

working abroad

opportunities guide





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introduction

International experiences have been gaining in popularity, especially as students want the chance to grow personally, professionally, and culturally. The opportunities available cover a wide spectrum of work, from not-for-profits to big corporations. Regardless of what you are interested in, working internationally involves exploring and planning.

Things To Keep In Mind

Before you decide to start job-searching abroad, there are a few things that must be kept in mind.

- First, the initial cost of moving is high. Not only is money required for the airfare, it is also required for relocation. It may be difficult to bring old household appliances with you, so moving abroad could mean starting from scratch. Saving money beforehand is necessary if you are considering further traveling while abroad.
- Aside from relocation, feelings of loneliness and the lack of stability are common. As cultures may be different, holidays typically celebrated in the U.S., such as Thanksgiving, may not be celebrated in other countries. Be prepared to learn and adapt to new norms, laws, and culture.
- Choosing to live and work in a new country will also involve a range of logistical challenges, such as visas and taxation issues. It is best to research ahead. If you do secure a position abroad, ask your human resources department if the company will take care of the logistics of securing a visa. If not, look into the Department of State's website with visa application details at travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/international-travel/before-you-go/travelers-with-special-considerations.html.
- Last but not least, it is important you consider why you want to work abroad and what you hope to gain from it. In fully understanding your goals, you will be able to remain positive during your transition and correctly identify the type of work and lifestyle you want to be engaged in while abroad.

Benefits of Working Abroad

Despite all the logistically planning involved, international experiences have many personal and professional benefits. In addition to having the opportunity to experience a different culture and to travel within and nearby the country, you will also gain positive life skills. Being able to move and adapt to a country with a different lifestyle and culture allows you to foster adaptability skills that are marketable later on in your career. You also gain the opportunity to hone teamwork and communication skills as you tackle differences within the working environment. Additionally, learning and mastering a new language will also increase your future marketability, in terms of both language spoken and communication skills.

All this being said, there are numerous opportunities to work professionally abroad, regardless of career interests.

cornell specific opportunities

Preparing During Your Undergraduate Years

Utilize the resources that are available throughout Cornell to explore what opportunities are available during your degree program and after graduation. Explore Global Cornell for study abroad opportunities and attend information sessions about each country and program. Look for courses across disciplines that have an international component.

College of Human Ecology Academic Curricula

Global & Public Health Sciences (GPHS) Major:

The Global & Public Health Sciences major allows students interested in health problems of a community to study actions that can be done to protect or improve the lives of those in a community. The major is especially appropriate for students who wish to pursue advanced study that would lead to leadership positions in government and non-governmental organizations that deal directly with current and emerging health concerns. As part of the curriculum, students are required to complete a minimum of three credit hours of supervised experiential learning in a laboratory or community setting. While students have the option to choose from a list of supervised experiences in the local community, on-campus laboratory, off-campus academic settings (such as Cornell in Washington and Capital Semester in Albany), some students elect to gain international field experience in a underserved environment.

Global Health Minor

In addition to the GPHS major, the College of Human Ecology also offers the Global Health minor. Through the program, students are expected to spend a minimum of 8 weeks in a developing country as part of their field experience. Students can participate through a Cornell Summer Program in India or an independent field experience. In addition to the field experience, students are expected to take 2 core classes (NS 2600: Introduction to Global Health, and NS 4600: Explorations in Global Health), as well as 3 other elective courses.

Some Human Ecology Courses with an International Aspect

- FSAD 3200 Global Textile and Apparel Sustainability
- FSAD 4021 Apparel and Textiles in Developing Nations (India trip)
- NS 3090 Global Health Case Studies from Weill Cornell Medicine
- NS 4450 Toward a Sustainable Global Food System: Food Policy for Developing Countries

University-Wide Opportunities

International Relations Minor

IRM is an interdisciplinary undergraduate minor open to all Cornell undergraduates. This is composed of six courses from four core groups (International Economics and Development, World Politics and Foreign Policy, International Policy, and Regional Specialization) and two electives. IRM graduates have gone on to higher education

in political science and anthropology, as well as to successful careers in government as well as international business. If you are interested in applying for the minor, message the Einaudi center so that you can be put on a listerv of opportunities to engage in panels or events about international relations.

Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies

The Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies offers many different areas of specialization for studying abroad, interning abroad, or conducting research. The eight programs are comparative Muslim societies, East Asia program, Institute for African Development, Institute for European Studies, Latin American and Caribbean studies, Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies, South Asia program, and Southeast Asia program. There is also a variety of funding opportunities for students looking to study within these areas or conduct research.

Spending a Summer Abroad

Aside from participating in the Global Health Minor, students can also spend their summer abroad through other non-health related programs. The Cornell Abroad office not only helps students plan for a study abroad semester, but also helps students find international summer opportunities, even following graduation. The Cornell Abroad office is located in 300 Caldwell hall and is open from 9am to 4pm Mondays to Fridays. Students can stop by the office to schedule an appointment to speak with a representative.

Financing a Summer Abroad

Undergraduates on Cornell semester programs pay regular Cornell tuition, program fees and out-of-pocket expenses. Your program fees and out-of-pocket expenses depend on the program you select, your living arrangement, and other local costs. If you enroll in a full semester or yearlong program through Global Cornell, your estimated family contribution to Cornell does not change. Meet with a Global Cornell advisor to plan out your finances, more information can be found on the Global Cornell website (<https://abroad.globallearning.cornell.edu/get-started/finances>).

If you are planning on studying abroad not through a Cornell program there are many scholarships that will cover your program or travel fees. Explore the Department of State scholarship list that includes the Gilman Scholarship, CIEE, Chevening scholarship,

Self-Assessment Resources

Career and Personal Assessment Resources

Resources that can help you make informed decisions about going abroad are available through Cornell Career Services. (<https://scl.cornell.edu/get-involved/career-services/career-exploration/understand-yourself>)

governmental opportunities

Opportunity and Advice Postings

Resource Library

The Resource Library of Cornell's Career Services has books on international careers, gap years, internships, and volunteer opportunities. (<https://scl.cornell.edu/get-involved/career-services/resource-library>)

GoinGlobal

This is a rich international resource including information on 40+ country career guides, job and internship postings, resume and cover letter norms, and U.S. H1B information. Since this feature requires a subscription, you must log in with a Cornell IP address in order to use the account. (<https://online.goinglobal.com/>)

Transition Abroad

This platform provides an overview of international opportunities, resources, and logistical considerations. They also provide tips on how to compose an international resume and how to plan an international career. (<https://www.transitionsabroad.com/>)

U.S. State or Federal Government

The United States government has a strong international presence, allowing thousands of United States citizens to work abroad for the federal government. Due to the variety of positions available amongst the various agencies, there is not a single area of expertise that is required for international work (although there are certain departments that are more likely to have international placements than others).

Obtaining an international position within the federal government requires planning, and often years of experience working for the state. Due to the international agreements, there are requirements that local nationals are hired whenever possible to bolster the local country's economy. Additionally, most of the upper- and mid-level federal positions overseas are filled through internal placement. Internal placements allow government employees wanting to work overseas to first apply for the position "in-house". It is often when there are no available in-house interests that agencies advertise the position through announcements and postings.

Due to the typical hiring structure, it is highly recommended to first work for an agency of interest in the U.S., and when opportunities arise, ask to be transferred. Departments that have the greatest international presence include the Department of State and the United States Agency of International Development. You can also intern for Congress on Foreign Relations Committees or Peace Corps. Check out this link for a list of government agencies with an international focus: <https://www.wiu.edu/libraries/govpubs/international/usAgencies.php>

Working as a Foreign Service Officer

Foreign Service Officers have the opportunity to choose from one of five career tracks: (1) Consular, (2) Economic, (3) Management, (4) Political, or (5) Public Diplomacy. It is not unusual for Foreign Service Officers to have assignments in two or three different career tracks during their career; however, all FSOs are expected to serve in the Consular position for their first two years. Information regarding the hiring process and the five career tracks can be found at careers.state.gov/work/foreign-service/officer.

United Nations & Affiliated Agencies

The United Nations

The United Nations (the UN) is an international organization made up of 193 member states, or countries, that serve to promote international cooperation. Due to the nature of the global presence of the UN, there are a number of opportunities to work globally under the UN and UN-affiliated agencies. The main offices of the United Nations System include the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice, and the UN Secretariat. In addition, there are 40 UN programs and specialized agencies, as well as 28 peace operations. The UN Secretariat alone employs 32,000 staff in organizations around the world. The United Nations and UN affiliated agencies usually hire based on experience in the field and/or a graduate degree. While these opportunities are competitive and limited, they do include a number of internship programs targeted towards young professionals. The UN takes gender and nationality seriously, which can be more beneficial to women from underrepresented countries.

Internships at the United Nations

The United Nations and its affiliates do offer an internship program for those who are interested in the world of diplomacy and public policy. The program lasts for at least two months and up to six months. In order to be eligible, students must be either enrolled in a Master's or Ph.D. program, in their final year of their Bachelor's program, or be within one year of graduating from a Bachelor's, Master's, or Ph.D. program. Interns may not be a child or a sibling for a United Nations Secretariat staff, and must have excellent communication in English and/or French. Internship programs are located at the major UN locations, including New York, USA; Geneva, Switzerland; Vienna, Austria; and Beirut, Lebanon. Unfortunately, the UN does not pay its interns. Interns are responsible for all transportation and living costs during the time span of the internship. More information regarding the internship program and current openings can be found at <https://careers.un.org>, under Internship Programme.

non-governmental opportunities

Working for Non-Governmental Organizations

Many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have opportunities for young professionals to work abroad in specific countries and areas, or at the NGO's headquarters. There are four main types of NGOs:

Humanitarian Organizations

Humanitarian organizations enter areas that are in distress, to save lives, alleviate suffering, and maintain human dignity. These organizations have two types of focus: volunteerism and career professionalism. They usually take on a large number of eager, young, well-qualified but inexperienced applicants to work on operations abroad, usually in high-profile humanitarian crises. On the other hand, they also focus on career professionalism for those who wish to work at a management level. For example, many of these humanitarian organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Doctors Without Borders, and World Vision have headquarters located in Geneva, Switzerland. Postings for job vacancies for various humanitarian organizations can be found on www.reliefweb.org/vacancies.

Development NGOs

Unlike humanitarian organizations, development NGOs work in safer locations on longer-term projects to help countries and/or communities to help itself through self-governance, human development, and civil society. These NGOs include Planned Parenthood and Malaria Consortium. Good places to find vacancies with development NGO are www.developmentx.com or <https://www.gatesfoundation.org/about/careers/>.

Not-for-Profit Contractors

These organizations are usually funded from U.S. government departments. They work in areas of high insecurity and deliver results when others have left. Unlike humanitarian organizations who avoid the use of armed guards or military, the not-for-profit contractors rely on such protection on-site. They do not have the protection and relationship with the government of the site they are working with to ensure safety. Working with not-for-profit contractors is a great option for those who want to combine a corporate experience with a chance to make a positive impact. Examples of such programs include the International Relief and Development, and the Research Triangle Institute. More information can be found at <http://www.ird.org/> and <https://www.rti.org/>.

Advocacy Organizations

These organizations provide opportunity for those interested in political analysis, report writing, and research. They cooperate with humanitarian organizations to ensure that human rights violence is brought to the attention of the international community. Working

with the advocacy organizations serves as a good experience for later work with larger international groups. A few examples of NGOs include the Human Rights Watch, Freedom House, Lawyers Without Borders, and Amnesty International.

Keep in mind that it is often more difficult to find salaried positions in international agencies without previous field experience or the appropriate graduate degree. As a result, you may want to consider an internship or volunteer work abroad to gain the field experience that could eventually lead to permanent employment.

Funding for International Opportunities

If the international opportunity you are interested in does not offer compensation there are a variety of Cornell, and Cornell-affiliated funding options available.

- For internship opportunities, look into applying for Cornell funding like the Summer Experience Grant, Human Ecology grants, Einaudi Center Grants, and Einhorn Center Grants among others.
- For study abroad look into the Gilman Scholarship.
- For opportunities post graduation look into Fulbright.

If you don't find any luck with Cornell-affiliated opportunities then branch out to outside sources.

Working in Global Businesses/ Professional Services

Businesses employ the largest number of individuals in the international area. As the global economy continues to expand and nations become more interdependent, international business and operations are expected to expand accordingly. Most businesses promote employees to international positions only after several years of experience with the firm. However, this is not always the case. Certain industries, such as management consulting and technical operations, may assign young and inexperienced employees to overseas post. However, the policies for transferring abroad may vary from company to company, and it is recommended that you ask to learn more.

Below are a few industries in which opportunities to work internationally are common:

- Consulting
- Banking
- Hospitality
- Technology
- Communication
- Media/Journalism

There are many benefits to working for a global business. For one, these companies usually sponsor you abroad or pay for your visa applications. In fact, certain companies will also pay you a relocation bonus to assist you in your move abroad. When working globally, the main language spoken is English, allowing individuals to move to a country to learn the language, without already being fluent.

If you are interested in working abroad, you may want to consider working for a company that transfers frequently, such as HSBC, or any other big investment banks that have a global presence. Such firms include, but are not limited to, Barclays, Goldman Sachs, UBS, and Morgan Stanley. Many of their international management programs are travel enabled and participants have the opportunity to work around the globe. If you make your intentions of going abroad known from the start of your employment, you are likely to be considered for international transfers.

Some companies offer exchange programs. For example, L.E.K. Consulting offers its employees the chance to work abroad and gain exposure to international business. Approximately a third of the company's employees have participated in the SWAP program, which lasts from three to six months. Boston Consulting Group also allows its professionals to work at peer firms in another country. Both L.E.K. Consulting and Boston Consulting Group are large consulting firms with an international presence. While many consulting firms that have a global presence allow its employees to work abroad, it is best to check with the company.

Other Opportunities

Au Pair

An au pair is a domestic assistant from a foreign country who works for and lives with a host family. Typically, this involves housework as well as childcare. There are many programs available that will match you with host families who are in need of au pairs for their young children. Many families look for young, educated caregivers that are native English speakers. Housing and board are almost always provided as well as a small living allowance. Au pairs are usually committed for one to two years. Because this is an around the clock commitment, it is a great opportunity for you to immerse yourself in a new culture.

Teaching English Abroad

For many schools and institutions worldwide, prior teaching experience is not required. Requirements vary from country to country, but most Asian countries give strong preference to hiring native English speakers. Some countries even require citizenship from a native English speaking country to issue a work visa for teaching English. A TEFL (Teach English as a Foreign Language) certification is not required for most volunteer opportunities, but is highly recommended for professional teaching opportunities. TEFL certification can be earned by taking an accredited TEFL certification class. You can find opportunities on websites like www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/volunteer-openings/.

Additional Resources International Job Opportunity Search Tools

<https://jobs.goabroad.com/>

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/nri/work/15-country-specific-websites-to-kick-start-your-hunt-for-jobs-abroad/united-kingdom/slideshow/111160751.cms>