



CSIET Standards for Short-Term International Educational Travel Programs

These standards are intended for use in evaluating both inbound and outbound youth exchange programs whose in-country duration is generally eight weeks or less. For programs of longer duration, please refer to CSIET Standards for Long -Term Programs.

Agent: Individual or organization authorized to represent or act on behalf of the organization in administering one or more aspects of the program, for example, an overseas partner.

Organization: Entity that sponsors international educational travel activities.

Program: Organized international educational travel activity that begins with participant recruitment and selection, includes the components outlined in the standards that follow, and terminates when the participant returns to his or her point of origin or otherwise severs the relationship with the program sponsor. Programs applying for CSIET listing must have a minimum of one current exchange participant in each cycle that is being evaluated for each program (i.e. long-term inbound and outbound; and short-term inbound and outbound).

Volunteer: 1. A representative who is compensated for out-of-pocket expenses only. If a representative receives regular compensation, such as a per student placement fee, this individual cannot be considered a volunteer. 2. A host family that provides room and board gratis to a student.

Federal Waivers: The CSIET Board of Directors has ruled that if the State Department or an agency of the U.S. government provides an exception that may affect compliance with CSIET standards, the organization to whom the waiver has been granted may operate under that exemption upon written presentation of such waiver to the CSIET Evaluation Committee.

Important Note: Organizations that apply to CSIET for listing are provided with a list of “Materials to be Submitted” to demonstrate compliance with CSIET Standards. If you wish to obtain the complete set of Standards with “Materials to be Submitted” please contact CSIET for a free copy.

STANDARD 1: EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Programs shall be designed to fulfill educational purposes related to an international experience.
- B. The organization sponsoring the program shall have clearly established goals and learning objectives to fulfill the educational purposes of its programs.

STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

- A. The structure and administration of the organization shall be clearly defined.
- B. The organization shall have the personnel needed to administer its programs effectively.
 - 1. The organization is accountable for the full scope of the programs it administers, including actions taken and representations made by its agents, and maintains responsibility for its students both within the United States and abroad.
 - 2. The organization shall maintain direct, hands-on control of the placement and supervision of inbound students and the hiring, firing, and remuneration of local representatives. It may not enter into a relationship with another entity that appears to exercise such control.
- C. The organization shall be organized under the laws of one of the 50 states of the United States or the District of Columbia.
- D. The organization shall demonstrate success in international educational travel through at least one full year since its incorporation.

Supplemental Guideline: Date of Incorporation

The CSIET Board of Directors has determined that the intent of this Standard is to ensure that programs have participants on exchange for the Evaluation Committee to review in the current cycle. Accordingly, compliance with Standard 2D could be demonstrated if the applying organization documents one year of incorporation by the final Evaluation Committee meeting of the current cycle.

STANDARD 3: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The organization shall be capable of discharging its financial responsibilities to all participants.
- B. The organization shall have sufficient financial backing to protect all monies paid by participants and to ensure fulfillment of all responsibilities to participants.
- C. The organization shall have an independent Certified Public Accountant annually prepare an audited or review financial statement.

STANDARD 4: PROMOTION

- A. The organization's promotional materials shall professionally, ethically, and accurately reflect its purposes, activities, and sponsorship.
- B. The organization shall not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc., that:
 - a. are not sufficiently in advance of the student's arrival
 - b. appeal to public pity or guilt
 - c. imply in any way that a student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately
 - d. identify photos of individual students and include an appeal for an immediate family.

Following are guidelines for public media advertisements:

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be unacceptable: Urgently Needed, Don't let me be homeless, This is an emergency...

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be acceptable: Open your hearts and homes, Host a foreign Exchange Student...

It is permissible to use a picture of a student, a first name, age, country of origin, and a composite or generic listing of interests in an advertisement in order to demonstrate the personal nature of the program and the types of interests that students have. It is not permissible to identify that specific student as needing a home, nor is it permissible to refer to a student's athletic ability or accomplishments. Written waivers must be obtained for the use of any student photographs.

- C. The organization shall not promote or recruit for its programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families or schools. Specifically, programs shall not include personal student data or contact information (including address, phone or email addresses) on websites or other promotional materials.
- D. All promotional materials/activities shall distinguish the program and the sponsoring organization from others operating under:
 - a. affiliated or related corporate structures
 - b. the same or similar names or symbols.
- E. The organization shall fully disclose all fees, including school tuition, host family reimbursements, and other required or optional costs to prospective students and their natural families before enrollment. (If host families provide room and board gratis to the students, publicity should state that fees cover "selection and placement in host families" and not imply in any way that the fees paid by the students cover "room and board.")
- F. Neither the organization nor its agents shall promote its programs as providing opportunities for school athletic participation, high school graduation, driver's education instruction, household domestic service, child care, employment, or other activities that might compromise the student, program, or school. Standard 4F specifically prohibits the organization and its agents (this includes foreign partners) from promoting its programs as providing any of the aforementioned activities. The word "promote" as it is used in Standard 4F includes any specific focus on or prominence of pictures and/or text depicting these activities. No prominent pictures and/or text will be considered to be in compliance.)
- G. The organization shall not state or imply in its promotional materials/activities that persons who are compensated other than out-of-pocket expenses are volunteers.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

- A. The organization shall select participants on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program, minimally through a review of student applications to ensure the participants' suitability for placement in host families.
- B. Selection shall be completed in advance of the students' departure from their home country. *(It is recommended that participants be given the program rules and regulations in advance of the program.)*
- C. Students shall be given a suitable orientation either before departure or shortly after arrival in the host country. *(The orientation must include program rules and regulations, acceptable and unacceptable behavior, and other information that suitably prepares youth for successful program participation.)*

STANDARD 6: STUDENT PLACEMENT

- A. For short-term programs that include a homestay, the organization shall:
 - 1. select host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 - 2. personally interview all prospective host families in their home
 - 3. match students and host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 - 4. provide suitable orientation and training to the host family. *(CSIET suggests that host family orientations include information on family life, customs, religion, and mores of the student's native country, and information on potential problems in hosting exchange students and suggestions on how to cope with such problems.)*

STANDARD 6: STUDENT PLACEMENT (Con't)

- B. For programs that include accommodations other than a homestay, the organization shall:
 - 1. arrange accommodations on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 - 2. ensure the suitability of the accommodations with respect to location, cleanliness, safety, nutrition, and supervision
 - 3. confirm the accommodations sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home.
- C. For programs that include short-term attendance at a U.S. high school, the organization shall secure written acceptance from the school principal or other designated responsible school administrator prior to the exchange student's departure from his or her home country.
- D. Organizations shall not knowingly be party to a placement based on athletic abilities, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host family, a school or any other interested party.

STANDARD 7: OPERATIONS

- A. The organization shall ensure adequate care and supervision of students.
- B. Local representatives of the organization shall maintain regular personal contact with students and host families. *(Contact should take place with students at least once every other week in "total immersion programs." For programs with teaching or other activities, it is expected that contact is more frequent. An English-speaking chaperone shall be present on all planned group activities.)*
- C. The organization shall notify the student, host family, and/or other supervisor of accommodations regarding the travel itinerary in advance of the student's departure from the home country.
- D. The organization shall provide appropriate support services to assist with program-related needs and problems (for example, counseling services, medical care, language problems, changes in host family, emergencies).
- E. The organization shall maintain an effective system of screening, selecting, training, and supervising program representatives and group leaders.
- F. The organization shall provide students with the host family's name, address, and telephone (or similar contact information if placement is in other than a household); the program leader's name, address, and telephone; the address and telephone of the organization's national office; and relevant emergency telephone numbers.
- G. When classroom learning is a part of the short-term program experience, the organization shall have a curriculum or education plan in place for the teacher to follow.
- H. The organization shall provide an opportunity to the student, host family, and the program escorts or chaperones to participate in a post-exchange evaluation.
- I. The organization shall have in place adequate plans and procedures for dealing with emergency situations that may arise during the program.
- J. The organization shall respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to complaints received from students, families, schools or others concerned with the program and its quality.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT INSURANCE

- A. The organization shall guarantee that every student is covered with adequate health and accident insurance. Such insurance shall:
 - a. Protect students for the duration of their program
 - b. Provide for the return of the student to his/her home in the event of serious illness, accident, or death during the program.
- B. The organization shall provide students, host families, and appropriate supervisor(s) with detailed printed information regarding the terms and limits of insurance coverage and procedures for filing a claim.
- C. Compensated officials and employees of the organization shall not receive compensation from the sale of insurance to its participants.

STANDARD 9: ADHERENCE TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

- A. The organization shall comply with all appropriate government regulations regarding international exchange or any other activity under its auspices.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the organization to notify the Council of any change in status with respect to government designation, acknowledgment, acceptance, endorsement and/or sanction.