin de faciliter et d'accroître la participation des étudiants aux occasions d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Veuillez penser de manière générale à ce tout ce qui pourrait aider à mieux faire connaître ces possibilités et à y accéder. [PORTER ATTENTION AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES SOUS-GROUPES]

- Explorer :
- soutiens/outils manquants
 - motivateurs/facilitateurs pour encourager la participation
 - impressions/perceptions nuisant au désir d'y participer

41. [MODIFIER LA FORMULATION DE LA QUESTION SELON L'ENDROIT OÙ LES PARTICIPANTS ONT ÉTUDIÉ/TRAVAILLÉ À L'ÉTRANGER] Pouvez-vous penser à des façons de motiver ou d'encourager les étudiants à étudier ou à travailler dans des pays non traditionnels (p. ex., pays autres que les États-Unis, le Royaume-Uni, l'Australie, la France et l'Allemagne)? Croyez-vous que la COVID-19 aura une incidence sur la décision des étudiants d'étudier dans des pays non traditionnels, qui pourraient être perçus comme étant moins sécuritaires?

Revenons encore une fois à la COVID-19...

42. Pouvez-vous penser à des avantages que de tels programmes pourraient offrir dans un contexte post-pandémie? [ATTENDRE D'OBTENIR DES RÉPONSES SPONTANÉES AVANT DE FAIRE MENTION DE POSSIBILITÉS] Autrement dit, comment de tels programmes pourraient-ils contribuer à un rétablissement à l'échelle internationale?

- Explorer:
- rétablir des liens au niveau mondial
 - aider les étudiants à développer des compétences
 - encourager un retour à la normale

Communications (10 minutes)

Les dernières questions ont trait aux enjeux liés à la communication.

43. À votre avis, dans quelle mesure sont connus les programmes comme celui auquel vous avez participé?

SI LE TEMPS NE PERMET PAS LES DEUX QUESTIONS, POSEZ LA Q. 45

44. Quelle serait la meilleure façon de s'assurer que les étudiants connaissent les occasions d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger offertes par leurs établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire?

- Explorer : - moyens de communication les meilleurs/les plus efficaces

45. Et quelle serait la meilleure façon de fournir aux étudiants de l'information au sujet de ces programmes ou de mettre ces renseignements à leur disposition? Autrement dit, une fois qu'ils savent que de tels programmes existent, quelles seraient les meilleures façons de leur communiquer de l'information?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Nous avons parlé de plusieurs sujets ce soir et j'apprécie vraiment que vous ayez pris le temps de participer et de nous faire part de vos opinions. Je vais maintenant quitter la pièce pour voir si les observateurs ont d'autres questions à vous poser. À mon retour, je vous demanderai de nous faire part des dernières réflexions que vous aimeriez communiquer au gouvernement du Canada au sujet des thèmes abordés, si vous en avez.

LE MODÉRATEUR QUITTERA LA PIÈCE ET IRA VOIR SI LES OBSERVATEURS ONT D'AUTRES QUESTIONS.

Nous vous remercions pour votre temps. Le groupe de discussion est maintenant terminé.

4b. Students who did NOT participated in study and/or work abroad programs

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Introduce moderator/firm and welcome participants to the focus group.

TECHNICAL CHECK; CONFIRM SOUND AND VIDEO QUALITY.

- Thanks for attending/value your being here.
- Tonight, we're conducting research on behalf of the Government of Canada.
- We will be seeking your opinion on issues related to accessing study and work abroad opportunities for Canadian students.
- The discussion will last approximately two hours.
- Describe focus group.
 - This is a "virtual round table" discussion.
 - My job is to facilitate the discussion, keeping us on topic and on time.
 - Your job is to offer your opinions. There are no right or wrong answers.
 - Everyone's opinion is important and should be respected.
 - We encourage you to speak up even if you feel your opinion might be different from others.
- Explanations.
 - Comments treated in confidence.
 - Anything you say during these groups will be held in confidence.
 - Our report summarizes the findings but does not mention anyone by name.
 - We encourage you to not provide any identifiable information about yourself.
 - Your responses will in no way affect any dealings you have with the Government of Canada.
 - The session is being recorded. The recordings remain in our possession and will not be released to anyone, even to the Government of Canada, without your written consent.
 - Recording is for report writing purposes/verify feedback.
 - Observers.
 - There are people from the Government of Canada involved in this project who will be observing tonight's online session.
 - Purpose: oversee the research process and see your reactions first-hand.
- Any questions?
- Roundtable introduction: Please tell us your first name.

Context/background (15 minutes)

When we recruited you for this research, you indicated that you have not participated in a study and/or work abroad program through the post-secondary institution you attend, despite having interest in doing

1. How interested are you in an opportunity to participate in a study/work abroad program as part of your post-secondary studies? NOTE TO MODERATOR: THE FOCUS HERE IS ON 'INTEREST' REGARDLESS OF CHALLENGES, BARRIERS, OBSTACLES. CLARIFY THIS IF AND AS NEEDED. IF COVID-19/THE PANDEMIC IS MENTIONED, ACKNOWLEDGE THIS AND ASK PARTICIPANTS TO SET THIS ASIDE BECAUSE WE WILL COME TO IT LATER IN THE DISCUSSION.

Probe: - level of interest as well as interest in working versus studying abroad

2. Why are you interested in participating in such a program? What factor(s) motivate you to want to study/work abroad and what benefits, if any, would you hope or expect to derive from that experience?

Probe: - increased employability, networking, deepened understanding of other regions

3. Given the opportunity, where would you choose to go for a study/work term abroad? Why is that?

Probe: - factors that would influence choice of a country/region

4. Does your post-secondary institution offer students the opportunity to study/work abroad?

IF YES:

5. How familiar are you with the study/work abroad program offered through your post-secondary institution? What do you know about it?

Probe: - awareness of details (e.g. duration, country choices/options)
- sources of information (e.g. first-hand knowledge, hearsay)

6. Given your interest, have you taken any kind of action? What action(s), if any, have you taken in this regard? NOTE TO MODERATOR: THE FOCUS AT THIS POINT IS ON THINGS THEY HAVE DONE, NOT FACTORS THEY CONSIDERED SUCH AS THE PROS AND CONS OF STUDYING/WORKING ABROAD

Probes: - spoke to counsellor/advisor
- searched online for information
- applied for international study/work program via university/college

Considerations and challenges related to study/work abroad (50 minutes)

I would like to discuss issues related to accessing study and work abroad opportunities. To begin with ...

7. Can you describe or walk me through your thought process regarding the possibility of taking part in a study/work abroad program? What did you consider when thinking about the possibility of studying/working abroad? Were certain considerations more important than others? If so, which one(s) and why? NOTE TO MODERATOR: THE FOCUS AT THIS POINT IS ON WHAT PARTICIPANTS CONSIDERED AS PART OF THEIR DECISION-MAKING PROCESS, NOT THE REASONS WHY THEY DID NOT TAKE PART/APPLYING. CLARIFY IF/AS NEEDED

8. What information/tools/resources did you access/consult as part of this process?

Probe: - did you search for information online?

- did you reach out for advice or guidance to help them make this decision?

IF CONSULTED/HAD DISCUSSIONS WITH ANYONE:

9. Who did you have discussions with? PROBE: parent/family member, friend, partner, advisor/counsellor, classmate/colleague, former participant? What did you discuss? Were the discussions ongoing or one time-only?
10. Do you feel you are sufficiently informed about the study/work abroad program offered through your post-secondary institution? In other words, do you have enough information/tools/resources to make an informed decision? If so why? If not, why not?

Probe perceived shortcomings (e.g. missing, incorrect, vague, conflicting information)

I'd like to ask you more specifically about the pros and cons you considered.

ROTATE NEXT 2 QUESTIONS:

Given your circumstances, and setting aside the pandemic,

11. What considerations or factors, if any, have been most influential in terms of encouraging you to consider applying?

IF COVID-19 IS RAISED, REMIND PARTICIPANTS THAT THIS WILL BE DISCUSSED SHORTLY.

12. What considerations or factors, if any, have been most influential in terms of discouraging you or dissuading you from applying? BE ATTENTIVE TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEMBERS OF SUBGROUPS AND BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE STUDENTS, AS WELL AS DIFFERENCES BETWEEN DOMESTIC FACTORS (E.G. NOT WANTING TO DELAY GRADUATION) AND FACTORS RELATED TO BEING ABROAD (E.G. FEAR OF NOT BEING SUFFICIENTLY ACCOMMODATED IN ANOTHER COUNTRY)

Probe: - financial issues, health-related issues, academic issues, employment-related issues, lack of supports/accommodations abroad, domestic issues (e.g. family)

13. All things considered, what factor(s) was/were most important or influential in your decision not to participate in a study/work abroad program? BE ATTENTIVE TO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MEMBERS OF SPECIFIC SUBGROUPS AND BETWEEN UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE STUDENTS. ALSO BE ATTENTIVE TO FACTORS IDENTIFIED BY ANY PARTICIPANTS WHO ACTUALLY APPLIED FOR A STUDY/WORK ABROAD PROGRAM BUT WHO CHANGED THEIR MIND

14. How would you characterize the impact or influence of this/these factor(s)? For example, do you see them as complications/inconveniences you were unprepared/unwilling to deal with, challenges/problems that were difficult to address/resolve?, or barriers/obstacles making participation impossible/impractical/unrealistic?

Probe: - extent to which participants see themselves as *unwilling* vs. *unable* to participate in a study/work abroad program

15. Did you make any inquiries about supports or resources available to address this/these challenge(s)? If so, what did you find? If not, why not?

16. Are you aware that financial support is available for study/work abroad opportunities? [HAND COUNT]

IF AWARE OF FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

17. Tell me what you know about it.

Probe: - sources of information

18. Did you apply for financial assistance? If yes, what happened? If not, why not?

Probe: - any barriers to accessing financial support

19. Are you aware of any other types of supports/resources available to people considering study/work abroad programs? If so, what?

IF AWARE OF OTHER KINDS OF SUPPORT:

20. Did you try to access/look into accessing any of these? If yes, what happened? If not, why not?

Probe: - any barriers to accessing non-financial support(s)

21. What, if anything, would have to be in place or available to you in terms of supports, resources or tools that would realistically allow you to take part in such a program?

22. All things considered, what would you identify as the most important potential barrier(s) to someone taking part in a study/work abroad program? BE ATTENTIVE TO BARRIERS IDENTIFIED BY MEMBERS OF SPECIFIC SUBGROUPS

[ADJUST WORDING BASED ON EXTENT TO WHICH FINANCIAL BARRIERS HAVE ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED]

Coming back to the issue of finances...

23. How important a factor is a person's financial situation when it comes to whether or not they take part in such a program? Are financial issues more or less important than some of the other barriers we've discussed? Why do you say that?

24. What are some of the financial barriers or obstacles someone might face when it comes to taking part in such a program?

- Probe:
- housing-related expenses in home country while abroad
 - supporting dependents in home country while abroad
 - additional school fees for abroad program
 - living expenses while abroad

[ADJUST WORDING BASED ON EXTENT TO WHICH COVID-19/THE PANDEMIC HAS ALREADY BEEN IDENTIFIED]

Coming back to COVID-19/the pandemic ...

25. What are some of the barriers or obstacles resulting from the pandemic that someone might face when it comes to taking part in such a program?

- Probe:
- financial strain (due to COVID-19)
 - travel restrictions/limits on possible countries one can visit
 - health (e.g. pre-existing health condition)
 - lack of family support/approval of travel

26. And, what about concerns...? What concerns might someone have about taking part in such a program in the post-pandemic environment?

Probe:

In general—

- program restrictions/quality of programs/modified programs
- health concerns
- personal safety

During a 2nd wave—

- being quarantined abroad
- having difficulty getting home
- having a program cancelled
- getting sick

27. To what extent, if at all, has COVID-19 and the current environment affected your interest in the possibility of taking part in a study/work abroad program Why is that?

Feedback on program and suggestions for improvement (25 minutes)

28. Do you know anyone in circumstances similar to your own that has participated in a study/work abroad program? NOTE TO MODERATOR: IF PARTICIPANTS KNOW NO ONE IN CIRCUMSTANCES SIMILAR TO THEIR OWN, ASK IF THEY KNOW ANYONE WHO HAS TAKEN PART. IF SO, ASK NEXT 2 QUESTIONS

IF YES:

29. Have you spoken to them about their experience studying/working abroad? If so, what did they say about it? Did they enjoy the experience?

Probe: - did the experience meet, exceed, fall short of expectations?

30. What challenges, if any, did they face? How did they deal with the challenges they faced/experienced?

Probe: did they receive support as part of their study/work abroad experience?

31. What suggestions would you make in order to facilitate and increase the participation of students in study/work abroad opportunities? Please think broadly in terms of anything that could help improve awareness of and access to such opportunities. BE ATTENTIVE TO SUBGROUP DIFFERENCES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Probe: - missing supports/tools
- motivators/facilitators to encourage participation
- impressions/perceptions adversely affecting desire to participate

32. Can you think of ways to motivate or encourage students to study or work in non-traditional countries (e.g. countries other than the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France, Germany)?

33. Why do you think students are more likely to be attracted to countries like the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, France, and Germany in terms of study/work abroad opportunities?

Coming back to COVID-19 again...

34. Do you think COVID-19 will affect your decision (or other students' decisions) to study in non-traditional countries, as they may be perceived to be less safe?

35. Can you think of any advantages programs such as these might bring in a post-pandemic environment? [WAIT FOR TOP-OF-MIND RESPONSES BEFORE USING THE PROMPT] Put another way, how might programs such as these contribute to international recovery?

Probe: - re-establishing global connections
- helping students to build skills
- encouraging a return to normalcy

Communications (15 minutes)

The last few questions have to do with communications issues.

36. In your opinion, how widespread is awareness of study/work abroad programs? Why do you say that?
37. What would be the best way to ensure that students are aware about study/work abroad opportunities offered through their post-secondary institutions?

Probe: - best/most effective communications channels

38. And what would be the best way to provide or make available information about such programs to students? In other words, once they are aware that such programs exist what would be the most effective way(s) to communicate information to them?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

We've covered a lot tonight and I really appreciate you taking the time to come and share your opinions. I'm going to check with the observers to see if there are any last questions for you and then I'm going to ask whether any of you has last thoughts that you want to give the Government of Canada about this topic.

Thank you very much for your time. This concludes the discussion group.

Introduction (5 minutes)

- Présenter le modérateur/le cabinet et souhaiter la bienvenue aux participants du groupe de discussion.

VÉRIFICATION TECHNIQUE; CONFIRMER LA QUALITÉ DU SON ET DE L'IMAGE.

- Merci d'être présents/nous apprécions que vous soyez ici.
- Ce soir, nous menons une recherche au nom du gouvernement du Canada.
- Nous désirons obtenir votre opinion sur des questions liées à l'accès aux occasions d'étudier et de travailler à l'étranger pour les étudiants canadiens.
- La discussion durera environ deux heures.

● Décrire le groupe de discussion.

- Il s'agit d'une discussion de type « table ronde virtuelle ».
- J'ai la tâche de faciliter la discussion et de veiller à ce qu'on s'en tienne au sujet tout en respectant le temps qui nous est alloué.
- Vous avez la tâche de fournir vos opinions. Il n'y a pas de bonnes ou de mauvaises réponses.
- L'opinion de chaque personne est importante et doit être respectée.
- Nous voulons que vous fassiez part de votre opinion même si vous croyez qu'elle est différente de celle des autres.

● Explications.

- Les commentaires seront traités de manière confidentielle.
 - Tout ce que vous direz dans le cadre de ces discussions sera traité de manière confidentielle.
 - Notre rapport présentera un résumé des constats, mais ne mentionnera le nom d'aucun participant.
 - Nous vous encourageons à ne mentionner aucun renseignement qui permettrait de vous identifier.
- Vos réponses n'auront aucune incidence sur vos rapports avec le gouvernement du Canada.
- La séance sera enregistrée. Nous conserverons l'enregistrement et nous ne le remettrons à personne, pas même au gouvernement du Canada, sans votre consentement écrit.
 - L'enregistrement servira à rédiger le rapport et à vérifier les commentaires reçus.
- Observateurs
 - Des représentants du gouvernement du Canada participant au projet observeront la séance en ligne de ce soir.
 - Objectif : superviser le processus de recherche et observer directement vos réactions.

● Des questions?

● Tour de table pour les présentations : Dites-nous votre prénom.

Contexte/renseignements généraux (15 minutes)

Lorsque nous vous avons recrutés pour les fins de cette recherche, vous avez indiqué que vous n'aviez pas participé à un programme d'études et/ou de travail à l'étranger par l'entremise de l'établissement d'enseignement que vous fréquentiez, et ce, même si vous en aviez manifesté l'intérêt.

1. Dans quelle mesure êtes-vous intéressé(e) à participer à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger dans le cadre de vos études postsecondaires? NOTE À L'INTENTION DU MODÉRATEUR : ON VISE ICI À OBTENIR DES RENSEIGNEMENTS SUR L'« INTÉRÊT », PEU IMPORTE LES DÉFIS, LES DIFFICULTÉS ET LES OBSTACLES. LE PRÉCISER, AU BESOIN. SI UN PARTICIPANT FAIT MENTION DE LA COVID-19/PANDÉMIE, RECONNAÎTRE QU'IL S'AGIT D'UN ENJEU ET DEMANDER AUX PARTICIPANTS DE LE METTRE DE CÔTÉ PARCE QUE CE SERA ABORDÉ PLUS TARD DANS LA DISCUSSION.

Explorer : - niveau d'intérêt et intérêt pour le travail ou les études à l'étranger

2. Pourquoi êtes-vous intéressé(e) à participer à un tel programme? Quel(s) facteur(s) vous motive(nt) à vouloir étudier/travailler à l'étranger et quels sont les avantages, s'il y a lieu, que vous espérez retirer de cette expérience ou auxquels vous vous attendez?

Explorer : - amélioration de l'employabilité, réseautage, meilleure compréhension d'autres régions

3. Si vous aviez l'occasion d'étudier ou de travailler à l'étranger, où choisiriez-vous d'aller? Pourquoi?

Explorer : - facteurs qui influenceraient le choix d'un pays/d'une région

4. Votre établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire offre-t-il aux étudiants l'occasion d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger?

SI LA RÉPONSE EST OUI :

5. Dans quelle mesure connaissez-vous le programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger offert par votre établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire? Que savez-vous à ce sujet?

Explorer : - connaissance des renseignements détaillés (p. ex., durée, choix/options de pays)
- sources d'information (p. ex., connaissances pratiques, ouï-dire)

6. Étant donné votre intérêt, avez-vous effectué certaines démarches? Quelle(s) démarche(s), s'il y a lieu, avez-vous entreprise(s) à cet égard? NOTE À L'INTENTION DU MODÉRATEUR : ON MET L'ACCENT ICI SUR LES GESTES POSÉS ET NON SUR LES FACTEURS PRIS EN CONSIDÉRATION, NOTAMMENT LES AVANTAGES ET LES DÉSAVANTAGES D'ÉTUDIER/DE TRAVAILLER À L'ÉTRANGER

Explorer : - parlé à un conseiller
- effectué des recherches en ligne pour obtenir de l'information
- présenté une demande pour participer à un programme international d'études/de travail par l'entremise d'une université/d'un collège

Considérations et défis liés à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger (50 minutes)

J'aimerais maintenant discuter des enjeux liés à l'accès aux occasions d'études et de travail à l'étranger. Pour commencer...

7. Pouvez-vous décrire ou m'expliquer le processus de réflexion concernant la possibilité d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger? Lorsque vous réfléchissiez à la possibilité d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger, à quoi pensiez-vous? Certaines considérations étaient-elles plus importantes que d'autres? Si c'est le cas, quelles étaient-elles et pourquoi? NOTE À L'INTENTION DU MODÉRATEUR : ON MET L'ACCENT ICI SUR LES CONSIDÉRATIONS DES PARTICIPANTS LORS DU PROCESSUS DÉCISIONNEL ET NON SUR LES RAISONS POUR LESQUELLES ILS N'ONT PAS PARTICIPÉ/PRÉSENTÉ UNE DEMANDE. LE PRÉCISER, AU BESOIN.

8. Quels sont les renseignements/outils/ressources que vous avez consultés ou auxquels vous avez eu accès pour prendre votre décision?

Explorer : - avez-vous effectué des recherches en ligne pour trouver de l'information?
- avez-vous tenté d'obtenir des avis et des conseils pour vous aider à prendre une décision?

SI LES PARTICIPANTS ONT CONSULTÉ UNE PERSONNE/DISCUITÉ AVEC QUELQU'UN :

9. Avec qui avez-vous discuté? EXPLORER : parent/membre de la famille, ami, partenaire, conseiller, camarade de classe/collègue, ancien participant? De quoi avez-vous discuté? Avez-vous eu bon nombre de discussions ou en avez-vous parlé une seule fois?
10. Selon vous, recevez-vous suffisamment d'information au sujet du programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger par l'entremise de votre établissement d'enseignement postsecondaire? Autrement dit, avez-vous suffisamment de renseignements/d'outils/de ressources pour prendre une décision éclairée? Si c'est le cas, pourquoi? Si ce n'est pas le cas, pourquoi pas?

Explorer : lacunes perçues (p. ex., renseignements insuffisants, incorrects, vagues ou contradictoires)

J'aimerais maintenant vous poser plus précisément des questions au sujet des avantages et des inconvénients auxquels vous avez pensé.

ALTERNER L'ORDRE DES DEUX PROCHAINES QUESTIONS :

Étant donné vos circonstances et sans tenir compte de la pandémie,

11. Quelles considérations ou quels facteurs, s'il y a lieu, vous ont le plus incité(e) à envisager de présenter une demande?

SI UN PARTICIPANT FAIT MENTION DE LA COVID-19, RAPPELER AUX PARTICIPANTS QUE CET ENJEU SERA ABORDÉ SOUS PEU.

12. Quelles considérations ou quels facteurs, s'il y a lieu, vous ont le plus découragé(e) ou dissuadé(e) de présenter une demande? PORTER ATTENTION AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES MEMBRES DES SOUS-GROUPES ET ENTRE LES ÉTUDIANTS DES UNIVERSITÉS ET DES COLLÈGES, AINSI QU'AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES FACTEURS AU PAYS (P. EX., NE PAS VOULOIR RETARDER L'OBTENTION DU DIPLÔME) ET LES FACTEURS LIÉS AU SÉJOUR À L'ÉTRANGER (P. EX., CRAINTE DE NE PAS AVOIR SUFFISAMMENT DE MESURES D'ACCOMMODEMENT DANS UN AUTRE PAYS).

Explorer : - questions financières, problèmes de santé, questions scolaires, enjeux liés à l'emploi, manque de soutien/mesures d'accommodement à l'étranger, questions domestiques (p. ex., famille)

13. Tout compte fait, quel(s) facteur(s) a/ont été le(s) plus important(s) dans votre décision de ne pas participer à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger? PORTER ATTENTION AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES MEMBRES DE SOUS-GROUPES PARTICULIERS ET ENTRE LES ÉTUDIANTS DES UNIVERSITÉS ET DES COLLÈGES. PORTER ÉGALEMENT ATTENTION AUX FACTEURS SOULEVÉS PAR DES PARTICIPANTS QUI ONT PRÉSENTÉ UNE DEMANDE POUR PARTICIPER À UN PROGRAMME D'ÉTUDES/DE TRAVAIL À L'ÉTRANGER, MAIS QUI ONT FINALEMENT CHANGÉ D'IDÉE.
14. Comment décririez-vous l'impact ou l'influence de ce(s) facteur(s)? Par exemple, estimez-vous qu'ils sont des complications/inconvénients que vous n'étiez pas prêt(e)/désireux(euse) d'affronter, des défis/problèmes qui étaient difficiles à surmonter/résoudre, ou des obstacles rendant la participation impossible/non pratique/irréaliste?

Explorer : - mesure dans laquelle les participants se considéraient *non désireux* comparativement à *incapables* de participer à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger

15. Vous êtes-vous renseigné(e) au sujet des types de soutien ou des ressources disponibles pour surmonter ce(s) défi(s)? Si c'est le cas, qu'avez-vous trouvé? Si ce n'est pas le cas, pourquoi pas?
16. Savez-vous que du soutien financier est offert pour la participation à des occasions d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger? [COMPTER LES MAINS LEVÉES]

SI LES PARTICIPANTS SAVENT QU'IL EXISTE DU SOUTIEN FINANCIER :

17. Dites-moi ce que vous savez à ce sujet.

Explorer : - sources d'information

18. Avez-vous présenté une demande pour obtenir du soutien financier? Si c'est le cas, que s'est-il produit? Si ce n'est pas le cas, pourquoi pas?

Explorer : - les obstacles pour obtenir du soutien financier

19. Connaissez-vous d'autres types de soutien/ressources offerts aux personnes qui aimeraient étudier/travailler à l'étranger? Si c'est le cas, quels sont-ils?

SI LES PARTICIPANTS SAVENT QU'IL EXISTE D'AUTRES TYPES DE SOUTIEN :

20. Avez-vous essayé d'obtenir d'autres types de soutien ou vous êtes-vous renseigné(e) pour en obtenir? Si c'est le cas, que s'est-il produit? Si ce n'est pas le cas, pourquoi pas?

Explorer : - les obstacles pour obtenir du soutien autre que financier

21. Pour que vous puissiez de manière réaliste envisager de prendre part à un tel programme, quels types de soutien, de ressources ou d'outils devraient être en place ou vous être offerts?

22. Tout compte fait, quel(s) est/sont, selon vous, le(s) plus important(s) obstacles à la participation à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger? PORTER ATTENTION AUX OBSTACLES SOULEVÉS PAR LES MEMBRES DE SOUS-GROUPES PARTICULIERS.

[MODIFIER LA FORMULATION SELON LA MESURE DANS LAQUELLE LES OBSTACLES FINANCIERS ONT ÉTÉ SOULEVÉS]

Revenons à la question des finances...

23. À quel point la situation financière d'une personne est-elle importante lorsque vient le temps de décider de participer ou non à un tel programme? Les questions financières sont-elles plus ou moins importantes que certains autres obstacles dont nous avons parlé? Pourquoi dites-vous cela?
24. Quels sont certains des obstacles financiers auxquels une personne peut être confrontée lorsqu'il s'agit de prendre part à un tel programme?

Explorer :

- les frais liés au domicile dans le pays d'origine pendant le séjour à l'étranger
- la subsistance des personnes à charge dans le pays d'origine pendant le séjour à l'étranger
- les frais de scolarité supplémentaires pour le programme à l'étranger
- les frais de subsistance pendant le séjour à l'étranger

[MODIFIER LA FORMULATION SELON LA MESURE DANS LAQUELLE LA COVID-19/PANDÉMIE A ÉTÉ MENTIONNÉE]

Revenons à la question de la COVID-19/pandémie...

25. Quels sont certains des obstacles auxquels une personne qui désire participer à un tel programme pourrait être confrontée en raison de la pandémie?

Explorer :

- difficultés financières (en raison de la COVID-19)
- restrictions liées aux voyages/choix plus limité de pays où aller
- santé (p. ex., antécédents médicaux)
- famille n'appuie/n'approuve pas le voyage

26. Et qu'en est-il des préoccupations...? Quelles préoccupations pourrait-on avoir relativement à la participation à un tel programme dans un contexte post-pandémie?

Explorer :

En général—

- restrictions des programmes/qualité des programmes/programmes modifiés
- préoccupations liées à la santé
- sécurité personnelle

Pendant une deuxième vague—

- être en quarantaine à l'étranger

- avoir de la difficulté à revenir à la maison
- annulation du programme
- devenir malade

27. Dans quelle mesure, s'il y a lieu, la COVID-19 et le contexte actuel ont-ils eu une incidence sur votre intérêt à participer à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Pourquoi?

Commentaires sur le programme et suggestions aux fins d'amélioration (25 minutes)

28. Connaissez-vous quelqu'un dans des circonstances semblables aux vôtres qui a participé à un programme d'études/de travail à l'étranger? NOTE À L'INTENTION DU MODÉRATEUR : SI LES PARTICIPANTS NE CONNAISSENT PERSONNE DANS DES CIRCONSTANCES SEMBLABLES AUX LEURS, DEMANDER S'ILS CONNAISSENT QUELQU'UN AYANT PARTICIPÉ À UN TEL PROGRAMME. SI C'EST LE CAS, POSER LES DEUX PROCHAINES QUESTIONS.

SI C'EST LE CAS :

29. Lui avez-vous parlé de son expérience d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Si c'est le cas, qu'a dit la personne à ce sujet? A-t-elle aimé son expérience?

Explorer : - est-ce que cette expérience a répondu en tout ou en partie à ses attentes ou les a surpassées?

30. À quels défis, s'il y a lieu, a-t-elle été confrontée? Comment a-t-elle composé avec ces défis?

Explorer : a-t-elle reçu du soutien dans le cadre de son expérience d'études/de travail à l'étranger?

31. Quelles seraient vos suggestions afin de faciliter et d'accroître la participation des étudiants aux occasions d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Veuillez penser de manière générale à ce tout ce qui pourrait aider à mieux faire connaître ces possibilités et à y accéder. PORTER ATTENTION AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES SOUS-GROUPES PARTICULIERS ET AUX DIFFÉRENCES ENTRE LES ÉTUDIANTS DES UNIVERSITÉS ET DES COLLÈGES.

Explorer :

- soutiens/outils insuffisants
- motivateurs/facilitateurs pour encourager la participation
- impressions/perceptions nuisant au désir d'y participer

32. Pouvez-vous penser à des façons de motiver ou d'encourager les étudiants à étudier ou à travailler dans des pays non traditionnels (p. ex., pays autres que les États-Unis, le Royaume-Uni, l'Australie, la France et l'Allemagne)?

33. Selon vous, pourquoi les étudiants sont-ils plus susceptibles d'être attirés par des pays comme les États-Unis, le Royaume-Uni, l'Australie, la France et l'Allemagne pour des occasions d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Croyez-vous que la COVID-19 aura une incidence sur votre décision (ou la

décision d'autres étudiants) d'étudier dans des pays non traditionnels, qui pourraient être perçus comme étant moins sécuritaires?

Revenons encore une fois à la COVID-19...

34. Pouvez-vous penser à des avantages que de tels programmes pourraient offrir dans un contexte post-pandémie? [ATTENDRE D'OBTENIR DES RÉPONSES SPONTANÉES AVANT DE FAIRE MENTION DE POSSIBILITÉS] Autrement dit, comment de tels programmes pourraient-ils contribuer à un rétablissement à l'échelle internationale?

Explorer:

- rétablir des liens au niveau mondial
- aider les étudiants à développer des compétences
- encourager un retour à la normale

Communications (15 minutes)

Les dernières questions ont trait aux enjeux liés à la communication.

35. À votre avis, dans quelle mesure sont connus les programmes d'études/de travail à l'étranger? Pourquoi dites-vous cela?
36. Quelle serait la meilleure façon de s'assurer que les étudiants connaissent les occasions d'étudier/de travailler à l'étranger offertes par leurs établissements d'enseignement postsecondaire?

Explorer : - les meilleurs moyens de communication et/ou les plus efficaces

37. Et quelle serait la meilleure façon de fournir aux étudiants de l'information au sujet de ces programmes ou de mettre ces renseignements à leur disposition? Autrement dit, une fois qu'ils savent que de tels programmes existent, quelles seraient les meilleures façons de leur communiquer de l'information?

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Nous avons parlé de plusieurs sujets ce soir et j'apprécie vraiment que vous ayez pris le temps de participer et de nous faire part de vos opinions. Je vais maintenant quitter la pièce pour voir si les observateurs ont d'autres questions à vous poser. À mon retour, je vous demanderai de nous faire part des dernières réflexions que vous aimeriez communiquer au gouvernement du Canada au sujet des thèmes abordés, si vous en avez.

LE MODÉRATEUR QUITTERA LA PIÈCE ET IRA VOIR SI LES OBSERVATEURS ONT D'AUTRES QUESTIONS.

Nous vous remercions de votre temps. Le groupe de discussion est maintenant terminé.

5. Travel Destinations

Location	Visited (Participants)	Want to visit (Non-participants)	Total
Europe	24	33	57
Europe (unspecified)	-	7	7
Austria	-	1	1
Belgium	1	1	2
Denmark	1	-	1
England	7	3	10
Finland	2	2	4
France	2	5	7
Germany	2	5	7
Ireland	1	1	2
Italy	-	1	1
Netherlands	1	1	2
Norway	-	4	4
Scotland	2	1	3
Spain	4	1	5
Sweden	1	-	1
Asia	6	9	15
China	2	2	4
Hong Kong		1	1
Japan	3	4	7
South Korea	1	2	3
Australia	8	4	12
New Zealand	2	1	3
Africa	1	4	5
Africa (unspecified)	-	1	1
Kenya	1	-	1
Rwanda	-	1	1
Senegal	-	1	1
South Africa	-	1	1
U.S.A.	1	3	4
Latin America	1	3	4
Latin America (unspecified)	-	3	3
Ecuador	1	-	1

6. Political Neutrality Certification

I hereby certify, as a Senior Officer of Phoenix Strategic Perspectives, that the deliverables fully comply with the Government of Canada political neutrality requirements outlined in the Policy on Communications and Federal Identity of the Government of Canada and Procedures for Planning and Contracting Public Opinion Research. Specifically, the deliverables do not contain any reference to electoral voting intentions, political party preferences, standings with the electorate, or ratings of the performance of a political party or its leader.



Alethea Woods
President
Phoenix SPI