

CIF INTERNATIONAL
PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGE PROGRAMS
REPORT 2016

In 2016, 19 CIF International Professional Exchange Programs (Int. PEPs) were organized by 19 NBs and CIP USA:

CIF Argentina (September 30th - October 23rd, 2016)
CIF Australia (September 2nd – 23rd, 2016)
CIF Austria (April 29th - May 20th, 2016)
CIF Estonia & CIF Latvia (May 20th -June 9th, 2016)
CIF Finland (May 8th – 28th, 2016)
CIF France (June 2nd – 26th, 2016)
CIF Germany (June 17th -July 3rd, 2016)
CIF Greece (May 16th-28th, 2016)
CIF Israel (May 6th -23rd, 2016)
CIF Nepal (November 18th - December 8th, 2016)
CIF Netherlands (November 12th -26th, 2016)
CIF New Zealand (October 28th- November 25th, 2016)
CIF Norway (September 17th - October 7th, 2016)
CIF Russia (September 16th-25th, 2016)
CIF Scotland (May 7th - June 4th, 2016)
CIF Sweden (April 1st – 30th, 2016)
CIF Switzerland (May 19th -June 3rd, 2016)
CIF Taiwan (October 15th-29th, 2016)
CIP USA Int. PEP (August-December/January-May, 2016)

- CIF Taiwan held its first International PEP in 2016.
- CIF Estonia and CIF Latvia had a joint program.
- CIF Russia held its first standalone program.
- Although announced, CIF India and CIF Turkey International PEPs could not be organized due to lack of applicants.

109 people applied to CIF International 2016 professional exchange programs, 92 accepted, 69 completed the programs.

Main Difficulties in 2016 Programs:

- Financial issues
- Recruiting candidates/lack of candidates
- Arranging agency visits, finding enough institutions for individual programs
- Getting visa
- Finding host families
- Cancellations before the program starts
- Confirming of agency placements early to give time for participants to make work plans

Reported Participant Feedbacks as Benefits in 2016 Programs:

The participants of CIF International 2016 PEPs gave feedbacks as benefits:

- Development on a personal and professional level
- Gaining an understanding of different cultures and the challenges different countries face
- International, professional and cultural exchange with fellow participants,
- Opportunity to observe daily work of professionals from different countries,
- Learning about social welfare systems and services, policies, procedures and working practice in a different culture
- Having a great experience in a unique setting
- Experiencing the host family living
- The diversity of field visits
- Sharing ideas about the political and cultural influence on social work;
- Being able to compare your own professional work in the hosting country
- More reflection, gathering ideas and increased enthusiasm to take back to your own work;
- Making lasting friendships
- Refreshing theoretical knowledge

Success Stories in 2016 Programs:

- One of the participants of CIF Argentina gave a lecture at the university, it was for students and professors, and it was a very successful experience
- CIF Estonia & CIF Latvia's Facebook group is still working and news are shared within this group: new fellowships in a modern way.
- In CIF Finland's program the cooperation between Tanzanian participant Angela and her field placement city Lappeenranta in education continued in practice after the program is over.
- The operating group around in CIF Germany managed very efficiently the program finances.
- The students, involved in the first period of CIF Netherlands program were very much engaged. They also gave the participants a look in their lives as student. CIF Netherlands have a new hostfamily who is willing to host participants in the future.
- CIF Russia managed to organize the professional part of the program taking into account of the completely different interests of each participant.
- Participants continue to maintain contact with CIF Scotland and with each other by email and Facebook; all report they have developed personally and professionally as a result of their experiences.
- CIF Switzerland provided the chance to CIF Taiwan program coordinator, to participate in their 2016 PEP as an observer. This was a

very good way to help new national branches to gain experience in organizing their programs.

- CIF Germany and CIF Taiwan participants experiences were published in World News

Suggestions to improve PEPs:

- PEP candidates would like to be informed earlier about the selection results, to be able to prepare for the trip and to get the tickets.
- Balancing the professional and cultural side of the programs
- Better preparations of participants from the sending country
- Possibilities of fundraising
- Use of social media as much as possible
- Emphasizing the importance of mastering English as the vehicle for all contacts during the program
- Evaluation at a later moment, as the participants claim they need more time to process all impressions and experiences of the whole program

Points to discuss in the next BD meeting:

- How branches manage issues when participants are not happy with the program load.
- Insurance issues
- Possibilities of networking with universities
- The possibility to send unemployed professionals to participate in IPEPs
- Evaluation process
- To discuss possibilities for participants to share experiences, create networks, like blogs, in which all participants can share experiences.
- A joint effort to make it possible for African participants to participate in CIF International programs
- Recruiting NB members
- Common certificate of CIF International PEPs
- Discussion about contents of PEPs, reflections
- Experience exchange among program coordinators (a tutor-intern model)
- Possibility of an online application form

Respectfully submitted
by
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