

Working with Agents and Educational Consultants

OASDI Conference, June 15, 2017



ICEF

Connect. Recruit. Grow.

Through students' eyes: education abroad



Who can help me explain this to my parents?

Where should I study?
What city, what state?

What is best for me?

What should I study?

There are so many schools to choose from...

What challenges should I expect to face?

I don't know another language. Will this be a problem?

How will I come to terms with life in a new country?

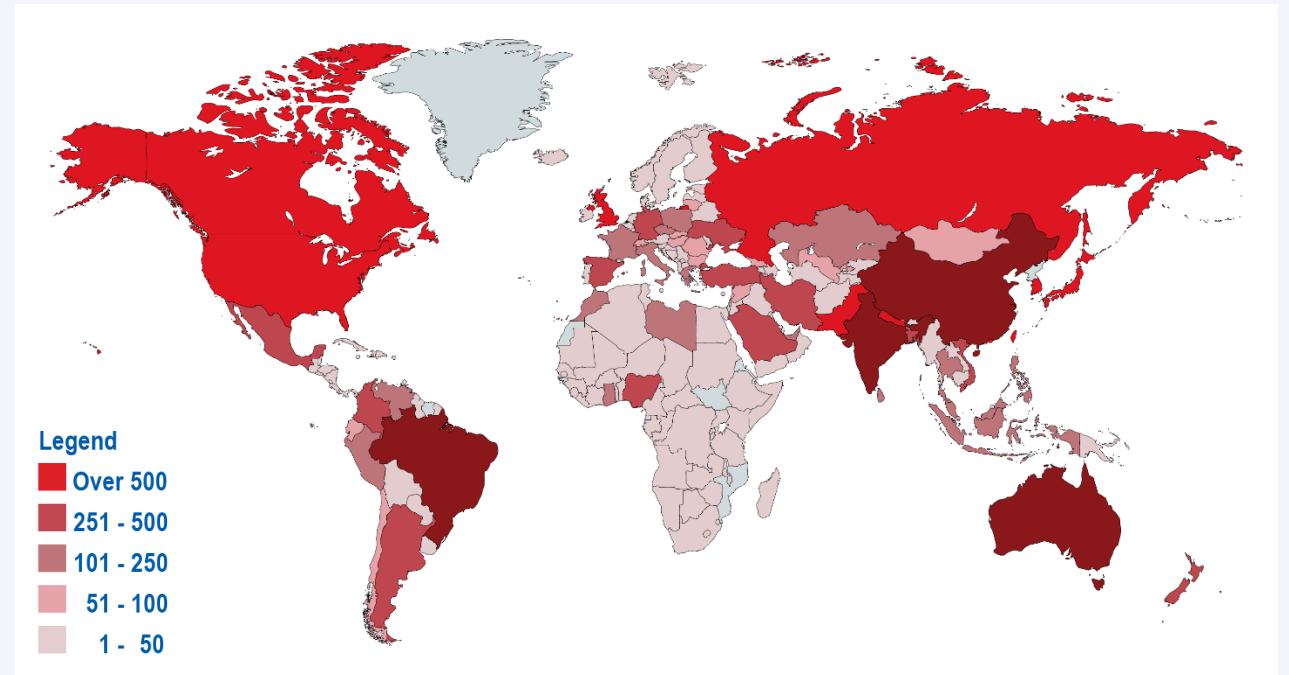
Can I apply for a scholarship?

AGENTS

Worldwide

Student recruitment agencies worldwide

23 000+ in
193
countries



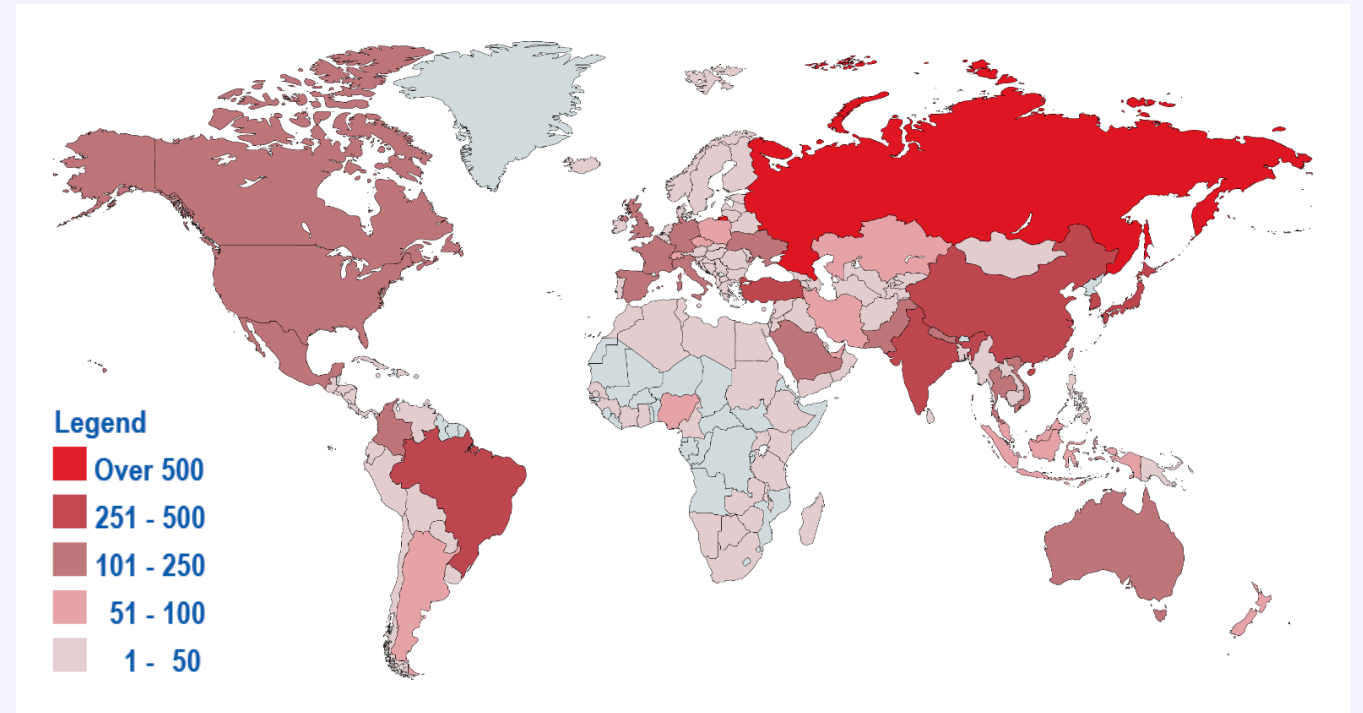
AGENTS

Qualified

Qualified recruitment agencies

7 799* in
153
countries

*Active agencies that have been to an ICEF Workshop or are a member of an association

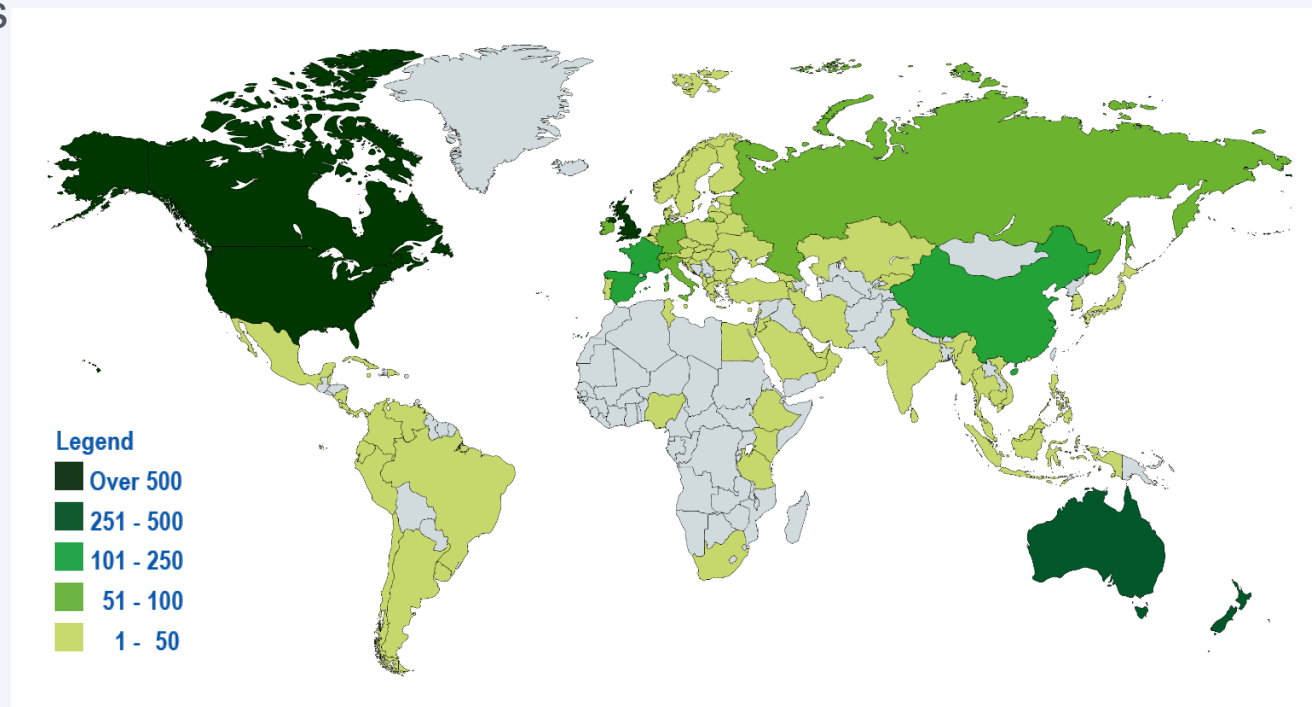


EDUCATORS

Working with agents

Educators working with recruitment agencies

4 643 in
101 countries



AGENTS

Why do students work with education agents?

- An agent is an accountable local person in whom students and their parents can confide and contact easily in their own country and language
- Agents give valuable counselling, saving students' time and helping them make their decision
- Agents offer useful value-added services
- Good agents will suggest the optimal institution/student match
- If needed, agents can provide telephone and email support to students once they are overseas (student services)
- Many international student markets are heavily driven by agent referrals (60%-80%)



AGENTS

What agents can do for schools

- Provide you with fast and direct access to specific local territories
 - Provide innovative suggestions for promotion suited to the target country
 - Recruit targeted numbers of students quickly and efficiently
 - Considerably reduce your admissions department's workload
 - Help you diversify your enrolment across a number of countries
 - Provide in-country support and thus reduce the need to travel as frequently to markets
 - Help you improve the quality of student applicants
 - Represent you on a year-round basis
 - Provide you with a local infrastructure, meeting rooms etc.
 - Provide you with honest student feedback
-
- “A trusted agent is like an extension of your school's International Office”



Standing Out

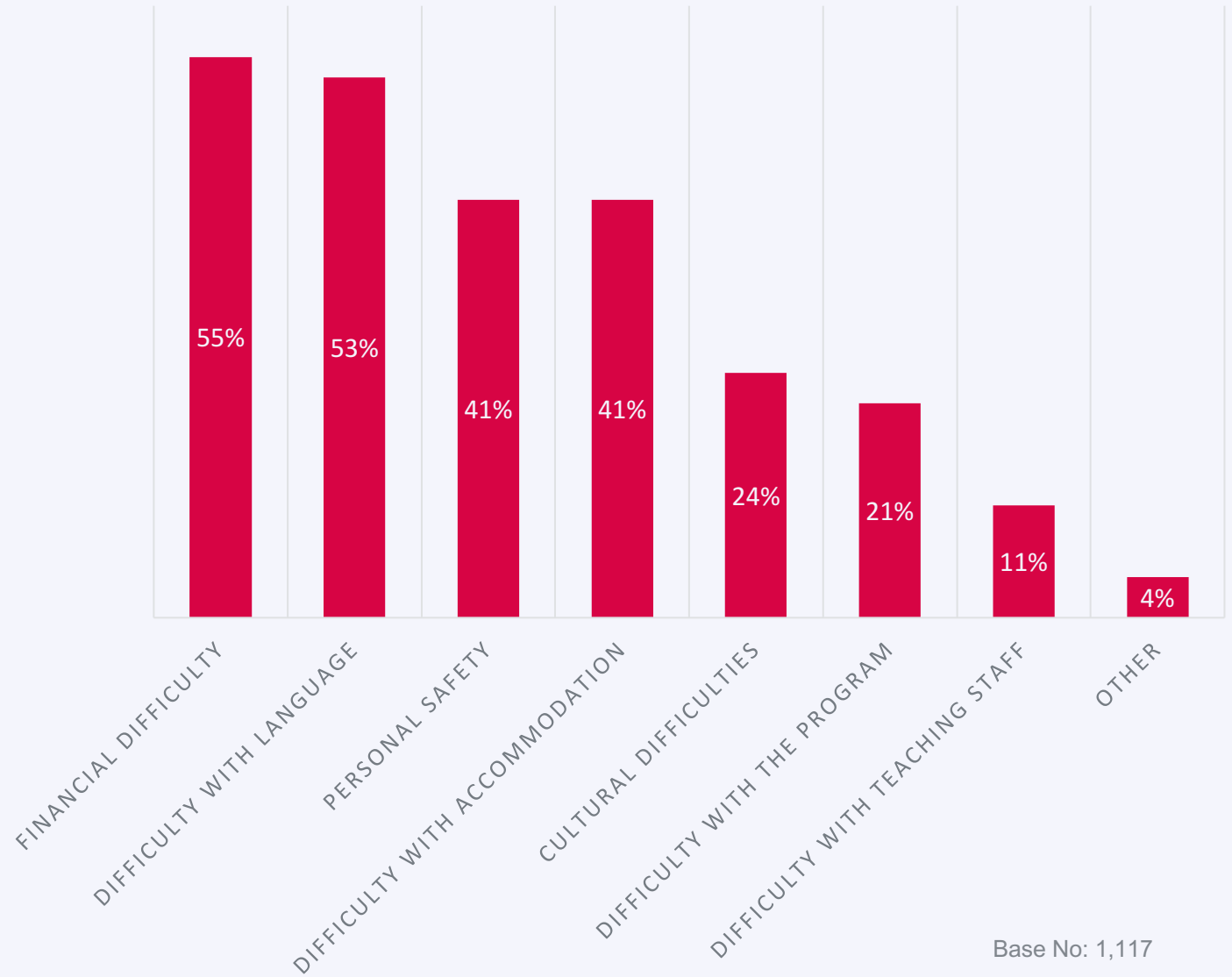
1. Who are you?
2. Start with experience
3. Think different



CHART

Main concerns before departing

What are the main concerns, complaints, and questions from students and parents before departing?

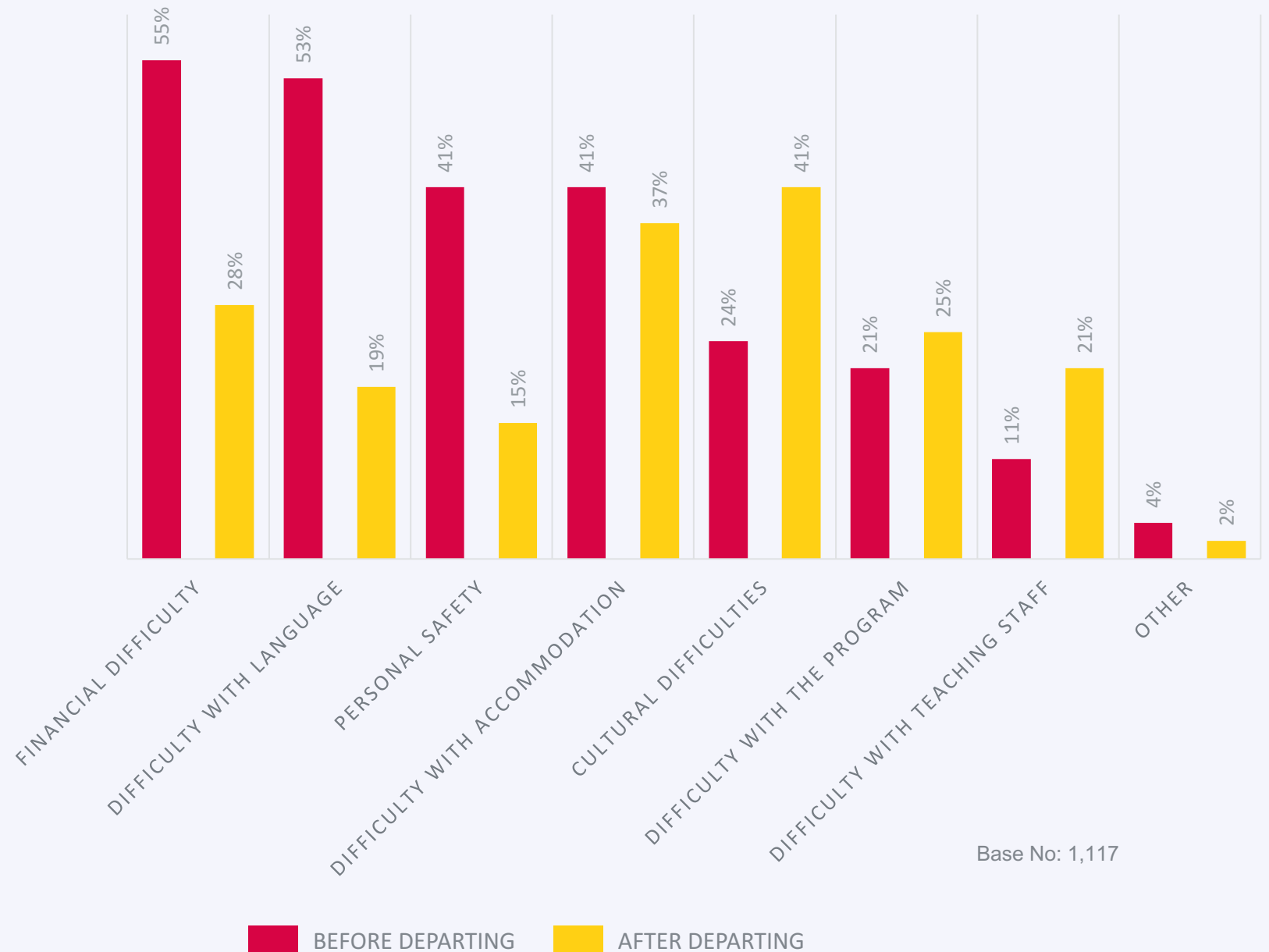


Base No: 1,117

CHART

Main concerns before and after departing

What are the main concerns, complaints, and questions from students and parents before departing?



INFOGRAPHIC

Ideal marketing + recruitment for institutions

1. Multi-channel
2. Adaptable by market
3. Communication is essential
4. Ever changing!



Where in the world do I find and meet Agents?

1. IATC & Canada Course Graduate list, found on icef.com
2. Agent lists from Embassy & Consulates overseas
3. Associations & colleagues
4. Qualified Education Agents app (Google Play or App Store)
5. ICEF, or other Agent Workshops



How to select agents

Some key questions:

- How long have they been in business?
- What is their company structure and number of staff?
- How many students do they handle each year?
- Where are they sending students?
- What other institutions do they represent (type, location)?
- What is their promotional and marketing strategy?
- Are they members of an association?
- What professional standards do they follow?
- Can they provide references?
- Are they ICEF-Screened / ICEF-Trained?
- Are they AIRC certified?



Focus on fit: when looking for agency partners it is essential to do your due diligence. Focus on those agencies that are best suited to your institution and with which you have a real opportunity to grow for the long term. Agencies differ!

Competition

Relationships

“Agents send students to people that they like”

1. Focus on fit
2. Think long term
3. What do they want?
4. Make it personal



Agent contract: a written agreement is necessary

- Define respective roles & responsibilities
- Review business plan: marketing, communications and budget
- Give key performance indicators: quantity / quality
- Outline exact compensation model
- Exclusivity: if and when
- Dispute resolution guidelines
- Duration of contract including termination clauses



Agent compensation

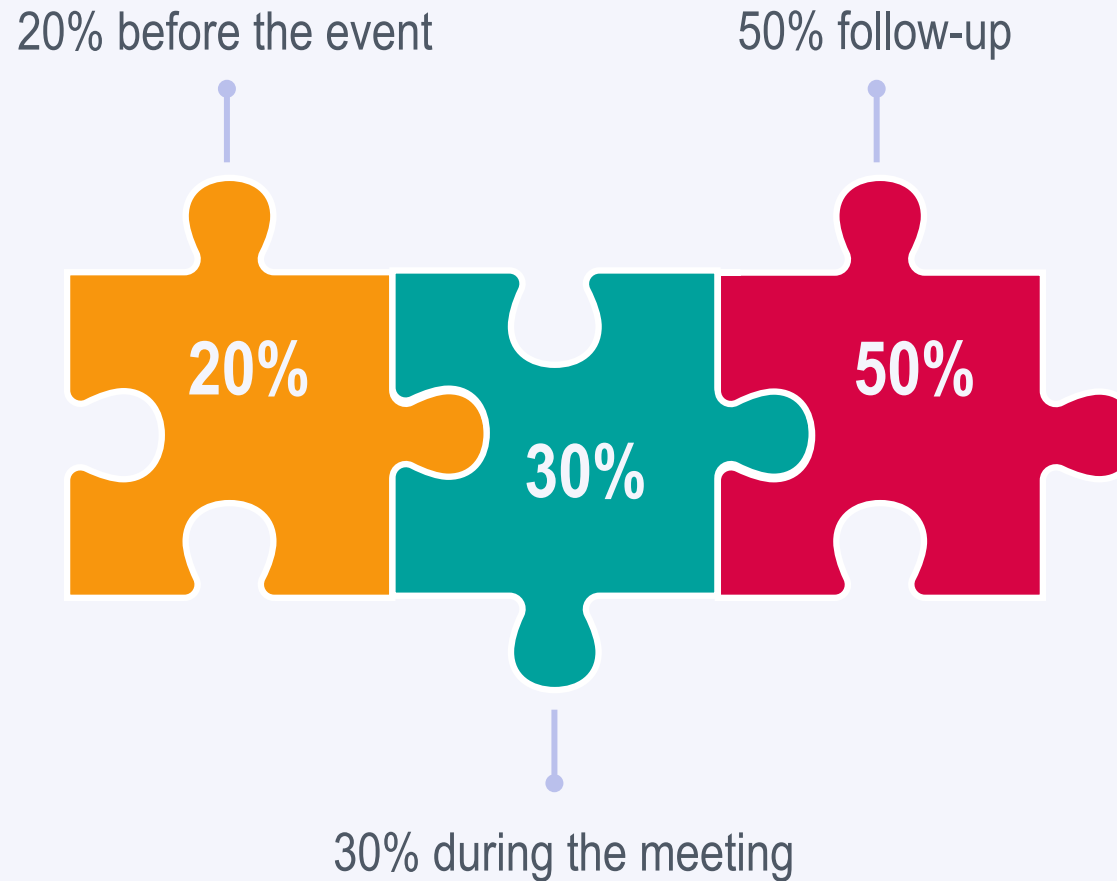
Most widely used forms of compensation:

1. Commission-based
2. Fee per student
3. Retainer fee
4. Advising fee



HIGHLIGHT

Succeed at an ICEF Workshop with the 20 | 30 | 50 Rule



HIGHLIGHT

20 | 30 | 50 Rule

20%

Pre-Event

- Researching markets and deciding strategy
- Remember that meeting existing partners can be just as valuable as meeting new partners
- Carefully craft your message to request meetings. "I am looking for..."



HIGHLIGHT

20 | 30 | 50 Rule

30%

During the Event

- Have a well-planned meeting strategy. Use an elevator pitch that clearly articulates your value proposition
- Build relationships at a personal and professional level
- Listen!



HIGHLIGHT

20 | 30 | 50 Rule

50%

Post-Event

- Follow-up after the meeting
- Keep in touch regularly
- Invite agents to visit your institution
- Conduct agent training
- Distribute materials
- Create a special agent access only area on your website



CHART

Top 10 criteria in marketing for institutions

How important is this criteria in terms of marketing for institutions?

QUICK RESPONSE TIMES TO ENQUIRIES AND APPLICATIONS AND REGULAR COMMUNICATION UPDATES (1030)

93%

AGENT MANUAL WITH FEES AND INFORMATION (1035)

91%

PROMPT PAYMENT OF COMMISSIONS (1029)

90%

FINANCIAL SUPPORT SCHEMES, INCLUDING SCHOLARSHIP/BURSARY SCHEMES (1023)

90%

AGENT TRAINING WORKSHOPS ORGANISED IN THE DESTINATION COUNTRY (1030)

88%

HAVING GUARANTEED ENTRY TO SPECIFIC EDUCATION INSTITUTION PROGRAMS (1015)

88%

REGULAR VISITS BY YOU AND/OR YOUR STAFF TO THE EDUCATION INSTITUTION (1019)

88%

PARTICIPATION IN AN AGENT INCENTIVE SCHEME (1002)

88%

AVAILABILITY OF AN ONLINE APPLICATION SERVICE (1026)

86%

24-HOUR TURNAROUND ON ADMISSIONS DOCUMENTS (1009)

86%

Base No: 1,117

Building sustainable **partnerships**

Common threads regarding best practices in establishing relationships with education agents include:

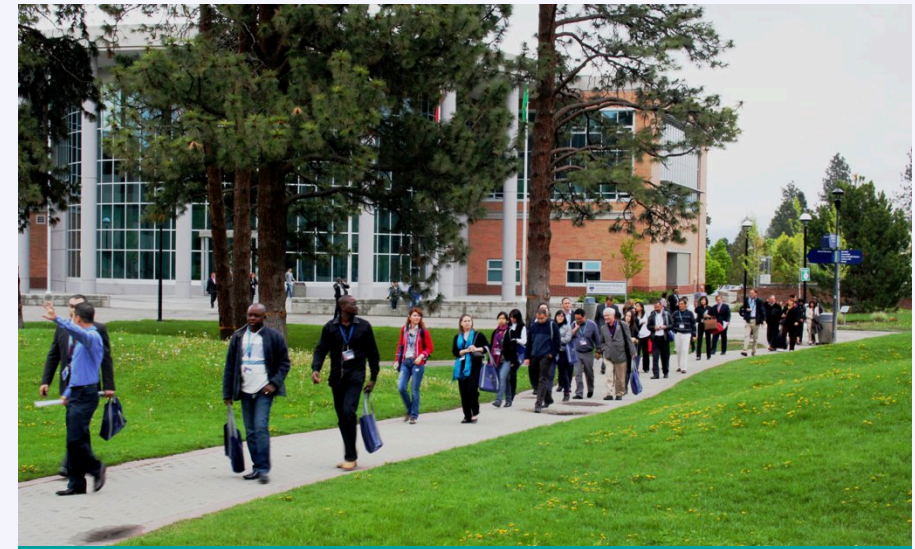
1. Provide a face to your institution
2. Educate and engage all staff members
3. Treat agents as an extension of your team
4. Make it personal
5. Train them face-to-face
6. Respond promptly to agent enquiries
7. Promotional materials
8. Armchair recruitment is not effective
9. Listen to your agents
10. Keep in touch



Think long term: lasting relationships are not built on unrealistic expectations or promises of immediate results. Be patient and work towards longer-term goals based on mutually agreed, sustainable targets.

FAM (familiarisation) tours

- ▶ **FAM tours - hosting agents or other partners on your campus**
- ▶ **Why?**
 - Agents get a real sense of the school
 - Meet the people behind the school
 - Build personal relationships
 - Agents can say “I have been there”
 - Show, not tell



Make it personal

Get to know them!



Facilitate mixers with faculty and staff



Organize meetings with students from the same country



Have agents meet with admissions and counseling staff



What agents say about FAM tours

“By attending a Fam tour you start forming your own opinion of the school/university. It is one thing when you get information at a conference or website, it is another when you see it with your own eyes. You feel the atmosphere of the place, you talk to the people. I also think what kind of clients would like it, start thinking: “oh this school will suit Daniel”. It is very smart to have a Fam tour before or after conferences, as its continuation of your cooperation with the school.

And you are definitely able to sell the school much better, as one of the questions clients always ask you is if you have visited this school yourself. Also you get closer contacts with the staff and it definitely helps in working together.”

Mariya Lunyak, Director Alekom-tour Education Abroad – Kiev

"I visited the University of Tasmania and other institutions as part of an agent FAM tour to Tasmania following The ICEF ANZA Workshop. Prior to this visit I knew very little about Tasmania, and had not considered or promoted it as a major study destination to my clients. Since my visit I have signed an agreement with the University of Tasmania and successfully enrolled 6 students."

Ahmed Naraghi, Managing Director, Iran-Australia Cultural & Arts Institution

BEST PRACTICES

Agent Strategy

How do we know if our agent strategy is working?

- ▶ Set measurable goals.
- ▶ How often are you communicating.
- ▶ Have a plan for follow up.
- ▶ Measure what works and what doesn't.



Advisory Services

Educator Development and Advisory Services

For more info on how ICEF can help you with your education needs visit

<http://www.icef.com/educator/overview/>



Publication

Agency-Educator **relationship** management:

From onboarding to creating sustainable recruitment partnerships

**Free
Download:**

**[Icef.com/
whitepapers](https://icef.com/whitepapers)**



Time for questions and knowledge sharing



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