

What is an Individual Experience?

An Individual Experience (IE) may be an individualized international internship, project, research trip, study, or any other type of experience that does not fit into an existing BYU international study program. This independent option allows students to customize their own international, cross-cultural learning for BYU academic credit. IEs are secured by the individual student and are often found through networking with faculty, friends of the family, other students, and by looking for ideas online. Individual experiences may be in all industries and academic disciplines.

When should students apply for their IE?

Ideally, students should apply for their IE at least **three months before** they plan to leave. This is to allow time for the application to be processed and for students to go through the necessary steps, including the security and Title IX briefing and cultural preparation module on learning suite. Students may apply later, but it will be up to the discretion of the ISP coordinator whether their application will be accepted. Students must still complete all requirements, even if they apply late.

Where can a student do an IE?

Individual Experience locations may be almost anywhere in the world.

IEs are registered through the ISP office if they take students outside the fifty states. If it is an experience in a US Territory (Puerto Rico, American Samoa, U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, etc.), students should still work with ISP.

Students cannot travel to countries or regions restricted by the BYU Travel Policy (see travelsmart.byu.edu or an ISP coordinator). For safety, ISP has the right to accept or deny any proposal based on location, applicant language preparation, or applicant in-country experience.

How long is an IE?

The length of an IE is flexible. Students should keep in mind that the “semester” or “term” for their experience may not fit BYU’s academic calendar, but that by meeting with the ISP office, they may be able to arrange a solution.

How does earning BYU credit for an IE work?

Students can do their IE to receive BYU credit for their internship if the credit is required for their major, minor, or graduation requirements. Credits taken overseas should relate to the type of experience, the geographical location, or the student’s academic discipline.

Students usually take internship credit, directed readings credit, advanced language conversation credit, or research credit. Other credits may be available; students should inquire with their academic department for specific information. Students may take as many credits as is required by their academic departments.

Students do not register themselves for their IE class; all credit to be taken overseas is registered by ISP creating a special international section of the appropriate departmental internship class or other credit. This will be done after the application requirements have been completed.

Where do students live while doing an IE?

Housing is the responsibility of the individual student and should follow BYU housing guidelines. Students may want to look for housing through the experience provider, friends of the family who may have lived abroad, or online resources. They may not live with local LDS families. Students should not pressure local Church leaders and members to find housing or provide free housing.

In the event that students have the cross-cultural opportunity to live with a host family, students should respect the impact they have on the lifestyle of the host family, especially when it comes to compensating for rent, utilities, meals, and transportation.

Can students travel while doing an IE?

In country, students are encouraged to take field trips to sites of historical and cultural significance, as long as the trips do not interrupt responsibilities to the experience provider or participation in Sabbath-day observances. These trips must also conform to the BYU Travel Policy. For travel in or to countries on BYU's Travel Restrictions List (<https://travelsmart.byu.edu/>), all travel plans outside of the experience location need to be approved by Chris Quinlan (christopher_quinlan@byu.edu) a minimum of 3 days in advance for security and cultural sensitivities, as noted above.

How much does an IE cost?

Students pay the \$35 application fee and tuition for the number of credits they take. The cost of IEs vary, but students will want to ask themselves the following questions to prepare financially:

- How many credits will I take and what will be the cost for my BYU tuition?
- How much will my airfare cost?
- Do I have a passport yet? How much does this cost?
- Do I need a visa to go to this country? How much will a visa cost?
- Are my accommodations and living expenses included by the experience provider company?
- How much will safe accommodations cost in this country?
- Will I need to take mass transit in-country? How much does this cost?
- Immunizations? How much will this cost?

What Funding Sources Are Available for an IE?

BYU scholarships and federal financial aid will apply to tuition and program costs for students who are registered for a minimum of 3/4 time (9 credit hours per semester or 4.5 credit hours per term).

Academic departments and colleges may assist with scholarships and grants.

Private grants and scholarships outside of BYU may also help. See kennedy.byu.edu/scholarships.

For more information:

Interested students will need to contact the ISP internship coordinator's assistant at quinlan_assistant@byu.edu or 801-422-1541.

For additional resources:

<https://kennedy.byu.edu/>