



15 Years of Impact on American Communities

How a U.S. exchange investment strengthened
American host institutions, communities, businesses,
and strategic partnerships



Abstract

For 15 years, the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (Global UGRAD-Pakistan) has brought talented Pakistani undergraduates to U.S. colleges and universities for semester-long academic exchange. This assessment examines a dimension of impact often undermeasured in international exchange: the concrete benefits generated for Americans and American communities. Drawing on program data, alumni and host surveys, focus groups, interviews, and program records, the assessment finds that Global UGRAD-Pakistan strengthened U.S. host institutions, expanded volunteer service through organizations serving American communities, built durable relationships between Americans and Pakistani alumni, supported American business and innovation pathways, and contributed to long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation. Together, these findings show how a U.S. Government exchange investment can deliver domestic benefits while advancing American security, prosperity, and strategic partnerships.

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About the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (Global UGRAD-Pakistan)

Global UGRAD-Pakistan is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by IREX. Since 2010, the program has provided emerging Pakistani undergraduate leaders from communities across Pakistan with one semester of non-degree academic study at U.S. colleges and universities. Through coursework, community service, cultural exchange, and leadership development, participants strengthen academic, career-preparedness, and practical leadership skills while building direct relationships with Americans. The program also benefits U.S. host institutions and communities by bringing Pakistani students into American classrooms, campuses, and local organizations, where they contribute through service, share perspectives on Pakistan, build workforce-relevant skills with American peers, and form relationships that support long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.

About the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA)

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs' (ECA) mission is to create lasting people-to-people ties that make America stronger, safer, and more prosperous. ECA programs increase mutual understanding between the people of the United States and the people of other countries through educational, professional, and cultural exchanges. Exchange programs strengthen the national security of the United States through improved foreign relations, support U.S. international leadership, and provide a broad range of domestic benefits by breaking down barriers and by investing in American communities and organizations.

About IREX

IREX is a global solutions provider that partners with communities, institutions, governments, the private sector, and local organizations to cultivate leaders, expand access to education, and create economic opportunity. IREX designs and implements programs that strengthen education systems, equip young people and leaders with practical skills, advance innovation, and build durable institutional and community partnerships. With deep experience in international education, leadership development, higher education partnerships, workforce readiness, digital innovation, and alumni engagement, IREX delivers practical, evidence-informed solutions that help people and institutions thrive. Across its work, IREX emphasizes effective implementation, responsible stewardship of resources, and measurable results for individuals, institutions, and communities.

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Executive Summary

Launched in 2010 by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Global Undergraduate Exchange Program in Pakistan (Global UGRAD-Pakistan) has provided 2,611 Pakistani undergraduates with semester-long academic programs at U.S. colleges and universities. Over 15 years, the program placed participants at 236 host institutions in 221 communities across 47 states and Washington, D.C., creating sustained opportunities for Pakistani students and Americans to learn, serve, collaborate, and build relationships.

Pakistan has long been a consequential U.S. partner in a region central to American security, economic, and diplomatic interests. Global UGRAD-Pakistan was designed to invest in talented young Pakistanis from communities across the country, strengthening their leadership, technical, academic, and community engagement skills while building direct experience with American institutions, principles, and communities. Fifteen years later, the program's alumni continue to carry those experiences into their home communities, helping shape perceptions of the United States and supporting long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.

This assessment examines a dimension of exchange impact that is often undermeasured: how this U.S. Government investment generated concrete benefits for Americans and the U.S. communities that hosted Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants. The findings show how the program contributed to a stronger, safer, and more prosperous America by strengthening U.S. host institutions, contributing nearly 59,000 volunteer service hours impacting over 400,000 Americans, building durable relationships with Pakistani alumni, supporting American business and innovation pathways, and advancing long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.

The evidence also suggests that these outcomes were not incidental. They were enabled by a program model that combined merit-based selection, academic study, leadership development, community service, structured cultural exchange, host institution support, and sustained alumni engagement. Host advisors, alumni, and program administrators consistently described these elements as central to the program's ability to generate benefits beyond the individual participant experience.

AI and Robotics Innovation: Global UGRAD-Pakistan Alumnus Delivers Value for American Companies

Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus Muhammad Haseeb has applied AI and machine learning to strengthen American business performance. As a Google software engineer, **he designed and implemented a machine-ranking algorithm estimated to generate \$3.6 million in annual revenue.** At Afiniti, a U.S.-based software and data firm, he invented a clustering algorithm that improved efficiency and led to a U.S. patent. **He also applied natural language processing techniques to improve Home Depot supply chain performance by 10%.**

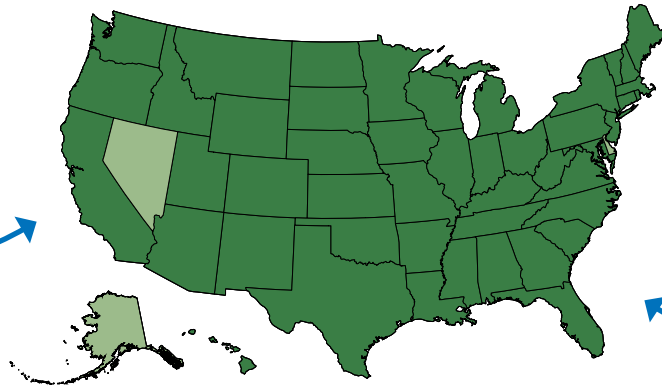
Haseeb studied at Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey, where work on an autonomous vehicle project first sparked his interest in AI and computer vision. His story illustrates how Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni can contribute to American innovation, productivity, and technology-sector competitiveness.



Global UGRAD-Pakistan by the Numbers

2,611 Pakistani participants completed semester-long academic programs in the United States.

236 U.S. Host colleges and universities in **221** American communities participated across **47** states and Washington, D.C.



\$61.3 million was spent in the United States, representing nearly **99%** of total program expenses.

Participants contributed **58,713** **volunteer service hours** impacting over **400,000** individuals through organizations serving American communities.



Participants volunteered with more than **2,400 U.S. organizations and initiatives.**



93% of participants departed the United States with more favorable views of Americans.



91% of alumni reported changing perceptions of the United States in their home communities.

Introduction and Background

For 15 years, Global UGRAD-Pakistan brought Pakistani undergraduate students into American colleges, universities, and communities for a semester of academic study, community service, cultural exchange, and leadership development. The program's participant-centered model created direct engagement between Pakistani students and Americans in classrooms, host institutions, local organizations, and community settings across the United States.

Global UGRAD-Pakistan has long been understood as an investment in Pakistani students and in the U.S.-Pakistan relationship. Participants returned home with strengthened academic, leadership, career-preparedness, and community engagement skills, as well as direct experience with American institutions, principles, and communities. Many also sustained relationships with Americans after the program, creating long-term ties that supported continued exchange, collaboration, and improved understanding of the United States in their home communities.

This assessment examines the other side of that investment: the domestic return generated for Americans, American institutions, and American communities that hosted participants. While international exchange programs often measure participant outcomes and alumni impact abroad, their effects on American students, faculty, host institutions, local organizations, businesses, and communities are less frequently examined.

The assessment asks: **How did Global UGRAD-Pakistan affect Americans, American institutions, and American communities?** The Assessment Approach section that follows describes the contribution-focused methodology, evidence sources, use of AI-assisted synthesis, and limitations that informed the findings.

This report begins by defining “U.S. impact” for Global UGRAD-Pakistan, drawing on input from Americans and program stakeholders closely connected to the program. It then presents seven key findings that explain how the program generated benefits for U.S. host institutions, local communities, American students and faculty, alumni relationships with Americans, business and innovation pathways, and long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation. The report concludes with recommendations for future academic exchange programs seeking to intentionally design for, measure, and strengthen benefits for Americans as well as international participants.





Global UGRAD-Pakistan at a Glance

	Sponsored by the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in implementation by IREX.
	Provided one semester of non-degree academic study at accredited U.S. colleges and universities.
	Combined coursework, leadership development, community service, cultural exchange, and alumni engagement.
	Connected Pakistani participants with American students, faculty, host advisors, families, local organizations, and community members.
	Supported continued alumni engagement through professional development, networking, and community development initiatives in Pakistan.

Assessment Approach

This assessment is a contribution-focused learning exercise designed to identify credible patterns of U.S. impact from 15 years of Global UGRAD-Pakistan implementation. It is not a causal evaluation and does not claim that the program alone produced every outcome described. Instead, it examines how program activities, participant experiences, host community engagement, and alumni relationships contributed to outcomes for Americans, American institutions, and American communities.

The assessment draws on prior evaluations and program data; alumni, participant, host, and stakeholder surveys; program records and reports; focus group discussions with U.S. host advisors; targeted alumni questionnaires and interviews; and interviews with program administrators in the United States and Pakistan. Findings were developed by identifying patterns across multiple sources and grounding claims in available data, direct participant and host perspectives, and documented program records.

IREX used secure AI-assisted synthesis to support review of open-ended survey responses and focus group materials. AI-supported outputs were reviewed, validated, and interpreted by human evaluators, however AI was not used to generate findings.

The findings should be read with limitations in mind. Some data were not originally collected with U.S. impact as the primary focus, survey respondents may be more highly engaged than the broader alumni population, and interviews and focus groups may reflect response or desirability bias. Appendix 4 provides additional detail on the working definition of U.S. impact and limitations.



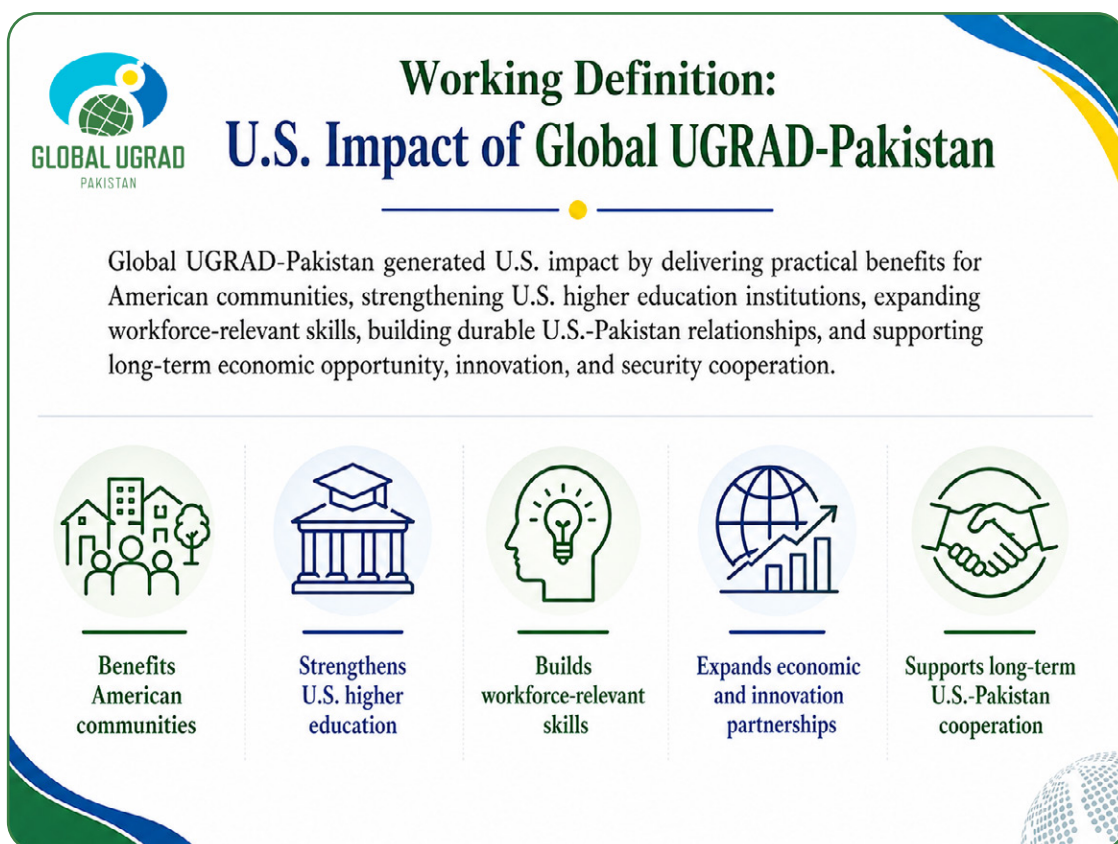
What We Mean by U.S. Impact

International exchange programs often measure outcomes for international participants and their home communities. That perspective is important, but it captures only part of the value created by exchange programs funded by the United States. This assessment examines a complementary question: what changes occur for Americans, American institutions, and American communities when they host and collaborate with Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants?

To guide this assessment, IREX developed a working definition of U.S. impact for Global UGRAD-Pakistan, informed by host advisors, community partners, friendship families, alumni, program administrators, and representatives from the U.S. Department of State, including the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan. Their input helped identify the ways Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated value for American students, faculty, host institutions, local organizations, businesses, and communities.

For this assessment, **U.S. impact** refers to the ways Global UGRAD-Pakistan strengthened American institutions and communities; built skills, relationships, and trust between Americans and Pakistanis; contributed to American innovation, business, and workforce-relevant capacities; and supported long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation. The full working definition is provided in Appendix 4.

This definition was used as an organizing lens for the assessment. It guided the review of program data, survey responses, focus group discussions, interviews, and alumni stories, and helped identify how Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated domestic benefits for Americans while supporting long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.



Key Findings: How Global UGRAD-Pakistan Generated U.S. Impact

The following key findings apply this definition of U.S. impact to 15 years of Global UGRAD-Pakistan implementation. Together, they show how a semester-long academic exchange generated domestic benefits for American institutions and communities, built workforce-relevant skills, supported durable relationships between Americans and Pakistanis, and contributed to long-term economic, innovation, and strategic partnerships.

The graphic below summarizes the findings. The sections that follow examine each finding in more detail, drawing on program data, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and alumni stories.



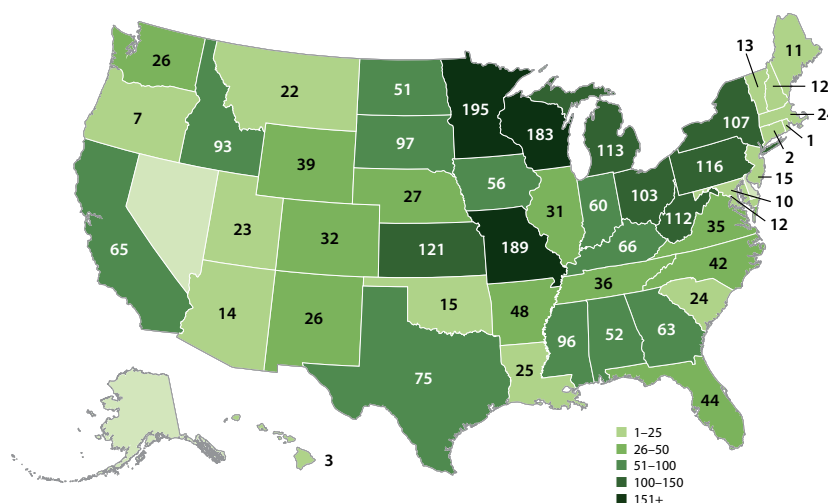
KEY FINDING: NATIONAL REACH, BROAD U.S. COMMUNITY IMPACT

Global UGRAD-Pakistan's U.S. impact began with the breadth and depth of its reach. Over 15 years, the program connected **2,611 Pakistani participants** from every region of Pakistan with **236 U.S. host colleges and universities** in **221 American communities** across **47 states and Washington, D.C.** This reach created repeated opportunities for American students, faculty, host advisors, friendship families, local organizations, and community members to learn, serve, collaborate, and build relationships with Pakistani participants.



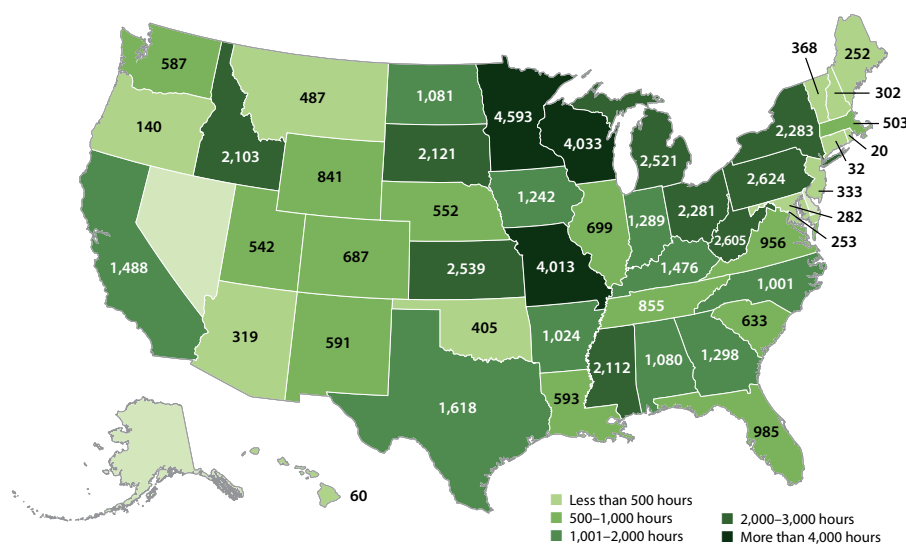
The program's U.S. footprint extended well beyond major urban centers. Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants lived, studied, and volunteered in a wide range of American communities, including small towns, regional campuses, community colleges, public universities, and private institutions. **78.4% of participants were placed outside major cities, and at more than one-third of host institutions,** Global UGRAD-Pakistan students were the only students from Pakistan on campus. This placement model expanded direct U.S.-Pakistan engagement to American communities that may otherwise have had limited contact with Pakistani students, perspectives, and experiences.

**Global UGRAD-Pakistan
Participant Placements by State 2010–2025**



Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants were not simply visitors to American communities; the program invested directly in those communities and institutions. Nearly all program funds were spent in the United States, with **\$61.3 million spent domestically**, representing nearly **99% of total program expenses**. Participants also contributed **58,713 volunteer service hours impacting over 400,000 individuals** through organizations serving American communities and volunteered with more than **2,400 U.S. organizations and initiatives**. These contributions supported American institutions, businesses, local organizations, and community services while giving participants direct experience with American traditions of service, civic engagement, and local problem-solving.

Global UGRAD-Pakistan Volunteer Service Hours by State 2010–2025

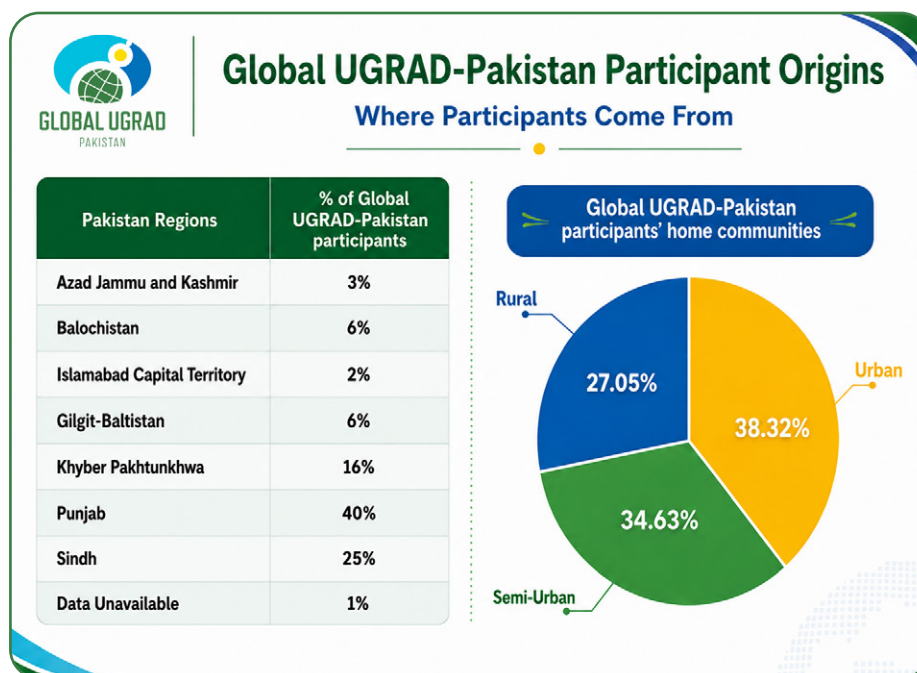


The volunteer hours map shows how this community investment reached American communities across the country. While placement data show where participants studied, the service map shows where they gave time and effort to organizations serving local needs. Together, the two maps demonstrate that Global UGRAD-Pakistan’s U.S. impact was not confined to campus life; it extended into local service organizations, community institutions, and civic spaces across the United States.

“Global UGRAD-Pakistan students volunteered at our local assisted living facility, where residents learned about Pakistan and experienced their culture of service and welcome. By the end of the semester, the Senior Center called to ask, ‘When can we have another student?’”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

The program’s broad U.S. reach was mirrored by its reach across Pakistan. Participants came from every region of Pakistan, including areas outside major urban and elite networks. This breadth gave American host communities direct engagement with Pakistani students from a wide range of geographic, academic, and community backgrounds. It also meant that alumni returned to communities across Pakistan with direct experience of American people, institutions, and local communities.



The United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan described Global UGRAD-Pakistan as unique among the educational and cultural exchange programs it supports because of the breadth of participant backgrounds and the program’s popularity across Pakistan. One United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan (USEFP) representative noted that the program drew students “from all over Pakistan,” including “very far-flung areas,” and reported that the program received between **30,000 and 40,000 applications each year** in recent years.

This dual reach matters for U.S. impact. In the United States, Global UGRAD-Pakistan brought Pakistani participants into communities across the country, including places where a participant may have been the only Pakistani student on campus. In Pakistan, it helped ensure that alumni returned to a wide range of home communities with direct experience of American institutions, communities, and people. A 2023 outcomes study of U.S. exchange alumni in Pakistan found that rural participants were more likely than participants from larger cities and suburbs to report more positive views of Americans, the U.S. government, U.S. policies, and U.S.-Pakistan ties after their exchange.

“The biggest impact is that participants came from all over Pakistan, including very far-flung areas. It was one of the most popular programs among students here. In recent years, we received between 30,000 and 40,000 applications each year.”

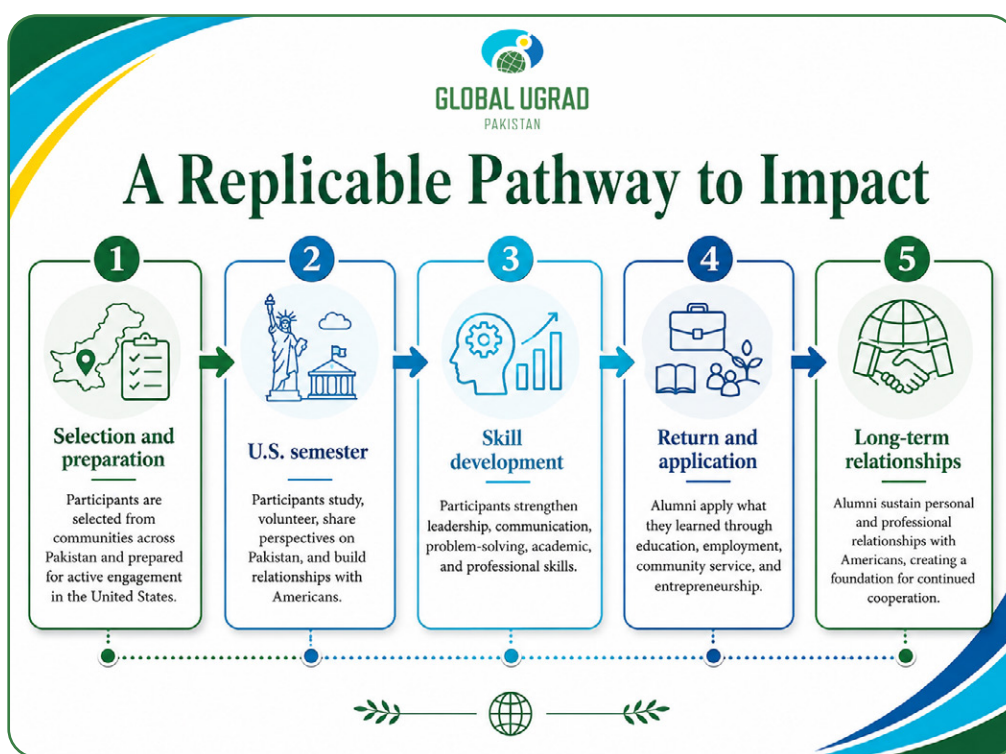
– USEFP representative



Together, the reach data, placement model, domestic spending, volunteer service, and geographic breadth across both countries show that Global UGRAD-Pakistan’s impact was national in scope and local in practice. By connecting Americans and Pakistanis in communities across both countries, the program created the foundation for direct engagement, local service, trust-building, and sustained relationships that support long-term U.S. interests.

KEY FINDING: CONSISTENT, REPLICABLE PATHWAYS TO IMPACT

Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated impact through a consistent and replicable pathway. While each participant's experience was distinct, alumni and American host advisors described recurring patterns across cohorts: participants arrived prepared to engage, built relationships through coursework, community service, and cultural exchange, strengthened leadership and career-preparedness skills, and sustained connections with Americans after returning to Pakistan. These patterns suggest that the program's impact was not incidental. It emerged from a model that combined merit-based selection, academic study, leadership development, community service, structured cultural exchange, host institution support, and sustained alumni engagement.



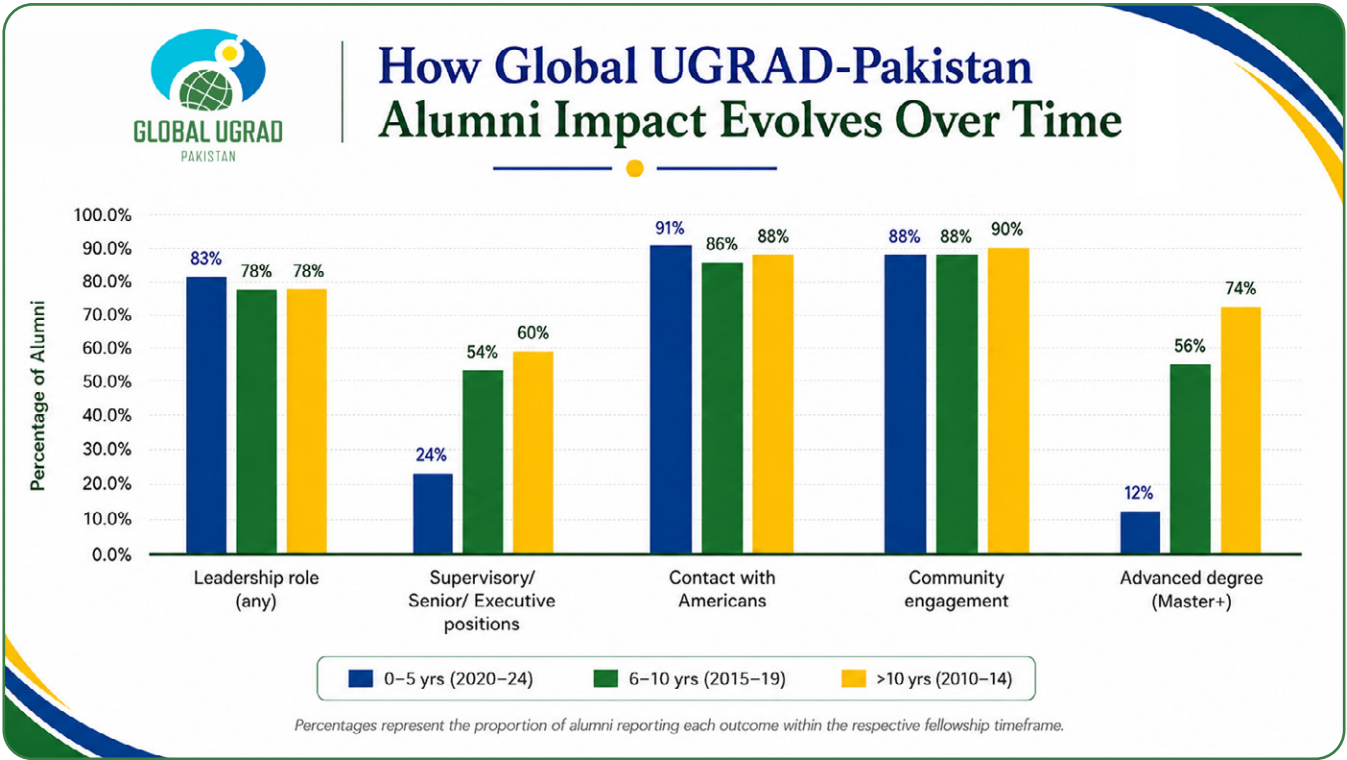
Participants and hosts described this pathway in different ways, but the core sequence was consistent. Host advisors emphasized that Global UGRAD-Pakistan students were highly engaged from the beginning of their U.S. semester, often seeking out volunteer opportunities, campus activities, and ways to share their culture within the first weeks of arrival. Alumni, in turn, consistently credited the program with strengthening confidence, leadership, communication, time management, community service, and professional direction.



“The students are some of the most active people on campus — not only because it is part of the program, but because they want to be. They want to become leaders.”

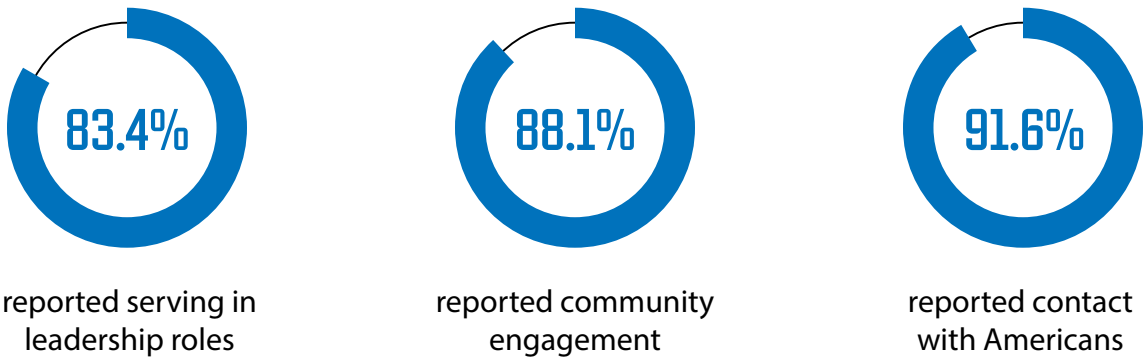
— U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

Survey data also show that these pathways continued well beyond the U.S. semester. Alumni reported sustained leadership, community engagement, advanced education, and relationships with Americans years after completing Global UGRAD-Pakistan. Among 2025 Annual Alumni Survey respondents, **89.4%** reported that they were still in contact with Americans they met during Global UGRAD-Pakistan, and more than **76.9%** communicated at least monthly with American friends or colleagues. The survey also found that alumni maintained high levels of community engagement across cohort groups, including **88%** among respondents who completed the program within the past five years, **89%** among respondents six to ten years out, and **90%** among respondents more than ten years out.

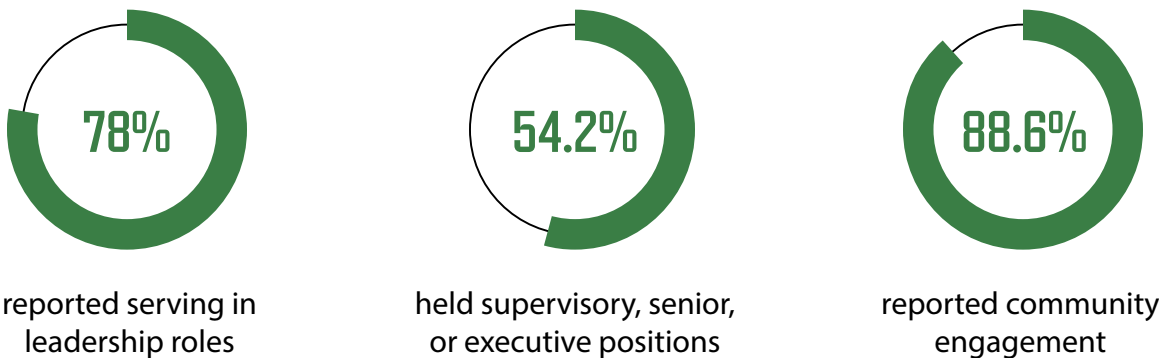


Alumni survey data show that Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni continue to report leadership roles, community engagement, advanced education, and contact with Americans years after completing the program. These patterns suggest that the program’s effects continue to develop over time rather than ending with the U.S. semester.

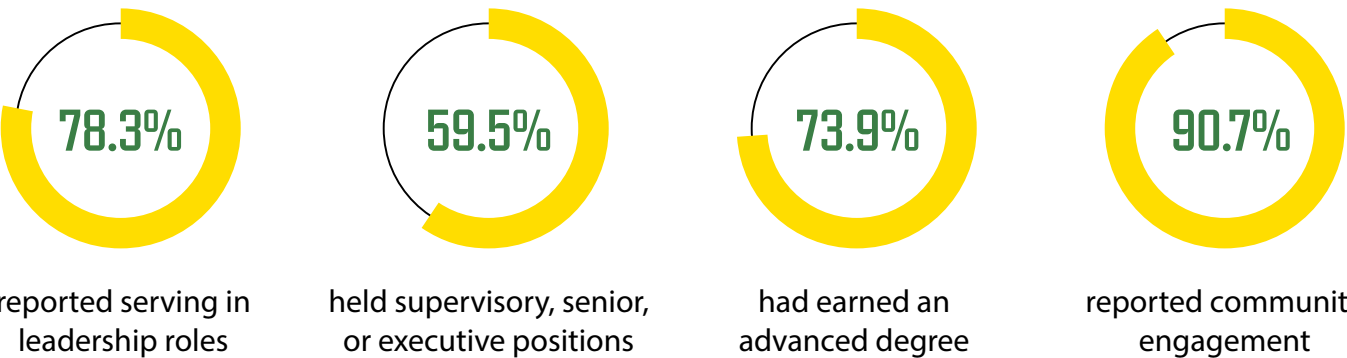
0–5 years after program:



6–10 years after program:



More than 10 years after program:



This long-term pattern is important because it shows that Global UGRAD-Pakistan’s impact was not limited to short-term participant satisfaction or immediate post-program enthusiasm. Alumni continued to apply the skills, relationships, and perspectives developed through the program as they advanced in their education, careers, and community roles. The 2025 Annual Alumni Survey shows that **95.6%** of alumni reported that leadership skills and knowledge from the program positively affected their educational success, **94.1%** reported that those leadership skills enabled them to make a difference in their community, and **96.5%** credited program leadership skills with contributing to significant career development.



The consistency of these outcomes across alumni cohorts points to the value of the program model. Global UGRAD-Pakistan did not simply place students in U.S. classrooms; it created a structured experience that encouraged participants to engage with American peers, faculty, host families, and community organizations while building practical leadership skills. The same core elements — preparation, academic study, service, cultural exchange, and sustained alumni engagement — appear throughout the evidence as drivers of long-term impact.

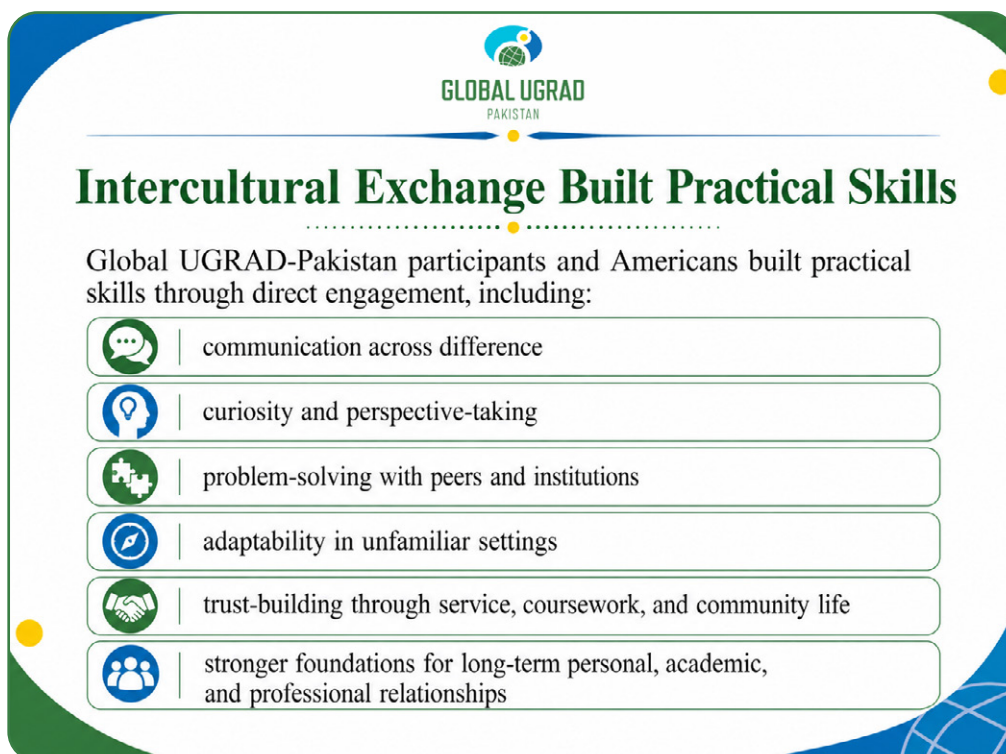
This finding matters for U.S. impact because replicable pathways create durable returns. When participants consistently build skills, sustain relationships with Americans, and continue applying their experiences after returning home, the benefits of the exchange extend beyond a single semester. They support long-term ties between Americans and Pakistanis, strengthen alumni leadership and community engagement, and create the conditions for continued educational, professional, and institutional cooperation.

“Global UGRAD-Pakistan played a major role in my professional and community accomplishments by equipping me with essential academic, leadership, and intercultural skills. The program enhanced my confidence, critical thinking, and ability to work in diverse environments, which directly supported my academic progress, research engagement, and community involvement.”

– Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus

KEY FINDING: TRUST AND PRACTICAL SKILLS THROUGH INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE

Intercultural exchange was not a secondary outcome of Global UGRAD-Pakistan; it was one of the program's core pathways to U.S. impact. Direct engagement with Pakistani participants helped American students, faculty, staff, host families, and community partners build curiosity, problem-solving capacity, intercultural communication skills, and deeper understanding of Pakistan and the people of Pakistan. These experiences also helped Pakistani participants develop a more grounded understanding of American people, institutions, communities, and values.



Host advisors consistently described Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants as active contributors to American campus and community life. Participants asked questions, shared their experiences, joined campus activities, completed community service, and helped Americans see their own institutions and communities from new perspectives. These interactions helped build trust, which became a foundation for sustained personal, academic, professional, and institutional relationships.

“Global UGRAD-Pakistan students arrive ready to engage, ask thoughtful questions, and share who they are. Their curiosity helps American students and faculty see their own culture in new ways.”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

These skills matter for American competitiveness because they help American students, faculty, staff, and community partners work across cultures, solve problems with international peers, and participate more effectively in global education, business, technology, and civic environments.

The exchange experience also shaped how participants understood the United States. Since 2018, nearly 1,200 Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants completed their program, and **92% reported a stronger understanding of American culture**. Participant reflections emphasized cultural exchange as an immersive and eye-opening experience that helped them build cross-cultural communication skills, flexibility, empathy, and meaningful relationships.

The assessment found that many of the most meaningful intercultural experiences began through visible and accessible forms of cultural exchange: food, holidays, traditions, campus events, and community service. These experiences often created entry points for deeper relationships and trust. Host advisors described cultural events, shared meals, holiday programming, and student-led campus activities as moments when American students and community members learned about Pakistan while also reflecting on their own communities and assumptions.

From Cultural Exchange to Trust

Shared food, holidays, traditions, and service created entry points for deeper engagement. These everyday interactions helped Americans and Pakistani participants build trust, work together, and sustain relationships beyond the semester.



The strongest long-term theme in alumni reflections was not simply that participants learned about American customs, but that they experienced Americans as welcoming, respectful, and generous. A review of open-ended responses from the 2025 Annual Alumni Survey found that **warmth, kindness, and hospitality from Americans** was the strongest intercultural exchange theme, appearing in more than **30% of all responses** related to reflections on participants' intercultural experience in the United States.

“People are really different than what we see on social media. Living in Nacogdoches, Texas changed my views. I saw how family-oriented people are, and I did my best to replace misconceptions about Pakistan as well.”

– Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus, Stephen F. Austin State University, Nacogdoches, Texas

The benefits of intercultural exchange also flowed to American institutions and communities. Host advisors described how Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants prompted American students, faculty, staff, and community members to ask new questions, collaborate in new ways, and think differently about culture, service, and community life. In some cases, participants' presence contributed to new or strengthened campus practices, including cultural events, student organizations, food accommodations, prayer spaces, and more responsive student support services.

“ Their presence helped us reflect on what we take for granted and see our own community in a new way. It helped each of us become more aware. ”

– Friendship family participant

These trust-building experiences were practical, not abstract. They helped Americans develop skills and perspectives that matter for education, workforce readiness, institutional adaptability, and international collaboration. They also helped Pakistani participants carry home direct, experience-based understanding of Americans and American communities. This two-way learning created the foundation for the durable relationships, institutional changes, business pathways, and long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation described in the findings that follow.

Why this matters for U.S. impact

Trust is a practical asset. By helping Americans and Pakistanis learn, serve, and solve problems together, Global UGRAD-Pakistan built the relationships and skills that made longer-term institutional, economic, and strategic cooperation possible.

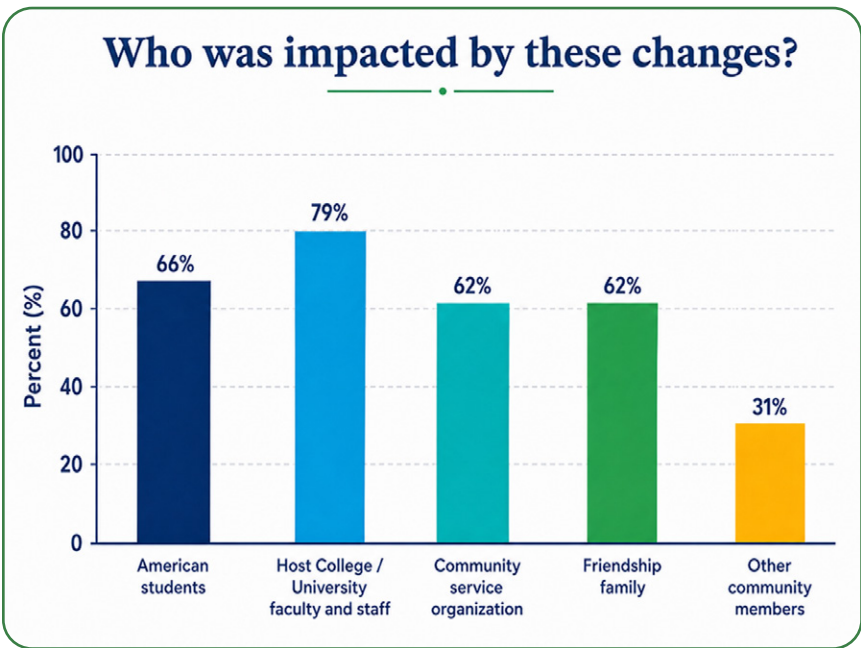
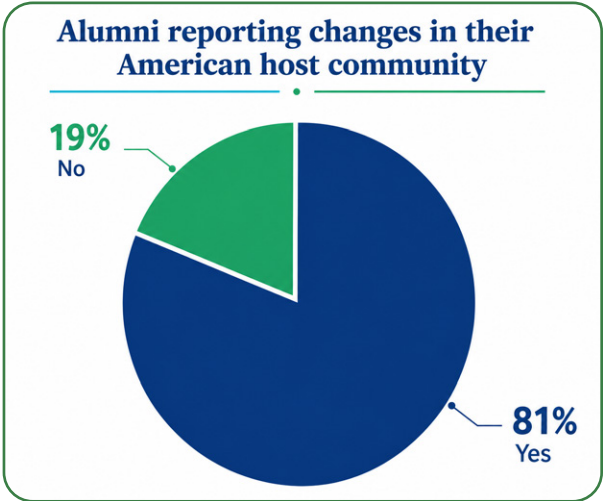


KEY FINDING: STRONGER AMERICAN INSTITUTIONS AND COMMUNITIES

Hosting Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants strengthened American institutions and communities in practical, observable ways. The program brought Pakistani students into U.S. classrooms, campuses, local organizations, and community spaces, where participants contributed through coursework, volunteer service, country presentations, cultural exchange, and day-to-day engagement with American peers, faculty, staff, host advisors, friendship families, and community members. These interactions helped U.S. institutions and communities build new connections, improve services, expand cultural knowledge, and develop more responsive practices for students and community members.

In a targeted alumni questionnaire, 81.1% of Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni respondents reported changes in their American host communities associated with their program experience. Reported changes included better understanding of Pakistani culture, greater awareness of Muslim culture, Americans making new connections with other Americans, Americans developing new skills, Americans becoming more creative and innovative, and new structures in host institutions.

These changes reached multiple groups in American host communities, including American students, host college and university faculty and staff, community service organizations, friendship families, and other community members. This matters because the program's U.S. impact was not limited to the participant-host advisor relationship. Alumni observed ripple effects across campus and community networks, including changes in awareness, skills, relationships, creativity, innovation, and institutional practices.



One of the clearest forms of institutional and community benefit was skill-building among Americans. Host advisors and alumni described how Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants helped American students and community members develop curiosity, creativity, adaptability, problem-solving skills, intercultural communication, and new ways of thinking. One host advisor described how Pakistani students approached coursework in ways American students “may not have imagined before,” prompting American peers to think differently and become more competitive as future graduates.

The program also prompted American host institutions to adapt and strengthen services. Host advisors and alumni described new or improved practices that made campuses more responsive to student needs, including expanded halal food options, dedicated or more accessible prayer spaces, stronger Muslim student association activity, improved support for students with disabilities, new cultural programming, and new institutional structures or initiatives. These changes were often sparked by the needs and contributions of Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants, but they benefited broader campus communities, including American students, faculty, and staff.

“Our Pakistani students pursue the same degrees that our domestic students are doing, but they do it in ways that American students may not have imagined before. That forces them to think outside the box and become more competitive and attractive as future graduates. We are benefiting from that — workforce wise, employment wise, and economically.”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion



One host advisor described how supporting a Global UGRAD-Pakistan participant during Ramadan led the institution to create a prayer room that remained available after the participant’s semester. The same experience helped the institution identify additional Muslim students on campus and eventually contributed to development of a Muslim Student Association. In another example, an alumnus described advocating for halal beef options at Boston University, resulting in a dining change that the alumnus described as a lasting benefit for future students.

Practical Institutional Changes

- Expanded halal food options
- Dedicated or more accessible prayer spaces
- Strengthened Muslim student association activity
- Improved support for students with disabilities
- New or strengthened cultural programming
- New structures or initiatives at host institutions
- More responsive student services and campus practices

“During Ramadan, we created a prayer room to accommodate student needs. It is now open to everyone and used by students and faculty. When we worked with dining services on meal accommodations, we realized there were more Muslim students on campus than we knew. Last year, with one of our Global UGRAD-Pakistan students, we were able to develop a Muslim Student Association.”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

Global UGRAD-Pakistan also contributed to community-level initiatives beyond campus. In one example, participants volunteered in local schools and read stories from their home regions to children. A host advisor recalled that the activity sparked a broader community effort, with librarians organizing book donations and expanding access to children's books across the community. This example illustrates how participant engagement could prompt American institutions and local partners to collaborate in new ways.

The program also created opportunities for institutional problem-solving. A host advisor described supporting a Global UGRAD-Pakistan participant who was blind and did not use a cane or read Braille. Faculty and staff adapted by recording readings and lessons and using tactile tools to support the participant's independence. The host advisor summarized the institutional learning by explaining that the campus had to think creatively and learn how to help the participant function independently.

Host advisors also described broader institutional change. One host advisor said the program helped a small private institution become "much more global," noting that Global UGRAD-Pakistan had been central to that change since 2011. This type of feedback underscores that the program's value to U.S. institutions was not only transactional or semester-specific; in some cases, hosting participants contributed to longer-term institutional identity, capacity, and engagement.



Sustainable Community Book Drive

Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants volunteered in local schools and read stories from their home regions to children. A host advisor recalled that the activity sparked a broader community effort, with librarians organizing book donations and expanding access to children's books across the community.

The assessment also identified examples of two-way innovation flowing from the relationships built through the program. One Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus reported that a U.S. host family developed a deeper interest in Pakistan through daily cultural exchange and later visited Pakistan. After returning to the United States, the host family adapted an idea observed in Pakistan into a socially conscious business initiative focused on sustainable, reusable cotton menstrual products. This example illustrates how exchange can generate practical ideas that move in both directions, from American communities to Pakistan and from Pakistan back to American communities.

“ It has been hugely impactful on us in ways that we can track and other ways that we cannot. It helped us move from being a fairly homogeneous small private institution to becoming much more global. I feel like Global UGRAD has been at the core of that since 2011. ”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

Taken together, these examples show that Global UGRAD-Pakistan strengthened American institutions and communities by making exchange practical and local. Participants helped American peers think differently, prompted institutions to adapt services, contributed to community initiatives, and created opportunities for Americans to build skills, relationships, and cultural fluency that support workforce readiness and long-term cooperation.

Why this matters for U.S. impact

Stronger institutions and communities are a direct domestic return on exchange. Global UGRAD-Pakistan helped American host institutions and communities build practical capacity, improve services, strengthen community connections and develop skills that matter for education, workforce readiness, innovation, and long-term international cooperation.



KEY FINDING: ECONOMIC AND INNOVATION VALUE FOR AMERICANS

Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated economic, commercial, and innovation value for Americans by building long-term relationships, skills, and professional pathways that extended beyond the U.S. semester. Alumni maintained personal and professional connections with Americans, applied skills gained through their U.S. experience, and contributed to sectors relevant to American business, technology, energy, education, and innovation.

The assessment identified examples of alumni contributing directly to American industry and innovation. One Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus works as an engineer for Scalvy, an American startup that develops power systems designed to improve efficiency, reliability, and cost performance for data centers, batteries, and electric vehicles. Another alumnus, **Mohammad Mamoon Malik**, who studied at Boston University Metropolitan College, described working with Tkxel in Pakistan, a multinational technology company headquartered in the United States. Here Malik launched the Tkxel Ambassador Program, through which he hired students from Boston University to represent the company at technology events in Boston. Malik described this as a way to create job opportunities for American undergraduates using the professional network built during his Global UGRAD-Pakistan exchange.

Economic and Innovation Pathways

Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni contributed to U.S. economic and innovation value through several pathways:

- contributing to American business performance and technology innovation
- creating professional opportunities for American students and young professionals
- expanding the reach of U.S.-origin education, technology, and entrepreneurship tools
- connecting American organizations with partners and markets in Pakistan
- supporting collaboration in sectors such as AI, technology, energy, education, and workforce development
- sustaining professional relationships with Americans after the exchange experience



“While working at Tkxel in Pakistan, I launched the Tkxel Ambassador Program. This was a full-circle moment for me: I hired students from my host institution, Boston University; to represent the company at tech events happening around Boston. This allowed me to create part-time professional roles for American undergrads using the professional network I built during my exchange.”

– Mohammad Mamoon Malik, Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus

Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni also helped expand the reach of U.S.-origin education, technology, and entrepreneurship tools. **Khet Kumar**, a Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus who studied at Northcentral Technical College in Wausau, Wisconsin, founded Red Pi, an EdTech social enterprise that integrates U.S.-origin technologies and standards — including Scratch, CSTA, and ISTE — into AI, STEAM, robotics, and digital skills curricula for K–12 schools. Through Red Pi, Kumar has brought American educational frameworks, curriculum standards, and software to students and teachers in Pakistan. Red Pi’s collaboration with Oklahoma-based Kidvation brings a U.S.-designed youth entrepreneurship program into Pakistani classrooms, connecting Pakistani students to American e-commerce platforms while extending Kidvation’s market reach.



Alumni also contributed to U.S.-Pakistan partnerships in energy and technology. **Muhammad Sheraz Aamir**, a Spring 2020 Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus hosted by Saginaw Valley State University, works at the intersection of technology localization, energy access, and investment partnerships. He directs a program that connects international energy providers with Pakistani industrial partners to co-develop local energy solutions for remote communities. His work includes collaboration with New Energy Nexus, an American organization, to bring American technology into new markets. He also previously worked with Energy Innovation Capital, a U.S.-based energy investment firm, supporting due diligence on emerging energy startups, including U.S. companies developing next-generation battery technologies.



Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni also contributed to American business growth and innovation in other sectors. Alumni examples include work with a U.S.-based medical billing company, collaboration with American high-energy physicists, and leadership in U.S.-based engineering and energy technology. These examples illustrate the range of sectors in which Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni have maintained or built professional ties with Americans and American institutions.

“During my Global UGRAD-Pakistan experience, I noticed the formation of new or expanded partnerships between Americans and Pakistanis across several areas. Academically, students and faculty engaged in joint research projects, collaborative presentations, and knowledge-sharing initiatives. In arts and culture, partnerships emerged through cultural festivals, performances, and exhibitions. These partnerships not only strengthened personal networks but also laid the groundwork for long-term institutional and community collaborations.”

– Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus

The assessment also identified examples of new or expanded partnerships between Americans and Pakistanis in academic, cultural, community service, and social impact settings. One alumnus described joint research projects, collaborative presentations, cultural festivals, performances, exhibitions, volunteer programs, awareness campaigns, and advocacy initiatives that brought Americans and Pakistanis together. The alumnus noted that these partnerships strengthened personal networks and “laid the groundwork for long-term institutional and community collaborations.” While not all of these partnerships are commercial, they show how relationships formed through the exchange can mature into professional and institutional collaboration over time.



Taken together, these examples show that Global UGRAD-Pakistan's economic and innovation value for Americans emerged through durable relationships, practical skills, and alumni career pathways. The assessment does not suggest that every alumnus created direct economic value for Americans. Rather, it shows that Global UGRAD-Pakistan created conditions for economic and innovation value by connecting talented Pakistani alumni with American institutions, companies, technologies, and professional networks. In several documented cases, those relationships later supported American business performance, U.S.-origin technology adoption, market reach, job opportunities for American students, and partnerships in sectors important to long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.

Why this matters for U.S. impact

Economic value from exchange often develops over time. Global UGRAD-Pakistan built relationships and skills that alumni later used to connect American companies, technologies, students, and institutions with opportunities in Pakistan and beyond. These examples show how academic exchange can create long-term pathways for business, innovation, workforce development, and strategic cooperation.



KEY FINDING: LONG-TERM U.S.-PAKISTAN COOPERATION

Global UGRAD-Pakistan strengthened long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation by helping alumni return to communities across Pakistan with direct experience of American people, institutions, and communities. Alumni used those experiences to counter misconceptions about Americans, build trust with U.S. peers and partners, and apply leadership skills in fields relevant to lawful commerce, public service, education, technology, entrepreneurship, and community development.

These findings matter because many participants came from communities where direct contact with Americans may have been limited. Program administrators in Pakistan described Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants as especially influential because many came from areas outside major metropolitan and elite networks. After returning home, alumni were able to speak from direct experience about American people, communities, and institutions — helping replace stereotypes or secondhand impressions with more personal and grounded understanding.

Alumni themselves described this bridge-building role.

Alumni Carry U.S. Experience Back to Communities Across Pakistan

- **93%** of participants departed the United States with more favorable views of Americans.
- **91%** of alumni reported changing perceptions of the United States in their home communities.
- **99%** of participants were first-generation U.S. exchange students.

“In their villages or small communities, there was limited knowledge of the United States as a country and culture. Global UGRAD-Pakistan students became good ambassadors because they interacted with American community members directly. When they returned home, they shared those experiences and helped change perceptions in far-flung communities.”

– USEFP representative

One alumnus explained that sharing personal experiences from the United States helped friends, family, and coworkers see Americans in more balanced and realistic ways. Another alumnus said that people in Pakistan were often surprised to hear that Americans were “warm, welcoming, and kind,” and that sharing those experiences helped address misconceptions about America and Americans.

“I believe I have helped bridge some of the misconceptions Pakistani people have about America and Americans. When I share my experiences, they are often surprised to learn that people in the U.S. are much like us — warm, welcoming, and kind.”

– Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumnus



Global UGRAD-Pakistan also supported long-term cooperation by helping alumni build skills and networks that they later applied in public service, entrepreneurship, education, technology, legal systems, trade, and community development. Many alumni returned to Pakistan with a service mindset and continued to create opportunities in their home communities. In the 2025 Annual Alumni Survey, **36% of respondents reported starting their own program, initiative, or enterprise**, illustrating how alumni translated their skills and experience into practical action after returning home.

Alumni Community Development Initiatives

Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni have implemented community development initiatives and Big Ideas Challenges across regions of Pakistan, supporting projects related to entrepreneurship, digital skills, career readiness, health and safety, water and waste management, education, and legal services.

One of the clearest examples of long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation is the pathway from exchange experience to lawful commerce and trade facilitation. **Mehak Fayaz**, a Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumna hosted by the University of Southern Indiana in 2017, now advances trade security and counternarcotic enforcement in Pakistan. She credits the program with strengthening her commitment to public service. As a Customs Officer, Mehak has led interdictions of narcotics, currency, and other contraband, disrupting transnational smuggling routes with implications for U.S. border security. She now advances export compliance and lawful trade tied to U.S. markets while training rural entrepreneurs on customs compliance, reinforcing lawful commerce, economic opportunity, and stability in underserved regions.



Alumni also applied their Global UGRAD-Pakistan experience through community initiatives that addressed practical needs in Pakistan. Illustrative examples include an urban agriculture project in Karachi that introduced community members to composting, water conservation, and vertical gardening; a mediation initiative that trained lawyers, law students, and legal experts to address Pakistan’s legal case backlog; and digital literacy and entrepreneurship training in Faisalabad that helped participants secure employment and launch digital start-ups. These examples show how alumni used skills developed through the program to support local problem-solving, economic participation, and institutional capacity in Pakistan.

Illustrative Alumni Initiatives in Pakistan	
Initiative	Contribution to Long-Term Cooperation
Urban Agriculture for Food Security	Introduced community members in Karachi to composting, water conservation, and vertical gardening.
Strengthening Local Stability and Addressing Legal Backlogs	Equipped lawyers, law students, and legal experts with mediation skills and awareness.
Connecting Communities to a Digital Future	Provided digital literacy and entrepreneurship training in Faisalabad, with some participants securing employment or launching digital start-ups.

These alumni-led efforts matter for U.S. impact because they demonstrate how exchange experiences can produce durable cooperation beyond formal diplomacy. Alumni who return home with direct experience of American communities, sustained relationships with Americans, and practical skills are positioned to build trust, support lawful economic participation, strengthen institutions, and create opportunities for continued U.S.-Pakistan engagement.

A host advisor summarized the strategic value of this long-term pathway by noting that Pakistan is an important U.S. partner in a volatile region and that cultivating talented students with direct U.S. experience can increase American strategic capacity over time. This framing is useful because it connects the program's people-to-people foundation to longer-term cooperation in areas where trust, leadership, and professional networks matter.

“Pakistan is a really important strategic partner of the U.S. Through cultivating bright students who have this global experience and go on to do other significant things, that is going to increase our strategic capabilities in this part of the world.”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

Taken together, the evidence shows that Global UGRAD-Pakistan contributed to long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation by changing perceptions, sustaining relationships, and helping alumni apply skills in sectors and communities that matter for shared prosperity and stability. The assessment does not claim that the program alone produced broad economic or security outcomes. Rather, it shows that Global UGRAD-Pakistan created credible pathways for long-term cooperation by investing in alumni who returned home with favorable views of Americans, practical leadership skills, and direct relationships with U.S. institutions and communities.

Why this matters for U.S. impact

Long-term cooperation depends on trust, relationships, and credible partners. Global UGRAD-Pakistan alumni returned to communities across Pakistan with direct experience of Americans and American institutions, sustained relationships with U.S. peers and partners, and skills they applied in public service, enterprise, education, technology, law, and community development. These pathways strengthen the foundation for durable U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.



KEY FINDING: IMPLEMENTATION QUALITY AND LONG-TERM RESULTS

Global UGRAD-Pakistan’s long-term results were closely tied to how the program was implemented. The assessment found that the program’s impact did not emerge simply because Pakistani students spent a semester in the United States. It emerged because participants were intentionally selected, prepared, supported, and expected to engage deeply with American campuses and communities through academic study, community service, cultural exchange, leadership development, and sustained alumni engagement.

Host advisors and program administrators identified several implementation elements as central to the program’s success: recruitment that reached students from communities across Pakistan; clear preparation before arrival; structured expectations for community service and cultural engagement; responsive participant support; host institution guidance; re-entry programming; alumni learning and networking opportunities; and alumni grant programs. These elements helped participants arrive ready to contribute, navigate new environments, build relationships with Americans, and apply what they learned after returning to Pakistan.

Implementation Elements That Supported Long-Term Results

-  Recruitment reaching students from communities across Pakistan
-  Clear participant preparation before arrival
-  Host Institution Toolkit and orientation
-  Structured community service requirement
-  Digital Cultural Passport
-  Country presentations and cultural exchange activities
-  Sequential leadership development programming
-  Responsive participant support
-  Re-entry workshops
-  Alumni learning, networking, and grant opportunities

A recurring theme across host advisor feedback was that Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants arrived prepared and ready to engage. Host advisors described students as motivated, active, and clear about program expectations. One host advisor noted that participants arrived on campus ready to identify volunteer opportunities and engage in campus life, explaining that students “absolutely know what’s expected and they don’t hesitate.”

“The students, the second they are on campus, are ready to go. They want to find their volunteer opportunities. They know what is expected, and they do not hesitate.”
– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

This readiness was not accidental. Host advisors credited program preparation, orientation, expectations, and ongoing support with helping participants make the most of a short, intensive semester. One host advisor said IREX did an “outstanding job” preparing students before arrival, helping them understand the opportunities and situations they would encounter, and providing the structure needed to make the most of their time in the United States. Another host advisor explained that preparation and orientation helped motivated students arrive with clear expectations and become “ready to go on day one.”



“IREX does an outstanding job of educating students prior to their participation in the program. They set students up for success by helping them think through what will happen, prepare for the situations they will encounter, and make the most of the opportunities they will have.”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

The program’s structure also helped participants engage beyond campus. Host advisors and program administrators highlighted the community service requirement and Digital Cultural Passport as important tools for integrating participants into American host communities. The Digital Cultural Passport encouraged participants to take part in cultural activities, build social connections, and reflect on their experiences. Host advisors described community service as especially valuable because it helped students engage with local residents, understand issues facing their host regions, and develop a more grounded view of American communities outside campus settings.



“Community service is one of the most valuable components of the program. It helps students integrate into the local community and learn about issues residents of their host region face.”

– U.S. host advisor survey response

The assessment also found that community service and cultural exchange were closely connected in participant and alumni reflections. Program materials indicate that Global UGRAD-Pakistan students and alumni often linked volunteering with cultural learning, and that themes such as time management, networking, and academic skills were frequently connected to community service and cultural experiences. This reinforces a broader finding across the report: the program’s cultural and service components were not peripheral. They were part of the mechanism through which participants built relationships, developed practical skills, and contributed to both American and Pakistani communities.

High-quality participant support also mattered. Host advisors described a support model that connected students, host institutions, and IREX staff in a clear and responsive way. One host advisor described the program as well organized from intake to exit, with clear materials, clear expectations, regular check-ins, and collaboration among the university, students, and IREX. The host advisor emphasized that students were supported by their host institution and by IREX, and that students understood they were expected to be both students and cultural ambassadors.

“ Everything ran smoothly from intake to exit. The materials were clear, expectations were clear, and students were supported by both the university and IREX. Students knew they were here to be students, but also to be cultural ambassadors. ”

– U.S. host advisor, focus group discussion

In at least one case, a host advisor described how responsive participant support helped resolve a challenge in a culturally informed and constructive way. The host advisor said that when a student was struggling to meet expectations, IREX intervened firmly but sensitively, helping the issue improve and enabling the student to succeed academically and personally. This example illustrates how implementation quality can affect not only risk management, but also student success and host institution confidence.

Global UGRAD-Pakistan’s implementation model also extended beyond the semester. Re-entry workshops, alumni networking opportunities, Alumni Academy resources, and alumni grants helped participants translate their U.S. experience into continued leadership, professional development, and community engagement in Pakistan. These post-program supports helped sustain the program’s impact after participants returned home and contributed to the long-term alumni outcomes described throughout this assessment.

This finding matters because implementation quality is what converted a short-term exchange into long-term value. Global UGRAD-Pakistan’s outcomes depended on more than placement at U.S. institutions. They depended on the program’s ability to recruit motivated participants, prepare them for active engagement, support them through challenges, structure meaningful community service and cultural exchange, and maintain alumni pathways after return. These implementation choices helped generate the relationships, skills, institutional changes, community contributions, business pathways, and long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation documented throughout this assessment.



Why this matters for U.S. impact

U.S. impact depends on program quality. Global UGRAD-Pakistan shows that international exchange generates stronger long-term results when participants are carefully selected, clearly prepared, well supported, and intentionally connected to American campuses, community organizations, cultural experiences, and alumni pathways.

Recommendations and Conclusion

RECOMMENDATIONS:

U.S. IMPACT PRIORITIES FOR FUTURE INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

This assessment found that Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated substantial benefits for Americans, American institutions, American communities, and long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation, even though U.S. impact was not comprehensively defined or measured across the full 15 years of implementation. The findings point to a clear opportunity for future exchange programs: design, implement, and measure academic exchanges as strategic investments that deliver benefits for Americans while advancing U.S. foreign policy goals abroad.

While grounded in the Global UGRAD-Pakistan experience, the following recommendations are intended to inform future academic exchange and international education programs that seek to strengthen benefits for Americans as well as international participants.



Design programs to deliver explicit benefits for Americans and international participants.

Future exchange programs should define expected benefits for Americans at the design stage, including benefits for U.S. host institutions, American students and faculty, local organizations, businesses, and communities. Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated U.S. impact through classroom engagement, volunteer service, country presentations, cultural exchange, alumni relationships, and professional pathways. Future programs can build on these patterns by intentionally creating structured opportunities for Americans and international participants to learn, serve, collaborate, and solve problems together.

Designing for U.S. impact does not require shifting attention away from international participant outcomes. Instead, it recognizes that strong exchange programs create value in both directions. Future programs should articulate how participant learning, host community engagement, and long-term alumni relationships can produce measurable benefits for Americans and international participants alike.

Build U.S. impact measurement into monitoring, evaluation, and learning from the outset.

Future programs should include U.S.-focused indicators and learning questions from the beginning. These could include changes in American student, faculty, host advisor, employer, community service supervisor, and host family knowledge, skills, relationships, and institutional practices. They could also track U.S. community service contributions, country presentation reach, alumni relationships with Americans, professional collaborations, and examples of business, innovation, research, or institutional partnerships.

Because Global UGRAD-Pakistan was not originally designed around a formal U.S. impact framework, this assessment had to draw together evidence from program records, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and alumni stories. Future programs would benefit from systematic data collection that captures U.S. impact as it occurs, rather than reconstructing it retrospectively.



Position American host institutions and communities as co-producers of impact.

American host institutions and communities are not passive settings for exchange; they help generate the outcomes that make exchange meaningful. Global UGRAD-Pakistan's U.S. impact depended on the engagement of host advisors, faculty, students, friendship families, community service organizations, local schools, civic groups, and other community partners. These actors created the conditions for participants to engage deeply, contribute locally, and build relationships that continued beyond the semester.

Future programs should engage host institutions and communities as active partners in design, implementation, learning, and evaluation. This may include shared goal-setting, clearer articulation of U.S. impact outcomes, host-focused feedback loops, recognition of host contributions, and practical tools that help institutions and communities document how exchange strengthens their own students, services, partnerships, and local capacity.



Preserve the cultural and community dimensions that make practical impact possible.

The assessment found that intercultural exchange, community service, and relationship-building were not secondary to the program's impact; they were central mechanisms through which impact occurred. Through shared meals, holidays, classroom engagement, service activities, country presentations, campus events, and host family relationships, Americans and Pakistani participants built trust, curiosity, problem-solving capacity, and practical communication skills.

As future programs increasingly emphasize workforce development, economic opportunity, innovation, and strategic cooperation, program designers should continue to preserve the cultural and community components that make those outcomes possible. Trust, cultural fluency, and direct relationships are practical assets. They help Americans and international participants work together, sustain partnerships, and build the foundation for longer-term educational, professional, institutional, and economic collaboration.

Connect exchange programming to workforce development, innovation, and economic opportunity.

Future programs should more intentionally connect exchange experiences to workforce-relevant skills, innovation, entrepreneurship, and professional collaboration. Global UGRAD-Pakistan helped participants and Americans build communication, adaptability, problem-solving, intercultural competence, leadership, and collaboration skills. The assessment also identified examples of alumni using relationships and skills developed through the program to support American companies, expand the reach of U.S.-origin technologies and education tools, create opportunities for American students, and build partnerships in sectors such as technology, AI, education, and energy.

Future programs can strengthen these pathways through applied projects, sector-specific collaboration, host institution partnerships, alumni engagement with U.S. companies and universities, and structured opportunities for participants and Americans to work together on practical challenges. These efforts should be measured carefully and described with appropriate claim discipline, distinguishing between broad program patterns and illustrative examples of economic or innovation value.



Prioritize results-focused implementation, preparation, and participant support.

Global UGRAD-Pakistan's long-term results were closely tied to implementation quality. Host advisors described participants as arriving prepared, motivated, and ready to engage in campus life, community service, and cultural exchange. Program elements such as participant preparation, host institution guidance, community service expectations, the Digital Cultural Passport, re-entry workshops, alumni learning opportunities, and responsive participant support helped turn a short-term exchange into longer-term value.

Future programs should treat implementation quality as an impact driver, not an administrative detail. Careful recruitment, clear expectations, structured support, responsive issue resolution, and post-program engagement all affect whether participants are able to contribute meaningfully during the exchange and apply what they learn after returning home.



Recruit and prepare participants in ways that broaden reach and strengthen long-term cooperation.

Global UGRAD-Pakistan's reach across Pakistan was central to its strategic value. Participants came from every region of Pakistan, including communities outside major urban and elite networks, and many returned home positioned to share direct experience of American people, institutions, and communities with peers, families, colleagues, and local leaders. Program data and stakeholder perspectives indicate that this breadth helped extend the program's influence beyond individual participants to communities across Pakistan.

Future programs should continue to consider how recruitment, selection, and preparation affect long-term impact. Reaching participants from a wide range of geographic, socioeconomic, and institutional backgrounds can strengthen the credibility and reach of exchange programs, particularly when participants return to communities where direct contact with Americans may be limited.

Invest in alumni-U.S. relationship infrastructure as a long-term strategic asset.

The durability of relationships between alumni and Americans was one of the strongest pathways to long-term impact. Among 2025 Annual Alumni Survey respondents, 89.4% reported that they were still in contact with Americans they met during Global UGRAD-Pakistan, and more than 75% communicated at least monthly with American friends or colleagues. These relationships created a foundation for continued personal, academic, professional, institutional, and community collaboration.

Future programs should treat alumni relationships with Americans as strategic assets that require continued support. Alumni engagement infrastructure can help sustain collaboration with U.S. institutions, communities, companies, and professional networks over time. These ties can remain valuable even as policy environments, funding priorities, and diplomatic conditions evolve, providing durable people-to-people connections that support long-term cooperation.



Continue studying the impact of international exchange programs on American host communities.

This assessment demonstrates the value of studying how international exchange affects Americans and American communities. While exchange programs often measure participant learning and alumni outcomes abroad, their domestic effects are less frequently documented. Global UGRAD-Pakistan offers evidence that international exchange can strengthen American institutions, expand community service, build workforce-relevant skills, support innovation pathways, and create durable relationships that benefit both countries.

Funders, implementers, host institutions, and researchers should continue building the evidence base on U.S. impact. Future studies could examine which program models produce the greatest benefits for host communities, how U.S. impact develops over time, and how relationship-building, cultural exchange, community service, workforce development, and alumni engagement interact to produce long-term value.



CONCLUSION: GLOBAL UGRAD-PAKISTAN DELIVERED DURABLE RETURNS FOR AMERICAN COMMUNITIES AND U.S. INTERESTS

Over 15 years, Global UGRAD-Pakistan demonstrated that a well-designed academic exchange can deliver practical benefits for American communities while advancing long-term U.S. interests. The program brought Pakistani undergraduates into American classrooms, campuses, local organizations, and communities, where they studied, volunteered, shared perspectives, built relationships, and contributed to local life. The assessment found that this engagement strengthened U.S. host institutions, expanded volunteer service in American communities, built durable relationships with Americans, supported American business and innovation through alumni career pathways, and contributed to long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.

These outcomes were not automatic. They were generated through a program model that emphasized reach, preparation, structure, service, cultural exchange, participant support, and sustained alumni engagement. Global UGRAD-Pakistan's broad placement model brought exchange benefits to communities across 47 states and Washington, D.C., including smaller and regional communities beyond major urban centers. Its community service requirement connected participants to local organizations serving American communities. Its cultural exchange components helped Americans and Pakistanis build trust and practical skills. Its alumni engagement pathways helped relationships and skills continue to generate value long after the U.S. semester ended.

The assessment also shows that U.S. impact can take many forms. It can appear as a campus creating more responsive student services, a local organization benefiting from participant service, American students developing new skills through cross-cultural collaboration, an alumni relationship creating professional opportunities for Americans, or an alumnus returning to Pakistan and helping peers, colleagues, and community members understand the United States through direct experience rather than stereotypes. These outcomes are local and personal, but they also contribute to larger U.S. interests by strengthening trust, cooperation, economic opportunity, and durable people-to-people ties.



Global UGRAD-Pakistan also illustrates an important lesson for the future of international exchange: programs designed for outcomes, not simply completion, can generate value well beyond the immediate exchange experience. When programs intentionally connect participant selection, preparation, academic study, community service, cultural exchange, host engagement, and alumni pathways, they create conditions for long-term returns. Those returns include stronger American institutions and communities, more globally prepared American students and professionals, deeper alumni relationships with Americans, and practical pathways for business, innovation, and long-term cooperation.

The findings also underscore the importance of measuring what has often gone underexamined. Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated U.S. impact even without a comprehensive U.S. impact framework in place from the beginning. Future programs can build on this evidence by defining U.S. impact explicitly, collecting data systematically, and treating host institutions, communities, and alumni relationships as central to program value. Doing so would strengthen accountability, improve program design, and help communicate the full return of U.S.-funded exchange investments.

In an era of global competition, economic complexity, and contested information environments, Global UGRAD-Pakistan shows how disciplined international exchange can deliver concrete benefits for American communities while strengthening the relationships, skills, and trusted networks that advance U.S. interests. The program's 15-year record demonstrates that exchange is not only a cultural or educational experience; when implemented with quality and purpose, it is a practical investment in America's long-term strength, security, and prosperity.



Appendices

APPENDIX 1: FULL LIST OF U.S. HOST INSTITUTIONS BY STATE

Host Institution	Host Institution City	State
Gadsden State Community College	Gadsden	AL
Troy University	Troy	AL
Tuskegee University	Tuskegee	AL
University of Alabama	Tuscaloosa	AL
University of Alabama – Huntsville	Huntsville	AL
University of North Alabama	Florence	AL
Arkansas State University	Jonesboro	AR
University of Arkansas	Fayetteville	AR
Arizona Western College	Yuma	AZ
Northern Arizona University	Flagstaff	AZ
California State Polytechnic University, Pomona	Pomona	CA
California State University – Chico	Chico	CA
California State University – Dominguez Hills	Carson	CA
California State University – Los Angeles	Los Angeles	CA
California State University – Monterey Bay	Seaside	CA
California State University – Bakersfield	Bakersfield	CA
California State University – San Marcos	San Marcos	CA
Humboldt State University	Arcata	CA
San Francisco State University	San Francisco	CA
Colorado State University	Fort Collins	CO
Otero Junior College	La Junta	CO
University of Northern Colorado	Greeley	CO
Connecticut College	New London	CT
University of Connecticut	Storrs	CT
American University	Washington	DC
Florida Gulf Coast University	Fort Myers	FL
Florida International University	Miami	FL
Florida State University	Tallahassee	FL
University of Central Florida	Orlando	FL
Agnes Scott College	Decatur	GA
College of Coastal Georgia	Brunswick	GA
Georgia College and State University	Milledgeville	GA
Gordon State College	Barnesville	GA
Kennesaw State University	Kennesaw	GA
Oglethorpe University	Atlanta	GA

Host Institution	Host Institution City	State
University of Hawaii – Kapi'olani Community College	Honolulu	HI
Eastern Iowa Community College	Davenport	IA
Graceland University	Lamoni	IA
Iowa Wesleyan University	Mt. Pleasant	IA
Kirkwood Community College	Cedar Rapids	IA
Mount Mercy University	Cedar Rapids	IA
University of Northern Iowa	Cedar Falls	IA
Upper Iowa University	Fayette	IA
Wartburg College	Waverly	IA
Boise State University	Boise	ID
College of Southern Idaho	Twin Falls	ID
Lewis-Clark State College	Lewiston	ID
North Idaho College	Couer d'Alene	ID
University of Idaho	Moscow	ID
Loyola University Chicago School of Law	Chicago	IL
Millikin University	Decatur	IL
Monmouth College	Monmouth	IL
North Central College	Naperville	IL
Northern Illinois University	DeKalb	IL
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville	Edwardsville	IL
University of Saint Francis	Joliet	IL
Western Illinois University	Macomb	IL
Ball State University	Muncie	IN
Indiana State University	Terre Haute	IN
University of Evansville	Evansville	IN
University of Southern Indiana	Evansville	IN
Valparaiso University	Valparaiso	IN
Wabash College	Crawfordsville	IN
Emporia State University	Emporia	KS
Kansas State University	Manhattan	KS
Pittsburg State University	Pittsburg	KS
Southwestern College	Winfield	KS
University of Kansas	Lawrence	KS
Campbellsville University	Campbellsville	KY
Murray State University	Murray	KY
University of Kentucky	Lexington	KY
Western Kentucky University	Bowling Green	KY
Dillard University	New Orleans	LA
McNeese State University	Lake Charles	LA
University of Louisiana at Monroe	Monroe	LA
University of New Orleans	New Orleans	LA

Host Institution	Host Institution City	State
Xavier University of Louisiana	New Orleans	LA
Boston University	Boston	MA
Boston University Metropolitan College	Boston	MA
Bridgewater State University	Bridgewater	MA
Endicott College	Beverly	MA
Bowie State University	Bowie	MD
Goucher College	Baltimore	MD
University of Maine	Orono	ME
Alma College	Alma	MI
Eastern Michigan University	Ypsilanti	MI
Grand Valley State University	Allendale	MI
Michigan State University	East Lansing	MI
Northern Michigan University	Marquette	MI
Saginaw Valley State University	University Center	MI
Wayne State University	Detroit	MI
Western Michigan University	Kalamazoo	MI
Concordia College	Concordia	MN
Minnesota State University – Mankato	Mankato	MN
Minnesota State University – Moorhead	Moorhead	MN
St. Catherine University	St Paul	MN
St. Cloud State University	St. Cloud	MN
University of Minnesota – Crookston	Crookston	MN
University of Minnesota – Morris	Morris	MN
University of Minnesota – Twin Cities	Minneapolis	MN
University of St. Thomas	St. Paul	MN
Winona State University	Winona	MN
Columbia College	Columbia	MO
Cottey College	Nevada	MO
Lincoln University	Jefferson City	MO
Missouri State University	Springfield	MO
Southeast Missouri State University	Cape Girardeau	MO
University of Central Missouri	Warrensburg	MO
University of Missouri – Columbia	Columbia	MO
University of Missouri – Kansas City	Kansas City	MO
University of Missouri – St. Louis	St. Louis	MO
Alcorn State University	Lorman	MS
Delta State University	Cleveland	MS
Mississippi State University	Starkville	MS
Mississippi Valley State University	Itta Bena	MS
University of Mississippi	University	MS
Carroll College	Helena	MT

Host Institution	Host Institution City	State
Montana State University	Bozeman	MT
Montana State University – Billings	Billings	MT
University of Montana	Missoula	MT
Appalachian State University	Boone	NC
Bennett College	Greensboro	NC
Fayetteville State University	Fayetteville	NC
Lees-McRae College	Banner Elk	NC
University of North Carolina – Pembroke	Pembroke	NC
University of North Carolina – Wilmington	Wilmington	NC
Western Carolina University	Cullowhee	NC
Dickinson State University	Dickinson	ND
North Dakota State University	Fargo	ND
University of North Dakota	Grand Forks	ND
Chadron State College	Chadron	NE
Creighton University	Omaha	NE
Southeast Community College	Beatrice	NE
University of Nebraska – Kearney	Kearney	NE
University of Nebraska at Omaha	Omaha	NE
Keene State College	Keene	NH
New England College	Henniker	NH
Fairleigh Dickinson University	Teaneck	NJ
Montclair State University	Montclair	NJ
New Mexico Highlands University	Las Vegas	NM
University of New Mexico	Albuquerque	NM
Jamestown Community College – SUNY	Jamestown	NY
Keuka College	Keuka Park	NY
Marie Colvin Center, School of Communication and Journalism, Stony Brook University	Stony Brook	NY
Mohawk Valley Community College	Utica	NY
Nazareth College of Rochester	Rochester	NY
SUNY Cortland	Cortland	NY
SUNY Fredonia	Fredonia	NY
SUNY Plattsburgh	Plattsburgh	NY
Utica University	Syracuse	NY
Wagner College	Staten Island	NY
Kent State University	Kent	OH
Ohio Northern University	Ada	OH
Otterbein University	Westerville	OH
Shawnee State University	Portsmouth	OH
University of Findlay	Findlay	OH
University of Toledo	Toledo	OH
Wright State University	Dayton	OH

Host Institution	Host Institution City	State
Oklahoma State University Institute of Technology	Okmulgee	OK
University of Tulsa	Tulsa	OK
Linfield University	McMinnville	OR
Chatham University	Pittsburgh	PA
Clarion University of Pennsylvania	Clarion	PA
Duquesne University	Pittsburgh	PA
Gannon University	Erie	PA
Indiana University of Pennsylvania	Indiana	PA
Juniata College	Huntingdon	PA
Moravian College	Bethlehem	PA
Northampton Community College	Bethlehem	PA
Slippery Rock University	Slippery Rock	PA
Temple University	Philadelphia	PA
Thiel College	Greensville	PA
Wilson College	Chambersburg	PA
University of Rhode Island	Kingston	RI
Claflin University	Orangeburg	SC
Coastal Carolina University	Conway	SC
Greenville Technical College	Greenville	SC
University of South Carolina – Aiken	Aiken	SC
Augustana University	Sioux Falls	SD
Black Hills State University	Spearfish	SD
South Dakota State University	Brookings	SD
University of South Dakota	Vermillion	SD
Maryville College	Maryville	TN
Middle Tennessee State University	Murfreesboro	TN
Tennessee Technological University	Cookeville	TN
The University of the South	Sewanee	TN
University of Memphis	Memphis	TN
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga	Chattanooga	TN
Huston-Tillotson University	Austin	TX
Prairie View A&M University	Prairie View	TX
Stephen F. Austin State University	Nacogdoches	TX
Tarleton State University	Stephenville	TX
Texas A&M University-Texarkana	Texarkana	TX
University of Houston – Victoria	Victoria	TX
University of North Texas	Denton	TX
University of Texas – San Antonio	San Antonio	TX
University of the Incarnate Word	San Antonio	TX
Snow College	Ephraim	UT
University of Utah	Salt Lake City	UT

Host Institution	Host Institution City	State
Utah State University	Logan	UT
Utah Tech University	St. George	UT
George Mason University	Fairfax	VA
Marymount University	Arlington	VA
Old Dominion University	Norfolk	VA
Roanoke College	Salem	VA
Virginia Commonwealth University	Richmond	VA
Norwich University	Northfield	VT
Vermont State University – Castleton	Castleton	VT
Vermont Technical College	Randolph Center	VT
Central Washington University	Ellensburg	WA
Eastern Washington University	Cheney	WA
Pacific Lutheran University	Tacoma	WA
Saint Martin's University	Lacey	WA
Western Washington University	Bellingham	WA
Fox Valley Technical College	Appleton	WI
Milwaukee School of Engineering	Milwaukee	WI
Northcentral Technical College	Wausau	WI
Northeast Wisconsin Technical College	Green Bay	WI
St. Norbert College	DePere	WI
University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire	Eau Claire	WI
University of Wisconsin – Green Bay	Green Bay	WI
University of Wisconsin – La Crosse	La Crosse	WI
University of Wisconsin – Madison	Madison	WI
University of Wisconsin – Marathon County	Wausau	WI
University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee	Milwaukee	WI
University of Wisconsin – Richland	Richland Center	WI
University of Wisconsin – River Falls	River Falls	WI
University of Wisconsin – Stout	Menomonie	WI
University of Wisconsin – Superior	Superior	WI
Concord University	Athens	WV
Davis & Elkins College	Elkins	WV
Shepherd University	Shepherdstown	WV
West Liberty University	West Liberty	WV
West Virginia University	Morgantown	WV
Northwest College	Powell	WY
University of Wyoming	Laramie	WY

APPENDIX 2: ILLUSTRATIVE LIST OF U.S. COMMUNITY SERVICE HOSTS

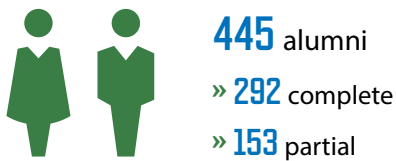
Since 2010, Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants have contributed nearly 59,000 hours — more than 6.5 years — of volunteer service through organizations serving American communities, partnering with more than 2,400 U.S. organizations and initiatives. Illustrative examples include:

Host Organization	State(s)	Service Theme
2/42 Community Church (Night to Shine)	KS, MN, MO, OH, OR, TN, WV, WY	Faith & Family
American Cancer Society	MA	Health & Wellness
American Heart Association	PA	Health & Wellness
American Red Cross	GA, MI, MO, WV	Disaster Relief & Emergency Response
America's Second Harvest Food Bank	FL	Hunger Relief
AmeriCorps	IA, PA, SC, WI	Community Service
Be The Match on Campus	KS	Health & Wellness
Best Buddies	TN	Youth Development
Big Brothers and Big Sisters	KS, WI	Youth Development
Boy Scouts	IN	Youth Development
Boys & Girls Club	CA, TN	Youth Development
Catholic Charities	MN	Faith & Family
Feed My Starving Children (FMSC)	IL	Hunger Relief
FIRST Robotics	MI	Youth Development
Girl Scouts of America	ID, MS, NY	Youth Development
Goodwill	NC, OH	Workforce & Self-Sufficiency
Habitat for Humanity	AR, KY, MN	Housing & Homeownership
Head Start	UT	Youth Development
Lions Club	WV	Community Service
Lutheran Social Services	SD	Faith & Family
Relay For Life	MI	Health & Wellness
Ronald McDonald House	UT	Faith & Family
Rotary Clubs	ID, NY, MI, PA	Community Service
Salvation Army	SD	Community Service
Special Olympics	IA	Youth Development
The American Legion Auxiliary	WY	Veterans & Military
The United Way	MT, SD	Community Service
Volunteers of America	SD	Community Service
Wounded Warrior Project	NM	Veterans & Military
YMCA South Dakota	SD	Health & Wellness

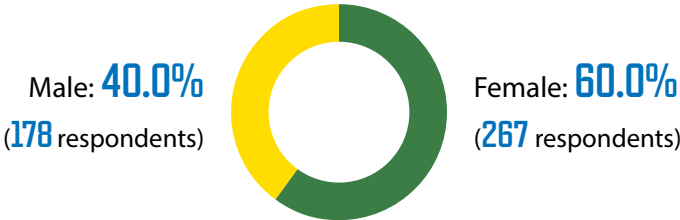
APPENDIX 3: 2025 ANNUAL ALUMNI SURVEY RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

The 2025 Annual Alumni Survey was distributed to 2,443 individuals, and 445 provided complete or partial responses, resulting in an overall response rate of approximately 18%.¹ In general, more highly engaged alumni have been more likely to respond to surveys.

Total Respondents:



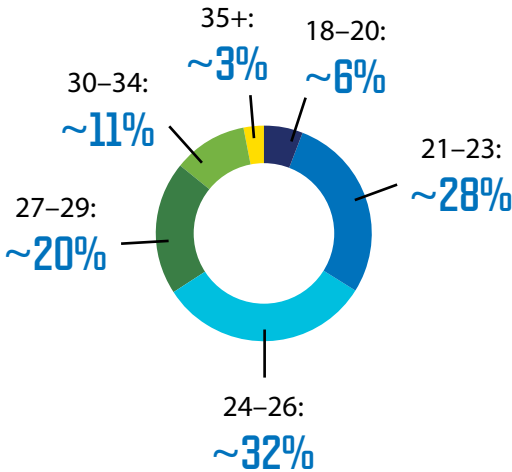
Sex Distribution:



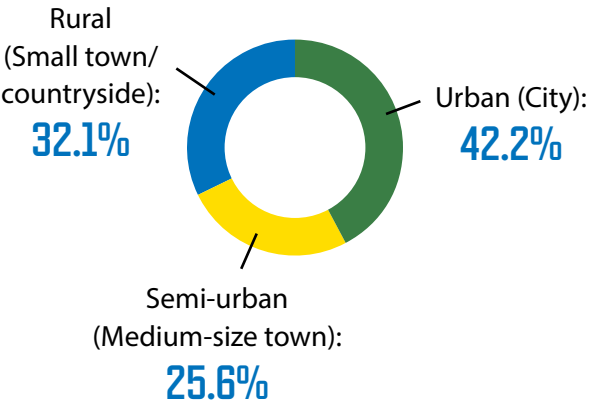
Age Range:

Majority under **35 years**
(youth category)

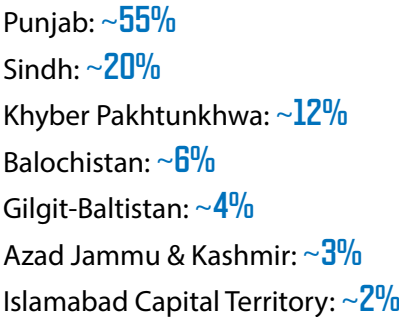
Most common ages:
24, 25, and 27 years



Geographic Representation (Home Community):



Home Province/Territory: (Based on responses)



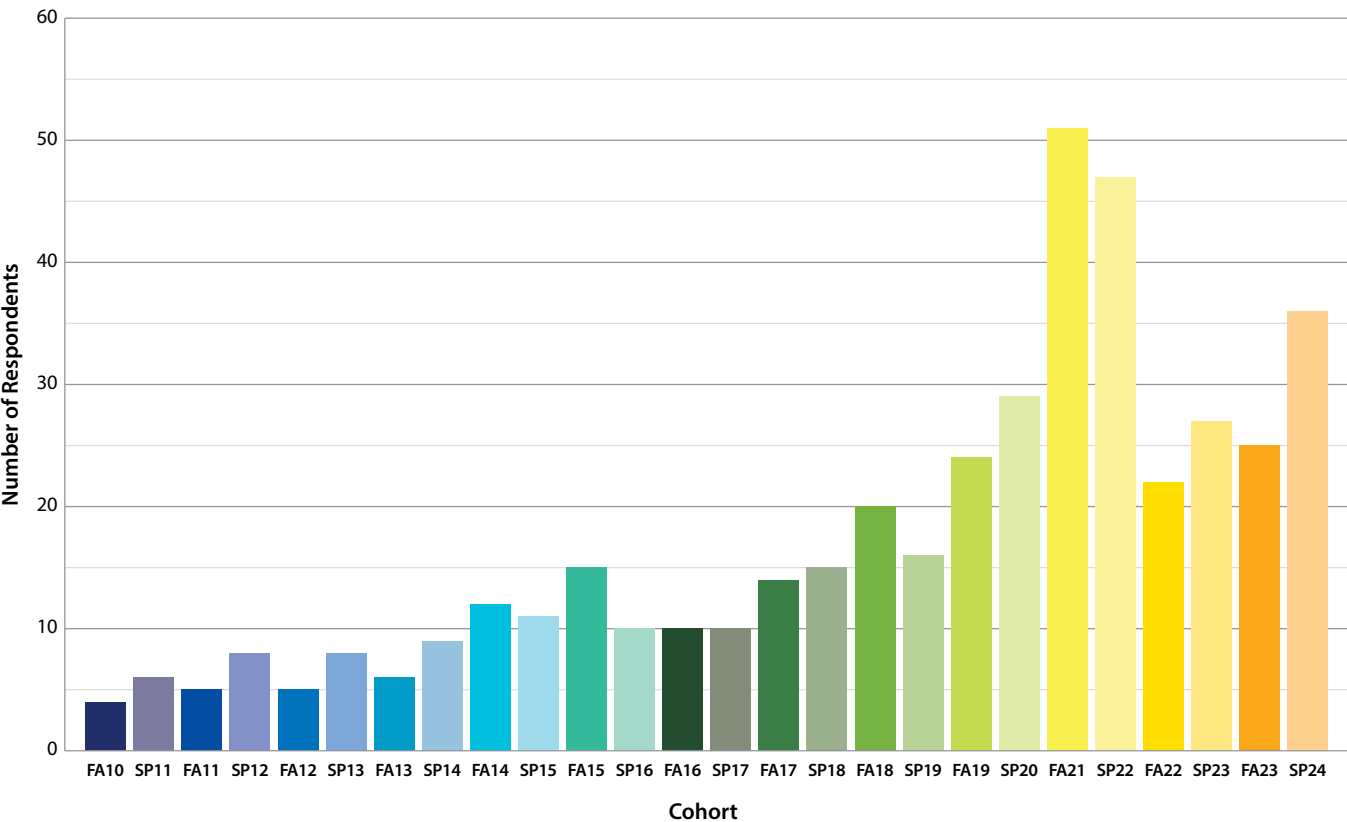
¹ With 445 responses, the survey results have an estimated margin of error of approximately ± 4.6 percentage points at the 95% confidence level, assuming a proportion near 50%. This means that for any reported percentage, the true value for the entire population of 2,443 individuals is likely within about 4–5 percentage points of the observed result, provided the sample is representative. However, this does not account for potential nonresponse bias so we cannot generalize survey results to the entire population of Global UGRAD Pakistan alumni.

Year of Participation (Program Cohorts):

This section reflects a full recount from the Alchemer raw dataset (n=445). Percentages are Count / n and rounded to two decimals. The distribution now sums to 100%.

Cohort	Count	Percent
Fall 2010	4	0.90%
Spring 2011	6	1.35%
Fall 2011	5	1.12%
Spring 2012	8	1.80%
Fall 2012	5	1.12%
Spring 2013	8	1.80%
Fall 2013	6	1.35%
Spring 2014	9	2.02%
Fall 2014	12	2.70%
Spring 2015	11	2.47%
Fall 2015	15	3.37%
Spring 2016	10	2.25%
Fall 2016	10	2.25%

Cohort	Count	Percent
Spring 2017	10	2.25%
Fall 2017	14	3.15%
Spring 2018	15	3.37%
Fall 2018	20	4.49%
Spring 2019	16	3.60%
Fall 2019	24	5.39%
Spring 2020	29	6.52%
Fall 2021	51	11.46%
Spring 2022	47	10.56%
Fall 2022	22	4.94%
Spring 2023	27	6.07%
Fall 2023	25	5.62%
Spring 2024	36	8.09%



FA: Fall SP: Spring #: Last 2 Digits of Cohort Year
 Example: "FA10" = Fall 2010

Educational Background:

Undergraduate degree completed: ~65%

Master's degree: ~28%



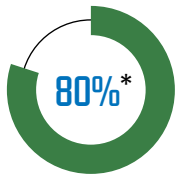
Doctoral degree: ~4%

Currently pursuing graduate studies: ~26%

Employment Status:

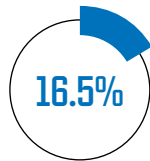
Paid employment: 70%

Full-time:



** of employed respondents*

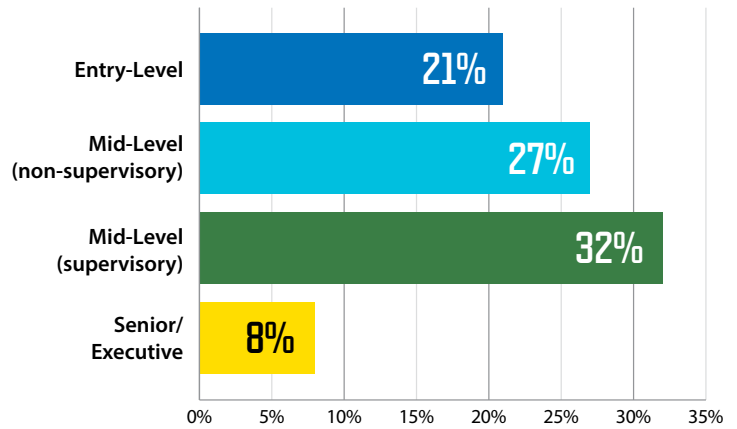
Part-time:



Unpaid career-related opportunities: 9%

Self-employed: 9%

POSITIONS



APPENDIX 4: WORKING DEFINITION OF GLOBAL UGRAD-PAKISTAN'S U.S. IMPACT

This assessment defines **U.S. impact** as the ways Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated benefits for Americans, American institutions, American communities, and long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation. The definition reflects input from host advisors, community partners, friendship families, alumni, program administrators, and representatives from the U.S. Department of State, including the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and the U.S. Embassy in Pakistan. It was used as an organizing lens for reviewing program data, survey responses, focus group discussions, interviews, and alumni stories.

For this assessment, Global UGRAD-Pakistan's U.S. impact refers to the ways the program strengthened American host institutions and communities; built skills, relationships, and trust between Americans and Pakistanis; contributed to American innovation, business, and workforce-relevant capacities; and supported long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation.

Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated U.S. impact through direct engagement. Pakistani participants and Americans studied, served, problem-solved, shared cultural perspectives, and built relationships together in American classrooms, campuses, local organizations, host families, and community settings. These experiences helped Americans and Pakistanis see one another through direct personal experience rather than assumptions or secondhand impressions, creating the foundation for sustained relationships and practical cooperation.

The assessment identified five interrelated dimensions of U.S. impact:

1 Strengthening American Host Institutions and Communities

Global UGRAD-Pakistan strengthened American host institutions and communities by bringing Pakistani participants into U.S. classrooms, campuses, local organizations, and community spaces. Participants contributed through coursework, volunteer service, country presentations, cultural exchange, and day-to-day engagement with American students, faculty, staff, host advisors, friendship families, and community members. These interactions helped U.S. institutions and communities build new connections, expand cultural knowledge, improve services, and develop more responsive practices for students and community members.

Examples documented in the assessment include expanded halal food options, dedicated or more accessible prayer spaces, stronger Muslim student association activity, improved support for students with disabilities, new or strengthened cultural programming, new structures or initiatives at host institutions, and community-level initiatives such as book drives and service partnerships. These examples show that exchange can strengthen U.S. institutions and communities when participants are treated as contributors, collaborators, and members of local campus and civic life.

2 Building Workforce-Relevant Skills and Innovation Capacity

Global UGRAD-Pakistan helped Americans and Pakistani participants build skills that matter for education, workforce readiness, innovation, and collaboration. Through direct engagement with Pakistani participants, American students, faculty, staff, and community members developed curiosity, adaptability, problem-solving skills, intercultural communication, creativity, and new ways of thinking. Host advisors described Pakistani participants as highly engaged contributors who prompted American peers and institutions to ask new questions and approach problems differently.

These skills are practical, not abstract. They support the ability of Americans and Pakistanis to work across cultural, institutional, and professional contexts; to collaborate on shared challenges; and to build the trust needed for durable academic, professional, institutional, and community partnerships.

3 Creating Durable Relationships Between Americans and Pakistanis

Global UGRAD-Pakistan created lasting personal, academic, professional, and institutional relationships between Americans and Pakistanis. The assessment found that alumni sustained relationships with Americans after returning to Pakistan, including friendships, professional ties, academic connections, and institutional relationships. Among 2025 Annual Alumni Survey respondents, 89.4% reported that they were still in contact with Americans they met during Global UGRAD-Pakistan, and more than 75% communicated at least monthly with American friends or colleagues.

These relationships are an important form of U.S. impact because they extend the value of the exchange beyond a single semester. They provide a foundation for continued collaboration, improved understanding, professional cooperation, and long-term people-to-people ties between the United States and Pakistan.

4 Supporting Economic, Business, and Innovation Pathways

Global UGRAD-Pakistan supported U.S. economic and innovation value by creating long-term pathways through which alumni used relationships, skills, and professional networks developed through the program. The assessment identified examples of alumni contributing to American business performance, expanding the reach of U.S.-origin education and technology tools, creating professional opportunities for American students, and building partnerships in sectors such as AI, technology, energy, education, and workforce development.

These examples should be understood as documented pathways rather than universal outcomes for all alumni. The assessment does not claim that every alumnus created direct economic value for Americans. Rather, it shows that Global UGRAD-Pakistan created the conditions for economic and innovation value by connecting talented Pakistani alumni with American institutions, companies, technologies, and professional networks.

5 Advancing Long-Term U.S.-Pakistan Cooperation

Global UGRAD-Pakistan supported long-term U.S.-Pakistan cooperation by helping alumni return to communities across Pakistan with direct experience of American people, institutions, and communities. Participants departed the United States with more favorable views of Americans, and alumni reported changing perceptions of the United States in their home communities. These outcomes matter because many participants came from communities where direct contact with Americans may have been limited.

Alumni also applied skills and relationships from the program in sectors and communities relevant to long-term cooperation, including education, public service, technology, entrepreneurship, lawful commerce, legal systems, energy, and community development. These contributions support the broader finding that exchange programs can strengthen cooperation by building trust, practical skills, and durable people-to-people relationships over time.

How the Definition Was Developed

IREX developed this working definition through an evidence-informed process that drew on existing program data, prior evaluation findings, survey responses, alumni stories, focus group discussions, and interviews with stakeholders connected to Global UGRAD-Pakistan. The assessment team reviewed existing evidence and then used focus groups and interviews to better understand how Americans, alumni, host advisors, program administrators, and other stakeholders experienced and described U.S. impact.

The assessment team consulted U.S. host advisors representing communities across the United States, with attention to host contexts outside major cities. The definition was also informed by perspectives from program administrators in the United States and Pakistan, including representatives of the United States Educational Foundation in Pakistan and the Pakistan-U.S. Alumni Network. These perspectives helped identify how Global UGRAD-Pakistan generated value for American students, faculty, staff, host institutions, local organizations, businesses, friendship families, and communities.

The working definition was used to guide the assessment's review of evidence and to organize the report's key findings. It helped the assessment examine not only what changed for Pakistani participants and alumni, but also what changed for Americans, American institutions, and American communities as a result of hosting and collaborating with Global UGRAD-Pakistan participants.

Limitations

This working definition should be understood as a practical framework for learning, not as a causal claim that Global UGRAD-Pakistan alone produced every outcome described in this report. The assessment is contribution-focused and exploratory. It identifies credible patterns of U.S. impact across program data, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and alumni stories, while recognizing that other factors may also have contributed to the outcomes described.

Several limitations should be kept in mind. First, program monitoring and evaluation data collected over the life of Global UGRAD-Pakistan were not originally designed with U.S. impact as the primary focus. As a result, the assessment could not capture the full scope of impact on American host institutions, local organizations, businesses, friendship families, and communities.

Second, some of the evidence used to develop this definition may reflect selection or response bias. Alumni who respond to surveys may be more highly engaged than the broader alumni population, and host advisors, alumni, and other stakeholders who participated in interviews or focus groups may have had especially strong or positive experiences with the program.

Third, interviews, focus groups, and surveys may be subject to desirability bias because participants knew the assessment was connected to the program and its funders. For this reason, findings should be interpreted as credible patterns across multiple data sources, not as definitive proof of program-wide outcomes.

Finally, it can be difficult to link observed outcomes directly and exclusively to Global UGRAD-Pakistan. External factors — including local campus context, community conditions, personal circumstances, professional opportunities, and broader U.S.-Pakistan dynamics — may also have influenced the outcomes described. The definition therefore supports contribution-focused learning and future measurement rather than causal attribution.

How This Definition Can Inform Future Practice

This definition is intended to support future program design, monitoring, evaluation, and learning. By naming the kinds of U.S. impact that exchange programs can generate — institutional strengthening, community benefit, workforce-relevant skill development, durable relationships, economic and innovation pathways, and long-term cooperation — future programs can more intentionally design for, measure, and strengthen benefits for Americans as well as international participants.

The definition can also help funders, implementers, host institutions, and researchers develop more consistent language and measurement approaches for understanding how international education programs affect American communities. Used carefully, it provides a framework for asking better questions, collecting more relevant data, and communicating the full value of exchange programs without overstating causal claims.



Global UGRAD-Pakistan is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State with funding provided by the U.S. Government and supported in its implementation by IREX.