

An Investment in America

How Department of State BridgeUSA Exchange Programs Advance U.S. Interests at Home and Abroad

Summer Work Travel Program, 2019-2023

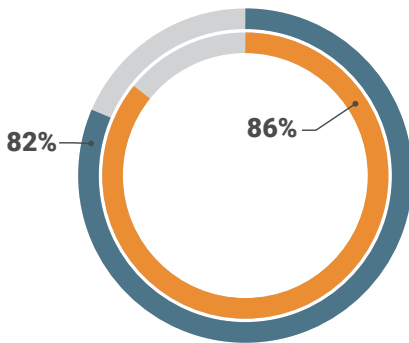
The U.S. Department of State BridgeUSA Summer Work Travel (SWT) program is a student exchange initiative designed to expose international university students to U.S. culture. Each year, students come to the U.S. for temporary work and travel opportunities during their summer breaks. This opportunity allows them to live and work throughout the U.S. for no more than four months, often in popular tourist destinations that benefit from the cultural exchange and additional seasonal support. In 2023, a total of 103,785 SWT participants took part in the program across the U.S.² Participants must be enrolled university students and they come to the U.S. on non-immigrant J-1 visas.

The Summer Work Travel Program Drives the U.S. Economy and Supports American Businesses



\$353 MILLION

Total amount SWT
program participants spend in
the U.S. per year



- Host employers rely on the program to help fill local staffing shortages
- Host employers report that the program supports overall business staffing

If host employers could not host international SWT participants...

82% would see their work and business negatively impacted from not being able to operate and/or having a lower revenue during their peak season.



²J-1 program national-level participation numbers are drawn from U.S. Department of State sources, upon which the economic impact calculations are also based. All other survey findings are based on a 2024 survey of 5,389 program alumni and 613 host organizations.

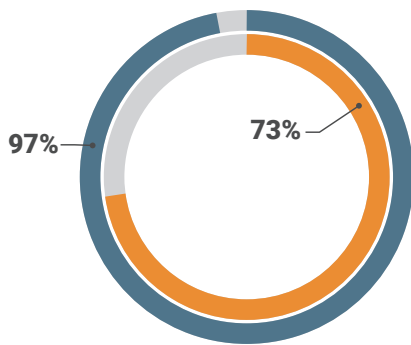
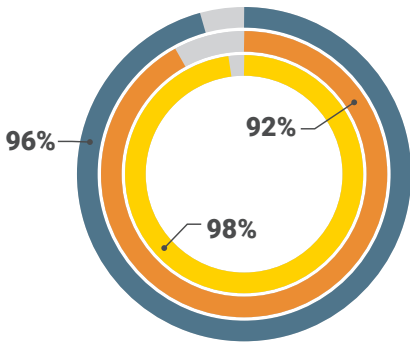
The Summer Work Travel Program **Advances American Interests**

Program alumni actively...

- Recommend the program to friends and family
- Continue their engagement with the U.S. by returning or planning to return to the country
- Spread the word about the program and their experience in the U.S. with their networks via conversations, presentations, and social media

U.S. businesses and organizations report that the program...

- Helps participants develop a better, long-term understanding of the U.S.
- Helps build strategic American alliances



The Summer Work Travel Program **Increases Mutual Understanding**

SWT participants...

- Participate in a range of cultural activities with host employers that enable them to develop an understanding of American culture and society
- Develop more positive views of the U.S. as a result of the program, leading to stronger long-term ties with other countries

Hosting SWT participants enables U.S. host businesses and organizations to...

- Promote mutual understanding between Americans and people in other countries
- Foster a positive culture in the workplace
- Diversify their U.S. communities and make them more culturally aware

