

President's Innovation Fund for International Experiences

Components of a Successful Proposal

While successful programs need not incorporate all of these components, the PIFIE committee focuses on the following programmatic areas when making funding decisions:

1.) Quality of Experience

Program involves structured coursework, internship placement, service opportunity, research project or some combination of the four with well-defined objectives of each. Also may include supplementary activities, such as field trips, guest lectures, or on-site advising. Proposal clearly demonstrates how participating students will gain from the experiential aspect of the program.

2.) Cultural Immersion

Formal activities involve significant interaction with local individuals through, for example, coursework with local students, accommodations with local host families, or research on a local topic. Non-English speaking locations are not required, but the committee considers exposure to a foreign language as a significant enhancement to a student's cultural immersion.

3.) On-Site Faculty Involvement

Program involves direct and meaningful on-site engagement by faculty, including the PI/Faculty Lead. Examples include teaching a course during the program, overseeing student research projects, leading field trips or seminars, or advising students throughout the program.

4.) Connection to participating students' academic or curricular experience

Program has a direct connection to some aspect of the Harvard College curriculum or a student's academic experience. Examples include courses that can be used for academic credit, programs that extend the material of an existing Harvard course, or activities that relate to a student's concentration or thesis.

5.) Institutional Support

Program has strong administrative infrastructure behind it. The administrative home has demonstrated success creating and implementing international programs, or the demonstrated capacity to do so.

6.) Safety

Program does not take place in a country on the US State Department list of travel warnings (http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/tw/tw_1764.html). Plans for residential accommodations and local travel are clearly defined, and any site-specific precautions are outlined.

7.) Number of Students

Program enrolls a number of students that allows ample opportunity for participation. The committee has not established a minimum student requirement, however the committee strives to be cost-effective in its funding decisions and therefore considers cost per student.