

# **EVALUATION PLAN**

## Meridian SUSI Program

### 2020-2021

December 23, 2020



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## Purpose of Study

The purpose of this evaluation is to conduct a formative evaluation of the Study of the U.S. Institutes (SUSI) for Global Student Leaders to assess implementation of the program and determine how well the program is meeting intended outcomes, as well as determining unintended outcomes.

## Program Background

The SUSI program is an experiential learning, cultural exchange program managed by Meridian International Center through a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Department of State.

The SUSI program brings undergraduate students from approximately 26 countries around the globe to the United States for intensive four-week residencies at a university institute and case study tours. According to the State Department's Notice of Funding Opportunity for the FY 2019 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders, the principal objective of the program is to provide foreign student leaders an in-depth examination of a theme in U.S. studies, while also heightening their awareness of the history and evolution of U.S. society, culture, values, and institutions.<sup>1</sup>

The institutes are organized by themes: Civic Engagement; Entrepreneurship and Economic Development; Religious Freedom and Pluralism; Rule of Law and Public Service; and Youth, Education and Closing the Skills Gap. Institutes provide academic coursework in the selected theme, as well as community service activities, leadership development sessions, and opportunities for interaction with American peers that showcase a balanced view of the diversity of demographics, institutions, and perspectives within the United States. Weeklong case study tours to another region of the U.S. provide participants with an opportunity to see theory in practice in a community. During their stay, participants live with a U.S. host family, volunteer at a local organization, and speak at local schools. The case study tours conclude in Washington, DC.

Prior to FY 2019, each university ran its own institute and managed all aspects of the program individually. The State Department restructured the SUSI program by awarding the agreement to Meridian International Center. Meridian acts as the umbrella organization managing logistics, reporting, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E). They collaborate with university partners who provide the institute portion of the exchange program. The program restructuring was intended to bring more efficiency to program management and allow for monitoring and evaluation of standard indicators and performance metrics that links outcomes of the Institutes to stated program goals and objectives to ensure that all Institutes meet comparable and high levels of quality in fulfilling program goals.<sup>2</sup> However, universities continue to implement the institutes

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<sup>1</sup> Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Notice of Funding Opportunity: FY 2019 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders, <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=310339>

<sup>2</sup> Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs Project Objectives, Goals, and Implementation: FY 2019 Study of the U.S. Institutes for Student Leaders, <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/view-opportunity.html?oppld=310339>

with their own evaluation framework, but currently there is no overall framework or requirements to provide M&E data to Meridian.

Meridian's original results framework for SUSI identifies the following program goal: Students improve their understanding of the United States, develop their leadership skills, and improve mutual understanding. Project objectives are listed as:

1. Enhance participants' knowledge and understanding of U.S. history, government, institutions, society, and culture.
2. Promote mutual understanding and lasting relationships between U.S. and international peers.
3. Develop participants' leadership skills and commitment to community engagement.

## Study Design

The SUSI program is an experiential learning program intended to build the self-confidence of participants through skill building, leadership training, networking, and academic instruction, as well as improve their understanding of U.S. culture and values through home-stays with U.S. families and volunteering.

## Experiential Learning Programs

Experiential learning follows a recursive cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting. Knowledge is created through the transformation of experience, either concrete or abstract experience, via reflective observation and active experimentation.<sup>3</sup> This cycle enables the learner to "learn how to learn" by stimulating their self-efficacy, or self-confidence.

Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their own ability to succeed in a given situation, and strongly influences whether or not someone successfully achieves their goals in life.<sup>4</sup> The four sources of self-efficacy are:

- Social modeling: watching others successfully complete tasks and goals; role models.
- Social persuasion: verbal encouragement from friends and social networks.
- Mastery experience: successfully completing a task or goal.
- Psychological responses: our own emotions, stress levels, and physical reactions.

Research shows that people with a strong sense of self-efficacy tend to achieve their personal and professional goals, recover quickly from setbacks, and view challenging problems as tasks to be mastered. Conversely, people with low self-efficacy lose confidence in their own abilities and avoid challenges.<sup>5</sup> In order to accomplish their professional goals and create positive

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<sup>3</sup> Alice Kolb and David Kolb. "The Learning Way: Meta Cognitive Aspects of Experiential Learning" in *Simulation and Gaming*, vol 40:3, p297-327.

<sup>4</sup> Albert Bandura. *Self-Efficacy in Changing Societies*. Cambridge University Press, 1997

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

change at home, SUSI participants need strong self-efficacy built through the experiential learning cycle.

## Evaluation Priorities

The evaluation design, or plan, includes the evaluation questions, the program theory of change, the evaluation framework, and an outline of the participants involved, data and analytical methods that will be used, and a timeline for conducting the evaluation.

The evaluation design is guided by the program goal and objectives (See Program Background) and the following two components:

- The priorities outlined by the SUSI Program staff during initial meetings.
- The nature of the program as an experiential learning program.

Evaluation priorities shall be further refined with the Department of State program staff during discussions projected to take place during November 2020. During conversations to date, the following priorities surfaced:

- Impacts the program has on participants once they return home.
- Life lessons participants gain and then use once they return home.
- The extent to which SUSI has been a formative experience for participants, such as building self-efficacy.
- The extent to which SUSI participants feel like they are part of a community and how to sustain that community.
- The impact of the experience on host families and other U.S. participants.
- Program implementation under the new structure and outcomes of differential implementation by university partners.
- Informal capacity building for the staff on monitoring and evaluation for future efforts.
- Improved metrics and ability to measure the impact (long-term outcomes) of the SUSI program.

## Theory of Change and Logic Models

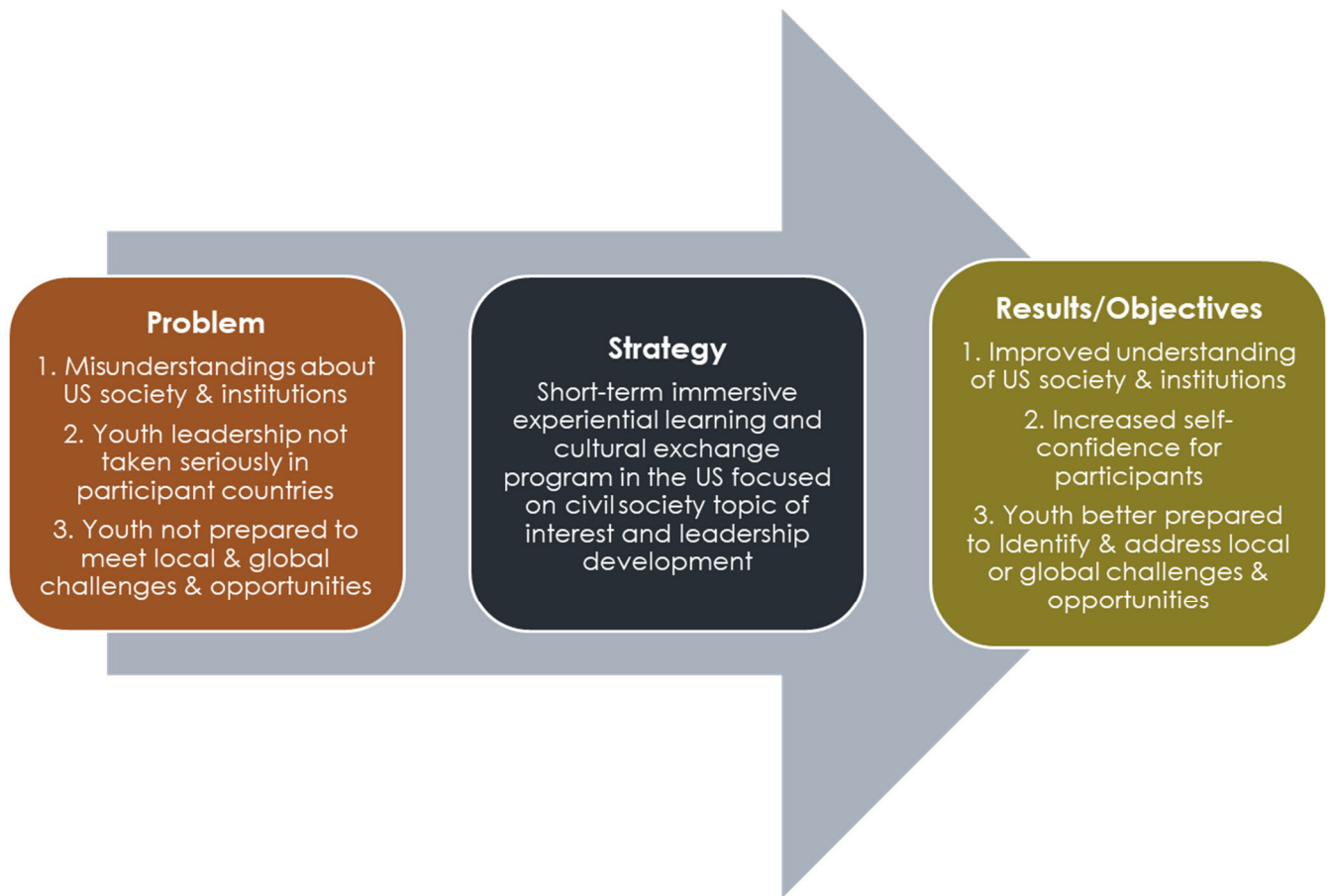
The Theory of Change (ToC) provides a graphic representation of how change will occur in the program and the basic assumptions being made in the theory and evaluation. The purpose of a ToC model is to *test plausibility* and is the foundation for the program logic model.<sup>6</sup>

The revised theory of change is based on a mind map developed in collaboration with the SUSI program team in October 2020. The challenges or needs the program addresses focus on building the skills of global youth and addressing misunderstandings about U.S. society and institutions. The program employs an experiential learning and cross-cultural strategy intended to result in improved understanding of U.S. society and institutions, increased self-confidence for participants, and youth who are better prepared to identify and address local needs in their home countries (Figure 1).

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<sup>6</sup> Lisa Wyatt Knowlton and Cynthia C. Phillips, *The Logic Model Guidebook*, London, Sage Press, Chapter 1.

Figure 1: SUSI Theory of Change



The primary assumptions of the program are:

1. Borders remain open and the J1 visa program remains operational to bring students into the United States.
2. The short time in the United States is enough immersion and learning to affect change.
3. University partners are open to a new program structure and reporting requirements.
4. The alumni network supports participants' self-confidence post-program.

The program logic model provides a detailed map of resources, planned activities, outputs, outcomes, and intended results for the program. The purpose of a program logic model is to *test feasibility* and to show the causal connections within the program.<sup>7</sup> The program logic model (Figure 2) maps the theory of change to the program's short-, mid-, and long-term outcomes, showing how they relate to the program goals. Relevant indicators from the ECA MODE framework are included in parentheses after selected outcomes; **green** indicators are the responsibility of the award recipient and should be included in post-program surveys, whereas **red** indicators are collected directly by ECA.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

Figure 2: Program Logic Model

ACTIVITIES	INPUTS	OUTPUTS	OUTCOMES		
			SHORT-TERM	MID-TERM	LONG-TERM
Examine current issues and themes in US society at university institutes & study tours	Faculty, curricula, univ. resources, logistics study tours, speakers study tours, tour handbooks,	Completed Institutes, learning assessments, completed study tours, action plans, entrepreneurship project in US	1.1S Participants expand their personal and professional networks by end of study visit (E3.0.3, E3.0.6)	1.1M Participants use networks & skills gained to address local challenges at home (Obj. 3) (E3.0.7, E3.1.1, E4.0.02)	1.1/1.2L Participants report SUSI experience enabled them to successfully address a local challenge at home (E2.0.2)
Provide engagement opportunities through home stays, volunteering, school visits, networking	Host families, volunteer organizations, schools, networking platform, contact lists	Experience with US family; experience with US civil society institutions/organizations; new contacts	1.2S Participants improve their understanding of US culture and values by end of study visit (FBS1.1.1a, FBS1.1.1b)	1.2M Participants share their knowledge & experience of the US with others at home	
Provide experiential & academic learning for leadership & professional development	Curricula on leadership; Training on professional and personal skills	Professional development training; Leadership training; participants trained; experience with US families, volunteer experience; alumni network; action plans;	2.1S Participants improve or learn leadership, professional & personal skills by end of study visit (FBS2.5.1, E4.0.03, E4.0.05, E4.0.06, E4.0.10)	2.1M Participants report using leadership, professional or personal skills at home (E4.0.02, E4.0.07)	2.1L Participants report SUSI experience positively changed their career or educational goals (E4.0.04, E4.0.15)
Provide opportunities to increase confidence through home stays, volunteering, school visits	Host families, volunteer organizations, schools, networking platform,			2.2M Participants increase their self-efficacy to create change at home or accept a leadership role at home (E2.2.1; E4.0.02, E4.0.04)	
Facilitate alumni programming, speaker series, round tables	Speakers; meetings; institutes; Meridian staff time; workshop materials, contact lists, alumni programs		2.3S Participants report alumni networks provide peer mentoring and role models		
Action plan for change in home community;	Mini grants; proposals; action plans; increased self-efficacy	Awards for mini grants; US projects for entrepreneurship	3.1S Participants submit action plan or proposal for mini grant	3.1M Participants use new skills, & networks gained in	3.1L Participants achieve at least 1 of the intended



Action plan & project for US community	US action plans;	Project design; networking; application of theory	to address local need or challenge at home or as CAP in the US	the Institutes to implement action plan at home or as CAP in the US (E3.0.7, E4.0.02)	results of their action plan or CAP project (E2.0.5)
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## Evaluation Questions

The stakeholder priorities together with the program goals and literature on experiential learning and self-efficacy shaped the evaluation questions. The evaluation questions are grouped by program goal with a separate set of program implementation questions; the affiliated program outcome is presented in parentheses following the question.

### *Objective 1: Improved understanding of U.S. society & institutions*

- 1.1 To what extent do participants expand their personal and professional networks because of participation in SUSI? Which U.S. individuals are they connecting with? How do participants collaborate with their U.S. networks to address local challenges at home? (1.1S, 1.1M)
- 1.2 To what extent is the program improving participants' understanding of US culture and values? (1.2S)
  - 1.2.1 What is the role of host families and/or student ambassadors in the process?

### *Objective 2: Increased self-confidence for participants*

- 2.1 What leadership, professional and personal skills did participants gain or improve during the program? (2.1S)
- 2.2 What skills have been most useful to participants once they return home? (2.1M)
  - 2.2.1 What skills have they needed that were not part of their institute?
- 2.3 To what extent do participants feel they are part of a peer network and what do participants want from alumni programming? (2.3S)
- 2.4 To what extent has the program increased participants' self-efficacy? (2.2M)
  - 2.4.1 To what extent have participants assumed/feel they can assume a leadership position/role in their home communities?
- 2.5 How has this experience affected participants' educational or career goals? (2.1L)
  - 2.5.1 What life lessons are participants gaining and using at home?

### *Objective 3: Youth better prepared to identify & address local or global challenges & opportunities at home*

- 3.1 To what extent do participants feel they can make/have made a positive change in their home community? (3.1L)

### *Implementation Evaluation Questions*

- 4.1 What support or programming do participants need to sustain their skills and confidence, once they return home?
- 4.2 What aspects of the institute curricula & case study tours contribute to program outcomes?

4.2.1 How are institutes assessing learning outcomes?

4.3 How do outcomes vary across the Institutes, and what might be the source of the variation?

4.4 How has the COVID pandemic affected program outcomes and implementation?

4.4.1 To what extent do alumni perceive virtual programming to be effective? How engaged are alumni by virtual programming? Do alumni want to continue virtual programming?

## Evaluation Framework

The evaluation framework provides a tabular overview of the evaluation plan by mapping the evaluation questions to expected outcomes, the data needed, the instrument to collect the data, and the analytical methods. The evaluation uses a mixed methods approach to fully understand the implementation context and triangulate data.

Rather than measure to a benchmark or indicator, the evaluation data collected will be used to measure the extent to which an outcome was achieved, or is on track to be achieved, allowing Meridian to establish benchmarks for the future.

### *Objective 1 Evaluation Framework: Improved Understanding of U.S. society & institutions (Table 1)*

For evaluation question 1.1, data on the nature and frequency of U.S. network contacts and collaboration with network contacts will be collected through the alumni survey and interviews. For evaluation question 1.2, survey data will be collected using a retrospective quasi-experimental design in which participants are asked to reflect on something before they participated and then after they participated. Statistical tests will determine if the changes in perceptions are significant. These questions will be based on an existing instrument used by the Peace Corps to assess changes in understanding of Americans by host country nationals who worked with a volunteer. Supplemental information will be collected through alumni interviews and a host family/student ambassador survey.

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Host families: the US families that provide home stays to the participants.

Student Ambassadors: US college students who live in the dorms with participants, and act as peer support.

Improved/change understanding: a deepening or improvement in their knowledge and conceptualizations of US daily life, religious/ethnic/racial diversity; freedom of speech; values; regional culture; community service

American daily life: the everyday experiences of US citizens, challenges, success, schedules, interactions, economics of daily life.

Values: diversity of beliefs connected to actions in daily life; ability to compare another culture's value to your own without judgement



Table 1: Objective 1 Evaluation Framework

EVALUATION QUESTION	OUTCOME	DATA NEEDED	INSTRUMENT	ANALYTICAL METHODS
1.1 To what extent do participants expand their personal and professional networks as result of participation in SUSI? Which U.S. individuals are they connecting with? How do participants collaborate with their networks to address local challenges at home?	1.1S Participants expand their personal and professional networks by end of study visit  1.1M Participants use networks & skills gained to address local challenges at home  1.2S Participants improve their understanding of US culture and values by end of study visit	1.1 Participants reported network with U.S. contacts and SUSI alumni; and reports of collaboration with networks  1.2 Participant reflections on their understanding of Americans, U.S. daily life, values, BEFORE & AFTER their experience; sources of information about Americans BEFORE; disaggregate by institute & home country	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews; Host Family/Student Ambassador Survey	1.1 Frequencies for network contacts and frequencies and Likert scales for collaboration with contacts, disaggregated by institute and home country; evaluative coding for qualitative data  1.2 Retrospective quasi experimental design; significance testing for quantitative data; evaluative coding for qualitative data
1.2 To what extent is the program improving participants' understanding of US culture and values? What is the role of host families/student ambassadors in that process?				

### Objective 2 Evaluation Framework: Increased self-confidence for participants (Table 2)

Gaining and mastering skills are a primary source of self-efficacy. Data will be collected on skills gained or improved during the SUSI Program divided into three categories: professional skills, personal skills, and leadership skills (2.1). This data will allow for further data collection on how alumni are using the skills they gained since returning home, which skills are most useful and other skills they needed once they return home (2.2).

Another source of self-efficacy is positive encouragement from peers and watching others successfully accomplish tasks (Social Persuasion and Social Modeling). Data will be collected on the role of the SUSI peer network and types of programming participants want for the future

(2.3). Quantitative and qualitative data on the frequency of peer support during and after the program, the nature of that support, and its relationship to sources of self-efficacy will be collected. Quantitative data will be collected on alumni programming needs.

To measure self-efficacy (2.4), the question sets will be designed as a retrospective quasi experimental structure. At the beginning of the survey, alumni will be asked to reflect on specific leadership, professional and personal skills and abilities they had *before* they participated in the program and then at the end of the survey or interview asked to reflect on their abilities *after* the program. The self-efficacy survey questions will be based on existing self-efficacy scales that have been tested for reliability. The existing questions will be adjusted for the SUSI program context and outcomes.

Increased self-efficacy often leads to altered aspirations, such as career and educational goals. Quantitative and qualitative data on career and educational goals will be collected using a retrospective quasi-experimental structure that will compare participants goals from before and after participating in the program. Additionally, experiential learning programs often lead to life-long learning outcomes that support self-efficacy and creating positive changes at home. Qualitative data will be collected on “life lessons” that participants learned and are applying to their personal and professional lives at home. In addition, these questions act as a counterfactual, assessing the impact of the SUSI program. For example, participants will be asked to consider what their life and career goals would be if they had *not* participated in the program, and to describe how their goals have changed as a result of the program.

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Professional skills: project management, giving presentations, public speaking, proposal writing, speaking/writing English, facilitating workshops, networking, time management, problem solving, community mapping, needs assessment, budgeting, prioritizing

Personal skills: cross-cultural competency, adaptability, asking for help, learning from mistakes, managing adversity or challenges, overcoming imposter syndrome, taking initiative, taking responsibility for work, finding positive ways to manage stress, building consensus, volunteer recruitment, taking opportunities and risks, self-advocacy

Positive change in home community: address a locally identified issue; build a group to address the issue; improve some aspect of the issue.

Sources of self-efficacy: Social Persuasion positive encouragement; Social Modeling watching others successfully complete tasks; emotional response to stress & challenges; Mastery experience successfully completing a task or goal; emotional response to stress & challenges.

Life Lessons: something learned through experience that participants can apply to future decisions, experiences, choices

Educational/Career Goals: personal aspirations for the future related to education and careers.

Leadership role: win an award for an achievement; leader within student or other organization, start business or NGO, accept a government position

*Table 2: Objective 2 Evaluation Framework*

EVALUATION QUESTION	OUTCOME	DATA NEEDED	INSTRUMENT	ANALYTICAL METHODS
2.1 What leadership, professional and personal skills did participants gain or improve during the program?	2.1S Participants improve or learn leadership, professional & personal skills	Specific skills participants learned or improved disaggregated by institute	Alumni Survey	Matrix: list of skills, learned, improved, already had, NA; frequency; disaggregate by institute
2.2 What skills have been most useful to participants once they return home? What skills have they needed that were not part of their institute?	2.1M Participants report using professional or personal skills at home	Specific skills participants learned or improved that they are using at home; disaggregate by institute and home country	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	Pipe in skills learned & improved; frequency use at home; disaggregate by institute & home country
2.3 To what extent do participants feel they are part of a peer network and what do participants want from alumni programming?	2.3S Alumni networks provide peer mentoring & role models	Level of connectedness; frequency of peer support; type of support; programming needs	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	Likert scales & frequencies; qualitative data on types of support & relationship to sources of self-efficacy
2.4 To what extent has the program increased participants' self-efficacy?	2.2M Participants increase their self-efficacy to create change at home or accept a leadership role at home	Reports from mini grants; self-efficacy scale BEFORE & AFTER: qualitative data on how participants overcome 'imposter syndrome' and lessons learned	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	General self-efficacy scale adapted to cross cultural exchange & experiential learning; Retrospective quasi experimental design with significance tests; qualitative data analysis coded for sources of self-efficacy
2.4.1 To what extent have participants assumed/feel they can assume a leadership position/role in their home communities?		Quantitative data on leadership roles have assumed; quantitative data on confidence in leadership readiness in future; challenges or additional skills they need; qualitative data on why participants believe they are	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	Frequency for assumed leadership role disaggregated by institute and home country; frequency for skills still need; code challenges linked to self-efficacy and program opportunities; code for program links to causality for leadership readiness

prepared to  
assume a  
leadership role

2.5 How has this experience affected participants' educational or career goals?	2.1L Participants report SUSI experience positively changed their career or educational goals	Qualitative and quantitative data for future career/edu goals as compared to before the program; why goals changed	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	code for before and after changes; code for program opportunities; code for why change linked to program effects
2.5.1 What life lessons are participants gaining and using at home?	2.2M Participants increase their self-confidence to create change at home or accept a leadership role	Qualitative data on life lesson participants will use in the future; how they learned this and why it is important to them	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	qualitative coding for life lesson and sources of self-efficacy; reason life lesson important connected to program opportunities
	2.1L Participants report SUSI experience positively changed their career or educational goals			

### *Objective 3 Evaluation Framework: Youth better prepared to identify & address local or global challenges & opportunities at home*

To understand how well participants feel the SUSI program prepared them to address local challenges, data from Objective 3 on skills gained and used at home will be correlated with data on how prepared participants feel to create change at home. These data will also be combined with project report data and interview data on progress and outcomes of action plans and CAP projects.

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Better prepared: feel they have the skills, networks, confidence, to create positive change at home

Positive change at home: build a local group of volunteers to identify a local challenge or need, create a plan, implement the plan to address some aspect of the need

*Table 3: Objective 3 Evaluation Framework*



EVALUATION QUESTION	OUTCOME	DATA NEEDED	INSTRUMENT	ANALYTICAL METHODS
3.1 To what extent do participants feel they can make/have made a positive change in their home community?	3.1L Participants achieve at least 1 of the results of their action plan or CAP project	Quantitative & qualitative data on how prepared participants feel to make change; project reports; results of CAP projects and action plans	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	Efficacy scales; scales on preparation and skill levels; coding project reports for outcomes; coding interviews for results

*Implementation Evaluation Framework*

The evaluation will assess the implementation of the SUSI program focusing on the recent changes in structure to the program and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Data to answer these questions will come from the Alumni Survey and Interviews, the interviews with university partners, and analysis of the institute curricula and learning assessments. In addition, Alumni Survey data will be disaggregated by institute to further answer questions in this group.

Conversations with SUSI staff revealed that professional, leadership, and personal skill training to participants can vary from institute to institute. This provides an opportunity to assess program outcomes between two groups of participants—those that attend institutes with skill-building explicitly woven into curricula, and those at institutes where this is implicit. In addition, university partners are not providing SUSI staff with key outcome data, including learning outcomes, and action plans or outcomes. Further, at least one institute has participants develop an action plan to implement in the U.S., acting as a practical application of skills and knowledge, prior to returning home. This also provides an opportunity to compare outcomes among different implementation methods.

The aim is to determine what elements of the SUSI program are leading to outcomes and provide the staff with data to support implementation adjustments and a set of global indicators that all institutes would report.

*Table 4: Implementation Evaluation Framework*

EVALUATION QUESTION	OUTCOME	DATA NEEDED	INSTRUMENT	ANALYTICAL METHODS
4.1 What support or programming do participants need to sustain their skills and confidence, once they return home?	Goal 2: Increased self-confidence; Goal 3: Better prepared youth	Participants: needs once they return home; challenges they face in reintegration, using and sustaining skills	Alumni Survey; Alumni Interviews	Quantitative data and frequencies on programming needs; qualitative data on challenges

EVALUATION QUESTION	OUTCOME	DATA NEEDED	INSTRUMENT	ANALYTICAL METHODS
4.2 What aspects of the institute curricula & study tours contribute to program outcomes? How are institutes assessing learning outcomes?	All goals; ability to develop a set of universal standard outcome indicators for university partners to report on	Participants: specific elements of the institutes and study tours that they have used; Institute curricula; Institute assessments of learning	Alumni Survey; Alumni interviews; Institute learning assessment analysis; institute curricula analysis	Review learning assessments & curricula, assess for connections to program outcomes; include institute elements in survey & analyze frequencies; code qualitative data for institute elements
4.3 How do outcomes vary across the Institutes, and what might be the source of the variation?	Testing program implementation at institutes against outcomes	Institute curricula analysis; disaggregate Alumni Survey data by institutes; University interviews	Request documents from institutes; Alumni survey; University interviews	Curricula analysis for professional and personal skill training; cultural competency training; leadership training; incorporate into survey and disaggregate survey results; code interviews for why/not include training; Code interviews for ability to measure program outcomes; curricula analysis for skill training, cultural competency training, leadership training;
4.4 How has the COVID pandemic affected program outcomes and implementation? 4.4.1 To what extent do alumni perceive virtual programming to be effective? Are alumni engaged by virtual programming? Do alumni want to continue virtual programming?	Accounting for program context changes	Qualitative data from students on changes to alumni programming (effectiveness, engagement, interest in continuing virtual programming), project, edu., and career plans; Qualitative data from institutes on impact to university, funding, staffing; quantitative data on action plans implemented, costs for changes to programming, curricula redesigns	alumni survey; alumni interviews, institute interviews, document review	coding index created based on impacts, direction of change and level of impact; qualitative data coded for impacts; quantitative data analyzed with frequencies;

## Study Participants & Consent

The primary participants in the evaluation will be the SUSI Program alumni, host families, and university partner staff and faculty.

Meridian will provide an Excel spreadsheet containing the following information for all alumni who completed their study tour:

- Name
- Year of study
- Gender
- Email contact and other contact, such as LinkedIn
- Home Country
- Current location
- Institute name
- Institute theme
- Academic major at time of application
- Host family name
- Host family contact information (email preferred)

All alumni will be invited to participate in the survey. They will be notified by the SUSI Program team that Meridian is conducting an evaluation of the program and they should expect an email from the evaluators.

The evaluators will email the participants directly and provide them with:

- Information on the evaluation
- Confidentiality protocols
- An FAQ sheet
- A direct link to the survey

Informed consent will be collected through the survey instrument prior to alumni starting the survey. For interviews, consent will be obtained during the scheduling process and verbally at the start of each interview.

Approximately 15 interviews will be conducted with SUSI alumni. Interviewees and alternates will be selected using a stratified sample from the full population based on their gender, home country, and institute. Alumni selected for interviews will be emailed and invited to participate in an interview.

For university partners, Meridian will provide contact information for the point of contact at each institute. The evaluators will work with the point person at each institute to schedule up to 5 interviews with university partner points of contact. The Institute point of contact will also provide contact information for up to 5 host families and/or student ambassadors. The evaluation team will select one host family and one student ambassador, as well as one alternate affiliated with each institute and SUSI alumni for interviews.

## Study Tasks

Working closely with Meridian, SEG/CCC will perform the following tasks for the evaluation:

### *TASK 1. Evaluability Assessment and Kick-Off Meeting*

Following the contract award, SEG-CCC initiated the evaluability assessment and scheduled an evaluation kick-off meeting with the project staff. This meeting is important for establishing a positive client-evaluator relationship, reviewing the status of the SUSI Program, and determining what type of evaluation will best answer client questions based on the status of the program.

The specific objectives of the kick-off meeting were to:

- Review findings and results from previous evaluation and performance management efforts and understand actions taken with SUSI program staff Identify the key project stakeholders, including members of the program implementation team, funders, and partner organizations
- Identify the information needs of the client and other stakeholders, and the intended use of proposed evaluation findings
- Determine the type of evaluation needed at this time for the program and the main evaluation questions
- Review the proposed evaluation task timeline and revise to align with client requirements and data collection realities, including adding specific dates where needed
- Discuss data management systems
- Identify any human subjects or privacy issues that must be addressed
- Establish the client point of contact (POCs) and discuss expectations for regular communications

SEG-CCC established a regular conference call and/or meeting schedule with the project staff to provide updates on evaluation activities, receive updates on program activities, coordinate actions, and plan future evaluation actions.

### *TASK 1a: Review Existing Data and M&E Framework*

Prior to the kick-off meeting (Task 1), the SEG-CCC team reviewed:

- Review SUSI program theory of change and logic model
- Review the SUSI evaluation framework
- Review any previous evaluation and performance management data and data collection instruments

## *TASK 2: Develop Detailed Evaluation Plan*

A detailed evaluation plan will be developed ten days after Task 1. This plan serves as a detailed guide for implementation of the study. Minimally, the plan will include sections on:

- Program description, theory of change, and logic model
- Evaluation questions and the approach to responding to each question
- Evaluation design based on the evaluability assessment and decisions made in Task 1.
- Description of the specific project activities that are the focus of the evaluation study
- Sampling strategy
- Data collection methods and instruments, including a brief literature review on research concepts, instrument validation, and electronic administration plan<sup>8</sup>
- Data analysis methods appropriate to responding to the evaluation questions
- Approach to informed consent/protection of human subjects
- Data collection schedule and updated project timeline, and
- Data management and sharing plan with Meridian staff
- Reporting

In reviewing the draft evaluation plan with the client, SEG-CCC will facilitate discussions with identified program stakeholders to ensure that methods will generate credible findings that support intended use and that potential methodological controversies and their implications are fully understood by all parties.

## *TASK 3a-b: Develop and Test Data Collection Instruments*

The RFQ mentions the development of three data collection instruments:

- 1) 6-month Post Program Survey;
- 2) 12-month Post-Program Survey; and
- 3) Targeted Interview Question Pool

These instruments are to be developed in partnership with SUSI program staff. SEG-CCC often uses, or adapts, pre-existing research-based scales or instruments that have been validated and found during a review of the literature. If existing instruments are not available, SEG-CCC will develop instruments in close alignment to evaluation requirements.

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<sup>8</sup> To be added to the final version of the evaluation plan.

a. *Surveys.* For the 6-month Post Program Survey and the 12-month Post Program Survey, SEG-CCC will develop or select surveys that are appropriate for the evaluation purpose and the sample population. For example, evaluations on cultural exchange and other experiential learning programs usually include intercultural competency measures, self-efficacy measures, and measures to assess impacts on professional and personal life back home. The SEG-CCC team has developed surveys using existing cultural competency and self-efficacy scales for other cultural exchange programs, as well as programs for underrepresented university students in STEM. To ensure respondents are interpreting survey questions as intended, SEG-CCC typically conducts cognitive interviews of survey instruments, using a small sample of nine or fewer individuals who are similar to the target population. This testing step will be critical since the students are not native English speakers.

b. *In-depth Interviews.* SEG-CCC frequently uses interviews with key stakeholders to collect perspectives on program implementation and impact. The evaluator, in collaboration with Meridian, will develop three targeted interview question pools: one each for program participants, US partners, and host familie<sup>9</sup>s. Example question topics include program participants' and US partners' experiences, impacts, descriptions of changes in self-efficacy and intercultural competency, and implementation challenges.

#### *TASK 4a-b: Collect Data*

Following the approval of the evaluation plan and testing and refinement of data collection instruments, SEG-CCC will proceed with data collection.

SEG-CCC proposes using a variety of electronic means to collect data, especially given the current pandemic conditions and with many of the students living outside of the US.

a. For interviews, SEG-CCC will use Zoom or WhatsApp, allowing interviewees to determine what platform works best for them. Both technologies allow for recording and transcribing the interview, and for collecting consent from participants. Students and partners will be invited to take part in interviews at their convenience via email invitations. Once a time is chosen by the interviewee, SEG-CCC will set up either Zoom meeting or begin the interview via WhatsApp, which allows for asynchronous data collection, meaning interviewees and interviewer do not have to be on the platform at the same time. This platform is widely used by students and others living in developing countries and has been used for data collection by other international development organizations. For budgeting, we assumed 5 interviews with U.S. partners and a sample of 25 students; the student sample will be stratified by countries/regions, gender, and topic areas to ensure a representative sample.

b. For the surveys, SEG-CCC will use one of its online survey platforms (SurveyMonkey or Qualtrics).<sup>10</sup> Consent forms will be integrated into survey forms with participants provided with the choice of opting out of the survey. Distribution lists for students and partners will be used to send email invites to respondents who can complete the survey online. For university partners, up to four email reminders will be sent only to those respondents who have not completed the survey, and a round of phone calls will be made after the third email reminder to non-respondents. We will consult with Meridian on the most appropriate methods for administering surveys to students, which will include at least four email reminders and reminders via

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<sup>9</sup> Interviews of host families is a new component. This data collection replaces the focus groups originally planned to test the interview protocols.

<sup>10</sup> Online survey platforms used by SEG-CCC are GDPR-compliant.

WhatsApp but may include other methods to engage students, including use of closed Facebook groups, LinkedIn, or other means of direct communications already set in place by Meridian. SEG-CCC is sensitive to varying time zones and will contact participants during timeframes that are most suitable for them.

*TASK 5a-b: Data Analysis and Interpretation of Findings*

a. Qualitative data will be loaded into Dedoose, a qualitative data analysis software. Analysis will be conducted using grounded theory methodology and three-level coding. Survey data analysis will use frequencies and mean, and advanced statistical analysis depending on the questions to be answered and the type of evaluation conducted.

b. As data are collected and analyzed, and preliminary findings emerge, SEG-CCC presents the data to the primary intended users during a “sense making” session. These sessions are facilitated discussions to contextualize findings and also discuss the usefulness of findings. In addition to making findings immediately available to primary evaluation users, input from users is critical to helping the evaluation shape the interpretation of findings and program recommendations.

*TASK 6: Reporting*

Evaluation results must be accurately communicated in a timely manner to help clients make informed decisions that ultimately will improve their programs and identify program impact. SEG-CCC uses a variety of formats to tailor our reporting to the needs of our clients.

## Timeline for Key Evaluation Activities

The timeline for key study administration and data collection and analysis activities is presented in the tables below.

*Table 5: Activity Timeline*

<b>1. Evaluability assessment &amp; kick-off meeting</b>	<b>10/19/2020</b>
<b>2. Develop detailed evaluation plan</b>	<b>1/6/2021</b>
a. Co-develop logic model and theory of change (draft)	11/5/2020
b. Finalize logic model and theory of change	11/10/2020
c. Develop detailed evaluation plan (draft)	11/13/2020
d. Finalize detailed evaluation plan	1/6/2021
<b>3. Develop and test data collection instruments</b>	<b>12/21/2020</b>
a. Draft alumni survey instruments	12/4/2020
b. Draft alumni & faculty interview question protocol	11/18/2020
c. Cognitive interviews & data analysis with recommendations	12/11/2020

d. Develop interview protocol for host families and student ambassadors	12/15/2020
e. Schedule university interviews for January	12/15/2020
f. Finalize survey instruments	12/21/2020
g. Finalize interview question protocols	12/21/2020
<b>4. Collect data</b>	<b>2/5/2021</b>
a. Collect alumni survey data	1/29/2021
b. Conduct alumni, faculty, and host family/ambassador interviews	2/5/2021
<b>5. Data analysis &amp; interpretation of findings</b>	<b>2/17/2021</b>
a. Survey analysis	2/5/2021
b. Interview analysis	2/12/2021
c. Sense-making session	2/17/2021
<b>6. Reporting</b>	<b>4/30/2021</b>
a. Report draft	3/22/2021
b. Report debrief with Meridian staff	4/1/2021
c. Final report	4/30/2021

## Data Management & Analysis

This evaluation uses a mixed methods approach and will produce data that is both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Mixed methods increase the validity of studies, allow for triangulation strategies, and provide a more complete answer to evaluation questions.

Quantitative data generated will be summarized using methods outlined in the Evaluation Framework (see above). Qualitative data will be analyzed using grounded theory with two-level coding. The final coding will be focused and patterned coding. Code books and indices will be created for both types of data.

Documents and other data collected and submitted to SEG/CCC will be kept in password protected files in a cloud-based system and on local hard drives. Computers are password protected.

Preliminary findings will be shared with Meridian in advance of the report. SEG-CCC will present findings to Meridian during a “sense making” session, during which facilitated discussions will help to contextualize findings and identify how to apply findings to improve program implementation. In addition to making findings immediately available to primary evaluation users, input from users is critical to helping the evaluation team shape the interpretation of findings and program recommendations.



## Reporting

The final report will be presented in draft form to Meridian for review, then feedback will be incorporated into the final version of the report. The final report will be submitted in PDF format to Meridian and will contain the following sections:

- Summary of findings and recommendations
- Program description
- Findings, organized by evaluation question
- Conclusions and recommendations
- Evaluation design and methodology
- Appendices, including copies of the data collection instruments and list of anonymized raw data from interviews and surveys

In addition, SEG/CCC will produce 1-page summaries for program stakeholders: university partners, embassy staff, and the Department of State. The summaries will target the interests of each stakeholder group.

## Appendix: Data Collection Instruments

### Consent Form: SUSI Program Evaluation Alumni Interviews

The Shaffer Evaluation Group and Cultural Crossings Consulting are conducting an evaluation of the SUSI Institute Program for Meridian International. The evaluation includes web-based interviews with a random sample of 15 SUSI alumni chosen by the evaluator.

**WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE EVALUATION?** The purpose of the evaluation is to:

1. Assess the program's impact on participants.
2. Understand how the SUSI program staff can support alumni with new programming that meets alumni needs.
3. Understand how program impacts vary across the institutes.

**TAKING PART IN THE EVALUATION IS VOLUNTARY.** You may choose not to participate by selecting "I do not consent". Deciding not to participate will not affect your relationship with the SUSI program.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO DURING THE EVALUATION?** If you agree to participate, you will be asked to respond to questions about what you learned during the SUSI Institute (knowledge, skills, life lessons); how you have used the knowledge, skills or life lessons since returned home; the influence of the SUSI experience on your self-confidence and ability to achieve personal and professional goals; and your understanding of your institute topic, U.S. culture and Americans before and after your SUSI experience.

**HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE EVALUATION TAKE?** Participation in the interviews will take 30 to 60 minutes and will be conducted via Zoom or WhatsApp.

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATING IN THE EVALUATION?** Participating in this evaluation will assist SUSI program staff in developing new alumni programming that meets alumni needs. Additionally, your responses will benefit others in the future by helping the SUSI program team to improve the institutes for future participants. Additionally, the evaluation will assist the SUSI team in demonstrating to funders the impact of the SUSI experience, and possibly support continued funding.

**HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED?** Participant's identities and participation in the evaluation will be confidential and not linked to individual responses. ISP addresses will not be collected or reported. Data from the interviews will be coded and analyzed in the aggregate looking for patterns and emerging concepts. Individual responses will not be reported in any internal or external reporting.

- I consent to participate in the interviews for the SUSI Institute Evaluation.
  - I prefer Zoom, please use this email address: \_\_\_\_\_
  - I prefer WhatsApp, please use this phone number: \_\_\_\_\_
- I do not consent to participate in the interviews for the SUSI Institute Evaluation.

If you consent to participate, please provide at least 3 dates and times you are available for the interview **between January 6 and January 29, 2021.**

Please report the times in [UTC time code using the conversion on this site](#)

Date	Time	UTC Time Zone

# SUSI Program Alumni Interview Protocol

## **Consent:**

Consent will be obtained prior to the interview being scheduled (see Consent Form: SUSI Program Evaluation Alumni Interviews). A sample of alumni will be invited to participate in the interviews.

The invitation will include a link to a Google form that asks participants if they consent. If they consent, they will be asked to provide the best contact information and 3 dates and times that they are available to participate in an interview. They will be asked which platform they prefer to use: Zoom or WhatsApp.

The interviewer will schedule the interview based on the dates and times provided by the alumni.

## **Introduction**

**START:** *Thank you for joining me today and taking part in the interviews for the SUSI Program evaluation.*

*The interview is **grouped into 4 general time periods** based on your experience: **BEFORE** you started your SUSI program, **DURING** your SUSI program, **AFTER** your SUSI program, and a **few final** questions.*

*I will be recording this interview so I can transcribe it and analyze it using qualitative software. And mostly so I can focus on our conversation rather than taking notes.*

*Do you have any questions before we get started?*

## **PART 1: BEFORE**

**SAY:** *For the first part of the interview, I want you to think back to when you first heard about the SUSI program, before you came to the United States for the Institute.*

1. What was your primary reason for wanting to participate in this SUSI Institute?
  - a. How did you believe the SUSI program would help you academically, professionally, or personally?
2. Before your SUSI program started:
  - a. What was your impression of US culture or values?
  - b. Before your SUSI Institute, how would you have described US Americans?
  - c. What was your knowledge of US: **fill in institute topic here:**
    - i. *Religious freedom and pluralism*
    - ii. *Civic engagement*
    - iii. *Rule of law or public service*
    - iv. *Entrepreneurship*

v. *Youth development*

3. What anxieties did you have about participating in the institute?
  - a. How did you overcome this?

**PART 2: DURING**

**Say:** *Now we are going to shift the interview to your time in the US at the SUSI Institute.*

1. During your time in the U.S., what did you learn about leadership that surprised you?
  - a. Why did this surprise you? OR how is this style of leadership different from what you are used to?
  - b. How did you learn this?
  - c. How have you been able to apply this at home?
2. What was the most challenging part of your SUSI Institute?
  - a. Why was it so challenging?
  - b. How did you overcome this challenge?
3. Describe the volunteering experiences that were part of your SUSI Institute.
  - a. What did you learn from those experiences and how have you been able to apply that at home?
4. Describe the moment you had your biggest culture shock while in the US.

**ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTITUTE ONLY**

5. Describe the CAP project that you did during your Institute
  - a. How did you apply what you learned in the classroom to your CAP project?
  - b. How have you applied what you learned at the institute at home?

**EVERYONE**

6. During your institute, who gave you positive encouragement and support that you could successfully complete the institute?
  - a. Did you find any mentors or role models at the institute? How did they help you during the institute?
7. On the last day of the institute,
  - a. How connected did you feel to the other participants in your Institute?
    - i. How have you maintained those connections since returning home?
  - b. How connected did you feel to the faculty and guest speakers from your institute?
    - i. How have you maintained those connections since returning home?

**PART 3: AFTER**

**SAY:** *Now we are going to talk about how you have been using what you learned during the institute at home and how the institute—and COVID-19--have impacted your future plans.*

8. By the end of the institute, did you feel you were ready to return home and implement your Community Action Project
  - a. become a leader?

9. Think about the person you were BEFORE your SUSI program and the person you are now.
  - a. How are those 2 people different;
  - b. How has your leadership style changed
  - c. What part of the SUSI experience created this change in you?
10. Since returning home, what have been the most useful professional or leadership skills you learned during the institute?
  - a. Why have these been so useful to you now?
11. Since returning home, what leadership or professional skills have you needed and wished you had learned in your SUSI institute?
  - b. Why do you wish you had learned these skills?
12. How have your career or educational goals changed because of your participation in the SUSI Institute?
13. Imagine you had not participated in the SUSI Institute. How would your life be different right now?
14. How have you collaborated with other SUSI participants or people you met in the U.S. since returning home?

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15. Describe the CAP project you developed.
  - a. How well did the workshops and classes help you develop this project?
  - b. What skills did you learn that helped you the most for this project?
  - c. How did you apply what you learned in the classroom to your CAP project?
  - c. How far did you get in implementing it before COVID
  - d. What was the most difficult part about implementing the project—other than the pandemic
  - e. How are you continuing to work on your project at home given the pandemic?
  - f. What kind of change or improvement did you see or hear about as a result of the project?
  - g. What's your next project

**SAY:** A “life lesson” is something instructive you learn through an experience that you can apply to future decisions and situations; like a guiding principle for your life.

16. What life lesson did you learn during the Institute that might be a guiding principle for you?
  - a. Give an example,
  - b. Why is this important
  - c. How did you learn this at the institute
17. How did the America you saw during your Institute and study tour compare to the America you had imagined or learned about at home?
18. What was the main thing you learned about US daily life or values during the institute?
  - d. How did you learn this?
  - e. What role did your host family or student ambassador play in helping you understand US daily life, such as culture and values?
19. Now that you have completed your SUSI Institute,
  - f. What kind of leader did you consider yourself?
  - g. What skills did you think someone needs to be a leader in their community or profession?

h. Do you still feel you can be a leader in your community? Why/Why not

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20. How has the pandemic affected your career plans?

21. How has the pandemic affected your self-confidence?

22. If Meridian continues to provide virtual alumni programming, what would you like to see them offer?

23. How have the online workshops and other alumni events sponsored by Meridian or your institute helped you during the pandemic?

i. Why have you not attended?

j. What would you like these online sessions to focus on?

24. How can Meridian support alumni now and after the pandemic to

k. maintain your skills and confidence?

l. Keep alumni connected?

25. Once the pandemic is over, will you continue with this project or design a new one to address post-pandemic community needs?

m. What kinds of needs do you see emerging now that you might want to work on?

# SUSI Program Participant Survey

## ***Introduction & Consent***

**TAKING PART IN THE EVALUATION IS VOLUNTARY.** You may choose not to participate or withdraw your participation at any time. Deciding not to participate, or deciding to stop participating later, will not affect your relationship with the SUSI program.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED?** You will be asked questions about what you learned during the SUSI program (knowledge, skills, life lessons); how you have used the knowledge, skills or life lessons; the influence of the SUSI experience on your personal and professional networks, self-confidence, and ability to achieve personal and educational goals; your understanding of U.S. values and culture before and after your SUSI experience, and suggestions for future programming.

**HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE EVALUATION TAKE?** Participation in this survey will take about 15-20 minutes of your time.

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATING IN THE EVALUATION?** Participation will assist SUSI program staff in understanding the effectiveness of the program and developing new alumni programming that meets alumni needs. Additionally, your responses will benefit others in the future by helping to develop new programs at the Institutes for future participants.

**HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED?** Participants will be assigned a unique identity code by the survey software. This code will allow you to participate in the survey and mask your identity. Internet Service Provider addresses will not be collected or reported, and responses will not be connected to identity codes during analysis. In addition, individual data will be aggregated for the purpose of analysis and reporting using frequencies and mean. Individual responses will not be reported in any internal or external reporting.

## ***PART 1 CONSENT***

1. Do you consent to participate in the evaluation for the SUSI Program?
  - a. Yes
  - b. No

***IF NO: jump to end of survey with consent thank you page***

***SURVEY LOGIC: RECOMMEND EMBEDDING THE DEMOGRAPHIC DATA LIKE: HOME COUNTRY, GENDER, STUDY AREA; will save us some space and time on the survey. Including the institutes here because we will need this to develop skip and display logic.***

2. Please select the institute you attended during your SUSI program.
  - a. Civic Engagement at Bard College (Summer)
  - b. Civic Engagement at FIUTS, University of Washington, Seattle (Winter)
  - c. Entrepreneurship at University of Massachusetts, Amherst



- d. Religious Freedom & Pluralism at the Dialogue Institute, Temple University, Philadelphia
  - e. Rule of Law, John McCain Institute at NNIC, University of Nevada
  - f. Youth, Education, and Closing the Skills Gap at FIUTS, University of Washington, Seattle
3. Was the SUSI program your first visit to the United States?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

**SKIP LOGIC: IF NO, ask:**

What was the purpose of your previous visit to the US?

Student exchange or education program

Cultural exchange program

Visit family

Vacation

Other:

How long did you visit the U.S. during your previous visit?

Less than 1 month

1-2 months

3-4 months

More than 4 months

**PART 2: PRE UNDERSTAND US**

*This section will ask you about your impression and understanding of U.S. culture and values **before you participated in the SUSI program**. Please respond to the questions honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in learning about how exchange programs in the U.S. impact participants' understanding of the U.S. and Americans.*

4. **Before you started your SUSI institute**, what was your source of information about U.S. daily life and values?
- a. U.S.-American friends (including on social media)
  - b. Family or friends who had traveled to the U.S.
  - c. Family or friends who live in the U.S.
  - d. International news (not U.S. news outlets)
  - e. Movies
  - f. Music videos
  - g. News from sources based in my home country (TV, newspapers)
  - h. School, professors, or teachers

- i. Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)
  - j. U.S. news (TV, newspapers)
  - k. U.S. television shows
  - l. Other:
5. **Before participating in the SUSI program**, how well did you *believe* you understood U.S. daily life and values?
    - a. 1 No understanding before SUSI
    - b. 2 Limited understanding before SUSI
    - c. 3 Moderate understanding before SUSI
    - d. 4 Thorough understanding before SUSI
  6. **Before participating in the SUSI program**, what three (3) words or short phrases best describe your understanding of U.S. daily life and values.
    - a. TEXT
    - b. TEXT
    - c. TEXT
  7. **Before participating in the SUSI program**, what three (3) words or short phrases best describe your understanding of [*pipe in institute topic here, Civic Engagement, Entrepreneurship, Religious Freedom and Pluralism, Rule of Law, Youth Development*]
    - d. TEXT
    - e. TEXT
    - f. TEXT

**PART 3: PRE TEST SELF EFFICACY**

*For this part of the survey, think back to the months **BEFORE** you left your home country to start your SUSI institute. The questions will ask you about the time before you started the SUSI program.*

*Please respond to the questions honestly by choosing answers that are true FOR YOU. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in learning about the skills, knowledge, and life lessons you learned from your SUSI experience and how you are using those in your life today.*

8. *Use the scale below to respond to the statements.*

**Before starting my SUSI Institute:**

	1 Does not describe me at all	2	3 Somewhat describes me	4	5 Describes me very well
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- a. I had someone who gave me personal and professional advice to help me expand my leadership skills.
- b. I had the skills and knowledge to create an initiative that would lead to positive change in my home community.
- c. I considered myself a leader at my university or job.
- d. I considered myself a leader in my community.
- e. I was viewed as a leader by fellow students, community members, or administrators.

9. **Before starting your SUSI Institute**, how familiar were you with the following leadership styles based on your personal experience, such as in your home country, work, or school?

1 Not familiar at all	2 Not very familiar	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat familiar	5 Very familiar
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- a. **Autocratic Leadership:** leaders set clear expectations for what, when, and how things will be done with a clear division between the leader and subordinates. Decisions are made without input from subordinates who are expected to follow orders.
- b. **Delegative Leadership:** leaders take a “hands off” approach and provide little guidance to team members leaving decision making to team members. Teams have a great deal of independence and make decisions on their own.
- c. **Participatory Leadership:** leaders provide guidance and build consensus by encouraging others to contribute to decisions. Members feel they are part of a team working toward goals.
- d. **Servant Leadership:** leaders have a clear purpose, values, and vision linked to benefitting a community. They inspire and motivate team members and build their potential.
- e. Other:

10. Think back to the **months BEFORE you left your home country** to start your SUSI program. Use the scale below to describe **how confident you were in your own ability** to successfully do the following activities during your SUSI program.

1 Not Confident at all	2	3	4 Unsure	5	6	7 Very Confident
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- a. I will be able to succeed in new situations where I do not know the rules.
- b. I will be able to overcome any self-doubt about my skills, abilities, and knowledge.
- c. I will be able to overcome many challenges during my SUSI experience.
- d. Learning how to manage new cross-cultural situations and challenges will help me grow in positive ways.
- e. I will be able to successfully accomplish challenging tasks or projects that are part of my SUSI program.
- f. I will be able achieve most of the personal or professional goals that I set for myself related to my SUSI experience.
- g. I will be able to learn and apply the leadership skills from my institute to successfully start initiatives that create change in my community when I return home.
- h. I will be able to recognize and overcome my stereotypes to positively and appropriately interact with people who are culturally different from me.

**PART 4: DURING**

For this part of the survey, think back to the months **DURING your SUSI program** while you were in the U.S. Consider the SUSI experience began the day you arrived in the U.S. and concluded the day you returned home.

Please respond to the questions honestly by choosing answers that are true FOR YOU. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in learning about the skills, knowledge, and life lessons you learned from your SUSI experience and how you are using those in your life today.

- 11. Which of the following experiences did you have during your SUSI institute?
  - a. Host family
  - b. U.S. Student Ambassador/Student Leader
  - c. Assigned Mentor
  - d. Assigned Advisor

**IF YES to any of the above, ASK matching question below; IF NO, skip to matrix question**

- 12. Overall, about how much time did you spend with your host family during your SUSI institute?
  - a. A weekend
  - b. 1 week
  - c. Longer than 1 week
- 13. On average, about how much time did you spend each week with your U.S. Student Ambassador/Student Leader during your SUSI program?
  - a. Less than 2 hours a week
  - b. 2-3 hours a week
  - c. 4-5 hours a week
  - d. More than 5 hours a week
- 14. On average, about how much time did you spend each week with your assigned mentor during your SUSI program?
  - a. Less than 2 hours a week
  - b. 2-3 hours a week
  - c. 4-5 hours a week
  - d. More than 5 hours a week
- 15. On average, about how much time did you spend each week with your assigned advisor during your SUSI program?
  - e. Less than 2 hours a week
  - f. 2-3 hours a week
  - g. 4-5 hours a week
  - h. More than 5 hours a week

**ASK EVERYONE:**

- 16. During your SUSI Institute, how much did you expand your personal or professional network among the groups listed below?

Network	Did not increase (1)	Barely increased (2)	Moderately increased (3)	Greatly increased (4)
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American friends				
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- a. U.S.-American friends
- b. U.S.-American academic colleagues, such as faculty or advisors
- c. U.S.-American professional colleagues
- d. Other SUSI program participants from my home country
- e. Other SUSI program participants from outside my home country
- f. My host family
- g. Other:

The next question will ask you about the **LEADERSHIP SKILLS** you learned or improved **during** your SUSI program. Leadership skills allow you to successfully manage teams, volunteers, and create change.

For each of the skills listed below, indicate if you learned or improved this skill **as a result of your SUSI program**. If you already had the skill **before** your SUSIS program, mark “I already had this skill”. If you did not learn, improve, or have this skill then mark either “Wish I had learned this skill at SUSI” or “Does not Apply”.

**MATRIX QUESTION**

Leadership Skill	I Learned this Skill	I Improved this Skill	I already had this skill	Wish I had learned this skill at SUSI	Does not apply

17. Which of the following **leadership** skills did you learn or improve **as a result of** your SUSI program experience?
- a. Building consensus, or finding common ground, among diverse groups
  - b. Building trust among team members
  - c. Communicating goals, values, and purpose to others
  - d. Empowering others
  - e. Listening to and accepting input from diverse groups
  - f. Motivating or inspiring others
  - g. Open communication and knowledge sharing with teams
  - h. See different points of view as valid
  - i. Selecting appropriate communication methods for different audiences
  - j. Team building
  - k. Treating others with respect
  - l. Other:

**DISPLAY LOGIC: SHOW ONLY IF THEY MARK LEARNING OR IMPROVING A SKILL**

18. Below is a list of activities and experiences from your SUSI program. Using the scale provided, please, indicate how much each of these activities contributed to building your **leadership skills either during or after your SUSI program.**

- a. Developing & implementing my Community Action Project
- b. Guest speakers or panel discussions
- c. Learning from or observing other SUSI participants
- d. Learning from or observing my assigned mentor or advisor
- e. Learning from or observing faculty outside of class
- f. Assignments that made me reflect on what I was learning
- g. Scheduled classes or assigned readings
- h. Site visits during my institute
- i. Spending time with my host family
- j. Spending time with my U.S. Student Ambassador or U.S. Student Leader
- k. Study tour after my institute
- l. Volunteering during my institute
- m. Weekend study tours during my institute
- n. Workshops during my Institute
- o. Other:

<b>0 My institute did not do this</b>	1 No contribution	2	3	4 Neutral	5	6	7 Immense contribution
Developing my Community Action Project							

*This question will ask you about the **PROFESSIONAL SKILLS** you learned or improved as a **result of your SUSI program.** Professional skills are technical skills related to your own professional development.*

*For each of the skills listed below, indicate if you learned or improved this skill **as a result of your SUSI program.** If you already had the skill **before** your SUSIS program, mark “I already had this skill”. If you did not learn, improve, or have this skill then mark either “Does not Apply” or “Wish I had learned this skill at SUSI”.*

**MATRIX QUESTION**

<b>Professional Skill</b>	<b>I learned this skill</b>	<b>I improved this skill</b>	<b>I already had this skill</b>	<b>Wish I had learned this skill at SUSI</b>	<b>Does not apply</b>
Budgeting					

19. Which of the following **professional skills** did you *learn or improve as a result of* your SUSI program?
- Budgeting
  - Community needs assessment
  - Facilitating meetings or groups
  - Grant management
  - Leading or starting dialogues with diverse communities
  - Marketing or project promotion
  - Networking or partnership building
  - Prioritizing
  - Proposal writing
  - Project planning and management
  - Public speaking or presentations
  - Using social media and the internet for community building or awareness
  - Time management
  - Writing in English
  - Other:

**DISPLAY LOGIC: SHOW ONLY IF THEY MARK LEARNING OR IMPROVING A SKILL**

20. Below is a list of activities and experiences from your SUSI program. Using the scale provided, please indicate how much each of these activities contributed to building your **professional skills either during or after your SUSI program.**
- Developing and implementing my Community Action Project
  - Guest speakers or panel discussions
  - Learning from or observing other SUSI participants
  - Learning from or observing my assigned mentor or advisor
  - Learning from or observing faculty outside of class
  - Assignments that made me reflect on what I was learning
  - Scheduled classes or assigned readings
  - Site visits during my institute
  - Spending time with my host family
  - Spending time with my U.S. Student Ambassador or U.S. Student Leader
  - Study tour after my institute
  - Volunteering during my institute
  - Weekend study tours during my institute
  - Workshops during my Institute
  - Other:

<b>0 My institute did not do this</b>	1 No contribution	2	3	4 Neutral	5	6	7 Immense contribution
Developing my Community							

Action Project							
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This question will ask you questions about the **PERSONAL SKILLS** you learned or improved **as a result of your SUSI program.** Personal skills support your ability to succeed in life.

For each of the skills listed below, indicate if you learned or improved this skill **as a result of your SUSI program**. If you already had the skill **before** your SUSIS program, mark “I already had this skill”. If you did not learn, improve, or have this skill then mark either “Wish I had learned this skill at SUSI” or “Does not Apply”.

Personal Skill	I learned this skill	I improved this skill	I already had this skill	Wish I had learned this skill at SUSI	Does not apply
Adaptability or flexibility in new or changing situations					

### MATRIX QUESTION

21. Which of the following **personal** skills did you learn or improve **as a result of** your SUSI program experience?
- Adaptability or flexibility in new or changing situations.
  - Cross-cultural communication.
  - Learning from my mistakes.
  - Effective listening.
  - Empathy for others.
  - Managing adversity or challenges.
  - Patience
  - Recognizing my strengths and weaknesses.
  - Self-reliance or self-confidence.
  - Taking responsibility for my work and actions.
  - Taking initiative.
  - Other:

### DISPLAY LOGIC: SHOW ONLY IF THEY MARK LEARNING OR IMPROVING A SKILL

22. Below is a list of activities and experiences from your SUSI program. Using the scale provided, please indicate how useful each of these activities were in helping you build your **personal skills either during or after your SUSI program**.
- Developing and implementing my Community Action Project
  - Guest speakers or panel discussions
  - Learning from or observing other SUSI participants
  - Learning from or observing my assigned mentor or advisor
  - Learning from or observing faculty outside of class



- f. Assignments that made me reflect on what I was learning
- g. Scheduled classes or assigned readings
- h. Site visits during my institute
- i. Spending time with my host family
- j. Spending time with my U.S. Student Ambassador or U.S. Student Leader
- k. Study tour after my institute
- l. Volunteering during my institute
- m. Weekend study tours during my institute
- n. Workshops during my Institute
- o. Other:

<b>0 My institute did not do this</b>	1 No contribution	2	3	4 Neutral	5	6	7 Immense contribution
Developing my CAP project							

**SHOW EVERYONE:**

23. Use the scale below to indicate how much the following people and activities contributed to your learning about your **institute topic**.

<b>0 My institute did not do this</b>	1 No contribution	2	3	4 Neutral	5	6	7 Immense contribution

- a. Developing and implementing my Community Action Project
- b. Guest speakers or panel discussions
- c. Learning from or observing other SUSI participants
- d. Learning from or observing my assigned mentor or advisor
- e. Learning from or observing faculty outside of class
- f. Assignments that made me reflect on what I was learning
- g. Scheduled classes or assigned readings
- h. Site visits during my institute
- i. Spending time with my host family
- j. Spending time with my U.S. Student Ambassador or U.S. Student Leader
- k. Study tour after my institute
- l. Volunteering during my institute
- m. Weekend study tours during my institute
- n. Workshops during my Institute
- o. Other:

24. How well did your institute prepare you to work cross-culturally with people from different backgrounds, beliefs, or cultures?

1 Not well at all	2 Not very well	3 Unsure	4 Moderately well	5 Very well
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**SKIP LOGIC: if mark NOT WELL AT ALL OR NOT WELL, ask:**

25. How could the institute better prepare you to work cross-culturally with people from different backgrounds, beliefs, or cultures?

**ASK EVERYONE**

26. Please describe the most challenging aspect of your SUSI Institute and how you managed this challenge.

27. On the last day of the institute, how connected did you feel to the following groups of people:

Groups of people	1 Not connected at all	2 Not very connected	3 Unsure	4 Moderately connected	5 Extremely connected	0 My institute did not do this
My fellow SUSI institute participants						

- a. Department of State or Embassy staff
- b. Meridian SUSI staff
- c. My assigned mentor or advisor
- d. My fellow SUSI institute participants
- e. My host family
- f. My U.S. Student Ambassador or Student Leader
- g. My institute faculty
- h. Other:

28. **By the end of your SUSI Institute**, how familiar were you with the following leadership styles based on your personal experience **during** SUSI?

1 Not familiar at all	2 Not very familiar	3 Unsure	4 Somewhat familiar	5 Very familiar
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- a. **Autocratic Leadership:** leaders set clear expectations for what, when, and how things will be done with a clear division between the leader and subordinates. Decisions are made without input from subordinates who are expected to follow orders.

- b. **Delegative Leadership:** leaders take a “hands off” approach and provide little guidance to team members leaving decision making to team members. Teams have a great deal of independence and make decisions on their own.
- c. **Participatory Leadership:** leaders provide guidance and build consensus by encouraging others to contribute to decisions. Members feel they are part of a team working toward goals.
- d. **Servant Leadership:** leaders have a clear purpose, values, and vision linked to benefitting a community. They inspire and motivate team members and build their potential.
- e. Other:

**DISPLAY LOGIC: SHOW NEXT 3 QUESTIONS ONLY TO ENTREPRENEURIAL INSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS**

29. How well did the Entrepreneurship institute prepare you to develop and implement your Community Action Project in the US?

1 Not well at all	2 Not very well	3 Unsure	4 Moderately well	5 Very well
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**SKIP LOGIC: if mark NOT WELL AT ALL OR NOT very WELL, ask:**

30. How could the Entrepreneurship institute better prepare you to develop and implement your Community Action Project in the US?

**SKIP LOGIC: ASK ONLY ENTREPRENEURSHIP INSTITUTE PARTICIPANTS**

31. How have you applied what you learned in your Entrepreneurship Community Action Project at home?

**PART 5A: AFTER**

*This section will ask you questions about the time **AFTER** your SUSI institute experience from the time you arrived home until today.*

*Please respond to the questions honestly by choosing answers that are true **FOR YOU**. There are no right or wrong answers.*

32. **Since returning home**, how often do you connect with or contact the following groups of people you met during your SUSI Institute? (*Contact includes email, text, WhatsApp, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and phone*)

Network	No contact	Minimal contact	Moderate contact	Frequent contact
U.S.- American friends				

- a. U.S.-American friends
- b. U.S.-American academic colleagues, such as faculty or advisors
- c. U.S.-American professional colleagues
- d. Other SUSI program participants from my home country
- e. Other SUSI program participants from outside my home country
- f. My host family
- g. Other:

33. **Since returning home**, which of the following activities have you done: (*Mark all that apply*)

- a. Been a SUSI Ambassador and given a presentation about my experience in the U.S. to others in my home country
- b. Collaborated with other SUSI participants to plan or complete **my** Community Action Project *at home*
- c. Collaborated with other SUSI participants to plan or complete **their** Community Action Project *at home*
- d. Posted to my blog or social media about my SUSI institute experiences
- e. Received a small grant to implement my Community Action Project at home
- f. Shared my SUSI institute materials with peers or others at home
- g. Started a new initiative in addition to my Community Action Project to create change at home
- h. Taken on a leadership role at my university or in my community
- i. Received a grant, fellowship, or other award to participate in another cultural or educational exchange program

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARKED SUSI AMBASSADOR GAVE PRESENTATION ON SUSI EXPERIENCE, ASK:**

34. What experiences or knowledge did you share with peers or others during your presentation at home? (*Mark all that apply*)

- a. Class or workshop topics from my institute
- b. Leadership and other skills I learned
- c. My Community Action Project
- d. What I learned about US daily life and values
- e. What I learned from guest speakers and the study tours
- f. What I learned from volunteering
- g. Other:

35. How many people attended your presentation?

- a. [enter a number]

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARK 'RECEIVED A SMALL GRANT TO IMPLEMENT MY COMMUNITY ACTION PROJECT AT HOME, OR 'COLLABORATED WITH OTHER SUSI PARTICIPANTS TO COMPLETE MY COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN AT HOME ask:**

36. Which of the following best describes the current status of your Community Action Project:

I could not complete my project due to the pandemic

I redesigned my project and have completed it or am implementing it now

I completed my project

**SKIP LOGIC: SHOW IF THEY SAY YES, COMPLETED ACTION PROJECT OR REDESIGNED ACTION PROJECT AND REPORTED LEARNING/IMPROVING SKILLS in previous section**

**PIPE IN THE LEARNED AND IMPROVED RESPONSES FROM THE QUESTIONS in PART 4; SKIP IF MARKED DIDN'T LEARN ANY SKILLS OR WISH HAD LEARNED**

Earlier, you indicated learning or improving the **professional, personal skills, and leadership skills** listed below during your SUSI program.

37. Since **COMPLETING** your SUSI experience (since returning home), how useful have the skills below been **in developing and implementing your Community Action Project at home?**

<b>Skill</b>	<b>Not useful at all 1</b>	<b>Not very useful 2</b>	<b>Somewhat useful 3</b>	<b>Extremely useful 4</b>

38. Which of the following groups of people helped you implement your Community Action Project at home?
- Faculty at my university in my home country
  - Other SUSI participants in my home country
  - Other SUSI participants outside my home country
  - Professional or academic colleagues I met during SUSI in the U.S.
  - Personal friends I met during SUSI in the U.S.
  - Students at my university in my home country
  - Community members or NGO staff
  - Other:

**SKIP LOGIC: IF THEY MARK:**

- **Unable to complete ACTION PLAN due to Covid-19, AND LEARNED SKILLS**
- **OR Did not mark anything related to action plan, AND learned skills**
- **OR Started a new initiative at home, AND reported learning skills in previous section**

**PIPE IN THE LEARNED AND IMPROVED RESPONSES FROM THE QUESTIONS in PART 4**

Earlier, you indicated learning or improving the **professional, personal skills, and leadership skills** listed below during your SUSI program.

39. Since **COMPLETING** your SUSI institute (since returning home), how useful have the skills below been in your home country?

Skill	Not useful at all 1	Not very useful 2	Somewhat useful 3	Extremely useful 4

**SKIP LOGIC: IF mark unable to complete ACTION PLAN due to Covid-19, or started a new project at home, ASK:**

40. Which of the following groups of people are helping you implement your Community Action Project or another project at home?
- a. Faculty at my university in my home country
  - b. Other SUSI participants in my home country
  - c. Other SUSI participants outside my home country
  - d. Professional or academic colleagues I met during SUSI in the U.S.
  - e. Personal friends I met during SUSI in the U.S.
  - f. Students at my university in my home country
  - g. Community members
  - h. Other:

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARKED COVID HAS DELAYED COMPLETION OF ACTION PLAN, ASK:**

41. You indicated your Community Action Project has been delayed due to the pandemic. What plans have you made to adjust the project for the pandemic or continue the project after the pandemic?
42. How could Meridian SUSI program staff support you in completing your Community Action Project during the pandemic?

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARKED TAKEN ON LEADERSHIP ROLE AT HOME, ASK**

43. Please describe the leadership role you have taken on at home. Be sure to include the name of the position, organization, and a description of what you are doing in the role.

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARKED RECEIVED A NEW FELLOWSHIP, GRANT OR AWARD ASK**

44. Please describe the new cultural or educational exchange program in which you are participating.

**SKIP LOGIC: ASK EVERYONE**

45. What professional, personal, or leadership skills do you need now to continue creating initiatives and change in your home country?

46. Which of the following people have you professionally collaborated with or received advice from since returning home? *(Mark all that apply)*

- a. SUSI alumni from my country that I met during my institute.
- b. SUSI alumni from another country that I met during my institute.
- c. Americans that I met during my SUSI institute.
- d. SUSI alumni from other cohorts that I met through alumni activities
- e. Received advice or mentorship from SUSI alumni from my country that I met during the program
- f. Received advice or mentorship from SUSI alumni from another country that I met during the program
- g. Received advice or mentorship from Americans that I met during my SUSI institute.
- h. Received advice or mentorship from SUSI alumni in other cohorts
- i. Other:

47. Have you participated in any of the virtual alumni programs or sessions? *(Mark all that apply)*

- a. Yes, participated in virtual alumni programs from my institute faculty
- b. Yes, participated in virtual alumni programs from the Meridian SUSI staff
- c. No, I have not participated in any virtual alumni programs.

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARK YES ABOVE, ASK:**

48. How helpful have you found the virtual programming from the following groups?

<b>Virtual programming from:</b>	<b>Not helpful</b>	<b>Barely helpful</b>	<b>Somewhat helpful</b>	<b>Very helpful</b>
Meridian Staff				
Institute Faculty				

49. Please share suggestions as to how Meridian SUSI staff and Institute staff could improve future virtual programs for alumni.

**SKIP LOGIC: IF MARK NO NOT PARTICIPATED IN VIRTUAL PROGRAMS ASK**

50. Why have you not participated in the virtual programs offered by Meridian or your Institute?

**ASK EVERYONE:**

51. How could the SUSI program support alumni in expanding their professional, personal and leadership skills once they return to their home country? *(rank in order of preference, 1 is most wanted)*

- a. Alumni conference
- b. Alumni portal to share project information and lessons learned
- c. Institute specific webinars led by US experts
- d. Training or certification opportunities for leadership or professional skills

- e. Webinars led by alumni
  - f. Webinars on professional development topics
  - g. Other:
52. How could the SUSI program support alumni in building and maintaining the connections between alumni and across the institutes? (*rank in order of preference, 1 is most wanted*)
- a. LinkedIn page
  - b. Alumni directory
  - c. Alumni virtual meet-ups
  - d. WhatsApp group or groups
  - e. Other:
53. How has the pandemic affected your educational or career plans?
54. What new community needs has the pandemic revealed that you might be interested in addressing in the future?

## ***PART 5B: POST TEST SELF EFFICACY***

### ***ASK EVERYONE:***

55. **Since returning home**, which of the following leadership styles have you adopted or used most often as your own leadership style?
- a. **Autocratic Leadership:** leaders set clear expectations for what, when, and how things will be done with a clear division between the leader and subordinates. Decisions are made without input from subordinates who are expected to follow orders.
  - b. **Delegative Leadership:** leaders take a “hands off” approach and provide little guidance to team members leaving decision making to team members. Teams have a great deal of independence and make decisions on their own.
  - c. **Participatory Leadership:** leaders provide guidance and build consensus by encouraging others to contribute to decisions. Members feel they are part of a team working toward goals.
  - d. **Servant Leadership:** leaders have a clear purpose, values, and vision linked to benefitting a community. They inspire and motivate team members and build their potential.
  - e. **Other:**

*For the next set of questions, please try to respond to each item separately in your mind from each other item. Choose your answers thoughtfully and make your answers as true FOR YOU as you can. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, so choose the most accurate answer for YOU--not what you think "most people" would say or do.*

56. A “life lesson” is something instructive you learn through an experience that you can apply to future decisions and situations; like a guiding principle for your life. Please describe a life-lesson you learned during your SUSI Institute.





62. Please describe how your educational goals have changed because of your participation in the SUSI program.

63. Participating in the SUSI program has changed my professional goals for the future.  
a. Strongly disagree Strongly agree

**IF MARK 4 or 5 AGREE or STRONGLY AGREE, ASK:**

64. Please describe how your professional goals have changed because of your participation in the SUSI program

**PART 6: POST UNDERSTAND US**

*This section will ask you about your impression and understanding of U.S. culture and values after you participated in the SUSI program. Please respond to the questions honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested in learning about how exchange programs in the U.S. impact participants' understanding of the U.S. and Americans.*

65. **By the end of your SUSI institute**, how well do you *believe* you understood U.S. daily life and values?

- a. 1 No understanding
- b. 2 Limited understanding
- c. 3 Moderate understanding
- d. 4 Thorough understanding

66. What three (3) words or short phrases best describe your impression of U.S. daily life or values **after you participated in the SUSI** program?

- h. TEXT
- i. TEXT
- j. TEXT

67. What three (3) words or short phrases best describe your impression of **[pipe in institute topic here]** **after you participated in the SUSI** program?

- k. TEXT
- l. TEXT
- m. TEXT

68. How much did the following people and activities contribute to your current understanding of U.S. daily life and values?

1 No contribution	2	3	4 Neutral	5	6	7 Immense contribution	0 My institute did not do this
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- a. Developing and implementing my Community Action Project
- b. Guest speakers or panel discussions
- c. Learning from or observing other SUSI participants
- d. Learning from or observing my assigned mentor or advisor

- e. Learning from or observing faculty outside of class
- f. Assignments that made me reflect on what I was learning
- g. Scheduled classes or assigned readings
- h. Site visits during my institute
- i. Spending time with my host family
- j. Spending time with my U.S. Student Ambassador or U.S. Student Leader
- k. Study tour after my institute
- l. Volunteering during my institute
- m. Weekend study tours during my institute
- n. Workshops during my Institute
- o. Other:

69. Describe one experience or moment that changed your impression of U.S. daily life or values.

70. The most difficult cultural adjustment I had to make during my SUSI program was: TEXT

71. The most helpful action I took to improve my understanding of U.S. daily life and values during my SUSI program was: TEXT

### ***THANK YOU PAGE***

Thank you for completing the SUSI program evaluation survey. We appreciate your time and thoughtfulness in completing this survey. The evaluation will be completed in April 2021 and a summary report provided to alumni.

### ***CONSENT THANK YOU PAGE***

*Show if they do not consent to the survey*

Thank you for your interest in the SUSI program evaluation. You will not receive further emails or invitations about the evaluation. If you change your mind and want to participate, please contact [Patricia Moore Shaffer at patricia.shaffer@shafferevaluation.com](mailto:patricia.shaffer@shafferevaluation.com) or contact the SUSI program staff.

The evaluation will be completed in April and a summary shared with alumni.

# SUSI Evaluation: Institute Group Interview Protocol

Group interviews will be conducted on Microsoft Teams and recorded via Teams for transcription and analysis.

**START:** *Explain the purpose of the group interview and focus is on 2019 and 2020 cohorts under the new agreement with Meridian & Dept. of State. They are welcome to make comparisons between the earlier versions of the program and the current structure.*

*Explain that it will be recorded for transcription and analysis. Names will not be used; data will be coded and analyzed in the aggregate.*

*Explain that you might be using Polls during the interview to collect quick quantitative data from them about opinions or frequencies.*

*Press record.*

**Say:** *We are going to talk about the SUSI Institute on TOPIC XXX today. Can I have each person introduce themselves to ensure the recording is working. Please say your name and role for your SUSI institute.*

## **PART 1: The Institute**

**Say:** *We have reviewed the curricula and syllabi for the institute but that does not convey the discussions or teaching and learning taking place. So, the first part of this group discussion will focus on the institute sessions and activities, and learning.*

1. How does learning about XX topic improve participants' understanding of US society and institutions?
  - a. What are the key understandings about US society and institutions that you want participants to leave with?
  - b. What specific Institute activities do you think are most impactful for improving participants' understanding of US society or institutions?
  - c. How else do participants gain understanding of US society and institutions during their SUSI experience?
  - d. Why is this geographic location important to learning this topic?
2. How does this institute define leadership?
  - a. What are the key leadership skills you want participants to gain during the institute?
  - b. Describe the activities or sessions you offer that are specifically designed to build participants' leadership skills.
  - c. How else do participants build these skills during the institute?
3. One thing that we are looking at is self-efficacy as an outcome and catalyst of SUSI.
  - a. How do you think the institute builds self-efficacy among participants?
  - b. What is the purpose of volunteering?
  - c. What is the purpose of the site visits?
  - d. What is the role of the Student Leader/Ambassador
    - i. How do you recruit and support/incentivize them?

4. From your perspective, what is the primary challenge that participants face during the institute?
  - a. ["challenge" can be anything, let them self-define it; also might have different views within the group]
5. RELIGIOUS INSTITUTE ONLY: How effective is the IDI assessment in building intercultural skills and facilitating learning?
6. ALL OTHER INSTITUTES: how does your institute formally build intercultural skills among participants
7. How do you assess learning and growth during the institute?
  - a. How do you assess learning about the topic?
  - b. How do you assess growth in leadership skills?
8. Do you update the Institute curricula regularly?
  - a. What triggers a revision of the Institute curricula?
  - b. Can you describe your process for updating the curricula?
9. Are you still in contact with any of the SUSI participants you hosted in the past?
 

If yes:

  - a. How many SUSI participants are you still in contact with?
  - b. On average, how frequently are you in contact with past SUSI participants?
  - c. How would you describe your relationship with the SUSI participants with whom you are still in contact?
    - i. Probe for mentoring or collaborative relationships
  - d. Which method of contact is most effective

## ***PART 2: COVID & the Future***

10. How has the COVID pandemic affected program outcomes and implementation?
  - a. Probe for impacts to program funding, staffing, Institute curricula and programming related to SUSI Institute
11. What virtual programs have you offered alumni since the start of the pandemic?
  - a. How engaged have alumni been in these programs?
  - b. What feedback have you received from alumni on their interests or needs in virtual programming?
12. If participants are unable to attend in person this summer due to the pandemic, how would you prefer to offer the institute?

# SUSI Evaluation: Host Family & Student Ambassador/Leader Survey

## **INTRO & CONSENT:**

Meridian International, the grant manager for the SUSI program, is assessing the outcomes of the SUSI Institutes and would like your input.

**TAKING PART IN THE EVALUATION IS VOLUNTARY.** You may choose not to participate or withdraw your participation at any time. Deciding not to participate, or deciding to stop participating later, will not affect your relationship with the SUSI program.

**WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THE SURVEY?** Ideally, you should complete the survey as a family since everyone interacted with the SUSI participant. If that is not possible, select an adult (over 18) who interacted with the SUSI participant the most.

**WHAT WILL I BE ASKED?** You will be asked questions about how you engage with SUSI participants, what you learn from each other, and how you stay in contact with them.

**HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE EVALUATION TAKE?** Participation in this survey will take about 10-15 minutes of your time.

**ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS TO PARTICIPATING IN THE EVALUATION?** Participation will assist Meridian SUSI program staff in understanding the effectiveness of the program and developing new programming that meets alumni needs. Additionally, your responses will benefit others in the future by helping to develop new programs at the Institutes for future participants.

**HOW WILL CONFIDENTIALITY BE MAINTAINED?** Participants will be assigned a unique identity code by the survey software. This code will allow you to participate in the survey and mask your identity. Internet Service Provider addresses will not be collected or reported, and responses will not be connected to identity codes during analysis. In addition, individual data will be aggregated for the purpose of analysis and reporting using frequencies and mean. Individual responses will not be reported in any internal or external reporting.

72. Do you consent to participate in the evaluation for the SUSI Program?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

***IF NO: jump to end of survey with consent thank you page***

## **PART 1**

73. Which of the following best describes your role in the SUSI program?
- a. I was/am a Host Family
  - b. I was/am a U.S. Student Ambassador or Student Leader

74. Please select the institute you were a ***[PIPE IN ANSWER TO QUESTION ABOVE]*** for.
- g. Civic Engagement at Bard College (Summer)
  - h. Civic Engagement at FIUTS, University of Washington, Seattle (Winter)

- i. Entrepreneurship at University of Massachusetts Amherst
- j. Religious Freedom & Pluralism at Dialogue Institute, Temple University, Philadelphia
- k. Rule of Law, John McCain Institute at NNIC, University of Nevada
- l. Youth, Education, and Closing the Skills Gap at FIUTS University of Washington, Seattle

**SKIP LOGIC:**

- **IF MARK HOST FAMILY SHOW PART 2**
- **IF MARK STUDENT AMBASSADOR SHOW PART 3**

**PART 2: HOST FAMILIES**

75. How many total SUSI participants have you hosted over the years?
- a. 1-2 participants
  - b. 3-5 participants
  - c. 6-10 participants
  - d. More than 10 participants
76. On average, how many days does a SUSI participant spend with your family during their Institute?
- a. Less than 1 day
  - b. 1-2 days
  - c. 3-4 days
  - d. 5 or more days
77. Normally, when does the first host family visit occur during the institute?
- a. Beginning of the institute, within the first week.
  - b. Middle of the institute between weeks 2 and 3
  - c. End of the institute, the last week of the institute
78. When you host a SUSI participant, what do you want them to learn about intercultural skills, U.S. daily life or culture?
79. Based on your experience, what types of interactions teach SUSI participants the most about intercultural skills, U.S. daily life or culture?
80. Based on your experience, what is the biggest challenge about intercultural skills, U.S. daily life or culture for SUSI participants?
81. Which of the following activities do you do/have you done with SUSI participants while hosting them? *(Mark all that apply)*
- a. Eating out
  - b. Family dinners at home
  - c. Local festivals or arts events
  - d. Local sporting events

- e. Neighborhood cookouts
  - f. Outdoor activities (hiking, biking, walking)
  - g. Religious services
  - h. Sightseeing
  - i. Shopping
  - j. Volunteering
  - k. Watching TV with the family
  - l. Other:
82. Which of the following was the primary reason you wanted to become a SUSI Host Family? (Mark only 1)
- a. Learn about other cultures
  - b. Mentor youth in other countries
  - c. Provide an international experience for my family members
  - d. Share U.S. culture with international students
  - e. Other:

83. How has your experience as a SUSI Host Family been different from your initial expectations?

84. What have you learned from being a SUSI Host Family?

85. What is the most challenging part about being a SUSI Host Family?

86. Are you still in contact with any of the SUSI participants you hosted in the past?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

**SKIP LOGIC: IF YES ASK**

87. How many SUSI participants are you still in contact with?
- a. 1
  - b. 2-3
  - c. 4-5
  - d. More than 5
88. On average, how frequently do you contact a SUSI participant from the past?
- a. 1-2 times a year
  - b. 3-4 times a year
  - c. Monthly
  - d. Weekly
  - e. Daily
89. Which communication method do you use most often to connect with the SUSI alumni you have hosted?
- a. Comment on their social media page (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
  - b. Email
  - c. Facebook Messenger



- d. WhatsApp
  - e. Zoom
  - f. Other:
90. Which of the following best describes your relationship with the SUSI participants with which you are still in contact?
- a. Friends on Facebook or other social media
  - b. Giving personal or professional advice
  - c. Support or collaboration on projects in the participant's home country
  - d. Support or collaboration on projects here in the U.S.
  - e. Other:
91. Which of the following best describes your family structure as a host family?
- a. Myself and a partner or spouse
  - b. Myself, a partner or spouse and children aged 0-12
  - c. Myself, a partner or spouse and children aged 13-18
  - d. Extended family including children, grandparents, or other relatives
  - e. Other:
92. What is your gender?
- a. Female
  - b. Male
  - c. Non-binary/third gender
  - d. Transgender
  - e. Prefer not to say
  - f. Prefer to self-describe:
93. What is your race/ethnicity?
- a. American Indian or Alaska Native (1)
  - b. Asian/Asian American (2)
  - c. Black or African American (3)
  - d. Hispanic or Latinx (4)
  - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5)
  - f. Caucasian or White (6)
  - g. Multiracial (7)
  - h. Prefer not to say (8)
94. What is your sexual orientation?
- a. Bisexual (1)
  - b. Gay or Lesbian (2)
  - c. Straight/Heterosexual (3)
  - d. Prefer not to say (4)
  - e. Prefer to self-describe:

**PART 3: STUDENT AMBASSADORS**

95. How many times were you a Student Ambassador/Student Leader for the SUSI Institute?
- a. 1 time
  - b. 2 times

- c. 3 times
  - d. 4 times
  - e. 5 or more times
96. On average, how many days does a SUSI participant spend with you during their Institute?
- a. Less than 1 day
  - b. 1-2 days
  - c. 3-4 days
  - d. 5 or more days
97. What is the role of the Student Ambassador/Student Leader?
98. Why did you want to become a SUSI Student Ambassador/Student Leader?
- a. Expand my network overseas
  - b. Learn about other cultures
  - c. Share U.S. culture with international students
  - d. Other:
99. Describe the types of interactions you normally have with SUSI participants.
100. Based on your experience, what types of interactions teach SUSI participants the most about U.S. daily life or culture?
101. Based on your experience, what is the biggest challenge about U.S. daily life or culture for SUSI participants?
102. What have you learned from being a Student Ambassador/Student Leader for SUSI?
103. Why did you want to become a Student Ambassador/Leader for SUSI? (Mark only 1)
- a. Expand my professional development skills
  - b. Improve my intercultural skills
  - c. Learn about other countries and cultures
  - d. Receive credit or other incentives
  - e. Other:
104. Are you still in contact with any of the SUSI participants you worked with in the past?
- a. Yes
  - b. No

**SKIP LOGIC: IF YES ASK**

105. How many SUSI participants are you still in contact with?
- 1
  - 2-3
  - 4-5
  - More than 5
106. On average, how frequently do you contact a SUSI participant from the past?
- 1-2 times a year
  - 3-4 times a year
  - Monthly
  - Weekly
  - Daily
107. Which communication method do you use most often to connect with a SUSI participant from the past?
- Comment on their social media page (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)
  - Email
  - Facebook Messenger
  - WhatsApp
  - Zoom
  - Other:
108. Which of the following best describes your relationship with the SUSI participants with which you are still in contact?
- Friends on Facebook or other social media
  - Giving personal or other professional advice to each other
  - Support or collaboration on projects in the participant's home country
  - Support or collaboration on projects here in the U.S.
  - Other:
109. What is your gender?
- Female
  - Male
  - Non-binary/third gender
  - Transgender
  - Prefer not to say
  - Prefer to self-describe:
110. What is your race/ethnicity?

- a. American Indian or Alaska Native (1)
  - b. Asian/Asian American (2)
  - c. Black or African American (3)
  - d. Hispanic or Latinx (4)
  - e. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (5)
  - f. Caucasian or White (6)
  - g. Multiracial (7)
  - h. Prefer not to say (8)
111. What is your sexual orientation?
- a. Bisexual (1)
  - b. Gay or Lesbian (2)
  - c. Straight/Heterosexual (3)
  - d. Prefer not to say (4)
  - e. Prefer to self-describe: