



StudyMaine Consortium 2010-2011 Workplan

Though not immediately thought of as an “export,” the provision of educational services to international students was worth \$15.5 billion to the economy of the United States during the 2007-2008 academic year. This substantial impact was felt not only through revenue generated through tuition and fees, but also by the institution’s host community through living expenses and discretionary spending.

Maine hosted over 1,500 international students in 2007-2008 at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Overall, 44% of those students were from Canada, with the vast majority of those Canadian students enrolled in post-secondary programs. Other countries represented in the state’s international student body included China, India, Saudi Arabia, and Bulgaria. Over 60% of Maine’s post-secondary students independently finance their education, not relying on state or institutional aid. For Maine schools struggling with declining revenues and domestic student populations, this translates to real income – estimated at \$28.8 million in 2007-2008 for post-secondary students. By comparison, New Hampshire hosted 2,300 post-secondary students with an overall economic impact of \$71.4 million.¹

This project seeks to assist Maine’s educational institutions in attracting more foreign students, thereby providing a positive economic impact on the schools and their communities. Many schools in Maine have had individual success in international student recruitment, but there is substantial collective interest in exploring a collaborative marketing effort under the expertise and guidance of the Maine International Trade Center. MITC proposes to bring its substantial overseas market building experience to bear to assist them in this endeavor.

Proposed activities

In cooperation with appropriate Consortium institution officials (heads of school, admissions coordinators, etc.), MITC will utilize its overseas marketing experience and contacts to target appropriate markets of interest for international student attraction. Once identified, MITC will conduct market research through its network of public and private service providers to identify best practices and opportunities for market entry. Direct technical assistance will be made available to the institutions throughout the process.

¹ The primary economic impact source, *Open Doors 2008* (Institute for International Education), has not yet been updated for 2008-2009. Furthermore, the *Open Doors* project is a survey of post-secondary institutions and does not address the impact of international high school students. Estimates on their impact are comprised of anecdotal inputs from school administrators and extrapolation of post-secondary student data. *Open Doors* gives a count of 1,200 international students at the post-secondary level; MITC’s conservative estimate for secondary students is 300.

Specific tasks to be undertaken include:

1. Project coordination: MITC will provide staff time to be spent working directly with educational institutions, including market identification and research. MITC staff will also act as the project lead and coordinate domestic and overseas activities.
2. Educational seminars: MITC will conduct one to two educational programs per year specifically dedicated to educational institutions. Subjects could include: an international student seminar connecting international students at secondary institutions with Maine colleges/universities and internationally active Maine businesses; market-specific programming bringing in experts in international student attraction as speakers for Maine's targeted countries of interest; or other pertinent international topics such as visas or immigration regulations for foreign students studying in Maine.
3. Website and Marketing materials: MITC, in cooperation with the Consortium educational institutions, will develop a StudyMaine website and print-based resources for the marketing of both the state generally and the Consortium partners specifically.
4. Overseas activities: MITC, in cooperation with the Consortium institutions, will identify appropriate overseas student recruitment events and coordinate a joint presence, including travel and show logistics as well as coordination with Commerce and State Department posts, at a major educational conference internationally.