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Page 1 of 8

100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund Announces New Grant-Winning Institutions
Santander Bank-Sponsored Grant Competition Funds Nine Higher Education Partnerships

WASHINGTON, DC: The U.S. Department of State, Partners of the Americas, and NAFSA: Association of International Educators announce the latest Innovation Fund grant winning teams sponsored by Santander Bank in this hemispheric-wide education initiative. The Innovation Fund inspires U.S. universities and colleges to team up with higher education institutions in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada to build institutional partnerships to increase student exchange and training opportunities. As of May 2018, the Innovation Fund has completed twenty competitions and awarded 157 grants to teams of 302 higher education institutions from 25 countries and 41 U.S. States. The goals of the Innovation Fund are to build bridges of connectivity, increase student mobility, and strengthen regional education cooperation and competitiveness in the Americas.

This Santander-sponsored Innovation Fund grant competition will facilitate **nine** dynamic higher education partnerships between universities and colleges in the Northeastern United States (Connecticut, Delaware, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, and Rhode Island) and higher education institutions in Latin America and Canada. These new grant-winning teams will provide sustainable study abroad and training opportunities in agriculture, business, indigenous studies, language, culture, and STEM fields, among others.

“We are proud that our support of the *100,000 Strong in the Americas* Innovation Fund has helped hundreds of students participate in study abroad programs where they have broadened their education beyond the classroom and gained valuable insight into their host countries and cultures,” said Maria Veltre, Santander’s chief marketing and digital officer. “These life-changing experiences prepare students to participate in the global economy when they enter the workforce. We wish all of the students well who will benefit from this round of funding.”

The new Innovation Fund grant winning teams are:

- **Cabrini University**, Pennsylvania, United States with **Universidad del Salvador**, Buenos Aires, Argentina
- **Universidad Católica de Salta**, Salta, Argentina with **Saint Peter’s University**, New Jersey, United States
- **Monroe Community College, SUNY**, New York, United States with **Fundacion Universitaria Tecnologico Comfenalco**, Cartagena, Colombia
- **Sacred Heart University**, Connecticut, United States with **Universidad Rafael Landivar**, Guatemala, Guatemala



- **Universidad del Valle de Guatemala**, Guatemala, Guatemala with **Massachusetts Institute of Technology**, Massachusetts, United States
- **Wilfrid Laurier University**, Ontario, Canada with **Syracuse University**, New York, United States and Cornell University, New York, United States and University at Buffalo-SUNY, New York, United States
- **Widener University**, Pennsylvania, United States with **Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica**, Heredia, Costa Rica
- **Fairleigh Dickinson University**, New Jersey, United States with **CETYS Universidad**, Baja California, Mexico
- **Rochester Institute of Technology**, New York, United States with **Universidad del Pacifico**, Lima, Peru

This is the fourth grant competition supported by Santander Bank since the Innovation Fund's inception in 2014. With generous support from Santander Bank through Santander Universities, there are 26 **new Innovation Fund** teams in 17 countries and 24 U.S. states working together to implement dynamic student exchange and training programs for more than 560 students in the Americas.

Innovation Fund awards are \$25,000 each, and additional resources committed by teams of higher education institutions, resulting in an average of 1.5 times more to leverage awards to implement sustainable student exchange and training programs between the United States and the rest of the Western Hemisphere.

New INNOVATION FUND Grants in this Santander Competition will be awarded to:

Cabrini University, Pennsylvania, United States
Universidad del Salvador, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Cabrini University/Universidad del Salvador Study Abroad Partnership: Democracy and Social Justice in the Americas

Cabrini University (Cabrini), in a new partnership with Universidad del Salvador (USAL), will create a bilateral exchange program that will engage students across disciplines and those underrepresented in study abroad from both universities. The program will focus on experiential learning and encourage students from Cabrini and USAL to reflect on themes of social justice education, social responsibility, and social change while incorporating language-learning and cultural competencies as they travel and take classes together for three weeks at each of the partnering universities in a six-week summer program. Students will then participate in virtual exchanges throughout the semester following their travels to continue building their connections. In the first year of implementation, the courses will focus on the

Universidad Católica de Salta, Salta, Argentina
Saint Peter's University, New Jersey, United States

International Business Needs International Students

Universidad Católica de Salta (UCASAL) and Saint Peter's University (SPU) will establish a bilateral, international mobility program to develop future bilingual international business professionals with academic and practical experience abroad. The program will include online instruction along with three



weeks spent on site at each of the partnering institutions, during which International Trade and Marketing students will learn about the cultural, legal, and economic aspects of foreign markets and visit local companies and organizations. This strategic partnership is significant for UCASAL and SPU since they both serve a large number of low-income students with little or no exposure to international travel.

Monroe Community College, SUNY, New York, United States
Fundacion Universitaria Tecnológico Comfenalco, Cartagena, Colombia

*Monitoring Coastline Water Quality in Cartagena, Colombia
Using GIS Technology and Spanish Consultants*

Monroe Community College (MCC), in partnership with Fundación Universitaria Tecnológico Comfenalco (Tecnológico Comfenalco), will implement an innovative, hybrid study abroad experience that integrates virtual learning through the use of Collaborative Online Virtual Learning (COIL) and bilateral student exchange. Three student groups—MCC GIS students, MCC Spanish language students, and Environmental Engineering students from Tecnológico Comfenalco—will work collaboratively to use the power of geographical information systems (GIS) and apps to visually display the complex dynamics of the human-physical environment. Participating Spanish language students, with guidance from faculty, will provide interpretation between GIS students and Environmental Engineering students as they support the development of mapping apps to monitor water quality and support humanitarian mapping efforts along the coastline of Cartagena, Colombia.

Sacred Heart University, Connecticut, United States
Universidad Rafael Landivar, Guatemala, Guatemala

Acting Globally, Thinking Locally: A Community-Engaged Student Exchange in Global Health

With the support of the Innovation Fund grant, Sacred Heart University (SHU) and Universidad Rafael Landivar (URL) will develop a community-engaged, student exchange program in global health. The program uses the Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) model to connect Health Science students from both institutions and engage with them through their study of the global health challenges in the U.S. and Guatemala for a semester. The students will work in teams with local community partners to propose “global health solution” service projects, which they will then implement over the course of one week in each country during summer.

Universidad del Valle de Guatemala, Guatemala, Guatemala
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Massachusetts, United States

Advancing Student Learning and Exchange through International Co-Design of Innovative Solutions with Rural Communities in Guatemala

Universidad del Valle de Guatemala (UVG) and Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) will provide students with hands-on, immersive learning experience in designing low-cost technologies to address global poverty challenges. With the support of the Innovation Fund, UVG and MIT will engage seven students from each institution to participate in a short-term study abroad exchange where they will take classes, visit local agencies, and work in their respective host communities. The program is designed to promote a multicultural environment where students can work together on projects to find solutions to



problems facing local communities while developing their professional skills through leadership and teamwork.

Wilfrid Laurier University, Ontario, Canada
Syracuse University, New York, United States
Cornell University, New York, United States
University at Buffalo-SUNY, New York, United States

Indigenous Mobility and Curriculum across Borders

Connected by the strong and meaningful associations with the indigenous people and territory in their respective locations, Wilfrid Laurier University (WLU), with its multiple partners, Syracuse University (Syracuse), Cornell University (Cornell) and the University of Buffalo-SUNY (Buffalo), will collaborate on a pilot exchange program that aims to increase the mobility of indigenous students between Canada and the United States. The exchange experience will be enriched by research opportunities during which students—in consultation with community-based partners and Indigenous scholars at host institutions—will work together to collect and develop an online database of Indigenous curriculum resources. This program will culminate in a symposium, hosted by WLU, that will highlight the potential for Indigenous exchange and curriculum in both New York and Ontario, and launch the resources online to a wide network of institutions.

Widener University, Pennsylvania, United States
Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica, Heredia, Costa Rica

Coffee Culture: Connecting Intercultural Competence and Environmental Sustainability in the U.S. and Costa Rica

Widener University (Widener) and Universidad Nacional de Costa Rica (UNA), who first developed their focus on coffee production independently, will combine their efforts to create a collaborative, cross-cultural partnership that takes an experiential, service-learning approach to exploring how the agricultural and sociocultural aspects of coffee affect sustainability. The partnering institutions seek to build a sustainable academic exchange program to enhance students' global awareness, environmental awareness, intercultural competence, consciousness and sense of social responsibility. While in the respective host country, students will attend lectures and participate in service-learning projects with coffee producers, NGOs, and cooperatives.

Fairleigh Dickinson University, New Jersey, United States
CETYS Universidad, Baja California, Mexico

Developing Transcultural Competencies through Cross-Border Team Building

Fairleigh Dickinson University (FDU) and CETYS Universidad (CETYS) in Ensenada will strengthen their existing relationship by introducing a new study abroad initiative to foster a culture of bilateral student exchange. While CETYS students regularly study abroad at FDU, FDU has yet to reciprocate the exchange. To counteract this pattern of unilateral movement, FDU and CETYS will offer a summer program that will bring FDU students to CETYS campus for a 10-day course and provide hands-on experience on transcultural behavior. The program is strategically designed to encourage students to pursue longer terms abroad and develop more equal exchange between the two institutions; however, with FDU having campuses in New Jersey and Vancouver, Canada, the summer program will be open to students from both campuses with the goal of ultimately creating a tri-lateral movement.



Rochester Institute of Technology, New York, United States
Universidad del Pacifico, Lima, Peru

Exchange of Practices in the Food and Beverage Value Chain through Bilateral Study Abroad between Lima, Peru and the Finger Lakes Region of New York

Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) and Universidad del Pacifico (UP) aim to internationalize their hospitality and business curricula through the integration of a two-week bi-directional, faculty-led exchange in a course on the food and beverage supply chain. During their time abroad, students will visit companies to examine regional best practices and interact with industry representatives from food and beverage producers, suppliers, and retail operators. Through this program, students will develop projects to share the learned global practices with public and private sector industry and trade organizations in the region.

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Established in January 2014, the **100,000 Strong in the Americas Innovation Fund** is the dynamic public-private sector collaboration between the U.S. Department of State, U.S. Embassies, Partners of the Americas, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, corporations, and foundations working together to stimulate connectivity and strengthen regional education cooperation and competitiveness throughout the Americas.

The Innovation Fund inspires U.S. universities and colleges to team up with higher education institutions in the rest of the Western Hemisphere to create new institutional partnerships that will increase student exchange and training opportunities.

As of May 2018, the Innovation Fund has awarded 157 grants to teams of 302 higher education institutions in 25 countries in the Western Hemisphere region 41 U.S. states. Innovation Fund grant winning teams work together to build institutional capacity, increase student mobility, provide more training programs, and contribute to workforce development in the Americas.

Over 1,750 higher education institutions currently form part of the Innovation Network – with 1,000 universities and colleges in the United States.

Learn more and join the Innovation Network: www.100kstrongamericas.org

The mission of **Partners of the Americas** is to connect people and organizations across borders to serve and to change lives through lasting partnerships. These partnerships create opportunity, foster understanding, and solve real-life problems. Inspired by President Kennedy and founded in 1964, under the Alliance for Progress, Partners is a non-profit, non-partisan organization with international offices in Washington, DC. www.partners.net or [@partnersamerica](https://twitter.com/partnersamerica).

With 10,000 members worldwide, **NAFSA: Association of International Educators** is the largest non-profit professional association dedicated to international education programming and policy. www.nafsa.org or [@NAFSA](https://twitter.com/NAFSA) and www.connectingourworld.org or [@ConnectOurWorld](https://twitter.com/ConnectOurWorld).

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