



EDUCATIONAL  
TOURS

# Educational Impact Report

2022



# Travel-based learning that makes a lasting impact

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## Dear educators,

The global pandemic has impacted our youth in ways we don't yet understand. Opportunities for honing interpersonal skills through in-person connection and collaboration were essentially put on hold. Yet studies show that students will need highly developed interpersonal skills to connect the dots between their classroom, community, and career—future-readiness—to navigate a world that shrinks by the day and changes by the hour.

At EF we believe the most powerful tool for navigating the future is perspective: the ability to step back and see things from a different point of view. There is no faster or more eye-opening way to gain perspective than through immersion learning—getting out of your comfort zone, exposing yourself to new ideas and cultural traditions, reflecting on our world's amazing diversity.

Why? The dynamic of educational travel is the opposite of the traditional classroom (one teacher to many students). On tour, each individual student benefits from a multitude of teachers: local residents, guides, mentors, peers, and a barrage of new and unfamiliar situations. Research shows that this type of immersion learning enhances social-emotional intelligence, problem-solving, and adaptability—the “future-proof” skills employers insist are critical for success in an increasingly automated and AI-driven workplace.

Our global learning philosophy—what we call the EF G<sup>2</sup>PA (see p. 3)—is powered by this science. It provides the framework for all of our on-program content. It ensures outcomes and measures progress in four key areas of future-readiness: growth mindset, global perspective, personal development, and the ability to harness these to take action with impact.

We know immersion learning works. The proof of it on tour inspires us every single day. In this report, we'd like to share a few of the positive impacts—academic, environmental, civic, social, and personal—we have co-created with you.

Thank you for your commitment to global education and helping us power positive change. We couldn't do it without you. Together, we can make the results of next year's report even more impressive.

Regards,



**Christian Meyer**  
Executive Vice President  
Education Programming & Partnerships



## Our educational philosophy prepares students for *the future* and *their futures*

As the past few years alone have shown, our world is constantly changing. The skills needed to thrive in this landscape—critical thinking, communication, the ability to empathize with others, and the drive to take meaningful civic action—are more important now than ever before.

Educators teach these essential skills every day. We partner with teachers to help amplify them. EF tours allow educators to take learning outside of the classroom by enabling hands-on, real-world experiences that open students' minds.

Just as a GPA focuses on academics, each student emerges from tour with a G<sup>2</sup>PA comprised of our research-backed, travel-based learning outcomes that cover the full spectrum of social-emotional learning. Every G<sup>2</sup>PA is unique, because every traveler gains something different on tour—whether that's newfound confidence to order food in a different language or a greater sense of empathy that will inspire them to have deeper conversations in their own communities. Yet, one thing always remains the same: The G<sup>2</sup>PA helps ready students for the real world and serves as a catalyst for ever-expanding growth back home. It's our solution for bringing education into the future and helping to ensure that students everywhere are equipped with the 21st century skills necessary to navigate, impact, and succeed in today's world.

### We're accredited, just like your school

We share your commitment to education. It's why we design tours that blend classroom and experiential learning, allowing us to meet the same rigorous standards as schools like yours.



## G<sup>2</sup>PA

EF tours focus on learning outcomes that continue to impact students for the rest of their lives.

### GROWTH MINDSET



Students will learn to embrace new opportunities with an open mind by:

- Expanding their curiosity
- Embracing new experiences
- Stepping out of their comfort zones

### GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE



Students will expand their world view as they engage with new cultures by:

- Building cross-cultural understanding
- Exploring new mindsets and values
- Learning to communicate across cultures

### PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT



Students will discover more about themselves as they grow on a personal level by:

- Increasing their confidence, independence, and self-awareness
- Developing a greater sense of empathy
- Practicing adaptability and flexibility

### ACTION & IMPACT



Students will gain necessary skills to navigate and make an impact in an ever-evolving world by:

- Becoming better collaborators
- Gaining leadership and decision-making skills
- Understanding the impact they can make in the world



Alexis K.  
Student from Pennsylvania

As soon as I came back from my first trip, I decided to take in other perspectives that I hadn't noticed before. I took more chances, I became a better global citizen, and I realized I had such potential to have an impact on the world.

# Learning outcomes you can see, change you can feel

We've seen the benefits of travel-based learning firsthand and recognize all the ways these opportunities help prepare travelers for everything that's ahead. But don't just take our word for it. Read what educators and students had to say about their experiences on tour.

It's one thing to learn about places in class, but it's totally different when you actually go there and learn about their cultures firsthand.



Kayla P., Student from Massachusetts



Sources:  
EF Educational Tours 2019 Post-Tour Student Survey  
EF Educational Tours 2019 Group Leader Evaluations



of students say they grew more confident and independent



of educators say their students grew more confident and independent

What better way is there to experience social-emotional growth than letting kids experience something new?



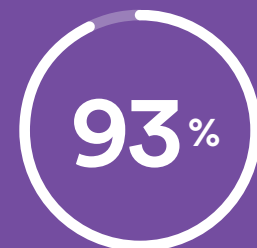
Nickie M., Guidance counselor from Pennsylvania



of students say they discovered more about themselves



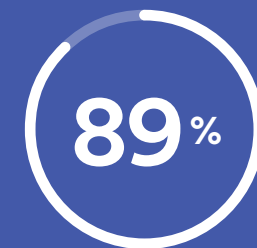
of educators say their students discovered more about themselves



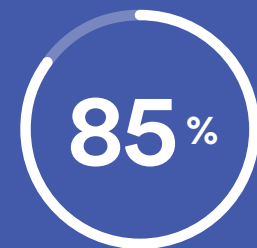
of students say their tour expanded their knowledge of the world



of educators say their students expanded their knowledge of the world



of students say they understand more about new people, places, and cultures



of educators say their students understand new people, places, and cultures

# We believe travel is for everyone

We know educators do, too. We want every student—regardless of gender identity, race, physical ability, sexual orientation, cultural identity, and socioeconomic status—to experience the life-changing impact of educational travel. From accommodating different students' needs to funding scholarships (and everything in between), we're committed to increasing access for all kinds of students to be able to get out there and travel.

## Making tours accessible for all students

Ensuring equitable access to travel is a big job. What makes it easier? Inspiring educators like Ernesto S., a high school graphic design teacher from Tucson, Arizona. His school is an hour from the border, with a 98.2% minority enrollment. With such a diverse student population, Ernesto has made it his mission to show students from all backgrounds that travel is possible. He's already led two tours with EF, and in March 2023, he's heading to France, Germany & the Alps with 53 students—and counting! See how Ernesto is giving students of all races, cultural identities, physical abilities, and socioeconomic status the opportunity to see the world through his EF tours.



“

**Being there in front of these attractions across the world, I think of that one kid who said, 'I'm never gonna be able to travel.' We can overcome everything.**

**Ernesto S.**  
Group Leader from Arizona

### Why do you offer educational travel opportunities for your students?

Growing up, I only went to Disneyland on vacation. My sister went on an EF tour to D.C., and I saw how amazing her experience was. I really wanted that for myself, and now for my students. I fight so hard for my students, and making these experiences possible is what brings me so much joy.

### How do you ensure all kinds of students have access?

I have a student who's wheelchair-bound. My Tour Consultant, Sarah—the best one!—said someone can come on the tour with us to assist the student. So now the parent is going to be coming along as a caretaker. Once I had three out of 24 travelers who had never been on an airplane before. When I'm offering a trip, I talk about what we can do and what I can offer. I do the homework and figure out the ways they can make this trip work for them.

### What about affordability? Is that a concern in your community?

The payment plans are really what make it work. I also send out fundraising ideas EF provides and tell the students, 'I'm here as a teacher to support you. If you want to do a concert at school, I'll book the auditorium.' I show them places in the area that are hiring. I've also helped with scholarships—I had teachers help a student with the application for EF's Global Citizenship Scholarship. I just help the kids who need help do what they need to do.

### Have you had students who want to travel, but feel like they can't?

Everyone wants to travel. But some students don't see themselves, as people of color, being able to afford it. Some of my students are the breadwinners for their family. A lot of my students are undocumented. It's important for me to show students that, look: I was able to do it. You could do it as well.

# Deepening the student learning experience

EF offers multiple ways for all kinds of students to maximize their on-tour experience.

## Confidence for college and beyond

EF partners with Southern New Hampshire University to give students the opportunity to build college confidence and earn college credit by enrolling in an exclusive online course. The course, *Interculturalism and Global Exploration*, helps students explore their destination, challenge their own assumptions, and discover connections between people, places, and cultures. Students can earn three college credits when they complete the course—but more importantly, they'll gain a confidence-building taste of higher-ed success.

Read more at [eftours.com/college](https://eftours.com/college)

## Customizable, project-based learning

Our personalized learning experience engages students before, during, and after tour, helping them to investigate a topic that inspires them. They form a more personal connection to their tour, plus, they have the option to create a final project for high school credit.

View some of these student projects at [eftours.com/projects](https://eftours.com/projects)

## EF & the Nobel Prize Museum

Students who complete a personalized learning project will be featured in the EF & Nobel Prize Museum Global Citizen's Digital Exhibit and receive a certificate of recognition from both EF and the Nobel Prize Museum. Plus, select projects from our EF Global Leadership Summits (once-in-a-lifetime travel experiences that feature a leadership conference, world-renowned keynote speakers, and student-led problem solving) are exhibited in the Nobel Prize Museum in Stockholm, Sweden!

Learn more at [eftours.com/nobel-museum](https://eftours.com/nobel-museum)



## Check out one student's personalized learning project

Discover how Hong Anh H. customized her learning experience during her 2019 EF tour in Ecuador.

**Hong Anh's research question:**  
How did the colonization of Ecuador in the past affect the culture of its indigenous people today?

**How it started:**  
“In the summer of 2019, I went with my school to Ecuador. When Leo, our Tour Director, explained the reason behind the many bakery and pastry shops in Quito was that the grains used in these products were brought over by the Spanish, therefore influencing the diet of the native people forever, I began to wonder how else colonialism affected Ecuador's indigenous culture. Since culture consisted of a wide variety of traits, I narrowed down my search to just three that I believed were the most significant: religion, language, and food.”

Check out Hong Anh's work at [eftours.com/ecuador2019](https://eftours.com/ecuador2019)

# Take a tour of our tours

EF offers hundreds of educational tours for all kinds of students and teachers in all kinds of countries across the globe. We have an incredible collection of core tours—think of them as tried-and-true favorites—but we also have the following tour collections that lead to the same kind of life-changing impact yet focus on specific subjects and areas of interest. And though they may differ in location or theme, every one of our tours has this in common: They expand students’ perspectives and set them up for success in an interconnected world.



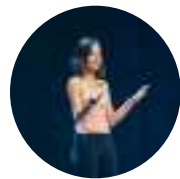
### STEM Tours

Each Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math-focused tour challenges students to develop imaginative solutions to real-world, global problems.



### Language & Culture Tours

EF’s Language & Culture tours are designed to give students the chance to explore the landscapes, landmarks, and languages they’ve learned about in the classroom.



### Global Leadership Summit

Students participate in a leadership conference where they hear from thought leaders and work in teams to create and present their own solutions to a global challenge.



### Middle School Tours

While middle schoolers can travel on any EF itinerary, our Middle School tours are specially designed to keep students aged 11 to 15 interested and actively learning.



### Service Learning Tours

Every activity on a service learning tour helps develop critical thinking, cultural awareness, and organizational skills as travelers help build lasting solutions to empower communities.



### Custom-Designed Tours

No one knows how to engage your students better than you—and we can help bring those ideas to life through our expertly crafted, custom-designed tours.

# Dive a little deeper

We’re passionate about the transformative power of educational travel. It’s why we make sure that our tours are designed specially with students’ futures in mind. To show you what we mean, we’ve highlighted a few elements of our themed collections to emphasize their career-readiness activities.

## Global Leadership Summit

In 2022, students across Europe and North America came to Berlin to take part in EF’s Global Leadership Summit focused on *The Impact of Sports & Wellness*. By working in cross-cultural groups and creating solutions to global problems through design thinking, students got to experience what it’s like—and use the skills they will need—to work in virtually any field. And by listening to the following speakers, they felt inspired and prepared to explore what’s next in their future.



2022 KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Sam Kass is a former White House Policy Advisor for Nutrition and executive director of the national “Let’s Move!” campaign.

Blake Leeper is an eight-time Paralympic Track and Field international medalist, world record holder, and three-time American record holder.

## STEM

On *Belize: Conservation from Ridge to Reef*, students spend eight days traveling from the mountains to the ocean and doing real fieldwork with professionals, like working on a reforestation project to help decrease erosion and improve water quality and exploring the impact of plastic pollution on a reef cleanup with local scientists.



## Service Learning

On many of our service learning tours in the Dominican Republic, including *Earth Month 2023: Environmental Activism in the Dominican Republic*, students have an opportunity to work with El Instituto del Ambiente, the country’s foremost institution addressing sustainable land management, agriculture, conservation, and reforestation. These environmental sustainability-focused service projects include things like trail restoration, river conservation, and reforestation.



## Our approach to travel and tour design

### Curated by experts

Educators, world travelers, subject-matter specialists, and locals all come together to create itineraries you won’t find anywhere else.

### Experiential learning

We build immersive experiences into every one of our tours, giving students the chance to personally interact with vibrant new cultures.

### Compelling itineraries

From sites that are Instagram staples to secret spots only locals know about, students will explore everything a destination has to offer.

## Traveler spotlight: The real, long-term impact of tour

Dr. Carrie Olson is the current President of the Board of Education for Denver Public Schools, a former teacher of over 30 years, and a proud travel enthusiast who not only led students on EF tours, but also studied the impact their experience had on them in her dissertation, “The Meaning of Educational Travel in the Lives of Urban Middle School Students: A Mixed Methods Study.” We sat down with Carrie to learn more about her research—and we chatted with one of her former student travelers to see what she’s up to now.

Carrie Olson, Ph.D.



### After writing a whole dissertation on the topic, we’re sure this isn’t an easy ask, but how would you summarize the findings of your research?

Overall, I found that the quantitative data suggested that educational travel means increased academic achievement (test scores and grade point averages) and increased school engagement (graduation rates, attendance rates). From the qualitative data, the former travelers shared that educational travel provides a strong connection to curriculum and instruction and provides an opportunity for personal development.



One of Carrie’s former students on her EF tour

### Could you tell us more about the kind of impact travel had on your students while they were on tour?

I try to highlight my students’ voices instead of mine, so here are a couple quotes directly from my former students:

“The Europe trip was a milestone in my life and continues to be something that changed the boundaries of what I think...me, growing up Hispanic in a low-income family, having only one pair of shoes a year, then being able to go to Europe and working my butt off and actually doing something with [my] life, it’s remarkable...it changed me.”  
– Kim, speaking about her 2004 European tour

“I remember being in front of the Declaration of Independence and getting really emotional. I just remember standing in front of it, and like just crying...And it felt like so many things were being promised to me, especially because [that year was when] I first realized, ‘Okay, my being here is considered illegal,’ but at the same time I felt like so many things were being promised to me just by standing in that same spot...So it was like me standing there felt like all doors were open for me.”  
– América, speaking about her 2006 Washington, D.C. tour

### How did travel affect your students long-term?

This surprised me, but my students told me that the most impactful part of their tour was actually what it came to mean to them after it was over. For example, one of my former travelers now runs a hotel in Switzerland. I ran into her mother, and she told me, “I know my daughter never would have done that without you.” And then my other student ended up taking her parents to Paris because they had raised the money for her to go in school. So, I think their tour experience is always a touchpoint—and not just for the kids who are college-bound. One of my students graduated high school and went straight into work putting up billboards. He was the youngest guy on the crew, but at lunch, his co-workers would say, “Hey, tell us another story about traveling.” And that gave him this status.

### Meet one of Dr. Carrie Olson’s former students

Alejandra (a former student who traveled with Carrie over 15 years ago!) told us how her EF tour helped her get to where she is today.



**Alejandra V.**  
Traveled to Europe in 2004

My tour helped me prepare to push myself outside of my comfort zone and adjust to a different environment. I currently work at the Colorado Department of Education as a Mental Health Resource Bank Specialist and at the Denver Public Schools as a school counselor. I definitely feel the tour helped me get to where I am today. I want to work with students to help them explore all of their options when they are finished with high school.

Carrie’s students on tour in Washington, D.C.



# Life-changing professional learning for educators

Here at EF, we're committed to supporting teachers as they change their students' lives—which is just one of the reasons we give them professional development opportunities. The best part is, all of our professional development opportunities are rooted in the excitement and immersive nature of travel-based learning—and we've heard firsthand that these opportunities invigorate educators, increasing teacher retention. Group Leaders are not only able to connect with other globally-minded teachers and grow as both individuals and professionals, but they also get to have a lot of fun. Plus, an EF tour itself helps educators grow in countless ways and prepares them to bring back a new perspective to their own classroom.

## Confidence to lead

First-time Group Leaders are welcomed to the EF family with plenty of training on the ins and outs of traveling with students. Training tours provide a taste of the experience students will receive—all while allowing educators to learn from other experienced Group Leaders and gain 25 professional learning hours or points. Plus, educators get access to our comprehensive collection of virtual training resources (including live webinars and on-demand sessions) which cover everything from safety necessities to tips for aligning their tour with their curriculum.

Hear from educators who have been on training tours at [eftours.com/training](https://eftours.com/training)



A teacher leads his students through the Louvre in France.

## Earning credit for growing

Educators can earn 45 professional learning hours or points when they lead an EF tour and complete a travel-based course. Additionally, they have the opportunity to earn three or six graduate-level credits through our partners at SNHU.

## Professional learning that goes the extra mile

When you partner with EF, you get access to exclusive educator-focused events like EF's Global Education Symposium. Our Symposium itinerary is filled with amazing guest speakers, experiential workshops, and networking opportunities. Educators get to collaborate with peers across the globe, hear directly from thought leaders in the space, participate in interactive discussions, and work together to brainstorm ways to apply new ways of thinking to their own institutions. Plus, there are virtual components, too—so every teacher who's interested can have access to Symposium.

## Opportunities that lead to teacher retention

Our research has shown that the professional development opportunities we provide to our Group Leaders improves teacher retention. Whether teachers are learning from Global Education Ambassadors (experienced Group Leaders who are passionate about educational travel) or joining our virtual Group Leader Lounge and online professional learning events, they're making meaningful connections with fellow educators and gaining advice and inspiration—both for their tour and their classroom.



## Time and space to focus on what educators do best

Educators can't focus on their growth (or their students') when they're worrying about safety or logistics. That's why we're here to make sure everything goes smoothly. Whether it's a worldwide pandemic or a sprained ankle, a missed flight or confusing medical paperwork, we've seen it all and we have the resources to handle it. In other words, our main priority is making sure our educators have all the resources they need to focus on what they do best: teach (of course!) and make a life-long impact on all of their students.



“ **Holly H.**  
Group Leader from New Mexico

**An EF tour is something to look forward to. Traveling allowed me to take the students where I've been talking about. The Louvre in Paris, for instance, or a place in Spain that I didn't know about, and that we could discover together.**



# Educational opportunities for every stage of life and learning

Everywhere you go—and for every stage of life you reach—there's EF. Educational Tours is just one of EF's incredible offerings. We're committed to opening the world through education, which is why we have programs for everyone, from middle schoolers to working professionals. And our experiences can take you anywhere, from Puerto Rico to Poland, Cartagena to Chiang Mai, and all the many beyonds. There are student tours across America and the globe, international language schools, a world-class business school, and so much more. Read on for more details on our range of educational products and how they can meet you no matter where you are right now, or where you want to be.



With you every step of the way

654

EF schools and offices

50

countries with EF operations

51,500

EF staff, educators, and Tour Directors ready to meet you wherever you land



## EF Explore America

*Middle school and high school*

EF Explore America brings lessons to life for middle and high school students on educational tours throughout North America. We design each and every one of our class trips with one thing in mind: to go beyond the same-old highlights you could see with anyone else.

[efexploreamerica.com](http://efexploreamerica.com)



## EF Educational Tours

*Middle school and high school*

EF Educational Tours expand middle and high school students' perspectives and prepare them for success in an ever-evolving world. Our compelling itineraries stretch all across the globe, and they're packed with experiential learning opportunities that are designed to spark curiosity and unlock potential.

[eftours.com](http://eftours.com)



## EF Gap Year

*Post-high school*

At EF Gap Year, we believe that the people who will succeed in the world of tomorrow are confident, constantly learning, and comfortable in the face of ambiguity. Our modern, global, experiential education programs are designed to give students between the ages of 18 and 22 years old the future-ready and relevant skills that will help them thrive in an ever-changing world.

[efgapyear.com](http://efgapyear.com)



## EF College Study Abroad

*College*

EF College Study Abroad develops custom, scalable, short-term study abroad programs that help our institutional partners maximize travel and skill-building opportunities for students of all backgrounds.

[efstudyabroad.com](http://efstudyabroad.com)



## Hult International Business School

*Grad school*

Hult International Business School is an independent, award-winning business school with campuses around the world. Hult flips the traditional approach to education by using learning-by-doing experiences to transform students into job-ready candidates from the moment they graduate.

[hult.edu](http://hult.edu)



## EF International Language Campuses

*Post-grad*

EF International Language Campuses allow anyone to learn a language faster. Our accredited EF global campuses use our proven, personalized method with courses that go beyond the classroom to challenge students in varied ways and diverse environments, so they experience the language instead of just studying it.

[ef.edu](http://ef.edu)

## Together, we make a world of difference

Here at EF, all of us are dedicated to making positive change that spans the entire globe. We care about our planet, and we're committed to sustainability. That's why we're committed to important causes like removing our carbon footprint, improving education for underprivileged children around the world, and leading the travel industry when it comes to animal welfare best practices.



### World Animal Protection

In 2018, EF became the first international education company to collaborate with World Animal Protection. Together, we ensure animal welfare best practices in all of our programs and avoid attractions that don't meet animal welfare standards.

Learn more at [eftours.com/animal-protection](https://eftours.com/animal-protection)

### Hello Zero

Our goal with Hello Zero is two-fold: to be carbon negative every year starting in 2021, and to eventually become historically carbon neutral, removing all of the carbon we have ever emitted since EF's founding in 1965. Hello Zero's first step is the EF Forest Initiative, a project to create and conserve forests around the world. In our first year, we planted three million trees with Eden Reforestation Projects, a nonprofit organization that engages local communities in planting, maintaining, and guarding previously deforested areas. And, we're continuing our partnership with Eden Reforestation Projects to fund the planting of three million more trees across Kenya, Madagascar, and Mozambique.

Learn more at [ef.com/hellozero](https://ef.com/hellozero)



### Featured Hult Prize Foundation Project: Rutopia

Rutopia, a project created by educators from Tec de Monterrey in Mexico, won the 2019 Hult Prize for its social enterprise that connects travelers with indigenous communities offering community-based ecotourism.

### The Hult Prize Foundation

Hult Prize inspires student entrepreneurs to solve the world's biggest challenges through innovative social enterprises with positive global impact. Through our year-long competition, over 100,000 young people in 120 countries work to create high-impact startups that address the annual challenge in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Finalists pitch their businesses to a panel of expert judges, and the winning team receives \$1 million in funding to make their idea a reality.

Learn more at [hultprize.org](https://hultprize.org)



## A world of impact

Every day, EF strives to positively impact people, communities, and the planet. Our approach to changing the world is based on three pillars:

### People

People are at the heart of everything we do. Human connection and the power it holds to change lives is core to every program we offer.

### Communities

We're committed to providing economic, social, and environmental benefits to all of the communities we interact with, and seek to collaborate with them to support local economies and preserve local cultures.

### Planet

We embrace eco-friendly practices by supporting local conservation efforts, reducing and recycling waste, minimizing our carbon footprint, and voluntarily offsetting all of our carbon emissions to help ensure a more sustainable and peaceful future for all.



These principles guide the work we do every day. It's easy to say that, but we wanted to take our impact even further. That's why we created our first annual EF Education First Impact Report. Here, we share stories and data about how we're creating positive change and contributing to sustainability efforts. We invite you to take a read.

[ef.com/impact](https://ef.com/impact)



Images provided by Eden Reforestation Projects

**Students come home with this sense of, 'I'm part of a bigger world. Other people are more like me than I thought they were.' They also have a different and deeper appreciation for who they are and what they have here at home.**



**Margo G.**  
Administrator from Texas

Discover the genuine impact EF educational tours have on students, educators, and local and global communities—then learn how you can bring the same opportunities to your school.



[eftours.com](http://eftours.com)



800-637-8222

