

Checklist for Student Groups Abroad

Section I: Checklist for Student Group Leaders

Below are the chronological steps that the student trip leader should follow to plan for their group trip abroad. Education Abroad is here to assist with any questions you have about the process. Please call (979) 845-0544 or email abroad@tamu.edu.

4 – 6 months prior to departure	<input type="checkbox"/> Submit the International Travel Proposal Form by the deadlines. <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Once you submit the Proposal, an Education Abroad Advisor will review it and send you directions how to complete the next steps. This must be done before making any financial commitments and selecting students.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Check for updated information about your destination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Texas A&M University System International Travel: Click on “TAMUS International Travel Advisory List”. If your destination country is on the list, additional approval will be required. - U.S. Department of State Travel Advisory
3 – 5 months prior to departure	<input type="checkbox"/> Select student participants and provide Education Abroad with finalized list of participants <input type="checkbox"/> Inform student participants of host country requirements (e.g., valid passport, COVID-19 guidelines, and so forth) <input type="checkbox"/> Send out the link to the Program Application provided by Education Abroad. The unique program application link will facilitate the individual student participant’s registration with Education Abroad.
2 – 3 months prior to departure	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend a Trip Leader Briefing (required for all student and staff trip leaders). <input type="checkbox"/> Complete <i>Clery Act Guidelines for A&M System Campus Security Authorities</i> in TrainTraq (2111844). <input type="checkbox"/> Complete remaining items Requested by Education Abroad
1 month prior to departure	<input type="checkbox"/> Payment of Education Abroad Registration which will include the group enrollment with CISI for international health insurance and emergency assistance coverage. <p>If a college/department or student organization will be paying the fee, the Education Abroad advisor will send an invoice for the total amount owed to the trip leader.</p> <p>If student participants will be paying the fee, students will see the fee on their Texas A&M student accounts. Payment deadlines are set by Student Business Services.</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Send any updates or changes about the trip to the Education Abroad Advisor. Especially dates, flights, locations, and emergency contact information. <input type="checkbox"/> Complete items in Marronlink, StuAct Portal and collect waiver forms from student participants. <input type="checkbox"/> Receive Departure Packet. Your Education Abroad advisor will e-mail all trip leaders a departure packet that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CISI insurance card for all participants • Copy of each participant’s medical information • Emergency contacts for each participant and in-country provider • Additional resources for emergency assistance

Section II: Pre-Departure Considerations

Below are some pre-departure considerations for your pre-departure planning.

Trip Logistics

Education Abroad can provide advice and recommendations upon request. However, it is expected that the Trip Leader will coordinate or assist in coordinating the following:

- Trip location(s) and dates
- Number of participants and support staff needed
- In-country arrangements, including lodging accommodations, transportation, cultural and educational activities, etc.
- Bus, flight, or transportation arrangements to/from the destination

Budgeting & Payments

- Create budget based on itinerary and program activities.
- Coordinate with the college or organization business office to post program fees to student accounts, if applicable.
- Coordinate with the college or organization business office to execute payment of all trip-related expenses (e.g. hotels, airfare, and other vendors) or work with third-party provider to pay associated fees.

Passports

- Ensure that students who do not have a passport or who have an expired passport apply for one at least 6 months prior to departure. More information on the passport application process, fees, and processing time can be found at: http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html.
- Ensure that all participants' passports will be valid for the required length of time after the trip's end. Each country has different validity requirements. For country-specific requirements, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>

Visa Requirement

- A visa might be required by the host country (-ies) and/or in layover country (-ies). For more information on country-specific entry and exit requirements, visit <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html>.
- If required, contact the appropriate Consulate to begin the visa application process.

Non-U.S. Citizens (including International Students & Green Card Holders)

- Non-U.S. Citizens may need a visa to enter the destination country. Refer to the destination countries' embassy website for entry requirements based on citizenship. International students also need to have a valid student visa to re-enter the United States upon return from the field trip.
- International students are required to check their visa status and obtain a Travel Signature with TAMU's International Student Services (ISS) prior to traveling abroad.

Research International Travel and Security Information

- Determine appropriate carry-on and checked baggage allowance. More information can be found on your airline carrier's website or at <http://tsa.gov>.
- Recommended airport check-in time: 3 hours prior to departure (for international flights); 2 hours prior to departure (domestic flights).

Health and Medical Considerations

- **Vaccinations**—might be required. See the Center for Disease Control’s website (<http://cdc.gov>) for country-specific vaccination requirements. *IMPORTANT: For those groups staying at one of the A&M Centers or Partners (Santa Chiara, Soltis Center, or Santa Clara), students must provide proof of bacterial meningitis vaccinations for all student participants per University regulations.*
- **Prescription Medications**—should be transported in its original container with the prescription attached. Remind participants to bring a sufficient supply.
- **CISI Medical Insurance**— All participants are enrolled for the duration of the trip. Review the [current policy](#)
- **Doctors and Medical Facilities**—for information regarding doctors and medical facilities worldwide, consult the CISI website and log into their online portal.
- **Emergency Contacts, Medical Information & Consent Form**— The form collects information about allergies, medications, and medical conditions that the student discloses. Should a participant need medical assistance and is incapacitated, this information can be given to the assisting doctor or medical personnel. This form is embedded in the student’s application. Approximately 1 month before the program starts, this form will be sent to the trip leaders by the Education Abroad advisor along with all participants’ insurance cards. Trip leaders should travel with a copy of this document, keeping it in a secure place at all times. This document must be destroyed upon completion of the trip.

Pre-Departure Preparation and Orientations

- All students are required to complete the health and safety pre-departure orientation in the application offered by Education Abroad.
- Trip Leaders should also provide *at least one* orientation specific to their trip for all student participants. Suggested pre-departure orientation topics include, but are not limited to:
 - Behavior and expectations (pre-departure and while abroad)
 - Budget and financial information
 - Cultural and country-specific information
 - Health and safety advice
 - Travel and packing guidance
- Education Abroad provides information about scholarships and financial aid for credit-bearing international experiences. Encourage students to check out the resources available on our [Funding page](#).
- The trip leader must check and make sure that students are enrolled in the required courses, if the program is credit bearing, prior to departure.

Copies of Documents

- Encourage participants to make copies of all important documents (e.g. passport, visa, airline tickets, credit cards- front and back, etc.).
 - Have them leave 1 copy with a trusted family member/friend in the U.S.
 - Take a couple of copies with them abroad; should be stored securely.

Register with the U.S. Embassy or Consulate

- Register your entire group with the U.S. Department of State STEP Program: <https://step.state.gov/step/>.

Destination Considerations

- Arrange a cell phone for while abroad.
- Consider destination country/area food and water safety.
- Prepare a first-aid kit for the group.
- Determine rendezvous locations, dates and times if group will not always travel together.

 Final Trip Preparations

- Confirm all in-country logistics, including accommodation reservations, transportation, museum appointments, etc.
- Finalize and distribute a final copy of the trip itinerary, emergency contact information, etc. to all participants.
- Confirm that participants requiring special documentation (e.g. visa) are prepared for international travel.
- Verify that all participants have submitted required materials (e.g. copies of important documents, medical information, etc.)
- Pay the CISI invoice that will be provided by Education Abroad. The current cost is \$1.53 per person per day.

 Final Check for Safety of Travel Announcements

- Check to see if there are any warnings on the Texas A&M Country Risk List: [Texas A&M University System International Travel](#). Click on "TAMUS International Travel Advisory List".
- For information regarding U.S. Department of State Travel Advisories, visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html>
- For other news involving international travel for U.S. citizens, visit: <https://travel.state.gov/content/studentsabroad/en.html>