



LGBTQ+ STUDENTS & STUDYING ABROAD

At AIFS, we want to support all students in their study abroad journey, regardless of their gender, race, religion, age, physical ability, or sexual orientation. Everyone has a complex identity, and as a student who is LGBTQ+, this piece of your identity can be an important factor when deciding on a study abroad location. We encourage you to use the information here as you review your options in order to select the location that will be the best fit for you.

Use the questions on the other side of this handout and the Student Resources section of the AIFS website to help you **research locations** that best fit your needs and interests.

Remember that **everyone's experience is unique**. Although there are some locations that are more welcoming, **LGBTQ+ students can and do study abroad all over the world**.

For many students, being abroad allows them an opportunity to **explore aspects of their identity** that they are unable to do so in their home environment. This can lead to a different sense of freedom while abroad.

AIFS offers **scholarships for students from underrepresented communities** in study abroad (including the pride community). Students can also utilize funds from outside sources, such as the Human Rights Campaign and the Fund for Education Abroad.

Spend time thinking about what it means to be your **gender, race and sexuality in a new context**. This will better prepare you for your experience abroad.

You can **connect with program alumni** through the AIFS student portal or by emailing alumni@aifs.com and letting us know your location of interest.

Additional information and resources can be found on our website at

<https://www.aifsabroad.com/student-resources.asp>.

Please contact us at studyabroad@aifs.com or at (800) 727-2437 so we can discuss your specific interests and needs for your time abroad. We look forward to hearing from you.



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

How open do you want/need to be while abroad?

If you choose a location where you will feel the need to hide this part of your identity, how will this impact your overall education abroad experience?

Do you want/need to be part of a supportive LGBTQ+ community?

What are laws and cultural norms surrounding relationships and dating in your host country?

Is open discussion of sexual orientation and gender identity welcome or more taboo?

What are the laws regarding homosexuality and gender identity in your host country?

Are there protections against discrimination towards persons who are LGBTQ+ in your host country?

What is the social attitude towards the LGBTQ+ community in your host country? Are there any current news stories about pride events?

Are there any pride publications, advocacy organizations, or LGBTQ+-friendly establishments nearby?

Are there LGBTQ+ organizations on your host campus or in the community?

How pride-friendly is your host university?

What types of housing options are available? If you will live with a host family, do you want to specifically request a family that is known to be supportive of LGBTQ+ students?

If you regularly utilize any health or counseling services at home, will these be available and covered by insurance abroad?

If your gender presentation is different from your legal sex, or if you are in the process of transitioning, what types of challenges might you face with travel, immigration, and documents?

What other intersections of your identity may take the foreground if your sexuality is not in the majority (citizenship, first language, gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.)?