

## **Master Agreement for Custom Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs**

**between**

**Contractor**

**and**

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)**

The following document serves as a service agreement ("Agreement") between African Encounter Travel Ltd ("Contractor") and Virginia Tech for the operation of customized faculty-led study abroad programs. In the interest of expanding educational opportunities and to provide a unique learning experience for graduate and undergraduate students, as well as promote collaboration between the two parties, Contractor and Virginia Tech agree to the following provisions:

Award: This Master Services Agreement (MSA) results from a public and competitive solicitation for services issued by Virginia Tech, followed by the subsequent proposal received from the Contractor. The following documents contain additional terms that are hereby incorporated by reference into the MSA in the following order of precedence:

- a. This executed master agreement for custom faculty-led study abroad programs
- b. Summary of Negotiations
- c. Contractor's Proposal (dated July 26, 2024)
- d. Request for Proposal Addendum (dated July 16, 2024)
- e. Request for Proposal Document (dated June 7, 2024)

### Program:

This Agreement is based on the principle of reciprocity and expresses the interest of both parties to cultivate educational experiences for Virginia Tech students and faculty through collaboration with the Contractor.

### Academics:

The programs' academic focus will depend upon the academic interests and expertise of individual faculty/staff involved. Contractor will provide the following academic services for the Program participants in an executed Addendum specifying the details of each program.

### Fees:

The costs per person will be determined in advance of each customized program and specified in the executed Addendum.

The fee may include but is not limited to. The fee shall be subject to the agreement of both parties:

- a. Administrative Fee
- b. Orientation
- c. Accommodation
- d. Transportation
- e. Airport pick up on arrival day and transfer to the airport on departure day
- f. Meals
- g. Translator fees for project work
- h. All project materials and supplies

Unless notated otherwise in the Executed Addendum, all services and accommodations are to be selected, facilitated, and arranged by the Contractor in consultation with Virginia Tech.

Participant Registration:

Virginia Tech students will be nominated by the academic department to ensure students meet Virginia Tech's institutional requirements for study abroad. The final selection of all participants in the program from the Virginia Tech student body shall remain in the sole and absolute discretion of the specific department for which the program is designed for. All Virginia Tech students selected to participate shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Contractor as detailed within the Executed Addendum.

Payment Schedule:

Full program payment is due 30 days prior to the start of a program. The Contractor will issue an invoice to Virginia Tech a minimum of 60 days prior to the start of a program. For custom faculty-led programs, Virginia Tech will work with African Encounter Travel Ltd to support group payment for services. For independent travelers studying abroad on a program as a third-party provider (not through a custom faculty-led program), the student would pay directly.

Insurance:

In order to participate in the program, all participants MUST acquire international medical and security insurance coverage. Virginia Tech will ensure that all participants have medical and security assistance coverage through the university-contracted vendor for the duration of the program dates.

Acts of God:

Neither party shall be responsible for failure to perform this Agreement if circumstances beyond their reasonable control, including, but not limited to: acts of God, governmental authority, terrorism, or war in or with the United States or the Program's location prevent such performance.

Participant Withdrawal Policy:

In the event that a participant wishes to withdraw from the program prior to the start of the program refund is at the discretion of the Contractor.

Terms of the Agreement:

From January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2026 with the option for four (4) two-year renewals. The Agreement shall become effective on the day representatives of both parties affix their signatures, and is subject to revision or modification by mutual written agreement.

Electronic Transactions:

If this paragraph is initialed by both parties, to the fullest extent permitted by Code of Virginia, Title 59.1, Chapter 42.1, the parties do hereby expressly authorize and consent to the use of electronic signatures as an additional method of signing and/or initialing this contract and agree electronic signatures (for example, the delivery of a PDF copy of the signature of either party via facsimile or electronic mail or signing electronically by utilizing an electronic signature service) are the same as manual executed handwritten signatures for the purposes of validity, enforceability and admissibility.

Initials  
TM RN  
(INITIALS)

In witness hereof, the authorized representatives of Contractor and Virginia Tech hereby execute this Agreement on the dates set forth below.

For Contractor

Signed by:

Tafadzwa Muchopa

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Tafadzwa Muchopa

Date: 1/22/2025

Name

Title      Quality Assurance Director

For Virginia Tech

DocuSigned by:

Reed Nagel

5EF51DA320D049B...

Reed Nagel

Date: 1/23/2025

Name

Director of Procurement

## Negotiations Summary

1. **Virginia Tech question:** Do you agree that if your company is awarded a contract, any current engagements you are actively working on for the University shall be in accordance with the terms of the final contract?

**Provider response:** Yes.

2. **Virginia Tech question:** Understanding that price is customized for each trip, will the University be receiving any discount structure compared to your standard list pricing you charge?

**Provider response:** Program customization means that costs will be tailored to the specific requirements of each program. We do not have standard list pricing. The costs depend on the suggested budget, chosen accommodation facilities, and the type of vehicles used. The costs are also tiered based on the number of participants traveling and the requested number of free-of-charge chaperones. In all cases, we aim to find the most cost-effective options. However, we cannot guarantee any discounts because these can only be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature of the relationships we have with the facilities in question.

3. **Virginia Tech question:** Do you agree that your company shall, to the best of your ability, provide transparency in pricing for future engagements if requested?

**Provider response:** Yes.

4. **Virginia Tech question:** As part of Virginia Tech standard procedures, all awarded contracts will be publicly posted on an online contracts' portal. Is there any information included that would be used to identify or harm a person's identity, finances or personal information? If so, please provide a redacted copy of your proposal.

**Provider response:** Please find attached the revised PDF with potentially personally-identifying information removed.

5. **Virginia Tech question:** Are there any additional forms or documents that you will require to be incorporated into the contract documents? If so, please submit.

**Provider response:** No. We believe everything was submitted with the initial proposal document.

6. **Virginia Tech question:** Do you agree to provide invoices with payment due thirty (30) days after receipt of invoice or goods/services, whichever is later?

**Provider response:** Our standard payment terms require invoices to be paid in full at least 60 days before the start of the program, with deposits due at least 90 days in advance. These timeframes allow us to adequately plan and prepare top-notch experiences for our clients. We will send an invoice for the full program amount as soon as the program is confirmed. The invoice will state the 15% deposit amount required to secure the booking. we can send a follow-up invoice for the outstanding amount as required.

7. **Virginia Tech question:** Do you agree that you will be performing services as an Independent Contractor, Company, Corporation or other business entity and are not an employee of Virginia Tech or any other Commonwealth Entity?

Provider response: Yes.

8. **Virginia Tech question:** Do you further agree that Virginia Tech will not withhold any income taxes from its payments to contractors nor will it provide any employment benefits to the contractor or contractor's employees?

Provider response: Yes.

9. **Virginia Tech question:** Upon completion of the initial contract period, do you agree that the contract may be renewed by Virginia Tech upon written agreement of both parties for four (4) two-year periods, under the terms of the current contract?

Provider response: Yes.

10. **Virginia Tech question:** Please identify the highest-level executive in your organization that is aware of this solicitation. Describe that person's commitment to assuring the highest quality service to Virginia Tech if your organization is awarded a contract.

Provider response: Our Managing Director is fully committed to the highest quality of service.

11. **Virginia Tech question:** Please describe your quickest turn-around time if emergency services are needed.

Provider response: Our facilitators are trained to immediately respond to emergencies and follow documented procedures and use the contact numbers provided.

12. **Virginia Tech question:** Do you acknowledge, agree and understand that Virginia Tech cannot guarantee a minimum amount of business if a contract is awarded to your company?

Provider response: Yes.

13. **Virginia Tech question:** Does the vendor acknowledge, agree, and understand that the terms and conditions of the RFP # 952642408 shall govern the contract if a contract is awarded to your company?

Provider response: Yes.

14. **Virginia Tech question:** For purposes of interacting with HokieMart, please identify the person (name, phone number, email address, etc.) in your company that will serve as liaison for a) e-commerce, b) accounts receivable, c) emergency orders.

Provider response:

- a) Adrian Maarschalk, Director of Programs - East Africa, +254708283627, [adrian@edu-africa.com](mailto:adrian@edu-africa.com)  
b) Angie Kritzinger, Admin and Finance Support, +27845800271, [angie@edu-africa.com](mailto:angie@edu-africa.com)  
c) Annerien Nel, Director of Programs - Southern Africa, +27722567310, [annerien@edu-africa.com](mailto:annerien@edu-africa.com)

15. **Virginia Tech question:** Regarding your response to question # 6, For study abroad programs, the University's standard payment procedures are as follows: Full program payment is due 30 days prior to the start of a program. The Contractor will issue an invoice to Virginia Tech a minimum of 60 days prior to the start of a program. Participants are responsible for remitting payment directly to the Contractor for the program fee and services rendered. For additional program specific payment terms, the University is willing to work with the Contractor to accommodate those specific needs as best as possible. Do you acknowledge and agree?

Provider response:

"For study abroad programs, the University's standard payment procedures are as follows: Full program payment is due 30 days prior to the start of a program."

To best serve our participants and ensure timely bookings, we implement the following terms:

- A minimum deposit of 15% is required to secure your booking. The amount due will be based on the maximum number of participants expected.
- The final invoice for the remainder of the cost will be due 60 days before arrival unless agreed upon in writing by both parties (which may result in an upward revision of the minimum deposit payable on booking).
- If a booking is made 60 days or less before the in-country arrival date, the full payment must be made on booking.

However, if we can increase the initial deposit payment, we would be happy to accept the final payment 30 days before the program starts.

Our challenge is that without receiving a deposit, it becomes very difficult for us to pay our suppliers, which is necessary to secure bookings, especially for accommodation. We lack the cash flow and security to put down deposits without having first received funds from a client. If we are unable to put down these deposits, it could jeopardize the program.

“The Contractor will issue an invoice to Virginia Tech a minimum of 60 days prior to the start of a program.”

We usually issue this invoice much earlier once we have the final participant numbers and the client has signed off on the proposal. We’re fine with this request.

“Participants are responsible for remitting payment directly to the Contractor for the program fee and services rendered.”

Setting up and tracking multiple incoming payments can be a time-consuming and costly process. Instead of incurring bank fees on a single transfer, we end up paying fees for several transactions. If this is a requirement on your end, we can implement an administrative fee to cover the associated costs and efforts. However, we would prefer that the institution collect all the funds from participants and send the deposit and final payments to us.

“For additional program specific payment terms, the University is willing to work with the Contractor to accommodate those specific needs as best as possible.”

Noted.



## **VIRGINIA TECH REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL # 952642408**

### **CUSTOM FACULTY-LED STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM PROVIDERS**

#### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1. SCOPE OF WORK.....</b>	<b>3</b>
A. VALUES.....	3
a. Concrete measures to promote equity, inclusion, and access.....	3
b. Intercultural learning, global awareness, and anticolonial action.....	5
c. Ethical engagement and service with/within local communities that reflect respect for community care and a commitment to place-based pedagogy.....	7
d. Practicing and prioritizing sustainability.....	8
e. Modeling financial integrity and good stewardship.....	9
f. Opportunities to foster global virtual collaborations.....	9
B. LIABILITY, EMERGENCY MEDICAL & SECURITY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.....	11
C. PROGRAM SUPPORT.....	12
D. COMMUNICATIONS.....	14
E. PRE-DEPARTURE/UPON ARRIVAL SUPPORT.....	15
F. AIR TRAVEL.....	15
G. MARKETING & RECRUITMENT.....	16
H. DATA PRIVACY PROTECTIONS.....	16
I. PROGRAM CANCELLATION AND RETURN POLICY.....	16
<b>2. PROGRAM OFFERINGS.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>3. EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>4. Scheduling, Planning, and/or Lead Time Requirements or Considerations.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>5. Participant Withdrawal Policy.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>6. ATTACHMENTS.....</b>	<b>22</b>
A. SAMPLE PROGRAM PROPOSAL.....	22
B. PROOF OF INSURANCE.....	22
C. SIGNATURE BY AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE.....	22





## INTRODUCTION

EDU Africa has been delivering in-person programming for institutions originating from different countries since 2003. We currently have offices in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. These serve as regional hubs for the 16 countries where we currently run programs. Because we have strong community connections in the regions that we work in, we are also able to offer clients access to quality, sustainable, and unique experiences. Our expertise lies in our ability to customize all aspects of our programs, from accommodation to service-learning projects and activities.

We aim for all students to experience holistic transformation when they engage with Africa, both in person and virtually. As we build programs, we incorporate means of measuring this transformation by aligning the components of student experiences with our five transformative goals - **Global Citizenship, Intellectual Growth, Intercultural Competence, Personal Growth, and Professional Development** (higher education students) and **Intercultural Competence, Global Citizenship, Personal Growth, Leadership, and Collaboration** (school students). By combining place-based experience with intentional reflection practices and dialogue, we strive to challenge students to understand the various cultures, knowledge systems, and worldviews on the continent so that, as their views of life are challenged, the transformation they go through may propel them to be global agents of change.

## 1. SCOPE OF WORK

### A. VALUES

#### a. Concrete measures to promote equity, inclusion, and access

##### i. Policies and procedures aligned with inclusive excellence and support staff committed to fostering an environment of inclusion and belonging

At EDU Africa we believe that diversity in the fullest sense enhances who we are, as well as the experiences that we can offer. We appreciate that this means more than just national, racial, or gender diversity; we also understand the value of cognitive and cultural diversity - people's disparate and unique ways of processing information, thinking, and interacting with others. By seeing people for who they are, we can see what they truly have to offer.

Acknowledging that accessibility and eligibility considerations are vital to ensure fairness, inclusivity, targeted impact, resource allocation, legal compliance, and long-term sustainability, our recruitment process aims to attract and appoint new staff members who will excel in delivering what is required of them while meeting the broader organizational objectives. As such, we make sure that our staff goes through an extensive onboarding program.

To us, equity, inclusion, and accessibility refer to the design and implementation of programs so that individuals with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and circumstances can easily access and participate in them. It involves removing barriers and providing accommodations to ensure that everyone, including



individuals with disabilities or other challenges, can fully engage with the program's benefits or services. Our Diversity Policy and staff Code of Conduct clearly articulate the expectation for our team members to uphold these tenets and continually seek to grow in how they apply them within their various roles.

We have an Access and Eligibility in Programming Design Guide for our team to use so that they can curate programs that effectively meet the needs of diverse populations and contribute to a more equitable society. This document gives ideas on what modifications to include to promote similar access for those with functional differences or other special needs while still maintaining equal benefits for all participants.

#### ii. Targeted marketing and support materials for under-represented groups

We are committed to providing an inclusive and accessible environment for all our program participants. As part of our pre-departure processes, our Program Designers ensure that participants complete a form asking for details of any allergies, medical conditions, physical support needs, mental health concerns, neurodiversity, and other requirements. We encourage students to let us know as soon as possible if they have any specific needs we can accommodate, or require extra time or resources during their program, so we can assist them.

#### iii. Support for students with financial need

We, unfortunately, cannot currently offer direct financial aid. However, we are open to helping with solutions for all students to have access to international program opportunities. Program customization is our specialty, therefore our approach typically involves carefully assessing the desired student learning outcomes to ascertain how to curate the most cost-effective means of accomplishing them, considering any budgetary constraints. These details can be discussed on a case-by-case basis. We also offer opportunities for local students to be involved in our programs. This enhances learning opportunities and has a positive effect on community sustainability.

#### iv. Identity-based on-site resources to support student success

The Student Handbook we share with participants before they travel includes a section that addresses social identities. We recognize that every culture within a country has its own understanding(s) and views on social identities such as those relating to culture, politics, religion, socio-economic status, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and (dis)abilities, among others. These views are deeply influenced by traditions, attitudes, and beliefs. Furthermore, in some African countries, public expressions of certain identities are considered taboos or criminal offenses. It is our priority to support student safety and success in-country as we navigate this within the constraints of the laws of the lands in which we operate. Our pre-departure orientation sessions and the supporting materials provided to students offer as much information as possible on identity-based matters and encourage students to further research on any specific areas they feel may impact their study abroad experience. We also recommend other online resources for students to refer to both before and during travel.

#### v. Guidance and specific program recommendations for students with disabilities



- Web and other digital technologies, the built environment, and any domain in which thoughtful design, management, and procedures can improve disability access.

As already mentioned (in sections i. to iv.), when students communicate their needs in advance, we will do our best to choose accommodation and activity sites with the capacity to allow participants to adjust well and thrive within their away-from-home learning environments. This includes aspects such as wheelchair access, ramps, or support rails. The same applies when we consider any modes of instruction and teaching aids, digital, visual, or otherwise, utilized during their program.

## **b. Intercultural learning, global awareness, and anticolonial action**

### **i. Cultivation of sensitivity to identity, power, and positionality issues**

Our responsibility to foster goals related to intercultural learning, global awareness, decoloniality, and anticolonialism is carried with immense earnestness as we interact with our employees, partners, and program participants. For our participants, this responsibility and commitment is evident in the ways we build our programs to include learning outcomes that encourage:

- Intercultural Competence - focusing on cultural self-awareness, respect, and sensitivity
- Global Citizenship - unpacking the power inequalities, complicities, and historical entanglements that exist between countries, thus helping students work towards constructive equities and solutions
- Intellectual Growth - focusing on helping students recognize the wealth of knowledge and wisdom that exists and has always existed within African locales

We engage with candid peer reviews, intercultural concepts and pieces of training, reading groups on these topics, and reflective forums in the format of a weekly "Collective Session". Our collective sessions are a platform for us to address and explore the topics of identity, power, and positionality and maintain open discussion and exchange between colleagues to help build a framework for meaningful transnational engagement and intercultural experiences.

EDU Africa's Online Global Learning programming also offers a complementary framework for meaningful transnational and intercultural experiences and collaboration. Most importantly, it enables us to continue to foster global collaboration and connectivity between Africans and the rest of the globe.

### **ii. Standard inclusion of intercultural engagement and reflection activities**

By combining place-based experience and cross-cultural engagements with intentional reflection practices and dialogue, we strive to challenge students to understand the various cultures, knowledge systems, and worldviews on the continent so that, as their views of life are challenged, the transformation they go through may propel them to be global agents of change. Our facilitators are trained to coordinate reflection sessions during programs (usually after orientation, mid-program, and before departure). These sessions support students in articulating and processing their experiences and also help facilitators answer questions and attend to issues as they arise. The inclusion of intercultural engagement



opportunities and relevant reflection exercises form the cornerstone of our proposal curation process. Here is a sample program proposal for your perusal: [EDU Africa\\_Sample Program\\_Global Community Engagement and Social Change](#).

### iii. Guidance on the development of intercultural engagement skills for career readiness

By exploring global issues, exchanging knowledge, and gaining practical experience, our programs aim to encourage student growth in both intercultural competence and professional development. This [article](#) written by our Academic Director further explains our approach in this regard.

### iv. Hiring of local teams, application of local pedagogy, and redistribution of wealth to the communities that make study abroad possible

Our organization is rooted in Africa; it is our home and we are strong advocates of the education and empowerment it has to offer the world. Being on the ground and closely connected to 'where it all happens', we invite authentic African voices with a deep understanding of local context to be a part of our programs as we believe they are best positioned to powerfully deliver orientation content. We often involve external academic partners and specialists in various fields to enhance the delivery of our content. As an organization, our African contextual understanding is complemented by many years of deep experience with U.S. campuses, learners, and the associated cultural considerations. We source and carefully select our Program Facilitators from the region to ensure that they can effectively meet specific program themes and needs.

We have very strong local network support systems across sub-Saharan Africa given our purposeful geographic spread and the number of years we have been operational (two decades). Being based on the ground in Ghana, Kenya, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, with a staff complement that hails from various African nations, enables us to personally nurture strong relationships and connections with community partners. Our strong ties with our local partners enhance our ability to consistently provide quality programs because our partners come to understand our values and ethics.

One of our five brand pillars is our Commitment to Amplifying African Voices. As such, we use our programs as a platform to amplify and respect the rich voices, stories, feats, and ideas that are found in Africa. With this in mind, our program contributors are individuals and organizations that are authentically based in Africa and can speak from a place of context and lived experiences. Here are some examples of how we are living out the aspect of redistributing wealth to the communities that make study abroad possible: [Mara Naboisho Conservancy Case Study: Nature vs People](#), [Women Creating #BalanceforBetter in Africa](#), [Supporting Reforestation](#), [Women Making a Difference](#).

## c. Ethical engagement and service with/within local communities that reflect respect for community care and a commitment to place-based pedagogy

### i. Engagement with host communities in ways that reflect their needs and contribute to their well-being

The value we place on ethical community engagement is evident in that we appointed an Ethical Community Partnership Consultant on staff whose role is to:



- Ensure the regional development of sustainable community partnerships
- Establish and nurture community partnership relationships
- Establish and monitor the implementation of best practice guidelines
- Connect our programming teams with appropriate community partners
- Ensure the proper preparation of both participants and partners before they engage with each other
- Monitor, evaluate, and report on our ethical community engagements continentally

We also have a comprehensive staff training module that addresses this aspect to ensure that everyone understands its importance and can operate accordingly.

#### ii. Commitment to continuity of community engagement and iii. Prioritization of the health, safety, and perspective of local communities

Ethical community engagement is based on the understanding that community partners are experts in their domain and should be honored as leaders in the development of the placement experiences. Community partners hold historical, cultural, academic, and practical experience, making them authorities in their fields and a rich source of wisdom and knowledge. All our placements are guided by the needs set out by the community partner and are matched with corresponding student skills and resources. Through this process of honor and collaboration, each party benefits. To ensure that we are respectful of our partners' and stakeholders' needs and realities, we use a Community Partner Needs Assessment form to understand what our partners need. After we have collaborated on student engagement programs, we request their feedback to review the impact our involvement would have had on our hosting organizations. Visit our website to learn more about [Our Approach to Service Learning](#).

The true value of community engagement is found in the interactions and relationship-building that occur in the context of intercultural engagement. Ethical community engagement has sustainable benefits because the learning outcomes do not end when the placement ends. Student contributions are designed to become a platform on which the community partner can continue to build after the engagement.

At EDU Africa, we are committed to being good stewards in all our interactions and continually collaborate with our community partners to match opportunities for students in a wide variety of disciplines. Because we have strong community connections in the regions that we work in, we can continually offer students access to quality, sustainable, and unique experiences.

### d. Practicing and prioritizing sustainability

#### i. Program design with sustainability, environmental justice, and climate action as a foundation

View our [Ecology and Conservation](#) and [STEM](#) program samples to see how we design programs with sustainability, environmental justice, and climate action as a foundation.

Our learning centers, including the [Victoria Falls Wildhub](#) and the [Wildlife Tourism College](#) of The Maasai Mara, are more than just facilities. They are hubs for restoration, wildlife care, conservation, and education. Partnering with universities and research institutions, we offer students opportunities to study



and learn from the conservation areas and the animals within them. This collaborative approach enhances both education and research, advancing our collective understanding and impact.

We also intentionally talk about [Responsible Traveling](#) with our program participants both before and during their time on the ground with us to foster a deeper understanding of the importance of caring for our environment. We also give tips on how they can get involved, even in small ways, within their spheres of influence, for example, sharing tips on [How to Travel Plastic Free](#).

## ii. Incorporation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into the program experience and curriculum

Our Program Designers are mandated to curate programs with learning outcomes that engage students with the principles of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Our comprehensive catalog of intercultural programs and experiences prepares students to appreciate intercultural values, expand global awareness, and foster personal development to become global citizens. Importantly, students are encouraged to reshape the world into a better global village by adhering to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Each of our programs subscribes to SDG 15 in that we give a US\$5 donation towards the reforestation and management of Brackenhurst Forest in Kenya on behalf of each program participant.

In January 2021, the [Global Learning Collective](#) came together to address the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) through an innovative [Global Virtual Internship](#) program. The program was a team-based internship experience, focused on a problem-based learning approach that contributed to a sustainable future for all. The main objective of the Global Virtual Internship was to connect talented students from around the world, all with a focus on solving real-world region-specific challenges related to the UN SDGs. This provided students with a platform to professionally and personally develop their intercultural competencies and prepare to become global leaders with the know-how to successfully navigate in a multicultural environment. We conducted this program in the Fall, Spring, and Summer of 2021 and then again in the Summer of 2022. A total of 124 participants engaged and were deeply impacted by the program.

## iii. Options to offset study abroad travel emissions

We are committed to offsetting CO2 emissions generated by travel through effective operations, the purchase of trees, and other community environment projects.

EDU Africa donates to the [Centre for Ecosystem Restoration - Kenya \(CER-K\)](#) on behalf of each program participant. CER-K is a not-for-profit organization working to recover biodiversity in Kenya through the reforestation of the Brackenhurst forest and the restoration of other key Kenyan ecosystems. Through their donations, participants play an integral part in reversing the degradation of the African continent and ensuring that communities will be able to enjoy the benefits of these natural indigenous ecosystems for generations to come

## e. Modeling financial integrity and good stewardship

### i. Transparent budgetary practices





In terms of faculty-led programs, all net costs; including accommodation, transport, facilitator fees, meals, etc. are typically bundled together with a small percentage added. Programs are customized and therefore quoted on an ad hoc basis. Once a proposal is accepted and final quotes are provided, they do not change, unless extenuating circumstances arise. Any such increases will be communicated as soon as possible.

#### ii. Concrete measures to provide high-quality services at the lowest cost possible

All our programs are tailor-made to meet the requirements of the group traveling with us. Cost varies hugely according to the size of the group, the standard of accommodation, the number of days, countries to be visited, etc. We negotiate lower rates with all parties involved, this particularly applies to accommodation, where rates with our partner accommodation facilities are typically about 20% below those publicly available.

### f. Opportunities to foster global virtual collaborations

#### i. Pedagogy and practices aligned with Collaborative Online Internal Learning and Virtual Exchange

Our Online Global Learning Specialist's mission is to review, establish, and grow our online product offering, ensuring that we can sustainably offer transformative international programs, delivered entirely online. This role involves

- Streamlining and optimizing EDU Africa's approach to Online Global Learning programming and enhancing our product offering
- Engaging critically with research and scholarship on Online Global Learning programming to contribute to the field and enhance our praxis
- Curating and crafting innovative Online Global Learning curricula in collaboration with clients
- Ensuring a sustainable team approach to offering online programs across regions, including appropriate training for online program facilitators
- Monitoring, evaluating, and reporting on the growth and impact of EDU Africa's online global programming

Our first embedded virtual session was conducted in Kenya in May 2020. It was an adaptation of a Faculty-led program we had put together for the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, translated into

three online virtual sessions that included reflection exercises. Under the constraints of the COVID-19 pandemic, we ran about 10 free sessions and managed to surpass our target of hosting 5,000 virtual exchange hours between July and December 2020. We write about our journey here; [A Worldwide Pandemic and Our Move to Online Global Learning](#), and our client testimonials attest to how well we executed our programs. Our work led us to be named the winner in the [Offline to Online Transformation](#) category of the 2020 Global Youth Travel Awards hosted by the WYSE Travel Confederation.

We view Virtual Exchange as a robust and potentially revolutionary model for transforming the way we approach not only international education programs but classroom instruction in general. We do not see it



as a substitute for studying abroad. Our Virtual Exchange Programming offers a complementary framework for meaningful transnational and intercultural experiences and collaboration. Most importantly, it enables us to continue to foster global collaboration and connectivity between Africans and the rest of the globe.

Customized virtual programs have become an area of specialty for our organization. We can offer a variety of dynamic “Virtual Exchange” programs in various disciplines. In 2021, we curated and facilitated Virtual Exchange programs for over 30 educational institutions. We see Virtual Exchange as a form of interactive online educational engagement that positions all participants and contributors as co-investigators in the learning process. It is outcomes-based and involves sustained discussion, collaboration, and exchange between people (building a framework for meaningful transnational engagement and intercultural experiences), exploration and active participation, structured facilitation (done either by our trained team members or in conjunction with educators), Project-based learning, service learning and/or community engagement (depending on the nature and length of the program).

We have different types of virtual exchange offerings available, including:

- Co-investigation Clusters: pre-designed, short-term, high-impact program offerings that promote the process of co-investigative learning through three hours of synchronous engagement (or two 90 min sessions).
- Custom Independent Virtual Exchange programs: where we collaboratively design a program that achieves student learning objectives and is delivered entirely remotely.
- Custom Hybrid Virtual Exchange program: where we collaboratively design a program that combines remote delivery and a travel component in Africa (using VE to complement in-country programming).
- Custom Embedded Virtual Exchange program: where we curate select Virtual Exchange sessions that can be incorporated into an existing course being delivered by an educational institution.

## ii. Technology and other infrastructure-related capacity to facilitate virtual exchanges

We have been able to deliver Online Global Learning programs simply via the use of platforms such as Zoom and Google Meet. As far as our needs go, our offices and day-to-day working tools suffice for our purposes and we ensure the availability of multimedia equipment to enhance the learning experience when students are in-country with us.

## **B. LIABILITY, EMERGENCY MEDICAL & SECURITY HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

### a. Applicable insurance coverage

EDU Africa carries a General Public Liability cover of USD5 million (underwritten by Lloyds of London). We carry Passenger Liability on all our vehicles and when we outsource transportation to 3rd party





suppliers (due to demand), we obtain proof of their insurance. We make use of SATIB24 as an external emergency service provider.

We require each participant traveling with us to have medical insurance, although we are also covered by our own third-party liability insurance. When students are traveling to remote areas, we have evacuation cover in place, for example, when traveling to the Maasai Mara in Kenya, or Serengeti in Tanzania, we take out AMREF cover for participants at a fee of USD10 per person per program.

c. Providers must maintain an emergency action and communications plan that is shared with the University and program leaders in advance. The organization must provide a single communication channel 24 hours a day to professionals who specialize in crisis and emergency management to support in an emergency. This service must be able to guide Virginia Tech staff and students on safety and security precautions and if required coordinate evacuation services.

EDU Africa recognizes its responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of all students while they travel with us. While there is a degree of risk associated with any form of travel, and students generally accept this fact when they set off to engage in a program, it is of utmost importance to us that we make sure that we consider their Health and Safety, taking measures to ensure that experiences are as memorable as can be.

The aim of the EDU Africa Health and Safety Policy is to promote good practice by

- Providing all students with appropriate safety and protection while in the care of EDU Africa
- Allowing all staff/participants to make informed and confident responses to health and safety issues
- Deterring people who do not understand the importance of travel health and safety from working or volunteering with us

We strive to integrate this policy into our operations, relationships with partners, relationships with communities, and with students who travel with us to create a safer environment for travelers.

Our Health and Hygiene In-Country Minimum Standards document is a guideline to help both staff and participants promote a healthier and safer learning environment. We also have an Emergency Procedures

document that is available to be shared with our clients. It has step-by-step details on how to respond and the correct communication channels to use in the event of specific incidents which include medical-related emergencies, fire, and natural disasters. The relevant contact numbers are provided to our program

facilitators and these documents are talked through at participant orientation and are accessible for use when required.

In addition, during our pre-departure preparation online sessions, our Program Designers will adhere to a script that ensures that they iron out any emergency action concerns and together with the student chaperones, discuss further specifics or preferred protocols for each program. The designated Program Facilitator will be the go-to person when there is a need to navigate any emergencies. The EDU Africa office will usually be the main point of contact and coordination for all parties involved in any incident.



## **C. PROGRAM SUPPORT**

### **a. Appropriate academic content**

i. If providing academic services, providers must reflect a commitment to high-quality academics to align with Virginia Tech's curriculum and the learning objectives of the program

Our core specialty is to collaboratively develop programs that support students' desired learning outcomes. All activities that are included in EDU Africa's programs are outcomes-based in line with our transformation goals. Program Designers (PDs) offer support in creating these transformative learning outcomes, as well as intense curriculum development support in the creation of program itineraries. With their wealth of experience, our PDs can draw on extensive local knowledge and networks in-country to support educators in choosing the best lecture spaces, guest speakers, research partners, and other elements required to run a successful educational program. They will ensure that programs meet the client's logistical needs by following our process of [Developing a Customized Program](#).

### **b. In-country support**

Our services include organizing educational and recreational activities (including putting groups in touch with quality industry professionals, academics, institutions, companies, and organizations), booking hotels and arranging meals, facilitating ground transportation and logistics, and offering educational support to educators in the form of our facilitators and transformation programming.

#### **i. On-site personnel**

Our Program Facilitators complete an intensive training series, including modules on EDU Africa's transformation goals, reflective practices, emergency procedures, child protection policies, and communication skills. Embodying our values of friendliness, collaboration, innovation, stewardship, and learning, our facilitators will support educators and their students holistically throughout their learning journey to ensure their program meets its objectives.

Our facilitators will be available 24 hours a day while the program is running and can offer local knowledge and guidance to the group while in the host country. They will also be able to offer advice on where best to obtain medical care and other services if needed. Other support staff such as translators and specific activity guides will be arranged as required.

#### **ii. Ground Transportation**

Arranging on-the-ground transport logistics is a core part of our Program Design and Coordination process. We will ensure that vehicles are available for airport transfers, the attendance of program curricular and co-curricular activities, and response to emergencies.

EDU Africa is careful to comply with the legal operating requirements for each country in which we are based. This includes operators' licenses, vehicle inspections, and public and passenger liability



insurance. EDU Africa has all relevant required compliance documents in place and is registered with the relevant tourism bodies within each country of operation. We ask our third-party suppliers to periodically complete Risk Assessment Questionnaires. These ask them to confirm and give evidence of public and passenger liability insurance, operating license, motor vehicle license, financial and legal compliance, emergency procedures, and accident/incident log procedures. We also share with them our expectations so that our operations are congruent.

### iii. Lodging

When considering the use of an accommodation facility, we consider our clients' requested standards and rooming needs, and the extent to which the facility promotes the desired program's learning outcomes. This includes its proximity to planned activities, whether or not it contains adequate spaces for group activities, availability of multimedia equipment to enhance the learning experience, and student safety via the use of risk assessment questionnaires. We have a wide network of long-term accommodation partners that meet the local requirements for licensing, health, and safety. We continually share our standards and expectations with them to ensure quality participant experiences.

If home hosting is requested, we usually work with families that are known to us, ones we have a history with. Most families are those of individuals who work for companies affiliated with EDU Africa and are familiar with our core values and mandate. We visit their homes to physically ascertain that they meet the minimum standards and criteria required to act as host families. During the visits, we have conversations with various members of the families as part of the screening process. As most families have affiliation with us courtesy of the member working in one of our companies, we have access to some background information. For families that we get referred to, we do screening through interviewing and having conversations with members of those families before taking them in as host families.

We ask for testimonials from students after each homestay using a specific series of questions to ascertain whether their experience met the intended outcomes. These details are kept on record for future reference. Before we place another student with a family we have previously worked with, we assess the living circumstances again to see if they still match our standards and whether the family still upholds our values.

Some program itineraries may include travel to or through areas where Wi-Fi connectivity is intermittent or absent. If we are unable to make alternative arrangements for connectivity during those times, this will be communicated within the participation eligibility requirements at the proposal stage so that educators may anticipate this or opt for different activities if they prefer.

### iv. Site Visits, v. Meals, vi. Excursions/Activities

All activities that are included in EDU Africa's programs are outcomes-based in line with our transformation goals. Program Designers offer support in creating these transformative learning outcomes, as well as intense curriculum development support in the creation of program itineraries. While the educator opting for the program has the final say over the program, our Program Designers are key in ensuring the programs not only meet desired curricular goals but are also created in a way that is sustainable, ethical, and appropriate within and for the local context.



## **D. COMMUNICATIONS**

a. Providers must offer a dedicated service team for each program that will be responsible for scheduling and facilitating meetings (initial planning calls related to the proposal, pre-departure logistics and orientation, on-site services, post-program debriefing, etc.). The service team must provide regular status updates throughout the planning process and should also be available post-program for debriefing and closure of any outstanding issues.

Our team will work collaboratively with faculty to curate and deliver quality programs for both the virtual and in-country portions. Each program will have a dedicated Program Designer to assist with content development and have oversight of the program until its successful completion. An assigned Virtual Exchange Program Facilitator will conduct the virtual sessions, lead reflections, and support participants on their learning journeys. A Technical Support Team will be available to set up and ensure the smooth running of the virtual exchange portions of the program. An In-Country Program Facilitator will meet the group of students on arrival at the airport and accompany them for the full duration of their time on the ground. This facilitator will be available at all times to assist with any student and educator needs, thus ensuring the smooth running of the program.

b. During the program, the service team must provide multiple redundant emergency contact protocols to allow the traveling group to seamlessly communicate directly with the study abroad provider, the in-country ground team, the guide, the University, and other relevant stakeholders. In the event of unforeseeable events, the provider should notify of program alterations and offer regular updates to the University regarding booking confirmation and payment deadlines.

The designated Program Designer for each program will be responsible for maintaining communication with all the relevant stakeholders from the pre-proposal stage to the post-program debriefing stage. All EDU Africa programs are implemented by trusted and trained Program Facilitators. This guarantees that the planned itinerary and activities come to life. The assigned Program Facilitator/s will be available at all times to assist with any student and educator needs, thus ensuring the smooth running of the program. The educator and the Program Facilitator will have direct access to the EDU Africa office and local emergency response teams for support if required.

## **E. PRE-DEPARTURE/UPON ARRIVAL SUPPORT**

a. Providers must offer country-specific expertise including site-specific and collaboration on pre-departure orientation. All Virginia Tech programs are required to host at least one pre-departure orientation and an upon-arrival orientation at each destination. These sessions must include the following content: familiarization with the locality; important logistics; emergency response protocols; communications plan; site-specific and cultural information; and a health, safety, and security briefing).

Our organization is rooted in Africa; it is our home and we are strong advocates of the education and empowerment it has to offer the world. Being on the ground and closely connected to 'where it all happens', we invite authentic African voices with a deep understanding of local context to be a part of our programs as we believe they are best positioned to powerfully deliver orientation content.



As part of our program preparation processes, we schedule a pre-departure call with participants or their representative/s at least 90 days before their program start date. These calls are guided by a checklist that the Program Designer works through to ensure that all the key aspects, including the reiteration of program learning outcomes, orientation, activities, health and safety matters, and even reentry support, are addressed. Individual calls with participants may be arranged if necessary and within the relevant boundaries as discussed with the relevant educators or parents. Various documentation to aid in preparing the students for their study abroad experience, including a Student Handbook, will be shared via email.

We kickstart all our programs with an in-country orientation on the first or second day (depending on arrival time). It includes health and safety information, cultural etiquette, discussions around sustainable engagement, and our transformation agenda. Students can choose to take part in our transformation assessments at this point. This involves pre- and post-test online assessments that measure students' growth over the program (along with the appropriate transformation goals). Students take the pre-test during orientation, and the post-test during the last reflection session of the program. Participation in our transformation assessments is optional for all student groups (although highly encouraged).

## **F. AIR TRAVEL**

a. Though Virginia Tech program participants typically make their own air travel arrangements, providers should be able to book group air travel if requested by the program organizer.

We generally do not assist with international flights (we can refer you to a third party for these), although we can assist with domestic flight transfers (which we will generally do if in-country flights are part of the program itinerary).

## **G. MARKETING & RECRUITMENT**

a. Virginia Tech values providers who are able to assist in marketing and recruitment efforts, including but not limited to support for information sessions, and content creation in alignment with Virginia Tech's brand identity and style guide.

Our in-house marketing team is available to help educators with student recruitment. We can assist with the designing of pamphlets and flyers, and providing supportive marketing materials such as past student testimonials and blogs. From time to time, EDU Africa representatives travel to the United States for conferences or other affairs and present to and answer questions from prospective students about traveling to African countries. Our staff is also readily available via online communication platforms to assist with assurance or promotion. We can also assist with presentations, pre-departure documents and reading, post-travel resources, our transformative assessment tool and the reports generated thereof, and conference calls with educators and student groups where appropriate (both before and after travel).

## **H. DATA PRIVACY PROTECTIONS**

a. To the extent applicable, Contractor agrees to hold student information, including any personally identifiable student information or education records as those terms are defined under federal law, ("Confidential Data") in strict confidence and warrants to University that it will use reasonable industry



practices to establish and maintain adequate procedures to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of such Confidential Data, from unauthorized use or disclosure in violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

We agree to adhere to this. We store client information on our internal company cloud (Google Drive) that only our staff can access. Information will only be shared with third parties if necessary for the provision of accommodations that a particular student may require to support their participation in a program or if needed during an emergency (medical or otherwise). Personal data is only kept long enough for it to be processed for its stated purpose. Participant information will be discarded as soon as the program has wrapped up (debriefs and reporting have been completed) or no longer than 6 months after a program has ended (if there happens to be just reason to maintain this information for that long). We permanently delete all captured personal data from our company cloud. If students sign up to receive our newsletters, they are welcome to unsubscribe from these at any time.

## **I. PROGRAM CANCELLATION AND RETURN POLICY**

Our cancellation policy is detailed below. It was constructed after considering our partners' operational requirements and the financial implications thereof. However, we are open to negotiation within reasonable boundaries.

### **EDU Africa's Cancellation Policy**

1. Notification of program cancellation must be put in writing. The refund terms below apply.

If a program is canceled:

- 150+ days before arrival, we will refund 100% of the deposit\*, less any applicable booking/administration fees
- 120 - 149 days before arrival, we will refund 90% of the deposit, less any applicable booking/administration fees
- 90 - 119 days before arrival, we will refund 50% of the deposit, less any applicable booking/administration fees
- 60 - 89 days before arrival, where only the deposit has been paid, the deposit will be deemed non-refundable
- 60 - 89 days before arrival, where the total amount has been paid, the deposit will be deemed due and non-refundable
- 45 - 59 days before arrival, 40% of the total invoice amount will be deemed due and payable/non-refundable
- 30 - 44 days before arrival, 60% of the total invoice amount will be deemed due and payable/non-refundable
- 15 - 29 days before arrival, 80% of the total invoice amount will be deemed due and payable/non-refundable
- 14 days or less before arrival, 100% of the total invoice amount will be deemed due and payable/non-refundable





*\*This value is based on a standard 15% deposit to secure the booking. Any funds paid over and above this amount will be fully refunded unless notified and agreed upon (in writing) before booking.*

2. If participants/groups are prevented from traveling on a booked program by genuine circumstances (e.g. insurable risks or other circumstances beyond their control) and can prove these, bookings may be transferred to other participants/groups provided the participants/groups meet all the requirements related to that program.
3. EDU Africa will not cancel a booking unless:
  - they are forced to do so by unusual or unforeseeable circumstances such as government restrictions (e.g. due to public health and safety concerns), flight cancellations, war, civil or political unrest, or what is usually known as 'force majeure'
  - the minimum number of participants needed to operate the program has not been reached (all programs are subject to minimum numbers)
  - there is non-payment by the institution

In the event of a) above, EDU Africa does not claim liability and our standard cancellation terms will apply by default until the situation is thoroughly reviewed. EDU Africa undertakes to engage with suppliers to secure concessions to be as flexible and generous as possible in the application of our terms and conditions.

For b) and c) above, we will advise you of the cancellation no later than 45 days before the in-country arrival date of the program for programs of more than 10 days duration, and no later than 30 days before arrival for programs of 10 days or less.

In the case of Notifiable Medical Conditions such as COVID-19 (where participants fall ill, have positive test results, or the government imposes restrictions based on the prevailing situation), the relevant course of action will be discussed and concluded after discussions between the EDU

Africa (usually the Program Designer) and the institution's representatives in line with relevant protocols.

4. EDU Africa reserves the right to impose surcharges up to 30 days before departure (or whatever period may, from time to time, be declared by government statute) due to unfavorable changes in exchange rates, increases in airfares or other transport costs, or if government action should require us to do so. EDU Africa will only surcharge the institution by any amount that exceeds 2% of the basic program cost, or whatever amount may, from time to time, be declared by government statute, except for surcharges required by government action, which will be charged in full. If any surcharge larger than 10% of the program cost is imposed, the institution will have the right to cancel their booking within 7 days of the notification of the surcharge, and EDU Africa will then refund any monies paid to them in respect of the program, but not visas, vaccinations or any other incidental costs. If any surcharge is anticipated, the institution will be advised at the time of booking of the likely amount.



5. If EDU Africa is forced to make any significant changes to the program before departure, EDU Africa undertakes to inform the institution, and, if the institution does not want to accept the change, they may cancel without penalty. Note: A 'significant change' is a change of more than 24 hours in departure or return timings, or a change in itinerary, transport, or accommodation arrangements affecting more than 10% of the program.

## 2. PROGRAM OFFERINGS

Our mission is to develop and facilitate Transformative Learning Journeys through our study abroad programs in Sub-Saharan Africa. Our experienced Program Designers work closely with clients to develop programs that meet their logistical needs and achieve specific academic learning outcomes. Through these custom programs, we give educators and their students access to experiential learning opportunities, high-caliber industry and academic professionals, and sustainable community initiatives.

We facilitate Faculty-led, Service Learning, Study Abroad, Internships, and School programs. We also facilitate Online Global Learning programs of different kinds. Some of our programs are hybrid, with both virtual (usually pre-departure) and in-country engagements. Furthermore, some of our programs span multiple countries, be they virtual or in-country. We are passionate about people and operate under the values of friendliness, collaboration, innovation, stewardship, and learning as we seek to build lasting relationships with our local communities, partners, and clients worldwide.

## 3. EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

### a. Industry recognition received

EDU Africa won the WYSE Global Youth Travel Award Winners 2019 ([Best Education Abroad Provider](#)) and 2020 ([Best Offline to Online Transformation](#)). We were also winners of the [Go Overseas Community Choice Award](#) for Academics and Support in 2022. Such accreditations and accolades enhance our confidence in what we do and our ability to deliver impeccable programs for students.

### b. Forum on Education Abroad membership details

We are registered as part of the [Global Learning Collective](#) - the first truly global consortium of educational organizations that share similar values, offer a personal connection to in-country host partners, and provide on-the-ground expertise as well as local access in each region of the globe.

### c. Additional relevant certifications within the industry

We know that it is important not to work in isolation; hence, we have a vast network of partners and affiliated organizations, all of whom are chosen carefully based on excellence, reputable service, safety,





and reliability. In November 2020, The Forum on Education Abroad recognized EDU Africa Kenya for meeting the field's Standards of Good Practice. All our Kenya programs completed The Forum's Quality Improvement Program (QUIP) and earned [QUIP recognition](#).

EDU Africa has grown rapidly year after year and continues to push the boundaries of student transformation. Our wider team travels to the USA annually to attend Travel and Educational Conferences, both as exhibitors and presenters (CCID, WYSE, Diversity Abroad, FORUM, GEBG, and NAFSA). We are also vetted and approved vendors for several membership organizations, namely [GEBG](#), [CCID](#), and [ISEEN](#). This has allowed us to continue to gain strides in our growth strategy as opportunities for new partnerships continually arise and are fostered.

#### d. Client List and References

We have worked and engaged with more than 130 North American educational institutions (around 100 universities/colleges and 30 high/middle schools), and on average facilitate 80 - 90 programs annually across Africa. We have worked with or engaged with at least 9 of the top 50 ranked US Institutions.

#### Some Of The Institutions We Have Worked With

Abilene Christian University	Chowan University	George Fox University
Amherst College	Christian Faith Baptist	George Mason University
Arizona State University	Clemson University	Georgia College & State
Augusta University	Cleveland State University	Gustavus Adolphus College
Belmont University	Cornerstone University	Hailsham Community College CPT
Berry College	Daemen College	Hampton University
Berwick College	Duquesne University	Hobart and William Smith College
California Baptist University	East Oregon University	Johnson Cornell University
Campbell University	Edmonds Community College	La Roche College
Carson Newman University	Embry Riddle Aeronautical University	Lagrange College
Carthage College	Emory & Henry College	Louisiana State University
Central Michigan University	Franklin & Marshall College	Madonna University
Central Washington University	Friends University	Montgomery Bell Academy



North Park University	Stony Brook University	University of North Carolina - Wilmington
North Western University	SUNY (Buffalo State)	
Oral Roberts University	Syracuse University	University of Northern Iowa
Pepperdine University	Tampa University	University of Oklahoma
Pillar College	The University of Texas at Austin	University of Oregon
Rhodes College	Towson University 2018	University of South Carolina
Samford University	Union University	University of South Wales
San Diego University	United Theological Seminary	University of Tennessee - Chattanooga
San Mateo Community College	United Theological Seminary	University of Tennessee – Knoxville, Haslam Business College
Shorter University	University of Alabama	Vanderbilt University
Sophia University	University of Arkansas	Wesley Theological Seminary
Southam College	University of California – Los Angeles	Wharton - MBA
Spring Arbor University	University of Delaware	Whitworth University
St Catherine University	University of Illinois - Chicago	Yale
St Michaels College	University of Kentucky	
St Olafs College		

## References

*Names and contact details were removed to protect personal information as requested for publication purposes.*



## **4. SCHEDULING, PLANNING, AND/OR LEAD TIME REQUIREMENTS OR CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Enquiries Turnaround Times**

We aim to respond to email enquiries within 24 hours of receipt of a request for a program or proposal. Thereafter, depending on the type of program and level of customization required, we submit proposals to clients within 10 working days. More intricate proposals may take longer. Communication throughout the quoting process (and beyond - should a program be selected to run to completion) is ongoing, and clients have access to our office numbers in the unlikely event that Program Designers are unavailable or unresponsive via email. We also make use of an in-house Customer Resource Management system that allows us to keep up-to-date and hold each other accountable for the timeliness of our correspondence with clients.

### **Deposit and Payment Terms**

1. A minimum deposit of 15% is required to secure your booking. The amount due will be based on the maximum number of participants expected.
2. The final invoice for the remainder of the cost will be due 60 days before arrival unless agreed upon in writing by both parties (which may result in an upward revision of the minimum deposit payable on booking).
3. If a booking is made 60 days or less before the in-country arrival date, the full payment must be made on booking.

## **5. PARTICIPANT WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

EDU Africa reserves the right to investigate the behavior of participants, summon a student for a hearing, and issue a formal written warning before program termination if a participant has caused offense or damage to property, persons, animals, or the environment, as stated in our [Participant Agreement](#) that every student is required to read and sign before the start of their program. Our actions will be guided by our Academic Policies and Procedures. If the offense is considered severe and/or breaks the laws of the country, EDU Africa reserves the right to immediately terminate participation. In such a case, EDU Africa will not be liable for any refunds or costs incurred due to the premature termination of the program. Students have the right to appeal any decisions made by EDU Africa via the channels communicated at the time of communicating the outcome of their disciplinary process.



3. If a booking is made 60 days or less before the in-country arrival date, the full payment must be made on booking.

## **5. PARTICIPANT WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

EDU Africa reserves the right to investigate the behavior of participants, summon a student for a hearing, and issue a formal written warning before program termination if a participant has caused offense or damage to property, persons, animals, or the environment, as stated in our [Participant Agreement](#) that every student is required to read and sign before the start of their program. Our actions will be guided by our Academic Policies and Procedures. If the offense is considered severe and/or breaks the laws of the country, EDU Africa reserves the right to immediately terminate participation. In such a case, EDU Africa will not be liable for any refunds or costs incurred due to the premature termination of the program. Students have the right to appeal any decisions made by EDU Africa via the channels communicated at the time of communicating the outcome of their disciplinary process.

## **6. ATTACHMENTS**

### **A. SAMPLE PROGRAM PROPOSAL**

[EDU Africa\\_Sample Program\\_Global Community Engagement and Social Change](#)

### **B. PROOF OF INSURANCE**

[EDU Africa\\_Certificate of Liability Insurance\\_2024](#)

### **C. SIGNATURE BY AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVE**

[Signed Proposal Cover Page](#)



**VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY  
PROCUREMENT DEPARTMENT**

**ADDENDUM NO. 1**

**DATE:** July 16, 2024  
**TO:** All Offerors  
**FROM:** Levi Henry, Contracting Officer  
**TOTAL PAGE(S):** 4 pages (not including attachments)  
**SOLICITATION TITLE:** Custom Faculty-Led Study Abroad Providers  
**SOLICITATION NUMBER:** 952642408

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**I. CLARIFICATIONS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

\*\*\*The deadline for proposal submission has been extended from 3:00 PM EST on July 25, 2024 to **3:00 PM EST on July 26, 2024** as part of this addendum\*\*\*

The following sub-sections are being added to Section VI – Statement of Needs:

**J. Invoicing Requirements:**

The Contractor shall submit invoices for payment to the University exclusively in USD. Each invoice must clearly reference specific line-item descriptions from the Total Program Budget that correspond to the requested payment.

Invoices should be remitted to the University's point of contact for the program specified within the Addendum to the Master Agreement. Normal processing of invoices through standard internal University business procedures will ensure the invoice is submitted to the University's accounts payable department for processing and payment.

The following sub-section is being added to Section VII.A – Specific Requirements for Proposal Submission:

11. Budget Creation Process – Provide Information about how your company can work with the University to engage in the budget creation and development process.

The following sub-section replaces in entirety the section titled "Fees" on Attachment B template:

**Cost per Participant, Participant's Program Fee and Development of Total Program Budget:**

The costs per person and the subsequent Participant's Program Fee will be determined in advance of each customized program and specified in the executed Addendum as the Total Program Budget.

The Total Program Budget shall be developed taking in to consideration the costs of the following line items but is not limited to only these items and may be program specific. The Total Program Budget shall be subject to the agreement of both parties and finalized through execution of the Program's Addendum to this Agreement:

**a. Administrative Fee of Contractor**

- b. Orientation
- c. Accommodation
- d. Transportation
- e. Airport pick up on arrival day and transfer to the airport on departure day
- f. Meals
- g. Translator fees for project work
- h. All project materials and supplies
- i. Cultural engagement and class activities

The following sub-section is added to the Attachment B template:

Payment Schedule:

Participants: Registered participants will pay Participant's Program Fee directly to the University. The University will in turn make payments directly to the Contractor under the following guidelines:

Milestone payments, such as initial deposits, pre-payments, and interim payments, are permitted and will be specifically outlined and mutually agreed upon in the Addendum to the Master Agreement.

## II. REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION

1. **In regard to the template for the master services agreement, is there any flexibility with using the provider's template instead?**

Virginia Tech Response: *To streamline our approach to these agreements, the preference is that the Master Services Agreement Template be the document utilized for the agreements established from this RFP. This will help expedite the approval process at the University.*

2. **Does the scope of this RFP cover all Virginia Tech's different schools and programs, or will those separate entities develop their own agreements?**

Virginia Tech Response: *This covers all the Study Abroad Programs under Virginia Tech.*

3. **Will it be mandated that the University uses providers selected as part of this RFP process?**

Virginia Tech Response: *As this is a new process, they will be used to the extent they can. Over time as the program develops, it will eventually be a requirement that a provider has gone through this process to obtain a master service agreement to be included in the study abroad provider list.*

4. **What is the renewal process after each 2-year term?**

Virginia Tech Response: *Typically, we will reach out with 6 months remaining on the current term to send the provider a renewal letter asking if they are willing to renew the contract for the next term. At that time if there are any additional items that need to be incorporated, that will be reviewed.*

5. **Many points within the RFP appear to be related to U.S. based suppliers. As a foreign entity, will this affect our consideration of being selected as a provider?**

Virginia Tech Response: No, the intent and goal of this RFP is to be open to all entities both foreign and domestic. The location of your company shall not be used as a factor for selecting awarded providers. If there are items within the RFP that you feel do not apply to your company, please note in your proposal response that our request is not applicable to your company.

6. **Per section VI.I. in the RFP, to what extent is there flexibility to negotiate the outlined Cancellation and Program Return Policy? In many of our locations, in order to secure program arrangements over peak tourism season when the majority of faculty-led programs occur, bookings must be made far in advance and come with non-refundable cancellation fees. There are cases when we may not be able to ensure 100% refunds for cancellations earlier than 60 days (about 2 months) before the program start date.**

Virginia Tech Response: The preference is to proceed with the policy outlined, however we understand that there may be cases where this is not possible. In this case, we ask that providers be transparent with the University about the challenges that need to be considered so that we can proceed accordingly.

7. **What is the current number of faculty-led study abroad programs that are being conducted by Virginia Tech?**

Virginia Tech Response: There are currently about 90 faculty-led programs taking place.

8. **Approximately how many students and faculty typically participate in these programs?**

Virginia Tech Response: It is dependent upon multiple factors, but typically they tend to range from between 10 to 30 participants.

9. **What are the University's expectations for the involvement of the budget development and creation?**

Virginia Tech Response: Once your company has been engaged to provide services, the expectation is that there is a partnership between your company and the program coordinator at Virginia Tech to have an honest dialogue about what would be a justifiable budget in order to obtain the highest quality services for the lowest price to the students.

10. **How far into detail should providers go in terms of developing the budget? For example, is that from the time they arrive to the airport to the time they leave?**

Virginia Tech Response: The budget for the programs will need to go into considerable detail if possible. However, there will be categories within the budgets that allow for shifting of budgeted resources between categories as needed during the execution of the program all the while maintaining the overall program budget. Note, The RFP is not asking for any specific budget to be provided at the time of RFP proposal submission, but we do wish to understand your company's process for developing total program budgets so we can plan accordingly.

11. **We currently have an ongoing Program Services Agreement with the university under which our Program Proposals fall under. If we are to be awarded a contract through this process and the document under Attachment B is executed, then is the understanding correct that the current PSA will be replaced in its entirety by this new document?**

Virginia Tech Response: Yes, that is correct. Your current PSA will be replaced by the new master services agreement with the University resulting from this RFP.

- 12. And if that understanding is correct, is there room to negotiate provisions that had been in the Program Services Agreement to be placed back in this new Master Agreement (should our counsel advise so)?**

Virginia Tech Response: Yes, pending VT legal review and approval.

- 13. I note that you have Attachment C which is the Addendum template for the program portion that is meant to go with VT's Master Services Agreement. Does this mean that all our program proposals need to conform to Attachment C format or are we still able to submit our version of a program proposal?**

Virginia Tech Response: Once you have a Master Services Agreement with the University, moving forward all program proposals shall conform to the template in Attachment C.

- 14. We do multiple types of programs with VT (such as semester/internship), not just faculty led. How does this RFP process affect those non fac led programs?**

Virginia Tech Response: The current RRP process is specific to custom faculty-led programs and will not affect providers who engage in other program collaborations with VT. If you have a question about a particular circumstance, please contact vtabroad@vt.edu for support.

### III. ATTENDANCE ROSTER AND RECORDING OF PREPROPOSAL CONFERENCE

Below is the attendance roster and a link to the recording of the pre-proposal conference held on June 27, 2024

<https://www.procurement.vt.edu/preproposal.html>

#### VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY ATTENDANCE ROSTER NON-MANDATORY PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE

**RFP Number 952642408**

**Date: June 27, 2024 Time: 2:00 PM EST**

<b>Company Name</b>	<b>Representative(s)</b>
Peacework	Jessica Falla
Key Travel	Brandon Trefonas, Mike Schields, Makenzie Howard
Santa Reparta International School of Art	Allison Reyna
MICExperts Ticino	Diana Richner
EDU Africa	Tafadzwa Muchopa
Worldstrides	Alexis Bourgeois
7 Mares GMBH	Tiago Pinto Pais
CET Academic Programs	Brian Wiehr
Academic Programs International	Shanaya Thompson
Global Economic Ventures	Anna Brady
EDU Trips	Kate Coffey



IES Abroad	Robin Leephaibul
American Universities International Programs Limited	Kevin Arscott
Diversity Travel	Beverly Weir
SIT Study Abroad	Ben Efird
Learn From Travel	Roman Yavich
Learn Russian in the EU	Sergey Simonov
Service Without Borders	Daniel Hindman
Knomadic	Maria Rojas
SRISA	Emily Cucalon, Allison Reyna
Vla Vla Travel	Vlatka Maric
Wayra Spanish Institute	Diego Patt
Virginia Tech	Glenn Bugh, Katie Heiderscheit, Emily Talley, Candice Albert, Bob Efird, Keith Goyne, David Robertson, Ragheda Nassereddine, Margie Deck, Marie Medley, Levi Henry, Mary Helmick, John Spence, Theresa Johansson, Emily Schwartz



Request for Proposal # 952642408

For

Custom Faculty-Led Study Abroad Program Providers

June 4, 2024

**Note: This public body does not discriminate against faith-based organizations in accordance with the *Code of Virginia*, § 2.2-4343.1 or against a bidder or offeror because of race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, or any other basis prohibited by state law relating to discrimination in employment.**

RFP # 952642408, Study Abroad Program Master Service Agreement Providers

**INCLUDE THIS PAGE WITH YOUR PROPOSAL, SIGNATURE AT SUBMISSION IS REQUIRED**

**DUE DATE:** Proposals will be received until **July 25, 2024 at 3:00 PM**. Failure to submit proposals to the correct location by the designated date and hour will result in disqualification.

**INQUIRIES:** All inquiries for information regarding this solicitation should be directed to Levi Henry, Phone: (540) 231-7852 e-mail: [lhenry29@vt.edu](mailto:lhenry29@vt.edu). All inquiries will be answered in the form of an addendum. Inquiries must be submitted by 2:00 PM on July 3, 2024. Inquiries must be submitted to the procurement officer identified in this solicitation.

**OPTIONAL PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE:** An optional pre-proposal conference will be held on **June 27, 2024 at 2:00 PM**. See RFP Section IX, Pre-proposal Conference for additional information.

**PROPOSAL SUBMISSION:**

**\*Please note, proposal submission procedures have changed effective March 2023.**

**Proposals may NOT be hand delivered to the Procurement Office.**

Proposals should be submitted electronically through Virginia Tech's procurement portal. This portal allows you access to view business opportunities and submit bids and proposals to Virginia Tech digitally and securely.

**Proposals must be submitted electronically at:**

<https://bids.sciquest.com/apps/Router/PublicEvent?CustomerOrg=VATech>

Vendors will need to register through this procurement portal, hosted by Jaggaer. **It is encouraged for all vendors to register prior to the proposal submission deadline to avoid late submissions.** Registration is easy and free. If you have any challenges with the registration process, please contact Jaggaer Support at 1-800-233-1121 or [procurement@vt.edu](mailto:procurement@vt.edu).

Click on the opportunity and log in to your vendor account to begin preparing your submission. Upon completion, you will receive a submission receipt email confirmation. Virginia Tech will not confirm receipt of proposals. It is the responsibility of the offeror to make sure their proposal is delivered on time.

Hard copy or email proposals will not be accepted. Late proposals will not be accepted, nor will additional time be granted to any individual Vendor.

**Attachments must be smaller than 50MB in order to be received by the University.**

*In compliance with this Request For Proposal and to all the conditions imposed therein and hereby incorporated by reference, the undersigned offers and agrees to furnish the goods or services in accordance with the attached signed proposal and as mutually agreed upon by subsequent negotiation.*

AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**[INCLUDE THIS PAGE]**

I. PURPOSE:

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks to solicit proposals to establish a contract through competitive negotiations by Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech), an agency of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

As a leading research institution, Virginia Tech engages in global teaching, research, and service, which includes offering a robust study abroad program portfolio. In an effort to streamline the University's approach to selecting providers that assist with study abroad programs, we are encouraging proposals from all potential providers to be submitted for review in order to establish master service agreements with the University. Providers who have worked with the University in the past and those who wish to work with the University in the future are highly encouraged to participate in this solicitation. Providers who are currently affiliated and working with Virginia Tech on existing programs are also strongly encouraged to submit in this solicitation cycle so as to be part of the full portfolio. The goal through this process is to centralize oversight of study-abroad provider services and networks. The University invites all qualified providers to submit a proposal.

II. SMALL, WOMAN-OWNED AND MINORITY (SWAM) BUSINESS PARTICIPATION:

The mission of the Virginia Tech supplier opportunity program is to foster inclusion in the university supply chain and accelerate economic growth in our local communities through the engagement and empowerment of high quality and cost competitive small, minority-owned, women-owned, and local suppliers. Virginia Tech encourages prime suppliers, contractors, and service providers to facilitate the participation of small businesses, and businesses owned by women and minorities through partnerships, joint ventures, subcontracts, and other inclusive and innovative relationships.

For more information, please visit: <https://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/>

III. CONTRACT PERIOD:

The term of this contract is for two year(s), or as negotiated. There will be an option for four (4) two-year renewals, or as negotiated.

IV. EVA BUSINESS-TO-GOVERNMENT ELECTRONIC PROCUREMENT SYSTEM:

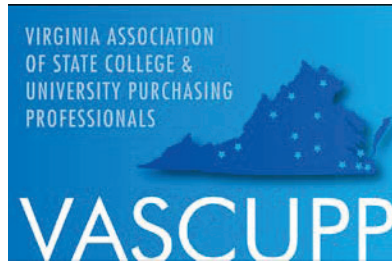
The eVA Internet electronic procurement solution streamlines and automates government purchasing activities within the Commonwealth of Virginia. Virginia Tech, and other state agencies and institutions, have been directed by the Governor to maximize the use of this system in the procurement of goods and services. *We are, therefore, requesting that your firm register as a vendor within the eVA system.*

There are transaction fees involved with the use of eVA. These fees must be considered in the provision of quotes, bids and price proposals offered to Virginia Tech. Failure to register within the eVA system may result in the quote, bid or proposal from your firm being rejected and the award made to another vendor who is registered in the eVA system.

Registration in the eVA system is accomplished on-line. Your firm must provide the necessary information. Please visit the eVA website portal at <http://www.eva.virginia.gov/pages/eva-registration-buyer-vendor.htm> and **register both with eVA and Ariba**. *This process needs to be completed before Virginia Tech can issue your firm a Purchase Order or contract.* If your firm conducts business from multiple geographic locations, please register these locations in your initial registration.

For registration and technical assistance, reference the eVA website at: <https://eva.virginia.gov/>, or call 866-289-7367 or 804-371-2525.

V. CONTRACT PARTICIPATION:



It is the intent of this solicitation and resulting contract to allow for cooperative procurement. Accordingly, any public body, public or private health or educational institutions, or Virginia Tech's affiliated corporations and/or partnerships may access any resulting contract if authorized by the contractor.

Participation in this cooperative procurement is strictly voluntary. If authorized by the Contractor, the resultant contract may be extended to the entities indicated above to purchase at contract prices in accordance with contract terms. The Contractor shall notify Virginia Tech in writing of any such entities accessing the contract, if requested. No modification of this contract or execution of a separate contract is required to participate. The Contractor will provide semi-annual usage reports for all entities accessing the Contract, as requested. Participating entities shall place their own orders directly with the Contractor and shall fully and independently administer their use of the contract to include contractual disputes, invoicing and payments without direct administration from Virginia Tech. Virginia Tech shall not be held liable for any costs or damages incurred by any other participating entity as a result of any authorization by the Contractor to extend the contract. It is understood and agreed that Virginia Tech is not responsible for the acts or omissions of any entity, and will not be considered in default of the contract no matter the circumstances.

Use of this contract does not preclude any participating entity from using other contracts or competitive processes as the need may be.

VI. STATEMENT OF NEEDS/SCOPE OF WORK:

Virginia Tech's current faculty-led program portfolio includes 90 programs across all academic areas on all continents including Antarctica. As a comprehensive institution with a large global engagement portfolio, we aim to identify a network of providers to support high-quality study abroad services aligned with the Forum on Education Abroad's *Standard of Good Practice* and *Code of Ethics* that maintain the existing breadth of the portfolio as well as its geographic diversity.

- A. Values: Virginia Tech requests proposals that align with the following Global Education Office values and reflect a commitment to:
  - a. Concrete measures to promote equity, inclusion, and access; these could include, among others:
    - i. Policies and procedures aligned with inclusive excellence and support staff committed to fostering an environment of inclusion and belonging.
    - ii. Targeted marketing and support materials for under-represented groups

- iii. Support for students with financial need
  - iv. Identity-based on-site resources to support student success
  - v. Guidance and specific program recommendations for students with disabilities
    - 1. Web and other digital technologies, the built environment, and any domain in which thoughtful design, management, and procedures can improve disability access.
  - b. Intercultural learning, global awareness, and anticolonial action, for example:
    - i. Cultivation of sensitivity to identity, power, and positionality issues
    - ii. Standard inclusion of intercultural engagement and reflection activities
    - iii. Guidance on the development of intercultural engagement skills for career readiness
    - iv. Hiring of local teams, application local pedagogy, and redistribution of wealth to the communities that make study abroad possible
  - c. Ethical engagement and service with/within local communities that reflect respect for community care and a commitment to place-based pedagogy
    - i. Engagement with host communities in ways that reflect their needs and contribute to their well-being
    - ii. Commitment to continuity of community engagement.
    - iii. Prioritization of the health, safety, and perspective of local communities
  - d. Practicing and prioritizing sustainability
    - i. Program design with sustainability, environmental justice, and climate action as a foundation
    - ii. Incorporation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals into the program experience and curriculum
    - iii. Options to offset study abroad travel emissions
  - e. Modeling financial integrity and good stewardship
    - i. Transparent budgetary practices
    - ii. Concrete measures to provide high-quality services at the lowest cost possible
  - f. Opportunities to foster global virtual collaborations
    - i. Pedagogy and practices aligned with Collaborative Online Internal Learning and Virtual Exchange
    - ii. Technology and other infrastructure-related capacity to facilitate virtual exchanges
- B. Liability, Emergency Medical & Security Health Insurance Coverage
- a. Successful proposals must include applicable insurance coverage that meets VT's requirements, as shown in ATTACHMENT A, Section 7 – INSURANCE.

- b. The university has standard study abroad insurance coverage. Providers shall not require additional insurance coverage beyond what is outlined in ATTACHMENT A, Section 7 – INSURANCE.
- c. Providers must maintain an emergency action and communications plan that is shared with the University and program leaders in advance. The organization must provide a single communication channel 24 hours a day to professionals who specialize in crisis and emergency management to support in an emergency. This service must be able to guide Virginia Tech staff and students on safety and security precautions and if required coordinate evacuation services.

### C. Program Support

- a. Appropriate academic content
  - i. If providing academic services, providers must reflect a commitment to high-quality academics to align with Virginia Tech's curriculum and the learning objectives of the program.
- b. In-country support
  - i. On-site personnel: Virginia Tech's Global Travel Policy indicates a faculty-to-student ratio of 1:15. The standard minimum program enrollment is 10; however, programs may run with fewer students if financially viable. Virginia Tech seeks providers with the ability to offer in-country support staff. Such staff should be fluent in the host language, familiar with the location, and available 24/7 to assist in emergencies. Availability of a local/cultural guide and/or translator (if relevant) is also important.
  - ii. Ground Transportation: The University requires safe and reliable airport transfers and ground transportation at each location. The bidder must be able to provide motor coach/bus transportation if required for group activities such as company visits, academic/business lectures, cultural activities and group meals. Ground transportation vendors arranged by the provider must meet all local requirements for licensing and registration.
  - iii. Lodging: Lodging must be secured at three-star equivalent hotels or hostels unless otherwise specified. Accommodation in private homes with host families may be requested for some programs. Depending on the location and availability double, triple, or quad occupancy rooms can be reserved for students and single occupancy rooms for faculty/staff. The accommodation should be located near city centers or sites relevant to the program and include wireless internet access. Accommodation facilities must meet any local requirements for licensing, health, and safety.
  - iv. Site Visits: Ability to arrange cultural, business, industry, laboratory, and other visits, depending on the program requirements.
  - v. Meals: Ability to arrange group meals as requested by the program leader; knowledge and recommendations to students for convenient and inexpensive options for other meals.



- vi. Excursions/Activities: Ability to create and implement an itinerary of local excursions and activities that support the expressed learning outcomes of each program.

#### D. Communications

- a. Providers must offer a dedicated service team for each program that will be responsible for scheduling and facilitating meetings (initial planning calls related to the proposal, pre-departure logistics and orientation, on-site services, post-program debriefing, etc.). The service team must provide regular status updates throughout the planning process and should also be available post-program for debriefing and closure of any outstanding issues.
- b. During the program, the service team must provide multiple redundant emergency contact protocols to allow the traveling group to seamlessly communicate directly with the study abroad provider, the in-country ground team, the guide, the University, and other relevant stakeholders. In the event of unforeseeable events, the provider should notify of program alterations and offer regular updates to the University regarding booking confirmation and payment deadlines.

#### E. Pre-Departure/Upon Arrival Support

- a. Providers must offer country-specific expertise including site-specific and collaboration on pre-departure orientation. All Virginia Tech programs are required to host at least one pre-departure orientation and an upon-arrival orientation at each destination. These sessions must include the following content: familiarization with the locality; important logistics; emergency response protocols; communications plan; site-specific and cultural information; and a health, safety, and security briefing).

#### F. Air Travel

- a. Though Virginia Tech program participants typically make their own air travel arrangements, providers should be able to book group air travel if requested by the program organizer.

#### G. Marketing & Recruitment

- a. Virginia Tech values providers who are able to assist in marketing and recruitment efforts, including but not limited to support for information sessions, and content creation in alignment with Virginia Tech's brand identity and style guide.

#### H. Data Privacy Protections

- a. To the extent applicable, Contractor agrees to hold student information, including any personally identifiable student information or education records as those terms are defined under federal law, ("Confidential Data") in strict confidence and warrants to University that it will use reasonable industry practices to establish and maintain adequate procedures to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of such Confidential Data, from unauthorized use or disclosure in violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act.

#### I. Program Cancellation and Return Policy:

In the event that Virginia Tech wishes to cancel any program 60 days before the start date (the "Cancellation Deadline") due to low enrollment or any other reason, Virginia Tech will



receive a refund of 100% of uncommitted and unexpended program fees. There will be no refund if Virginia Tech wishes to cancel the program after the Cancellation Deadline. Cancellations must be submitted in writing to the Contractor and will be noted based on the date notification is received. [Subject to "Acts of God" section below.]

In the unlikely event that the U.S. Department of State or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issues a travel advisory of health notice of Level 3 or higher advising against travel to host country locations during the program and Virginia Tech wishes to cancel the program, Virginia Tech will receive a refund of 100% of uncommitted and unexpended program fees as of the date Virginia Tech notifies the Contractor in writing of the cancellation due to the U.S. Department of State or Centers for Disease Control and Prevention advisory or safety cancellation.

VII. PROPOSAL PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION:

A. Specific Requirements

Proposals should be as thorough and detailed as possible so that Virginia Tech may properly evaluate your capabilities to provide the required goods or services. Offerors are required to submit the following information/items as a complete proposal:

1. Plan for providing the services in accordance with the scope of work as outlined above in section VI. Offeror shall demonstrate understanding and commitment to adhere to the expectations of the University.
2. A description for different types of program offering(s) offeror is able to provide to the University.
3. Experience / Qualifications
  - a. Industry Recognition your Company has received.
  - b. Forum on Education Abroad membership details
  - c. Additional relevant certifications within the industry
  - d. Client List / Higher Education Client List (preferably 3-5 references)
4. Crisis Management and Emergency Response procedures
5. Medical, Emergency, and Evacuation Insurance Coverage details
6. Scheduling, Planning, and/or Lead Time Requirements or Considerations
7. Participant Withdrawal Policy
8. Submission of Insurance Documentation (COI) in accordance with ATTACHMENT A, Section 7 - INSURANCE.
9. Participation of Small, Women-owned and Minority-owned Business (SWAM) Business: If your business cannot be classified as SWaM, describe your plan for utilizing SWaM subcontractors if awarded a contract. Describe your ability to provide reporting on SWaM subcontracting spend when requested. If your firm or any business that you plan to

subcontract with can be classified as SWaM, but has not been certified by the Virginia Department of Small Business and Supplier Diversity (SBSD), it is expected that the certification process will be initiated no later than the time of the award. If your firm is currently certified, you agree to maintain your certification for the life of the contract. For assistance with SWaM certification, visit the SBSD website at <http://www.sbsd.virginia.gov/>

10. The return of the Submission Instruction page and addenda, if any, signed and filled out as required.

#### D. General Requirements

1. RFP Response: In order to be considered for selection, Offerors shall submit a complete response to this RFP to include;

- a. **One (1) electronic document** in WORD format or searchable PDF of the entire proposal as one document, INCLUDING ALL ATTACHMENTS must be uploaded through the Virginia Tech online submission portal. Refer to page 2 for instructions.

Any proprietary information should be clearly marked in accordance with 2.d. below.

- b. Should the proposal contain **proprietary information**, provide **one (1) redacted electronic copy** of the proposal and attachments **with proprietary portions removed or blacked out**. This redacted copy should follow the same upload procedures as described on Page 1 of this RFP. This redacted copy should be clearly marked "*Redacted Copy*" within the name of the document. The classification of an entire proposal document, line item prices and/or total proposal prices as proprietary or trade secrets is not acceptable. Virginia Tech shall not be responsible for the Contractor's failure to exclude proprietary information from this redacted copy.

No other distribution of the proposals shall be made by the Offeror.

2. Proposal Preparation:

- a. Proposals shall be signed by an authorized representative of the Offeror. All information requested should be submitted. Failure to submit all information requested may result in Virginia Tech requiring prompt submission of missing information and/or giving a lowered evaluation of the proposal. Proposals which are substantially incomplete or lack key information may be rejected by Virginia Tech at its discretion. Mandatory requirements are those required by law or regulation or are such that they cannot be waived and are not subject to negotiation.
- b. Proposals should be prepared simply and economically providing a straightforward, concise description of capabilities to satisfy the requirements of the RFP. Emphasis should be on completeness and clarity of content.
- c. Proposals should be organized in the order in which the requirements are presented in the RFP. All pages of the proposal should be numbered. Each paragraph in the proposal should reference the paragraph number of the corresponding section of the RFP. It is also helpful to cite the paragraph number, subletter, and repeat the text of the requirement as it appears in the RFP. If a response covers more than one page, the paragraph number and subletter should be repeated at the top of the next page. The proposal should contain a table of contents which cross references the RFP

requirements. Information which the offeror desires to present that does not fall within any of the requirements of the RFP should be inserted at an appropriate place or be attached at the end of the proposal and designated as additional material. Proposals that are not organized in this manner risk elimination from consideration if the evaluators are unable to find where the RFP requirements are specifically addressed.

- d. Ownership of all data, material and documentation originated and prepared for Virginia Tech pursuant to the RFP shall belong exclusively to Virginia Tech and be subject to public inspection in accordance with the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. Trade secrets or proprietary information submitted by an Offeror shall not be subject to public disclosure under the Virginia Freedom of Information Act. However, to prevent disclosure the Offeror must invoke the protections of Section 2.2-4342F of the Code of Virginia, in writing, either before or at the time the data or other materials is submitted. The written request must specifically identify the data or other materials to be protected and state the reasons why protection is necessary. –The proprietary or trade secret material submitted must be identified by some distinct method such as highlighting or underlining and must indicate only the specific words, figures, or paragraphs that constitute trade secret or proprietary information. The classification of an entire proposal document, line item prices and/or total proposal prices as proprietary or trade secrets is not acceptable and may result in rejection of the proposal.
3. Oral Presentation: Offerors who submit a proposal in response to this RFP may be required to give an oral presentation of their proposal to Virginia Tech.—This will provide an opportunity for the Offeror to clarify or elaborate on the proposal but will in no way change the original proposal. Virginia Tech will schedule the time and location of these presentations. Oral presentations are an option of Virginia Tech and may not be conducted. Therefore, proposals should be complete.

VIII. SELECTION CRITERIA AND AWARD:

A. Selection Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated by Virginia Tech using the following:

<u>Criteria</u>	<u>Maximum Point Value</u>
1. Quality of services offered and suitability for the intended purposes	30
2. Qualifications and experiences of Offeror in providing the services	30
3. Specific plans or methodology to be used to provide the Services	30
4. Participation of Small, Women-Owned and Minority (SWAM) Business	10
Total	100

## B. Award

Selection shall be made of two or more offerors deemed to be fully qualified and best suited among those submitting proposals on the basis of the evaluation factors included in the Request for Proposal, including price, if so stated in the Request for Proposal. Negotiations shall then be conducted with the offerors so selected. Price shall be considered, but need not be the sole determining factor. After negotiations have been conducted with each offeror so selected, Virginia Tech shall select the offeror which, in its opinion, has made the best proposal, and shall award the contract to that offeror. Virginia Tech may cancel this Request for Proposal or reject proposals at any time prior to an award. Should Virginia Tech determine in writing and in its sole discretion that only one offeror has made the best proposal, a contract may be negotiated and awarded to that offeror. The award document will be a contract incorporating by reference all the requirements, terms and conditions of this solicitation and the Contractor's proposal as negotiated.

Virginia Tech reserves the right to award multiple contracts as a result of this solicitation.

## IX. OPTIONAL PRE-PROPOSAL CONFERENCE:

An optional pre-proposal conference will be held on **June 27, 2024 @ 2:00 PM**. The purpose of this conference is to allow potential Offerors an opportunity to present questions and obtain clarification relative to any facet of this solicitation.

**ZOOM Link:** <https://virginiatech.zoom.us/j/83100288578>

**Meeting ID: 831 0028 8578**

While attendance at this conference will not be a prerequisite to submitting a proposal, offerors who intend to submit a proposal are encouraged to attend.

Any changes resulting from this conference will be issued in an addendum to this solicitation.

## X. INVOICES:

Invoices for goods or services provided under any contract resulting from this solicitation shall be submitted by email to [vtinvoices@vt.edu](mailto:vtinvoices@vt.edu) or by mail to:

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)  
Accounts Payable  
North End Center, Suite 3300  
300 Turner Street NW  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

## XI. METHOD OF PAYMENT:

Virginia Tech will authorize payment to the contractor as negotiated in any resulting contract from the aforementioned Request for Proposal.

Payment can be expedited through the use of the Wells One AP Control Payment System. Virginia Tech strongly encourages participation in this program. For more information on this program please refer to Virginia Tech's Procurement website: <http://www.procurement.vt.edu/vendor/wellsone.html> or contact the procurement officer identified in the RFP.

XII. ADDENDUM:

Any **ADDENDUM** issued for this solicitation may be accessed at <http://www.apps.vpfin.vt.edu/html.docs/bids.php>. Since a paper copy of the addendum will not be mailed to you, we encourage you to check the web site regularly.

XIII. COMMUNICATIONS:

Communications regarding this solicitation shall be formal from the date of issue, until either a Contractor has been selected or the Procurement Department rejects all proposals. Formal communications will be directed to the procurement officer listed on this solicitation. Informal communications, including but not limited to request for information, comments or speculations regarding this solicitation to any University employee other than a Procurement Department representative may result in the offending Offeror's proposal being rejected.

XIV. CONTROLLING VERSION OF SOLICITATION:

The posted version of the solicitation and any addenda issued by Virginia Tech Procurement Services is the mandatory controlling version of the document. Any modification of/or additions to the solicitation by the Offeror shall not modify the official version of the solicitation issued by Virginia Tech Procurement Services. Such modifications or additions to the solicitation by the Offeror may be cause for rejection of the proposal; however, Virginia Tech reserves the right to decide, on a case by case basis, in its sole discretion, whether to reject such a proposal.

XV. TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

This solicitation and any resulting contract/purchase order shall be governed by the attached terms and conditions, see Attachment A.

XVI. CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION:

- A. Theresa Johansson, Director, Global Education Office, at Virginia Tech or their designee, shall be identified as the Contract Administrator and shall use all powers under the contract to enforce its faithful performance.
- B. The Contract Administrator, or their designee, shall determine the amount, quantity, acceptability, fitness of all aspects of the services and shall decide all other questions in connection with the services. The Contract Administrator, or their designee, shall not have authority to approve changes in the services which alter the concept or which call for an extension of time for this contract. Any modifications made must be authorized by the Virginia Tech Procurement Department through a written amendment to the contract.

XVII. ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment A - Terms and Conditions  
Attachment B - Template for Master Agreement  
Attachment C – Template for Addendum to Master Agreement

## ATTACHMENT A

### TERMS AND CONDITIONS

#### RFP GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

See:

[https://www.procurement.vt.edu/content/dam/procurement\\_vt\\_edu/docs/terms/GTC\\_RFP\\_02182022.pdf](https://www.procurement.vt.edu/content/dam/procurement_vt_edu/docs/terms/GTC_RFP_02182022.pdf)

#### ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. **ADDITIONAL GOODS AND SERVICES:** The University may acquire other goods or services that the supplier provides other than those specifically solicited. The University reserves the right, subject to mutual agreement, for the Contractor to provide additional goods and/or services under the same pricing, terms and conditions and to make modifications or enhancements to the existing goods and services. Such additional goods and services may include other products, components, accessories, subsystems, or related services newly introduced during the term of the Agreement.
2. **AUDIT:** The Contractor hereby agrees to retain all books, records, and other documents relative to this contract for five (5) years after final payment, or until audited by the Commonwealth of Virginia, whichever is sooner. Virginia Tech, its authorized agents, and/or the State auditors shall have full access and the right to examine any of said materials during said period.
3. **AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS:** It is understood and agreed between the parties herein that Virginia Tech shall be bound hereunder only to the extent of the funds available or which may hereafter become available for the purpose of this agreement.
4. **CANCELLATION OF CONTRACT:** Virginia Tech reserves the right to cancel and terminate any resulting contract, in part or in whole, without penalty, upon 60 days written notice to the Contractor. In the event the initial contract period is for more than 12 months, the resulting contract may be terminated by either party, without penalty, after the initial 12 months of the contract period upon 60 days written notice to the other party. Any contract cancellation notice shall not relieve the Contractor of the obligation to deliver and/or perform on all outstanding orders issued prior to the effective date of cancellation.
5. **CONTRACT DOCUMENTS:** The contract entered into by the parties shall consist of the Request for Proposal including all modifications thereof, the proposal submitted by the Contractor, the written results of negotiations, the Commonwealth Standard Contract Form, all of which shall be referred to collectively as the Contract Documents.
6. **IDENTIFICATION OF PROPOSAL:** Virginia Tech will only be accepting electronic submission of proposals. All submissions must be submitted to the Virginia Tech online submission portal. Upon completion you will be directed to your Submission Receipt. Virginia Tech will not confirm receipt of proposals. It is the responsibility of the offeror to make sure their proposal is delivered on time. **Attachments must be smaller than 50MB in order to be received by the University.** Proposals may **NOT** be hand delivered to the Procurement Office.



## 7. INSURANCE

The [Contractor] shall maintain (and shall cause its independent contractors or subcontractors to maintain), at its own expense, with a company or companies licensed to do business in the Commonwealth of Virginia the following insurance coverages:

Workers' Compensation

Statutory Virginia Limits

Commercial General Liability – to include coverages for premises & operations, personal & advertising injury, rented premises, and bodily injury.

\$1,000,000 per occurrence

\$2,000,000 aggregate

\$2,000,000 products/completed operations

Business Auto Liability – to include owned, non-owned, and hired car coverage

\$1,000,000 each accident, combined single limit

Umbrella Liability - in excess of commercial general & business auto liability

\$5,000,000 per occurrence

All coverages listed above pursuant to this Agreement shall be primary and non-contributory, and shall be maintained throughout the Term of this Agreement. All insurance policies listed above, with the exception of Workers' Compensation, must list "Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the Commonwealth of Virginia, its officers, officials, employees, agents, and volunteers" as additional insureds. Contractor's obligation to maintain Workers' Compensation insurance applies only to the extent that it is required by statute in the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Contractor's obligation to maintain Business Auto Liability insurance applies only to the extent that Contractor owns or utilizes automobiles. Contractor agrees that the insurance requirements specified in this Agreement do not reduce the liability of the Contractor, and that Contractor is responsible for maintaining its own insurance coverage on its personal property.

Evidence that such insurance is in effect shall be provided upon execution of this Agreement, annually thereafter, and at the request of Virginia Tech in the form of a Certificate of Insurance. The Certificate of Insurance must list "Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the Commonwealth of Virginia, its officers, officials, employees, agents, and volunteers" as additional insureds. The Certificate of Insurance should list the following as the certificate holder, and the certificate sent to the same:

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and the Commonwealth of Virginia

Office of Risk Management

North End Center, Suite 3300 (MC0310)

300 Turner Street

Blacksburg, VA 24061

[riskmanagement@vt.edu](mailto:riskmanagement@vt.edu)

8. **NOTICES:** Any notices to be given by either party to the other pursuant to any contract resulting from this solicitation shall be in writing via email.
9. **SEVERAL LIABILITY:** Virginia Tech will be severally liable to the extent of its purchases made against any contract resulting from this solicitation. Applicable entities described herein will be severally liable to the extent of their purchases made against any contract resulting from this solicitation.
10. **CLOUD OR WEB HOSTED SOFTWARE SOLUTIONS:** For agreements involving Cloud-based Web-hosted software/applications refer to link for additional terms and conditions: [http://www.ita.vt.edu/purchasing/VT\\_Cloud\\_Data\\_Protection\\_Addendum\\_final03102017.pdf](http://www.ita.vt.edu/purchasing/VT_Cloud_Data_Protection_Addendum_final03102017.pdf)



## ATTACHMENT B

### Template for

### Master Agreement for Custom Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs

between

Contractor

and

**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)**

The following document serves as a service agreement ("Agreement") between \_\_\_\_\_ ("Contractor") and Virginia Tech for the operation of customized faculty-led study abroad programs. In the interest of expanding educational opportunities and to provide a unique learning experience for graduate and undergraduate students, as well as promote collaboration between the two parties, Contractor and Virginia Tech agree to the following provisions:

Award: This Master Services Agreement (MSA) results from a public and competitive solicitation for services issued by Virginia Tech, followed by the subsequent proposal received from the Contractor. The following documents contain additional terms that are hereby incorporated by reference into the MSA in the following order of precedence:

- a. This executed master agreement for custom faculty-led study abroad programs
- b. Summary of Negotiations (dated xx/xx/xx)
- c. Contractor's Proposal (dated xx/xx/xx)
- d. Request for Proposal Addendum (dated xx/xx/xx)
- e. Request for Proposal Document (dated June 7, 2024)

#### Program:

This Agreement is based on the principle of reciprocity and expresses the interest of both parties to cultivate educational experiences for Virginia Tech students and faculty through collaboration with the Contractor.

#### Academics:

The programs' academic focus will depend upon the academic interests and expertise of individual faculty/staff involved. Contractor will provide the following academic services for the Program participants in an executed Addendum specifying the details of each program.

#### Fees:

The costs per person will be determined in advance of each customized program and specified in the executed Addendum.

The fee may include but is not limited to. The fee shall be subject to the agreement of both parties:

- a. Administrative Fee
- b. Orientation
- c. Accommodation
- d. Transportation
- e. Airport pick up on arrival day and transfer to the airport on departure day
- f. Meals
- g. Translator fees for project work
- h. All project materials and supplies

Unless notated otherwise in the Executed Addendum, all services and accommodations are to be selected, facilitated, and arranged by the Contractor in consultation with Virginia Tech.

Participant Registration:

Virginia Tech students will be nominated by the academic department to ensure students meet Virginia Tech’s institutional requirements for study abroad. The final selection of all participants in the program from the Virginia Tech student body shall remain in the sole and absolute discretion of the specific department for which the program is designed for. All Virginia Tech students selected to participate shall comply with all applicable requirements of the Contractor as detailed within the Executed Addendum.

Payment Schedule:

Full program payment is due 30 days prior to the start of a program. The Contractor will issue an invoice to Virginia Tech a minimum of 60 days prior to the start of a program. Participants are responsible for remitting payment directly to the Contractor for the program fee and services rendered.

Insurance:

In order to participate in the program, all participants MUST acquire international medical and security insurance coverage. Virginia Tech will ensure that all participants have medical and security assistance coverage through the university-contracted vendor for the duration of the program dates.

Acts of God:

Neither party shall be responsible for failure to perform this Agreement if circumstances beyond their reasonable control, including, but not limited to: acts of God, governmental authority, terrorism, or war in or with the United States or the Program’s location prevent such performance.

Participant Withdrawal Policy:

In the event that a participant wishes to withdraw from the program prior to the start of the program refund is at the discretion of the Contractor.

Terms of the Agreement:

The Agreement shall become effective on the day representatives of both parties affix their signatures, will be in force for a period of five years, and is subject to revision or modification by mutual written agreement.

In witness hereof, the authorized representatives of Contractor and Virginia Tech hereby execute this Agreement on the dates set forth below.

For Contractor

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

Title

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

For Virginia Tech

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

Director of Procurement

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTACHMENT C**  
**Template for**  
**Addendum to Master Agreement for Custom Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs**  
**between**  
**Contractor and**  
**Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech)**  
**Date**

The following document serves as an addendum to the agreement for Custom Faculty-Led Study Abroad Programs ("Master Agreement") between Contractor, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (hereinafter "Virginia Tech") for the operation of the XXXXX Program in XXXXXXXXXX.

The College of XXXXXXXXXX at Virginia Tech and Contractor are partnering to offer the "XXXXXXXXX Program" in TERM/YEAR subject to the terms of this Addendum.

This Addendum outlines the specifics of the program. All Terms and Conditions of the Master Agreement prevail.

Program:

Program Name:

A. Program dates

- a. The program begins on \_\_\_\_\_ in the following locations \_\_\_\_\_
- b. The program ends on \_\_\_\_\_ in the following locations \_\_\_\_\_

B. Program inclusions

- a. Participant lodging accommodations will include \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Participant transportation will include \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Other inclusions \_\_\_\_\_

C. Program costs

- a. The Program Fee is USD \_\_\_\_\_ per Participant
- b. For each program track offered, Contractor will provide Virginia Tech with \_\_\_\_\_ free faculty/staff placements.
- c. Beyond this allocation, faculty/staff costs are USD \_\_\_\_\_ per Program Leader.
- d. Additional staff from Virginia Tech will be charged the normal program fee by Contractor. Such fees will be due at the same time as students' program fees.

D. Number of Participants

- a. Contractor requires a minimum enrollment of \_\_\_\_ Participants and \_\_\_\_ Program Leader from Virginia Tech in order to offer the program.
- b. If there is need for additional space, Virginia tech will contact Contractor to see if space is available.

E. Deadlines

- a. The final enrollment and deposit deadline is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - i. Final faculty/staff and student participant names (as written on passport) and, insofar as the information is disclosed to Virginia Tech, their gender, dietary

requirements, allergies, and special accommodations (if applicable) must be confirmed by this date (as per the template to be provided by Contractor).

- ii. The non-refundable payment of \_\_\_\_% of the program fees or \$ \_\_\_\_ amount is due at this time.
- b. Final payment and documentation deadline: \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. The balance of the payment of the program fees are due at this time.
  - ii. All remaining Participant information (completing the template provided by Contractor) is due.

F. Itinerary

- a. Refer to attached draft itinerary
- b. Virginia Tech acknowledges and agrees that the attached itinerary and program details are subject to change and are contingent upon factors including but not limited to, the availability of transport, and any changes imposed by third parties, among other possible changes. Decisions on itinerary changes will be made in the best interests of all participants and with regards to the health and safety of participants.

For Virginia Tech

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

Dean of XXXXXXXX

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

For Contractor

\_\_\_\_\_

Name

Title

\_\_\_\_\_

Date