Volunteer Engagement and Multi-Generational Collaboration: An Analysis

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Thank you Dr. McLellan and Professor Mueller for everything you have done to help us with this project for Global Ties U.S.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In order to strengthen their citizen and public diplomacy efforts Global Ties U.S. partnered with a team of graduate students from American University’s School of International Service to determine challenges experienced, and best practices used by its community-based members (CBMs) in engaging volunteers from diverse backgrounds and ages. The team focused the research on three key areas: 1) identify the main challenges that the CBMs face in recruiting and retaining the millennial generation as volunteers, 2) explore the challenges of a multi-generational workplace, and 3) identify best practices and suggest ways to engage volunteers, and develop programs to retain and grow their networks. The team developed and distributed two surveys, one for CBM directors and programmers, and another for CBM volunteers. The International Visitors Council of Philadelphia was used as a case study to add qualitative data and context to the information gathered via the surveys.

The research findings revealed some innovative ways CBMs utilize millennials as volunteers. The team found that the CBMs have an opportunity to draw on the full potential of millennial volunteers. One recommendation that CBMs can consider is the formal recognition of the contributions of millennial volunteers, while simultaneously recognizing the different perspectives and experiences they bring to the organization. Another recommendation is allow interns and volunteers to work remotely. This way CBMs can create more opportunities for volunteering that can accommodate more volunteers. In regard to multi-generational collaboration, the team found that the CBMs do an excellent job at creating a positive environment where different generations work together, communicate, and feel comfortable. Nevertheless, the team recommends creating a formal mentoring program that will encourage collaboration between generations, and help mitigate some of the concerns about the transfer of knowledge.

The best practices shared, and recommendations given in this report are meant to suggest areas that CBMs might consider to support or improve their engagement and collaboration between generations to help them carry out the vital citizen diplomacy. Such best practices and recommendations should help CBMs plan activities that will engage and motivate millennial volunteers. They would also create more opportunities for millennial and non-millennial generations to work together and create a greater impact within the organizations and communities.
Global Ties U.S., formerly the National Council for International Visitors (NCIV), is a network of more than 100 non-profit member organizations, program agencies, and leaders that seek to connect the world through international exchange programs. Global Ties U.S. was founded in 1961 and has since linked professionals and students from various countries with their counterparts in the United States. Its member organizations can be found in 44 states and 14 countries around the world. Volunteers are the backbone of the Global Ties network, with 38,000 volunteers contributing 600,000 hours annually.

As a private-sector partner of the U.S. Department of State, Global Ties U.S. and its membership play a leading role in the implementation of the prestigious International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP). Through this professional exchange program, there have been approximately 200,000 international visitor participants since 1940. They include almost 1,700 government ministers and 35 current and 300 former chiefs of state or heads of government, including former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and former Mexican President Felipe Calderón. IVLP alumni around the world have helped play a role in strengthening ties and building a more peaceful and prosperous world for decades.

Mission: Global Ties U.S. strengthens relationships between individuals and nations by making international exchange programs more effective.

Vision: A peaceful, prosperous world where individuals build enduring relationships through international exchange.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This report is the culmination of an American University, School of International Service practicum project for Global Ties U.S. A practicum is completed in place of a Master’s thesis, in order to help students gain real world experience in project management and consulting. The team worked with Global Ties U.S. to determine the best practices used by its community-based members (CBMs) to connect with and engage volunteers from diverse backgrounds and varying ages, in their citizen and public diplomacy efforts. The goals of the project were: 1) identify the main challenges that the CBMs face in recruiting and retaining the millennial generation as volunteers, 2) explore the challenges of a multi-generational workplace, and 3) identify best practices and suggest ways to engage volunteers, and develop programs to retain and grow their networks. In addition, to help achieve these goals, the team distributed two surveys: one for CBM directors and programmers, and another for CBM volunteers. To provide the team with first-hand accounts and direct exposure to the Global Ties network’s millennial and multi-generational engagement efforts, the team used the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia as a case study. The team identified best practices that reflect methods to mitigate these challenges, and also ways CBMs encourage multigenerational collaboration.

Research Questions:

1. What are the challenges associated with multi-generational collaboration and volunteer engagement in the Global Ties network?
2. How does Global Ties U.S. and its membership address challenges associated with multi-generational collaboration and volunteer engagement?
3. How does/should the Global Ties network strengthen multi-generational collaboration and attract volunteers from various generations?

Key Terms:

Community-based members (CBMs): The non-profit member organizations in the Global Ties network that administer the U.S. Department of State’s International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) in their local communities.

Volunteer: An individual who works for an organization on their own time without receiving compensation in any form (i.e. monetary, credit).

Intern: An individual committed to working a certain amount of time with an organization, seeking to gain professional experience.

Millennials: Individuals under the age of 35 (born between 1979 and 1994)

Volunteer engagement: The process by which an organization seeks to recruit volunteers and involve them in the work the organization does.

Multigenerational collaboration: The process by which individuals from different generations work together and merge their different perspectives, wisdom and skills.
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In order to gather information from the 90+ CBMs, the team created two surveys to be distributed via Google Forms.1 Global Ties U.S. issued an email call for participation, in order to determine which CBMs would be interested in participating in the research project. Once a list of interested CBMs was generated, Global Ties U.S emailed the link to directors and programmers for the Survey on Volunteer Engagement and Multi-generational Collaboration. The survey for directors and programmers included 17 questions, which can be found in Appendix B.

At the end of the survey, directors and programmers were asked if they would be willing to send a second survey directly to some of their volunteers so that the team could collect additional data. CBMs were responsible for forwarding this Survey for Volunteer Engagement to approximately 10-15 volunteers in their database. The email that included the survey for volunteers came from a member of the SIS team. This survey included 26 questions; a copy of the survey can be found in Appendix C. The questions were designed to gather quantitative and qualitative data on volunteer engagement and multi-generational collaboration. Thirty-one CBMs responded to the Survey on Volunteer Engagement and Multi-generational Collaboration, and 29 volunteers responded to the Survey on Volunteer Engagement. These surveys were conducted in February and March 2014.

To supplement the quantitative and qualitative data received by the CBMs, the team interviewed the staff and one of the interns at the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia in March 2014. The team asked questions that would provide an additional qualitative element to the quantitative results received from the survey. The questions used during the interviews are listed in Appendix D. In addition, the team reached out via phone to respondents of the Survey on Volunteer Engagement and Multi-generational Collaboration to gather more nuanced information and data on the experiences of the CBMs. Follow-up telephone conversations with CBMs also helped encourage higher volunteer responses to the survey as those nearly doubled following our phone calls.

Limitations of Research

The team believes that the quality of responses well represents the diversity of experiences in the CBMs. Nevertheless, this team recognizes several limitations, primarily its small sample size; one third of all CBMs responded to the call for participation. The SIS team sought to receive 50 responses from the CBMs in order to gain a better understanding of the diverse experiences of the CBMs.

The Survey on Volunteer Engagement was sent to the CBMs that agreed to forward it to 10-15 volunteers in their network. During the research period, CBMs were also preparing other reports to be sent to Global Ties U.S. in addition to their daily activities; therefore, few CBMs were able to identify volunteers that would be available to complete the Survey on Volunteer Engagement. Six out of the nineteen CBMs that agreed to forward the survey did so. However, the phone follow-up conducted by the SIS team helped to increase volunteer participation in the survey.

In addition, there was not a great deal of balance between office volunteers and other types of volunteers’ responses in the Survey on Volunteer Engagement; 38% of the volunteers

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1 Google Forms is a tool that can be used create surveys and collect results in a Google Docs spreadsheet.
who responded used another category to describe themselves other than an office volunteer. Moreover, a greater amount of age diversity would have benefited our results. Nearly 70% of all respondents identified themselves as over the age of 36; therefore, this dearth of responses made it difficult to adequately address the experiences of millennial volunteers.

It became evident from the survey responses that CBMs would have appreciated a clear and very specific definition of volunteer and intern, as CBMs had differing views on the definition of these two positions. This made it somewhat difficult to answer some of the questions. The insert to the right explains the distinction the SIS team had in mind when executing this project. It should also be noted that there could be potential overlap from programmers and volunteers. Some programmers are considered volunteers and could have easily answered the Survey on Volunteer Engagement in the Local Councils rather than the Survey on Volunteer Engagement and Multi-generational Collaboration. Nonetheless, it is understood that the individual that answered the first survey did not answer the second survey.

The lack of survey responses from volunteers and age diversity hindered gathering information on engagement and collaboration from the perspective of some volunteers (i.e. office volunteers, home hospitality hosts, professional resource persons, etc.) and age groups. This lack of response from a diverse age group might also speak to the larger challenge faced by the Global Ties network, of attracting people to this 50-plus year old network. Nevertheless, the quality of responses made up for the somewhat low participation rate.

**RESEARCH FINDINGS**

The demographic of the professional workplace is beginning to change. The baby boomer generation, those born between 1945 and 1965, are reaching the second stages of their lives and the age of retirement. This departure, referred to by some as the looming retirement crisis in the United States, represents a shifting of roles, when the millennial generation will further integrate into the professional world and become the leaders of many innovative organizations in foreign affairs, such as the community-based members in the Global Ties network. In addition, there is growing focus on youth and young adults in the developed and developing world in cultural diplomacy. For example, President Barack Obama created the Young African Leaders Initiative that invests in the next generation of African leaders. Furthermore, the U.S. Department of State International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) is increasingly focusing on bringing young emerging leaders that seek to interact with their American counterparts. It is important that organizations identify a method to attract and retain millennials as volunteers and/or employees.

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3 IVC of Philadelphia Staff Person/Intern. Interview by author. Personal interview.
in order to continue pursuing their mission.

The process of attracting and retaining millennials is complemented by encouraging collaboration between various generations. Emling of the Huffington Post asserts “Generational conflicts are nothing new. Many baby boomers think millennials are lazy and self-absorbed, and many millennials think boomers are close-minded and rigid. But generations can’t -- and shouldn't be generalized.”\(^4\) Members of each generation are often generalized, especially in terms of what each can contribute. Each generation has something to offer, but occasionally formal avenues are necessary to foster multi-generational collaboration.

Volunteers are a vital part of the larger Global Ties network and the CBMs with 38,000 individuals providing 600,000 hours annually. These dedicated individuals act as home hospitality hosts, home stay hosts, professional resources, office volunteers, interns, drivers, and more. Ensuring that volunteers are engaged and feel valued on both local and national levels is imperative for the effective management of programs, recruitment, and retention. The definitions for intern and volunteer given in this report were included as a result of the discrepancies found between the terms when doing the research. Some directors expressed confusion when distinguishing between the two. By clarifying these terms, CBMs will know what to expect when working with volunteers and interns, and know what type of tools will serve better to retain them within the network. The findings explained in this section are described from the perspective of millennials, which is important to note because much of the literature on this generation is written by non-millennials. Nevertheless, this section relies heavily on survey responses from a majority of non-millennials (individuals over the age of 35).

**Volunteer Engagement**

The CBM volunteer pool is made up of millennials and non-millennials, full-time professionals, retirees, and students. Therefore, recruitment tools should be designed for the specific demographic a CBM is targeting. Survey responses indicate that some forms of outreach have a strong impact on volunteer recruitment. The majority of volunteers said that they learned of volunteer opportunities in the CBM’s through word of mouth or newspapers. The data suggests that powerful networks are still an effective tool when soliciting potential volunteers. Powerful networks can help to ensure that volunteers are sharing their experiences with friends, relatives and associates (networks) in such a way that assists in bringing more interest and volunteers to the area of citizen diplomacy. Former and current volunteers are usually better able to describe their experiences than an organization’s website. Although word of mouth and newspapers are the mostly widely used method volunteers use to learn of CBM activities, when the statistics are further disaggregated one finds a more nuanced picture. Using word of mouth for recruitment is better served for non-millennials, because 60% of millennial respondents reported that they learned of the CBM’s volunteer opportunities though online searches and/or the CBM’s website. Older generations tend to have a well established network of people with free-flowing information, while younger generations are often still creating their networks. This finding is in line with the perspective of directors and programmers; they also report that technological means are the most effective tools to solicit interest from millennial volunteers (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Outreach Tools CBMs Use to Solicit Interest from Millennials Volunteers, as reported by council directors and programmers

In accordance with the previous finding, CBM volunteers report that Facebook, the CBM’s website and regular community events are the most effective means to recruit millennial volunteers. Millennials are often looking for programs with learning opportunities.\(^5\) Events are also an effective method to recruit volunteers, but especially millennials. Events can include networking activities like the Compass Diplomat group\(^6\) at the International Visitors Council in Philadelphia, lecture/speaker series at local universities, and informal gatherings such as potlucks like those organized by the Iowa International Center.\(^7\)

Figures 1 and 2 illustrate a small disconnect between the forms of outreach volunteers and CBM directors feel are optimal for millennials.\(^8\) CBM directors and programmers believe that Facebook is the most effective tool to solicit interest while volunteers report that the best tool is a community event. This slightly contradicts the answers provided by directors and programmers, possibly due to what a volunteer at IVC asserted during an interview. The volunteer said community events are often attractive to millennial volunteers and effective in recruiting from this age group, because they give individuals an opportunity to “test-drive”

\(^7\) Iowa International Center Staff Person. Interview by authors. Phone interview. March 2014.
\(^8\) Please note that the responses might be impacted by a large number of non-millennial respondents, but from working with millennial volunteers they may have seen which types of outreach kept millennials actively involved in CBMs.
working with the CBMs, and also to be directly be involved with issues of interest.9

Facebook is considered the most effective tool in soliciting interest from the millennial generation by directors and programmers, and non-millennial volunteers. Though the directors, programmers and non-millennial volunteers identify Facebook as the most effective tool for soliciting outreach, current CBM millennial volunteers and interns report that community events, CBM websites and former volunteers are the best methods to reach this age group. This difference highlights the types of outreach CBMs could employ when attempting to solicit volunteers from different age groups, as each group finds information differently.

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Figure 3: Reasons for Volunteering with CBMs

The reasons for volunteering are similar to the results gathered from a 1996 survey conducted by Global Ties U.S. President Emeritus, Sherry Mueller. The reasons include: improving the image of the United States abroad, the opportunity to make a difference, and contributing to the education of volunteers’ children. The most popular reasons for volunteering with a CBM on their citizen diplomacy efforts, gathered from Survey on Volunteer Engagement and Multi-generational Collaboration, are: 1) educating myself and my family about the world; 2) enhancing and enriching personal development; and 3) expressing values related to altruistic beliefs.

From discussions with CBM directors and the case study of the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia, many CBMs largely rely on interns or young volunteers to handle work in the office. Being assigned these duties is more a reflection of the needs of the office than the value ascribed to the volunteer or intern. CBMs often report how vital and appreciated their volunteers and interns are.

In addressing the positions volunteers hold within the Global Ties network, the survey findings show that most of the roles that volunteers in general play fall within home hospitality host (22%), homestay host (20%), board member (21%), and professional resource person (19%).

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Directors reported that *millennial volunteers* are mainly assigned the role of office volunteer (28%). This is important because when you look at the percentage of general volunteers assigned this role, it only covers 1%. This finding reflects what the team has heard throughout conversations with CBM directors, that the main obstacle in having millennial volunteers become more involved with international visitors is their lack of ability to host visitors at their homes. Volunteers expect to interact with international visitors on a regular basis, but due to the variety of work in which many CBMs engage international visitor interaction is not always possible. The goal for the CBMs is the development of professionally and culturally enriching programs that will allow the international visitors and the communities they visit to learn from and share with one another. It is important to note that many CBMs have developed innovative ways to allow younger volunteers and those with smaller homes to be home hospitality hosts. For example some CBMs use group hosting where more than one individual can take some or all of the international visitors to dinner at a restaurant or a few people can contribute to dinner at another volunteer’s house.

When asking all volunteers about the roles they typically play, their responses coincide with the responses of CBM directors on the roles volunteers usually execute. Home hospitality is again the main task assigned (23%), office volunteering (15%) was the second most frequently assigned role.

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11 IVC of Philadelphia Staff Person/Intern. Interview by author. Personal interview.
Internships and volunteer programs are the most widely used methods to engage millennials in citizen diplomacy efforts.

Figure 6: Volunteer Roles as Answered by Volunteers

Figure 7: Programs Directors Use to Engage Millennials in Citizen Diplomacy Efforts

Internships and volunteer programs are the most widely used methods to engage millennials in citizen diplomacy efforts. A volunteer program allows an individual to dedicate a
portion of his/her time with an organization. He/she is not always committed to specific working hours. Being a volunteer with an organization that promotes citizen diplomacy is an opportunity to affect and create a global culture and community. Volunteer roles include home hospitality hosts, homestay hosts, professional resources persons, drivers and numerous other positions that are important to citizen diplomacy work. These volunteers aim to strengthen ties between Americans and the global community. Internships and volunteer programs account for over 60% of citizen diplomacy efforts. These two programs cover a range of ages and interests. Moreover, young professionals groups and high school programs represent 15% and 17% respectively of programs used to engage the millennial generation. The staff from the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia reported that managing an effective young professionals group takes a significant amount of time and resources, which is the reason many CBMs do not have such groups. Nevertheless, young professionals groups help CBMs interact more with millennials in their cities. In addition, some CBMs have partnerships with area high schools. For example, the Northern Nevada International Center has one high school intern. This intern is from a high school that has a global studies program which requires its juniors and seniors to intern for six hours a week with an internationally based organization. Another CBM, International Visitors Council of Los Angeles, has a program with a central city high school where students in the international studies program are required to do an internship. One of the interns from this program later became a staff member for the CBM. These programs provide proven methods to engage volunteers of all ages, but especially millennials.

Millennial volunteers are often assigned research and clerical/administrative tasks, which is likely due to the high participation rate of millennials working as interns and office volunteers. A large number of millennial volunteers reported that once they become more established they would be interested in serving as home hospitality hosts, homestay hosts and professional resource persons. This suggests that the office volunteer program could serve as a training opportunity for future volunteer roles.

![Volunteers Given Projects to Manage](image.png)

**Figure 8: Volunteers Given Projects to Manage on Their Own**

Fifty-nine percent of millennial volunteers state that they are given projects to handle on

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13 Northern Nevada International Center. Staff Person. Interview by author. Phone interview.
14 International Visitors Council of Los Angeles Staff Person. Interview by author. Phone interview.
their own. This research finding shows that CBMs are providing responsibilities and interesting work for millennial volunteers. By giving millennials opportunities to increase their skill set, they are preparing them for future career opportunities, and creating skilled workers who can one day fill staff vacancies.

Volunteers and directors agreed that there are a number of successes and challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers. However, volunteers have different opinions in regards to best practices and most pressing challenges. For example, 22% of director and programmer respondents reported that time commitment was a challenge, in comparison to 14% of volunteer responses.

**Case Study: International Visitors Council of Philadelphia**

The International Visitors Council (IVC) of Philadelphia was founded in 1954. IVC is an instructive case study because it is representative of the qualities and challenges of many of the CBMs that responded to the survey. In a city that does not have a great number of internationally focused organizations, IVC fills a gap, connecting Philadelphians with individuals from all over the world. Not only does it host the U.S. Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program, but also administers the City of Philadelphia’s Sister Cities Program. In fact, IVC’s Sister Cities Program was honored on March 27, 2014 by Sister Cities International.

The first meeting the team attended during the trip to Philadelphia was IVC’s “First Thursday,” a networking event the council hosts the first Thursday of every month, allowing Philadelphians to engage with guests from around world. The conversations that the team shared revealed a great deal about IVC. Members of IVC’s young professionals group “Compass” act as hosts during First Thursdays. During the event, they make sure to welcome guests properly and introduce them to other members. Many attendees at the event were from Sister Cities who came to Philadelphia for studies at local universities, word of mouth or heard about the event through their university.

The team’s attendance at the event, and interactions with Compass Diplomats reinforced some of the points that came out in survey responses. By participating in this young professionals group, these millennial volunteers have an opportunity to take on their own projects. Their interpersonal skills, an area that some CBMs felt was lacking in some millennial volunteers, were developed through the interactions they have with international visitors and new guests each First Thursday. Most members of the young professionals group were born overseas, have lived or studied abroad, or speak another language, matching the volunteer motivation responses that we received from council responses.

Events draw many millennial volunteers, as many are employed, but still wanted to be involved in IVC. One IVC office intern, who is not part of Compass or required to assist with First Thursdays, stated that she regularly attends First Thursday, assists with setup and closing because she is interested in networking with individuals of diverse backgrounds.

Besides organizing these events, members of Compass conduct other activities, such as group hosting IVLP visitors and taking visitors to other Philadelphia organizations’ interesting events. Through this group, IVC has found a wonderful way for young professionals to volunteer in a format that is convenient for them.
During discussions with IVC staff, a point was raised about the average age of IVLP groups becoming younger. Young visitors would have expressed interest in meeting with their peers as well as older experts in their field.

The survey revealed that many CBMs said it was difficult for millennials to act as homestay hosts, or to conduct home hospitality because their living quarters might be too small. To address the challenge of low millennial involvement, IVC informs millennials that they could participate in ways similar to what the young professions group has done: hosting visitors at restaurants, group hosting in someone’s home, or taking international visitors around town to interesting sites.

The team conducted meetings with the IVC staff, to learn more about the central research focus of multi-generational relationships and millennial engagement. From conversations with the Executive Vice President, a shift in office volunteer demographics became apparent that was also found to be true in other CBMs as reflected in the survey responses. More offices are using interns or millennial volunteers to support their paid staff. IVC highlighted an issue that sometimes occurs with retirees who act as office volunteers, where they might travel at certain points of the year, leaving gaps in staff coverage at critical moments. Interns in some cases are more predictable; they are committed to work for a set period with a set number of hours.

IVC did not experience a lot of issues in the area of multigenerational relationships. Staff reported that spending a great deal of time together at events during and after work hours helped bring the staff, office volunteer and interns closer together. A refreshing finding from the visit was the variety of duties interns were assigned to complete. Following the trends found in the responses of volunteers and directors on duties of office volunteers and interns, one intern’s work consisted of programming, such as IVLP and helping with the Sister Cities portfolio; sending e-mails; conducting research and then writing and editing. She always felt that her opinions were respected by IVC leadership. From discussions with the intern, it was realized the untapped opportunity of using interns to get others more involved in CBMs. The intern mentioned that she invited friends from her university to First Thursday events, and that a fellow student will be an intern with IVC next semester. Interns can be utilized by councils to get more students from their universities involved in events, escorting groups, etc. Especially in areas where there are not a large number of international organizations, CBMs could use this gap in programming to their advantage.

Throughout the team’s visit, IVC’s work served as a wonderful case study, giving us meaningful insights to enhance our final project findings. We hope that some of the solutions we have mentioned that they have found for problems that appear to be shared by many CBMs can help other CBMs with their own organization strategies in the coming year.

Some of the solutions we have mentioned that they have found for problems that appear to be shared by many CBMs can help other CBMs with their own organization strategies in the coming year.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Directors and Programmers</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
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<td>Time commitment</td>
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<td>Lack of office resources</td>
<td>Lack of work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Turnover</td>
<td>Lack of office resources</td>
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Table 1: Reported Challenges in Recruiting and Retaining Volunteers from Directors and Programmers, and Volunteers

Respondents did agree that time is an issue for volunteers, regardless of age. Younger volunteers, especially students, have academic commitments, which often take precedence over other commitments, while young professionals are concerned with advancing their careers. On the other hand, some older and sometimes retired individuals, desire to enjoy their freedom to travel and relax. Furthermore, responses from the survey showed that many CBMs stated that they value the presence and contributions of the millennial generation.

**Multi-generational Collaboration**

Recent conversation between a Millennial and Baby Boomer:

**Millennial:** People seem to think that young people can only learn from older individuals and do not have anything to contribute.

**Baby Boomer:** That’s true. Young people have to learn everything from older people because young people don’t know anything.

**Millennial:** You know I am part of that generation.

**Baby Boomer:** No you’re not. You know what you’re talking about and you’re educated. That generation has tattoos.

**Millennial:** I have tattoos.

**Baby Boomer:** .......

The above conversation demonstrates that both the non-millennials and millennials need to work on recognizing the contributions each can make and the strength in the differences between them. It also illustrates assumptions that each generation has about one another. Some Baby Boomers believe that the younger generation cannot teach an older generation anything and that they are the sources of knowledge. There is significant value in learning from older generations; as such individuals often have more experience and knowledge than their younger counterparts. However, one’s age should not cancel out one’s ability to contribute to the mission of an organization. This is something that CBMs can take advantage of and harness. Upcoming generations usually look at the world, its problems and an organization’s processes differently than other generations.

When some CBMs consider the contributions of the younger generation, ideas tend to center on technology and social media. The millennial generation can contribute far more than
teaching others about technological advances. Millennials might have solid and new ideas about fundraising events, networking opportunities, program schedules for international visitors. By allowing millennials to become involved in more activities and programming, CBMs will be able experience a new perspective for their organizations and programs.

![CBM Programs for Multi-Generational Collaboration](image)

**Figure 9: Community-Based Member Organizations’ Programs that Encourage Multi-Generational Collaboration**

The findings show that networking functions, volunteer bonding activities, and training programs are considered the most effective tools to enhance multi-generational collaboration. Though extremely important and valuable, mentoring programs were only viewed as effective by 10% of respondents. Networking functions such as First Thursdays in IVC Philadelphia were considered to be the most effective tool, which matches trends found in other survey responses. Millennials enjoy participating in networking functions, and other volunteers enjoy sharing the wealth of their experiences with the next generation of young leaders, so networking functions act as an effective venue for the two groups to meet and strengthen relationships. For example, Northern California World Trade Center hosts an annual Consular Corps Luncheon & Networking Reception that allows participants to meet with distinguished Consuls General, manufacturers, growers, international entrepreneurs, academics, service providers and trade advocates from the public and private sectors in an opportunity to create and promote international business relationships. Similarly, volunteer bonding activities came second for reinforcing multi-generational relationships and collaboration. Despite differences in age, volunteers are connected by their shared interest in international affairs, so just getting them in a room together can sometimes open a door for interesting discussions and group bonding. The CBMs, to strengthen multi-generational relationships/collaboration, could increase the use of

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mentoring and training programs.

In regard to challenges in encouraging multigenerational collaboration, the results from both surveys suggest that the main issue with engaging more young volunteers with the CBMs is time. Millennial volunteers are not always able to dedicate the desired amount of time to the CBMs. Time also relates to the CBMs themselves as they do not always have the staff resources/time to dedicate to training, mentoring, and engaging new volunteers or new interns. Other challenges that were mentioned are: the different skill set of younger volunteers for the tasks assigned; the level of commitment they bring and different expectations and work style. On the issues of different expectations, the results reflect what the literature on multigenerational relationships says about major areas of contention. As Delcampo argues in his book, “Managing the Multi-Generational Workforce from the GI Generation to the Millennials,” different age groups will have different expectations when it comes to the “reward” from the experience. From what we learned from the comments, different expectations refers to the fact that millennial volunteers may expect that they will be able to work on more projects than available, or that they will be able to make use of all of their skills when, again, there may not be urgent projects, or projects that fit their specific skill set.

“Volunteers usually stay three months. It takes one month to train them. So you only get two months of work.”
-CBM Director

Challenges in multi-generational collaboration

As for the main areas in which multigenerational collaboration has been successful, there has been consensus between both groups that communication is the best manner in which CBMs manage multigenerational relationships. The most successful way indicated by directors and volunteers to address collaboration between the different generations is to address issues, and work together to understand each other. Social events are the second most effective avenue by which to engage different generations; this supports one of the previously mentioned findings that stated that networking events are the most popular way of enhancing multigenerational collaboration. Types of social events include workshops, speaker events, and informal gatherings. Lastly, another area that was categorized as a success is the use of universities as resources, in other words partnering with institutions of higher education to engage students as interns or volunteers.
Areas of success in multi-generational collaboration

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

The following bullets identify key findings of this report:

- The importance of building powerful networks- this refers to the significance of word of mouth. Powerful networks can help to ensure that volunteers are sharing their experiences with friends, relatives and associates (networks) in such a way that assists in bringing more interest and volunteers to the area of citizen diplomacy.

- Using word of mouth for recruitment is better served for non-millennials, because 60% of millennial respondents reported that they learned of the CBM’s volunteer opportunities though online searches and/or the CBM’s website.

- There is a small disconnect between the forms of outreach volunteers feel are optimal for millennials and what directors believe are the best methods of outreach to this
group. CBM directors and programmers believe that Facebook is the most effective tool to solicit interest while volunteers report that the best tool is a community event. It was mentioned that community events are often attractive to millennial volunteers and effective in recruiting from this age group because they give individuals an opportunity to “test-drive” working with the CBMs, and also to directly be involved with issues of interest.

- The most popular reasons for volunteering with a CBM on their citizen diplomacy efforts were: 1) educating myself and my family about the world; 2) enhancing and enriching personal development; and 3) expressing values related to altruistic beliefs.

- Millennial volunteers are often assigned research and clerical/administrative tasks, which is likely due to the high participation rate of millennials working as interns and office volunteers. A large number of millennial volunteers reported that once they become more established they would be interested in serving as home hospitality hosts, homestay hosts and professional resource persons. This suggests that the office volunteer program could serve as a training opportunity for future volunteer roles.

**Recommendations**

1. **Local and National Recognition**

   The CBM directors and programmers, and volunteers reported that the best ways to retain volunteers is through recognition and feedback. According to the CBMs, 42% state the best way to retain volunteers is through recognition (Figure 12). This is especially important for millennials because, according to Zogby and Synder Khul, this generation is accustomed to being coddled and rewarded for small and large achievements. Furthermore, an award for young volunteers could encourage them to continue working with their CBM, if their reasons for leaving are not financial, by showing them that their work is valued and makes a difference in their community, just like other volunteers.

   The CBMs and Global Ties U.S. recognize volunteers for their dedication and service at the national and local levels, and so the importance of such recognition is embraced across the network. Nationally, Global Ties U.S. has the Lorinne Emery Citizen Diplomat Volunteer of the Year Award which recognizes excellence in volunteering. Though this award recognizes the contributions of volunteers from all ages, the team recommends creating a network-wide/national award specifically for millennial volunteers to recognize outstanding contributions and dedication. Awards can help individuals know if they are on the right track, and the recognition of hard work can help motivate some to continue on with their work if they are on the verge of quitting. This is represented by the data provided in Figure 12. The directors and programmers, from their wealth experience, identify the value of recognition in the efforts to retain volunteers. Since it does not currently exist, an award can be given to millennial volunteers annually or quarterly, and could also be divided by region. Global Ties U.S. could recognize the millennial volunteer in conjunction with the Lorinne Emery award.

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2. Mentoring Programs

Another possible program CBMs could implement would be a mentoring program for millennial volunteers and interns. Mentoring programs offer the same benefits as networking groups, but on a smaller, and more intimate scale. This will be especially effective because organizing young professionals groups require a significant amount of resources, organizational capacity and staff time. Interns and millennial volunteers can be asked if they would like a mentor for, at the minimum, the duration of their time with the CBM. Both parties could agree to meet at least twice a month, possibly outside of the office. The mentee and mentor can attend CBM events, grab a cup of coffee, have dinner together or go to the amusement park. These activities will help to increase mutual understanding. Joining together members of various generations will also help to strengthen multi-generational relationships. Younger and older generations will then have a platform to learn information from each other (reverse mentoring) and to share experiences which will ultimately strengthen the bond between generations and the CBM.

3. Virtual Internships

The U.S. Department of State and other government agencies use virtual interns to address the demanding workloads and limited space. This program can also be used by CBMs for interns and volunteers. A virtual internship (or employee/volunteer) entails the participant gaining experience while working in a remote professional setting and is not physically present at the job location. This could alleviate some of the reported challenges and stresses associated with recruiting and retaining volunteers such as: work scheduling for millennials and retirees, office space limitations and lack of office equipment (computers, printers, etc). With this option, volunteers and interns can work on their own time and still complete the work that is vital to the

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CBM’s programs and project.

4. Paid Internships

The economic climate often limits millennials from pursuing or remaining with unpaid internships. To help provide paid internships for students it is recommended that Global Ties U.S. develop an online publication on funding internship programs. Possible options for raising funds include: 1) a family funding a special internship in honor of a deceased former member, and 2) reaching out to donors to fund internships and naming the internship after the donor companies. The national office of Global Ties U.S. could fundraise toward this goal, to help CBMs provide paid internships.

5. Millennial Advisory Board

The team suggests the CBMs consider the creation of a millennial advisory board. This group would exist in order to complement the main board of the CBM. The millennial advisory board’s goal would be to help generate ideas about millennial recruitment and activities. An alternative would be to include more millennials on the existing CBM board.

6. Millennial Coordinator Fund Program

This recommendation is directed to Global Ties U.S. and it suggested to be administered by the national office. A millennial coordinator fund program would function in the form of a competition where CBMs submit proposals explaining why a millennial coordinator position would benefit their organization. The proposals would also clarify how a millennial coordinator would function at the CBM. What would be the coordinator’s goals? What resources are available to assist in achieving these goals? Global Ties U.S. would provide the funds for the creation of this temporary position. It may be seen as a type of internship or fellowship within the CBMs network that, while active, can help an organization increase their millennial generation involvement.

7. Lectures at Local Universities by International Visitors

International visitors are increasingly looking for avenues to engage emerging leaders, especially on college and university campuses. Therefore, it is suggested that CBMs establish opportunities for IVLP participants to lecture at local universities (if such an endeavor fits in with the established itinerary and subject matter). It is the hope that having IVLP visitors lecture at local universities can help generate interest among students about the field of international relations or more specifically citizen and cultural diplomacy, while simultaneously motivating them to volunteer with the CBMs. It is also represents another way to engage with the community and establish the CBMs as the premier organizations for international affairs in their communities.

8. International Affairs Roundtable

Students interested in International Affairs, international students and students returning from a study abroad experience could participate in a roundtable discussion. The roundtable discussion(s) would be organized by the CBMs. The aim is to create a bridge between the
student population in the community, and the staff and volunteers at the local CBM. Suggested topics include: adapting to U.S. culture, citizen diplomacy, cross-cultural communication, etc. The hope is that by creating this space for exchange, the CBMs can create a strong connection with the students early on that might lead to them becoming volunteers in the near future. It aims to help younger individuals make sense of their global role and how they can start making a change by joining the work of the CBMs.

**CONCLUSION**

These findings illustrate that CBMs are interested in, and engaging in some activities to recruit and attract younger volunteers. The best practices shared, and recommendations given in this report are meant to suggest areas that CBMs might consider to support or improve their engagement with a more diverse age group to help them carry out vital citizen diplomacy work. Such best practices and recommendations should help CBMs plan activities that will engage and motivate millennial volunteers, and create more opportunities for various generations to work together and create a greater impact within the organization and communities. Although the findings and recommendations presented here are based on the results of two surveys of a small portion of the Global Ties network, the team hopes all organizations can benefit from what has been shared as they consider how to increase their impact and continually create global ties between their communities and the rest of the world.
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APPENDIX A

TEAM BIOGRAPHIES

Renée Callender

Renée Callender is from New York City, New York. She completed her undergraduate degree at Seton Hall University in New Jersey in 2012, studying Diplomacy and International Relations, with minors in Russian and Women's Studies, and gained a certificate in Russian and Eastern European Studies. While completing her undergraduate degree, Renée studied abroad in St. Petersburg, Russia through the American Institute for Foreign Studies for a semester in Spring 2011, where she also lived with a host family.

While a student at Seton Hall, Renée worked on campus throughout her four years for the Information Technology Department, repairing University distributed laptops in one capacity and later editing the university website. Renée also completed internships during the summer. She worked for Mercy Corps’ New York Action Center with the coordinator of the Global Citizen Corps program in 2010, and the Secretary’s Office of Global Women’s Issues (S/GWI) at U.S. Department of State in 2011. She rejoined S/GWI as an intern in July 2012 and continues to work there on the gender-based violence portfolio. Renée is currently a graduate student in the International Politics program at the School of International Service in American University, focusing on Human Rights and Africa.

Saramarie García

Saramarie García was born and raised in San Juan, Puerto Rico. She graduated from the University of Puerto Rico-Río Piedras with a B.A. in Communications focused on Public Relations and Advertising in 2009. Because of her interest in different cultures, she decided to travel through Europe for one and a half months in the summer of 2010. This experience developed her interest in international relations even further.

After this trip, she served as an intern at the U.S. Department of State, in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA), Office of Alumni Affairs from June to September 2011. During her internship, she had the opportunity to live at the International Student House (ISH), where she was part of an amazing cultural exchange experience. The internship with ECA and her residency at ISH led her to become interested in
the field of public/cultural diplomacy, and pursue graduate study in this field. She has also interned at the Institute of International Education (IIE) in the Humphrey Fellowship Program division and is currently an intern in the EducationUSA division. Saramarie is a second year graduate student in the School of International Service at American University, focusing on Public/Cultural Diplomacy and International Exchanges. She speaks fluent Spanish, knows basic French, and studies Korean given her focus on the region of Asia.

Serge Okogo

Born in Libreville, Gabon, West Central Africa, Serge lost his hearing at the age three. He can read, speak, and write French, and is fluent in American and Gabonese Sign Language. Serge also reads, writes and speaks Obamba, his native language, and English. His activism for the deaf community started in October 1999, while he was still living in Gabon. He served as president of a national association that advocates on behalf of people who are deaf and, later, as vice president of a federation that connects disability organizations across the country. Serge has served as the International Deaf Partnership (IDP) Director for Francophone Africa and Latin America since Fall 2007. He managed a camp for deaf children in Gabon, from May to August 2008 and in Mali, from May to August 2010. Additionally, he volunteered in Haiti in March 2011 and May 2012 on a project to improve educational programs at the Institute Montfort and St. Vincent’s Center for Handicapped Children in Port-AU-Prince. Serge participated in the Clinton Global Initiative University Conference in Florida in April 2010 and again in San Diego in April 2011. He received a distinction from the Clinton Global Initiative University as a Global Citizen in March 2012. He graduated in May 2012 from Gallaudet University with double majors in Business Administration, concentration in Global Business, and International Relations. From May to August 2012, Serge interned with the United Nations in New York City. He also interned with the Embassy of the Gabonese Republic in Washington, DC in 2013. He was an associate researcher for the Center for Research on Collaboratories and Technology Enhanced Learning Communities (COTELCO) and Institute on Disability and Public Policy (IDPP) from 2012-2013 at the School of International Service (SIS), American University. Serge will receive his Master’s degree in Ethics, Peace, and Global Affairs in May 2014 from American University.
Kelley Whitson was born and raised outside of Washington, DC in Prince George’s County, Maryland. She graduated from Spelman College in Atlanta, Georgia with a B.A. in International Studies in December 2009. While studying at Spelman, Kelley worked for the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Georgia Division. She also studied with the Institute for Study Abroad-Butler University program in Lima, Peru where she attended Pontificia Universidad Catolica del Peru; and volunteered at La Casa de Panchita. She was awarded a Fulbright in 2010 to serve as an English Teaching Assistant at a secondary school in Terengganu, Malaysia from January to November 2011. Kelley was named a Charles B. Rangel International Affairs Graduate Fellow in 2012. As a result, she interned for Congressman Steny Hoyer and the House of Representatives, Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific from May to August 2012, and with the U.S. Embassy in Accra, Ghana from May to July 2013. Kelley will graduate from American University with a Master’s in International Development and a concentration in Education in May 2014. Once she finishes, she will assume her duties as a U.S. Department of State Foreign Service Officer in June 2014.
APPENDIX B

Survey on Volunteer Engagement and Multi-Generational Collaboration (Directors and Programmers)

1) Name of Organization

2) How many volunteers, in total, work at your organization?

3) What roles do your volunteers typically play? Check all that apply.
   - Board member
   - Homestay host
   - Home hospitality host
   - Professional resource person
   - Programmer
   - Office volunteer
   - Event coordinator
   - Driver
   - Not applicable
   - Other:

4) What duties are most frequently assigned to your volunteers? Check all that apply.
   - Clerical/Administrative
   - Research
   - Writing and editing
   - Fundraising
   - Outreach
   - Not applicable
   - Other:

5) What are your 3 major challenges in recruiting and retaining volunteers? Please list in order of importance (i.e. time commitment, retention, low involvement of millennial volunteers, etc.), with 1 being the biggest challenge.

6) What are your 3 major successes in recruiting and retaining volunteers? Please list in order of importance (i.e. retention, volunteers encourage others to volunteer, high involvement of millennial volunteers, etc.), with 1 being the most effective.

7) Which of the following programs does your council utilize to strengthen multi-generational relationships/collaboration? Check all that apply.
● Mentoring program (includes reverse mentoring)
● Volunteer bonding activities (retreats, potluck, brown bag lunches, community service etc.)
● Training programs
● Networking functions
● Not applicable
● Other:

8) What are your 3 major challenges in addressing multi-generational collaboration? Please list in order of importance (i.e. finding age diversity, handling different work patterns and skill sets, different expectations, etc.), with 1 being the biggest challenge.

9) What are your 3 major successes in addressing multi-generational collaboration? Please list in order of importance (i.e. work retreats, volunteering together as an office, constant communication with staff to address any concerns, etc.), with 1 being the most effective.

10) How many millennial volunteers commit time to your organization annually?
   ● 1-15
   ● 16-31
   ● 32+

11) What outreach tools does your council use to solicit interest from millennials to volunteer and/or support your organization? Check all that apply.
   ● Facebook
   ● Twitter
   ● Pinterest
   ● Tumblr
   ● YouTube
   ● Regular community events
   ● Events geared toward young professionals
   ● Website
   ● Council newsletter
   ● Former volunteers
   ● Other:

12) Of the tools you checked above, which three are the most effective in soliciting interest from millennials to volunteer with your organization? Please rank your responses, with 1 being the most effective.

13) What roles do your millennial volunteers typically play? Check all that apply.
   ● Homestay host
● Home hospitality host
● Professional resource person
● Programmer
● Office volunteer
● Event coordinator
● Board member
● Driver
● Not applicable
● Other:

14) If you use millennial volunteers to assist in the office, what duties do they perform most often? Check all that apply.
   ● Clerical/Administrative
   ● Research
   ● Writing and editing
   ● Fundraising
   ● Outreach
   ● Not applicable
   ● Other:

15) Do you use any of the following programs to engage millennials in citizen diplomacy efforts?
    Check all that apply.
    ● Volunteer program
    ● Internship program
    ● Young professionals group
    ● High school program
    ● Not applicable
    ● Other:

16) Which programs/practices have produced the best results in engaging millennial volunteers?
    Please rank your responses, with 1 being the most effective.

17) Do you have any further suggestions or comments on answers to previous questions?
APPENDIX C

Survey on Volunteer Engagement in the Local Councils (Volunteers)

1) Name of Organization for which you volunteer your time:

2) Please select your age range:
   - Under 21
   - 22-35
   - 36+

3) Are you currently in school? If so, what type of institution are you attending?
   - Post-graduate institution
   - 4-year college or university
   - Community college
   - Vocational school
   - Not applicable
   - Other:

4) To give us a better understanding of why you are committing your time to the CBM, please briefly describe your international experiences prior to becoming a volunteer.

5) In total, how long have you been a volunteer in the Global Ties network? (This includes volunteer experiences at other councils and short term experiences such as home hospitality host).
   - Less than one year
   - 1-2 years
   - 2-5 years
   - 5+ years

6) How did you learn about this council's volunteer opportunities? Please check all that apply.
   - Council website
   - Google
   - Facebook
   - Twitter
   - Newspaper
   - Volunteer fair
   - From a friend/ Word of mouth
   - Other:

7) What attracted you to become involved in the work of this CBM? Please check all that apply.
● Developing and enhancing one’s career
● Enhancing and enriching personal development
● Learning new skills and practicing underutilized abilities
● Expressing values related to altruistic beliefs
● Educating my family and myself about the world
● Improving the US image abroad
● Contributing to the economic development of my community
● Following in the footsteps of my relatives
● Completing a school community service responsibility
● Other:

8) What roles do you typically play? Please check all that apply.
● Board member
● Homestay host
● Home hospitality host
● Professional resource person
● Programmer
● Office volunteer
● Event Coordinator
● Driver
● Not applicable
● Other:

9) If you are an office volunteer or intern, what duties are most frequently assigned to you? Please check all that apply.
● Clerical/ Administrative
● Research
● Writing and editing
● Fundraising
● Outreach
● Hosting visitors
● Not applicable
● Other:

10) Would you like to contribute to the council in other ways?
● Yes
● No

11) Please explain your answer to Question 10 here.

12) As a volunteer, are you given projects to handle on your own?
13) Please explain your answer to Question 12 here.

14) What outreach tools does your council use to recruit and communicate with volunteers? Please check all that apply.
   - Facebook
   - Twitter
   - Pinterest
   - Tumblr
   - YouTube
   - Regular community events
   - Events geared toward young professionals
   - Website
   - Council newsletter
   - Former volunteers
   - Other:

15) Of the tools you checked above, which three are the most effective in soliciting interest from potential volunteers to work with this council? Please rank your responses, with 1 being the most effective.

16) Does your council ask you to engage in outreach to potential volunteers in your area? *
   - Yes
   - No
   - Not applicable

17) If so, what type of outreach do you conduct?

18) What, in your opinion, are this council's 3 major challenges in retaining volunteers?

19) What, in your opinion, are this council's 3 major successes in retaining volunteers?

20) Which of the following programs does your council utilize to strengthen multi-generational relationships/collaboration? Please check all that apply.
   - Mentoring program (includes reverse mentoring)
   - Volunteer bonding activities (retreats, potluck, brown bag lunches, community service, etc.)
   - Training programs
● Networking functions
● Not applicable
● Other:

21) Does this council use any of the following programs to engage millennials (individuals under 35) in citizen diplomacy efforts? Please check all that apply.
● Volunteer program
● Internship program
● Young professionals group
● School programs
● Other:

22) What, in your opinion, are your CBM’s 3 major challenges in addressing multi-generational collaboration? Please list in order of importance (i.e. finding age diversity, handling different work patterns and skill sets, varying expectations, etc.), with 1 being the biggest challenge.

23) What, in your opinion, are your CBM’s 3 major successes in addressing multi-generational collaboration? Please list in order of importance (i.e. work retreats, constant communication with staff to address any concerns, etc.), with 1 being the most effective.

24) Do you believe your suggestions and recommendations are respected by members of different generations?
● Always
● Sometimes
● Rarely
● Never

25) Do you have any further suggestions or comments on answers to previous questions?

26) Do you have any recommendations on how councils can improve volunteer engagement and/or multi-generational collaboration?
Interview Questions for the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia

1) What drew you to IVC Philadelphia?

2) How did you become interested in international affairs and international exchange?

3) How long have you been working/volunteering here?

4) How does this council define “volunteer” and “intern”? What are the similarities and differences?

5) How many volunteers do you have?
6) On average how many of your volunteers are 35 and/or under?

7) What duties are most frequently assigned to your volunteers?

8) How are volunteers recruited to this council?

9) Have you faced challenges and notable successes with recruiting and retaining volunteers, especially from the millennial generation?

10) What are some programs that have served to increase/improve volunteer engagement? Multi-generational collaboration?

11) What has proven most successful in encouraging multi-generational collaboration?

12) What volunteer opportunities do you think are most attractive to potential volunteers from the millennial generation?

13) What outreach tools does your council use to solicit interest from millennials to volunteer and/or support your organization?

14) Did you come on as a staff member, or did you start as a volunteer and transitioned into your new position?

15) Have you had any opportunities for career development during your time at IVC?

16) What has been your experience with volunteer engagement? Multi-generational collaboration?

17) When you have ideas that can contribute to the furthering of the council’s mission, do you believe your opinions respected?
18) Have you had concerns about working with individuals from different generations in a professional environment? What did you do to address those concerns? Did the council assist you in addressing those concerns (i.e. pair you with a mentor, training, organize outings)?

19) What has been the most effective method (s) in encouraging multi-generational collaboration?

20) What has been the least effective method (s) in encouraging multi-generational collaboration?

21) What kind of work/projects/roles are you typically assigned?

22) Do you volunteer to do work outside of your assigned responsibilities? How often?

23) Do you believe that you have learned skills that can assist you later in your career?

24) What skills have you learned as a result of your internship at the International Visitor’s Council of Philadelphia?

25) Do you wish to remain involved with IVC/ Global Ties network once you have completed your internship? If so, what position would you ideally like to hold? If not, where would you like to intern/work?

26) Would you recommend this internship/volunteer opportunity to a peer?

27) When you have ideas that can contribute to the furthering of the council’s mission, do you believe your opinions respected?

28) Have you had concerns about working with individuals from different generations in a professional environment? What did you do to address those concerns? Did the council assist you in addressing those concerns (i.e. pair you with a mentor, training, organize outings)?
APPENDIX E

Additional Resources


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