

Young professionals around the world are striving to compete in today's global economy. As individuals have become more interconnected with their counterparts across the world, international training has also become a highly valued skill. American policymakers are actively working to leverage a desire for training as a way to establish stronger business, political, and social ties with countries around the world. The tool? Intern and Trainee programs. Designated by the U.S. Department of State, these programs serve these key goals while also affording international professionals valuable skills, expertise, and cultural insights.

Over 35,000 international Intern and Trainee participants came to the United States in 2017. While Interns are current university students or recent graduates, Trainees are individuals with five or more years of experience or recent graduates with a year or more of experience. Both of these programs afford international participants the opportunity to temporarily live in the United States while taking part in professional training with host organizations and companies.

While Intern and Trainee participants strive to acquire necessary skills, the United States gains a unique opportunity to advance its public diplomacy goals. A recent study by EurekaFacts, *Intern and Trainee Exchange Program 2018 Review Report*, found that the U.S. is exporting its image, values, and best practices with each participant's return home. A staggering 95% of participants have a positive experience in the U.S. during their stay, 75% develop a more positive opinion of Americans, and 73% develop a more positive opinion of the U.S. in general. Comparable programs also benefit American workers. 71% of host organizations offer equivalent Intern or Trainee program opportunities for Americans.

The United States also gains economically. The study found that in 2017 alone, Interns and Trainees contributed over \$662 million during their average

eight-month stay. Individually, program participants have a significant economic impact on American local communities, contributing approximately \$2,000 each month on expenses like housing, food, entertainment, and travel.

Host organizations, comprised of a range of American-based companies, benefit as well. In fact, EurekaFacts found that 85% of hosts surveyed said the Intern and Trainee programs are important to their business. One reason is that they allow current staff to broaden their perspectives through exposure to different cultures. 75% of host organizations agreed that this phenomenon regularly occurs in the workplace. Additionally, 60% of host organizations said they would experience a negative impact without the programs.

Professionally-based exchanges are increasingly integral to companies as the new relationships formed through these programs lead to overseas partnerships. The study affirms these partnerships will continue to multiply: 70% of participants report a more positive opinion about the American way of doing business and about American companies in general.

Intern and Trainee programs illustrate a clear "win-win" for both the United States and participants. As valuable public diplomacy tools supporting U.S. national security, these programs simultaneously help American businesses and strengthen our economy.

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