LGBTQ+ Resources for Study Abroad

The Center for Global Engagement at CSI is committed to nondiscrimination, diversity, and inclusion to support you and all students (and faculty and staff) through our services, activities, and programs. In that spirit of inclusive excellence, we share here LGBTQ+ information and resources that can be useful for you and all students (and faculty and staff) when learning about global culture and travel and when participating in study abroad programs.

There are many reasons to study abroad: expand your horizons, gain a global perspective on your major and studies, build a global resume that will help you throughout your academic and professional career, learn first-hand about a culture, people, and their language, have life changing and life affirming experiences that you will treasure your entire life, and more...

Here are at least 10 Reasons Why LGBTQ+ Students Should Study Abroad – written by a Carleton College student some years ago

Challenges

One of the main challenges all students may face when studying abroad entails adjusting to the cultural norms in each country abroad. Likewise, one of the main challenges LGBTQ+ students may face entails adjusting to the LGBTQ+ cultural norms in each country abroad. Of course, being aware of the legal LGBTQ+ landscape in a country is imperative. Several resources listed below describe the legal and cultural LGBTQ+ climate in other countries.

Some cultures may not recognize LGBTQ+ identities in the same way as we’ve come to in the U.S. Or perhaps they’ll use different words to describe similar concepts. At times, this may result in a seeming invalidation of U.S. perspectives on LGBTQ+ topics, which can be disheartening for LGBTQ+ students that are likely to have had similar experiences with outright homophobia and transphobia in the U.S.

A more open society will be more progressive about LGBTQ+ rights than a less tolerant society, however students can expect to have more culturally nuanced experiences. The Fa‘afafine community in American Samoa, identifying themselves as third-gender, provides a concrete example of how gender identity is approached very differently in another culture.

One unexpected cultural phenomenon some students have experienced has to do with studying abroad in collective societies. Since the U.S. is a very individualistic society, individual expression is valued, whereas in many collective societies, individual expression is more frowned upon. A student with an American cultural background may initially perceive a lack of expressive diversity in the culture, when in reality this expression ties greatly to the collective culture nature of the society. In Asia, for example, there is a great emphasis in the culture on the collective and the group, as opposed to the focus on the individual in the U.S. Similarly, U.S. culture can often generally be seen more informal, when compared to cultures in many
countries across the globe, where traditions, formality, and more rigid societal structures seem to be more fixed and less fluid. Where possible, try to learn about the linguistic and conceptual differences between LGBTQ+ topics in the U.S. and in the culture of your chosen study abroad location.

Studying abroad while transgender or non-binary might present its own challenges, but we encourage you to take the leap. No matter where you are in your transition, experiencing another country and culture can have a huge impact on your life. While studying abroad you will have the space to be yourself and further explore how you identify in the world. There may also be opportunities to connect with other gender diverse people that can give you insight into their unique experiences. With some preparation, trans and non-binary students can have a life-changing experience. We encourage you to reach out to us and start exploring where you might study abroad.

Safety

Safety concerns for LGBTQ+ students will vary from country to country and city to city. Homophobia and transphobia are not unique to any country, but rates of violence against LGBTQ+ individuals should be factored into your research of programs that interest you. It is important for you to be aware of any legislation restricting gender presentation and/or sexual activity among same-gender individuals in your countries of interest.

The legal status of same-gender marriage and sex are often metrics used to judge the openness of a society. You are encouraged to learn and explore the social climate and local conditions of your chosen country of interest using the resources links below and to ask questions about LGBTQ+ safety abroad issues with your Study Abroad Advisor. If your Advisor does not know the answers, they will be sure to find resources that can help answer questions and concerns you may have.

According to their website, the ILGA – the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association – is the world federation of national and local organizations dedicated to achieving equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex (LGBTI) people. The organization offers maps and sexual orientation laws for countries the world over, in addition to other resources and data, and is a strong resource for up-to-date information.

Preparing for study abroad

- Rather than trying to narrow down a possible program list based on LGBTQ+-friendly locations, consider first looking at all programs and think about and work with your Study Abroad Advisor to decide what experience is best for you, given your goals and expectations
- Onsite staff will provide host-country information to help students acclimate to life abroad. Your Study Abroad Advisor will work with onsite staff to help ensure they have LGBTQ+ knowledge and can provide support, or at least can direct you to resources that
may be available. Some onsite staff may understand the U.S. context that students bring with them.

- Your Study Abroad Advisor most importantly wants to support your wishes. Please let your advisor know whether you would like to be out to colleagues, host families, or students or if you would like to keep your identities private.
- Please let your Study Abroad Advisor know which gender you would prefer to have for roommates where possible. Also, many programs may allow for single-accommodation housing if you so choose.
- Use resource links below to investigate and understand the LGBTQ+ climate of the foreign countries you are considering.
- Feel free to ask questions about this and more to your Study Abroad Advisor

Please feel free to contact us at the Center for Global Engagement:

We are now available via Virtual Online Advising Hours daily from 10 am – 4 pm (except when CSI is closed for summer hours through Fri Aug 13).

To schedule a virtual Study Abroad Advising appointment, please do so via Navigate Student (desktop) or the Navigate Student app.

We recommend that you contact the Study Abroad Advisor for the program you are interested in. Advisors are listed at the top of each program brochure page on the CSI site. If you have a general interest in study abroad, please feel free to either contact Russell Davis or John Dunleavy as below. We will be happy to get back to you to set a time for a one-on-one virtual advising session.

- Russell Davis (russell.davis@csi.cuny.edu)
- John Dunleavy (john.dunleavy@csi.cuny.edu)
- Deborah Stengle (deborah.stengle@csi.cuny.edu)

This fall we will also be available in-person at:

Center for Global Engagement, 2A-206
College of Staten Island
2800 Victory Blvd.
Staten Island, NY 10314
718.982.2100
www.studyabroad.cuny.csi.edu - to search and apply for programs
www.csi.cuny.edu/international
"Like" us at: www.facebook.com/CSIStudyAbroad
Resources for LGBTQ+ Study Abroad Students:

LGBTQ+ Study Abroad Resources - has many links to LGBTQ+ global culture and travel linked from NAFSA Rainbow SIG Facebook group

List of LGBT Rights by country or territory – Wikipedia

World Map with Information about Laws specific to LGBTI+ Communities - International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association

LGBTQI+ Country Guide – Chapman University

LGBTQIA+ Student Guide for Education Abroad with Student Resource for Multiple Countries - University of South Florida

Diversity Abroad: LGBTQ+ Students Abroad - links to country-specific resources, including guides for China, Ecuador, France, Japan, Spain, South Korea and more

Legal Help Desk - Transgender Law Center

LGBTI Travel Information - U.S. Department of State

Additional resources:

An LGBT Student Guide to Study Abroad - GoAbroad

OutRight Action International

Sex, Gender and Sexuality - Office for Education Abroad, Michigan State University

LGBT rights around the world - Human Rights Watch

Travel:

LGBTQ+ Travel Safety Considerations & Challenges – 1 minute 22 second video

Airport Screening and Travel Concerns for Transgender Passengers - Transgender Law Center

Gender Transition Applicants - U.S. Department of State

Instructions for how to update your passport to match your gender identity - National Center for Transgender Equality Passport Guide
TSA Guidelines for Transgender Passengers - Explains what identification transgender passengers will need during TSA screening.

Get Through the TSA Safely – a Transgender Travel Guide

Air Travel Tips for Transgender People - National Center for Transgender Equality

Equaldex - Interactive map of the world that details legal issues related to LGBTQ+ people throughout the world, and much more.

Out Traveler – Blog-magazine-style resource with articles, travel tips, destinations, and more.

Using Names and Pronouns:

Gender Pronouns - Trans Student.org

Comprehensive* List of LGBTQ+ Vocabulary Definitions - It's Pronounced Metrosexual

LGBTQ+ student study abroad stories:

6 Students Share Their LGBTQ++ Study Abroad Experience – IES Abroad

More stories written by students about LGBTQ+ study abroad are on IFSA-Butler’s site - Unpacked: A Study Abroad Guide for Students Like Me. Specifically, the LGBTQ+ section

Scholarships:

12 Study Abroad Scholarships for LGBT Students - GoAbroad

Gilman Scholarship – A U.S. Department of State scholarship program for students with limited financial means who receive PELL grants, which has been successful in supporting students who have been historically underrepresented in education abroad.
At CSI:

**LGBTQ Resource Center**  
Office of Student Life

If you have any questions, please reach out to:

Jeremiah Jurkiewicz (He/Him/His)  
[Jeremiah.Jurkiewicz@csi.cuny.edu](mailto:Jeremiah.Jurkiewicz@csi.cuny.edu)  
LGBTQ Resource Center/Pluralism & Diversity Coordinator  
Office of Student Life, College of Staten Island, 1C-226  
718-982-3091

Instagram/Twitter: @CSILGBTQ  
Facebook: CSI LGBTQ Resource Center

Follow Student Life!  
Insta: [https://www.instagram.com/csi_studentlife/](https://www.instagram.com/csi_studentlife/)  
Twitter: [https://twitter.com/CSIStudentLife](https://twitter.com/CSIStudentLife)  
FB: [https://www.facebook.com/CSIOfficeofStudentLife/](https://www.facebook.com/CSIOfficeofStudentLife/)  
CSI Connect: [https://csi.campuslabs.com/engage/](https://csi.campuslabs.com/engage/)

At CUNY:

Here is a link to a new CUNY resource: **CUNY Launches New Initiatives to Support LGBTQ+I+ Students**

CUNY’s LGBTQ+I+ Council, a CUNY-wide committee of faculty and staff, also created a one-stop online tool, the **Hub, collecting** available resources in one centralized location and sending the message that CUNY is a safe environment in which to thrive. The Council’s mission is to ensure the visibility and inclusion of the entire spectrum of LGBTQ+I+ students, faculty, and staff.

NYC Resources:

The **2021 LGBTQ+ Guide of Services and Resources** from the Office of NYC Comptroller Scott M. Stringer.