

ANNUAL REPORT 2025

OPENING MINDS CHANGING LIVES

*Celebrating intercultural learning,
global citizenship and lasting
connections.*



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"The true impact of intercultural learning is not measured by where people travel, but by who they become because they travelled."



A Year of Growth, Culture and Looking Forward

2025 was a year of reflection, growth and preparing for the future.

Following the celebration of 40 years of operation in 2024, 2025 gave our longstanding international educational charity, based in Cork, the opportunity both to build on our history and to look ahead with confidence.

We began the year by undertaking a strategic planning process, culminating in the launch of our new five-year strategy. Developed through consultation with volunteers, staff, board members and stakeholders, the strategy provides a clear framework for the future while reaffirming our commitment to creating transformative intercultural learning opportunities and ensuring the long-term sustainability of the organisation. Most encouragingly, organisational culture emerged as one of the highest-scoring aspects of EIL/AFS Ireland during this process, reflecting the strength of our people and values and reinforcing our optimism for the future.

Throughout the year, we continued to create meaningful opportunities for intercultural learning, global citizenship and personal development. We delivered high-quality impact by working with 1,749 participants and achieved the highest participant quality rating scores in the organisation's history. We also strengthened our scholarship reserves, helping to ensure that financial sustainability remains at the heart of our mission for future generations.

2025 also saw the commencement of an independent governance review, ensuring that good practices are fully embedded across the organisation and providing a strong foundation from which to grow our mission in the years ahead. Alongside this, we introduced new initiatives, including Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training and new online digital programmes, reflecting our commitment to continuous improvement, innovation and accessibility.

As we look ahead, we are excited to continue strengthening and diversifying our work throughout 2026 and beyond. While the world continues to face social and economic challenges, the need for intercultural learning, understanding and connection has never been greater.

None of this would have been possible without the people behind the mission. We would like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers, members, staff and all of our international partners, as well as our partners here in Ireland, for their continued support as we move forward together into the future.

Together, we are opening minds, changing lives and building global citizens.

AIDEEN O'LEARY

CEO

KATE O'BRIEN

CHAIRPERSON 2025

ANDREW ORMSBY

CHAIRPERSON 2026



Our Mission

To inspire active global citizenship and personal development through intercultural learning and travel.

Our Vision

A world where all cultures thrive together in peace and understanding.

Our Values

Our work is guided by **four core** values:

- **Diversity** – We embrace diversity in people, cultures and perspectives, recognising that our differences enrich our organisation and society.
- **Curiosity** – We foster a lifelong love of learning and encourage people to explore the world with openness and respect.
- **Collaboration** – We build strong relationships and partnerships because lasting impact is achieved together.
- **Integrity** – We act ethically, responsibly and with purpose in everything we do.

Our Story

Why We Exist



For more than 60 years, EIL/AFS Ireland has been creating opportunities for people to learn from one another through meaningful intercultural experiences.

Every year, we connect people across cultures through education, travel and exchange, helping them develop the knowledge, skills and confidence to make a positive contribution to their communities and the wider world.

What Makes EIL/AFS Ireland Distinctive

We are purpose-driven rather than profit-driven. We believe learning is lifelong, that every person has the capacity to create positive change, and that meaningful encounters between people can challenge assumptions, broaden perspectives and contribute to a more peaceful world.

Our Work

Today, our work is delivered through four interconnected areas:

Study Abroad

Connecting young people through inbound and outbound exchanges that foster intercultural understanding, confidence and personal growth.

Global Citizenship

Providing scholarships and international learning opportunities that empower participants to become active global citizens.

Cultural Groups

Welcoming international visitors to Ireland through educational travel experiences that showcase Irish culture, heritage and community life.

Volunteer Engagement

Supporting a vibrant network of volunteers and alumni who bring our mission to life, strengthen local communities and deepen engagement across the wider EIL/AFS network.

Every programme is different, every participant's journey is unique. But each experience begins with the same idea:

Learning happens when people connect.

STRATEGY IN ACTION

Building the Future of Intercultural Learning

2025 marked the beginning of an exciting new chapter for EIL/AFS Ireland with the launch of our Strategic Plan 2025–2030.

Developed through extensive consultation with volunteers, staff, board members, partners and stakeholders, the strategy provides a clear roadmap for the future of the organisation. Building on more than 60 years of intercultural learning, it sets out how we will continue to grow our impact while remaining true to our mission, values and commitment to creating meaningful international experiences.

The strategy recognises that the world around us is changing. Communities are becoming increasingly diverse, education continues to evolve, and charities must continually adapt to remain resilient and relevant. It positions EIL/AFS Ireland to respond to these opportunities by strengthening our organisation, expanding our reach and ensuring we continue to deliver high-quality intercultural learning for future generations.

At its heart, the strategy is about people. It is about creating opportunities for individuals, communities and partners to connect across cultures while ensuring EIL/AFS Ireland has the capabilities, partnerships and resources to grow sustainably into the future.

At its core, the strategy focuses on three interconnected goals:



Goal 1: Renewing Our Identity

- Strengthening awareness and understanding of EIL/AFS Ireland's mission, values and impact by enhancing our communications, deepening stakeholder engagement and ensuring our story is communicated clearly and consistently.

Goal 2: Inspiring Lasting Change

- Expanding opportunities for intercultural learning and active global citizenship through high-quality programmes, innovation and partnerships, ensuring more people can benefit from the transformative experiences that define EIL/AFS Ireland.

Goal 3: Enhancing Our Capabilities

- Investing in our people, governance, systems and financial sustainability to build a resilient organisation that can continue to innovate, grow and deliver lasting impact.

The first year of implementation has already demonstrated how these priorities are shaping decision-making across the organisation, laying the foundations for stronger partnerships, sustainable growth and even greater impact in the years ahead.



A Year of Growth & Connection

2025 saw our strategy move from ambition to action, with progress made across each of our three strategic priorities.

We strengthened our organisational identity by investing in communications, stakeholder engagement and volunteer development. The appointment of EIL/AFS Ireland's first Communications and Volunteer Manager created dedicated capacity to reconnect with volunteers, enhance communications and build stronger relationships across the wider AFS network.

Our commitment to delivering high-quality intercultural learning was recognised internationally when EIL/AFS Ireland achieved **Level 1 Membership** within the AFS network, reflecting the quality of our programmes and our strong organisational performance.

At the same time, our Cultural Groups programmes achieved their highest-ever **Net Promoter Score**, demonstrating the exceptional experiences created through collaboration between staff, volunteers, host communities and international partners.

Innovation also became a key driver of growth. During the year we introduced **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** training workshops and launched new digital global learning programmes, creating new opportunities for learning while diversifying our income and strengthening long-term organisational sustainability.

Alongside these developments, we continued to strengthen partnerships, expand our presence across the charity and education sectors, and invest in the people, systems and governance that will support future growth.

The first year of our Strategic Plan has demonstrated that strategy is more than a document. It is already shaping the way we work, helping us build stronger communities, broaden our impact and create even greater opportunities for intercultural learning in the years ahead.



People and Partnerships

In 2025, we continued to invest in our people and strengthen our organisational culture. Alongside our Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), we expanded staff wellbeing and professional development opportunities, including dedicated sessions on neurodiversity and mental health, focused on supporting both individual wellbeing and participant engagement.

Supporting staff development through representation opportunities both at home and abroad remained a key priority. During 2025, staff participated in nine international travel opportunities, compared with four in 2024. This reflects our commitment to investing in our team, strengthening relationships with international partners and expanding our organisational reach.

We also maintained a strong focus on stakeholder engagement in Ireland. Our team once again participated in St. Patrick's Day celebrations and Culture Night, while also representing the organisation at a number of significant sector events. Highlights included the Wheels Summit, where we engaged with the CEO of the Charities Regulator, and the Charities Institute Hackathon, hosted at LinkedIn headquarters, where four members of our team represented the organisation.

Throughout the year, staff were also encouraged to take on increased responsibilities, providing valuable opportunities to develop leadership skills, broaden experience, and contribute to the organisation's continued growth. We remain committed to fostering an inclusive, supportive workplace that empowers our people to thrive and to deliver meaningful impact for the people we serve.



Impact at Glance 2025

In 2025, EIL/AFS Ireland continued to connect people, communities and cultures through international education and intercultural learning. Across Study Abroad, Explore Scholarships, Cultural Groups and Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI), participants engaged in educational, cultural and community-based programmes spanning more than 40 countries, while tailored learning opportunities strengthened intercultural understanding and inclusive practice throughout Ireland.

Study Abroad

Total



189

Study Abroad
Students

Study Abroad Outbound



11

Outbound Students

Explore Scholarships



31

Explore
Scholarships

Explore Scholarships Destinations



14

Countries



EDI Workshops



20

Participants

Study Abroad Inbound



178

Inbound
Students



9

Local
Communities



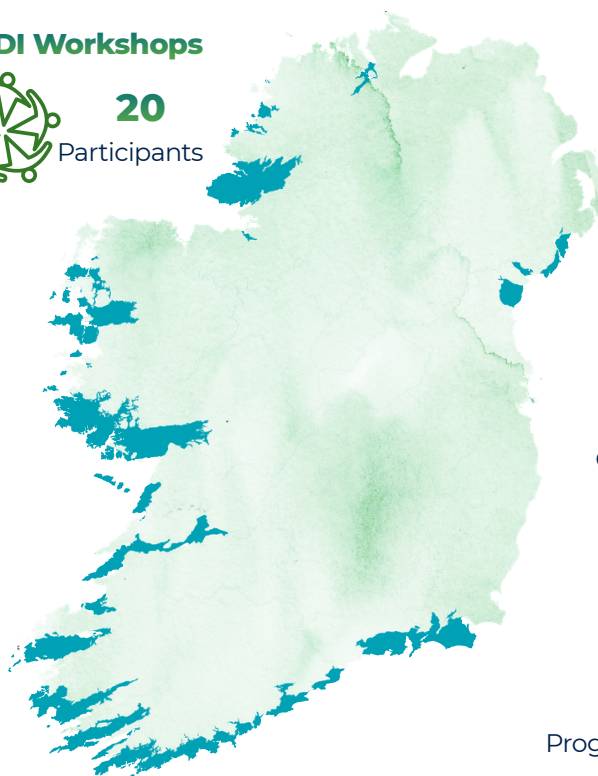
21

Inbound
Countries



30+

Irish Schools



Cultural Groups

1,529

Participants



72

No. of
Groups



18

Group Leaders



82

Net Promoter
Score (NPS)



7

Programme Series



Study Abroad

CONNECTING YOUNG PEOPLE.
STRENGTHENING COMMUNITIES.

Study Abroad continues to be one of EIL/AFS Ireland's most visible expressions of our mission to build understanding through intercultural learning. Every student welcomed into an Irish home and every young person supported to study overseas creates opportunities for cultural exchange, personal growth and lifelong international connections.

In 2025, the department successfully delivered inbound and outbound programmes despite a challenging operating environment. The team welcomed **178 international students** from **21 countries** into communities across Ireland while supporting a growing number of Irish students to experience life abroad. New schools joined the programme, new local coordinators strengthened our network and more than **30 schools** partnered with EIL/AFS Ireland to create meaningful international learning experiences.

The quality, consistency and impact of our work were also recognised internationally. During the year, EIL/AFS Ireland achieved **Level 1 Membership** within the AFS network, reflecting the high standard of our programmes, the strength of our participant support and our successful achievement of all key performance indicators within the required timeframes. This recognition reinforces our commitment to delivering safe, high-quality intercultural learning experiences while meeting the rigorous standards expected across the global AFS network.

Alongside programme delivery, the department adapted to significant organisational change, strengthened volunteer engagement, expanded partnerships and explored new programme opportunities to ensure Study Abroad continues to evolve in response to changing student needs and global trends.

Although recruitment and hosting remain challenging, the impact of every exchange extends well beyond the individual participant. Host families, schools, volunteers and local communities all play a role in creating experiences that foster confidence, resilience and global citizenship.



178
International
Students Hosted



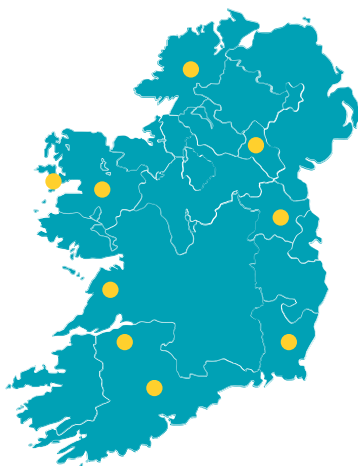
21
Nationalities
represented



30+
Partner
Schools



11
Irish students sent abroad



9
Host
Communities

Growing our network

4

New
schools
joined in
August



2

New Local
Coordinators
in Achill
and Clare



+70%

of placements
successfully
accommodated
two students in
one host family



First ever
student
from China
welcomed
to Ireland

DELIVERING IMPACT THROUGH PARTNERSHIP

Achievements

Supporting students

- Successfully rerouted 14 students who could not be placed elsewhere
- Placements confirmed before arrival, reducing disruption
- Return to in-person orientations strengthened student support

Building partnerships

- Expanded collaboration with volunteers and local coordinators
- Identified new STEM, Erasmus+ and short programme opportunities
- Strengthened international partnerships

Celebrating success

Two international students received national recognition during their exchange:

Pablo Rafael López Cardozo won the Europe Direct Soapbox Award.



Maya Lasic achieved 3rd place at Scifest.



Looking Forward

Challenges

- Recruiting host families and local coordinators
- Rising mental health support needs
- New immigration requirements increasing workload
- Cost pressures across schools and programme delivery
- Need for integrated systems to replace manual processes

2026 priorities include:

- Expanding host communities across Ireland
- Growing the volunteer network
- Diversifying programmes through STEM and Erasmus+
- Improving systems through a dedicated CRM
- Increasing outbound participation and accessibility
- Strengthening partnerships with schools and international organisations

”

When former exchange student Ondrej Vejslik returned to visit his host family in Clare, he met the current students from Italy and France, demonstrating how the relationships created through Study Abroad continue long after the programme ends.

Global Citizenship

CREATING OPPORTUNITIES. INSPIRING ACTION. BUILDING GLOBAL CITIZENS.

Not every young person has the opportunity to travel internationally, and those who benefit most from intercultural learning are often those who face the greatest barriers to participation. Through the Explore Scholarships and our Intercultural Learning programmes, EIL/AFS Ireland creates opportunities for all Irish residents to broaden their perspectives, develop leadership skills and become active global citizens.

In 2025, Global Citizenship continued to expand its reach both internationally and within Ireland. **Explore Scholarship participants** travelled across four continents, contributing thousands of volunteer hours while supporting projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. At home, our **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion workshops** brought intercultural learning into workplaces and communities, helping organisations build more inclusive cultures and stronger communication.

Whether travelling overseas or participating in local learning programmes, every participant became part of a growing movement committed to understanding, inclusion and positive social change. Together, these programmes continue to demonstrate that global citizenship begins with curiosity but creates lasting impact in communities both abroad and at home.



13
Countries
Visited



31
Scholarship
winners



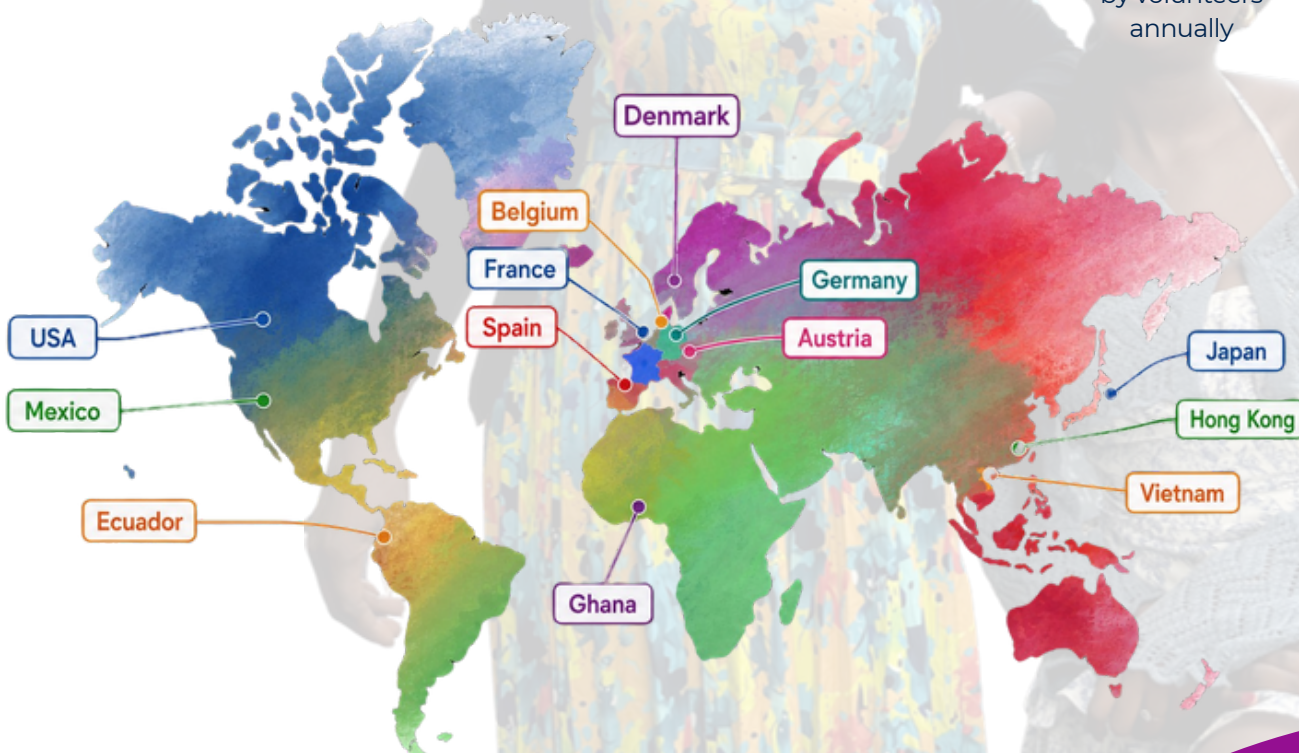
15
Schools &
universities
represented



8
Scholarship
categories



2000+
Hours
contributed
by volunteers
annually



Explore Scholarships

MORE THAN TRAVEL. A PATHWAY TO GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP.

Rather than simply funding overseas travel, Explore Scholarships provide life-changing international learning experiences that develop leadership, intercultural understanding and active global citizenship. Each scholarship offers participants a unique opportunity to engage with communities around the world while exploring issues such as education, sustainability, youth development, social justice and cultural exchange.

Although every programme is different, they all share one common goal: empowering participants to return home with the confidence, knowledge and motivation to make a positive difference within their own communities.

Explore Scholarship Pathways

Community Development

Participants worked alongside local organisations supporting education, youth initiatives and community wellbeing in destinations including **Mexico** and **Ghana**.

Education & Language

Scholarship winners taught English, supported language learning and participated in educational exchange programmes in **Vietnam**, developing communication skills while sharing cultures.

Environmental Sustainability

Participants joined conservation and ecological education projects in **Ecuador**, learning about biodiversity, sustainable living and environmental stewardship.

Youth Leadership

Leadership programmes encouraged participants to explore democracy, civic participation and community engagement through initiatives including the **Governor's Institute of Vermont (USA)**.

Human Rights & Social Justice

Participants engaged with organisations promoting equality, inclusion and community development while gaining first-hand insight into global social issues.

Study Abroad

Longer-term academic exchanges across Europe enabled participants to experience education in another country while building independence, intercultural competence and lifelong international friendships.



One of the year's highlights was the return of Explore participants to Africa for the first time since the pandemic. Working closely with AFS Ghana, three participants undertook meaningful community-based learning experiences, marking an important milestone in rebuilding international partnerships and expanding opportunities across the continent



Intercultural Learning & Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

BUILDING MORE INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES AND COMMUNITIES

Global Citizenship doesn't only happen overseas.

Throughout 2025, EIL/AFS Ireland expanded its Intercultural Learning and Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) programmes, bringing the principles of intercultural understanding into workplaces, educational settings and community organisations throughout Ireland.

Working with organisations such as **Cork ETB** and **St Luke's Home**, the team designed practical workshops that encouraged participants to reflect on culture, communication and inclusion while developing the confidence to work more effectively within increasingly diverse environments.

These programmes demonstrate that global citizenship begins at home as much as abroad.



Workshop Themes



Impact

These workshops helped participants:

- build intercultural confidence
- improve communication
- recognise bias
- develop inclusive leadership skills
- strengthen workplace relationships
- create more welcoming communities

”

As Ireland becomes increasingly diverse, intercultural understanding is becoming an essential life and workplace skill.

What We Learned in 2025

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITY



Explore Scholarships continues to attract learners from increasingly diverse educational backgrounds through a broad range of scholarship pathways.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS



New international and Irish partnerships are helping expand opportunities for intercultural learning both overseas and at home.

CREATING COMMUNITY IMPACT



Participants don't simply return from overseas; they bring their learning home through Action at Home projects, volunteering and community engagement.

GROWING DEMAND



Interest in intercultural learning continues to increase among schools, higher education and workplaces.

2026 Priorities

- ✓ Expand scholarship destinations and international partnerships.
- ✓ Continue growing opportunities across Africa.
- ✓ Increase access for learners from diverse backgrounds.
- ✓ Strengthen Action at Home initiatives.
- ✓ Grow Intercultural Learning and EDI programmes across education and workplaces.
- ✓ Continue demonstrating the long-term impact of global citizenship education.

Opportunities

- Maintaining equitable access to fully funded scholarships
- Growing international partnerships while maintaining programme quality
- Reaching more underrepresented communities across Ireland
- Measuring long-term participant and community impact

Global citizenship is not defined by the number of miles travelled but by the understanding, confidence and commitment participants bring home. Whether through an Explore Scholarship or an Intercultural Learning workshop, every programme equips people with the skills to contribute positively to their communities, creating a ripple effect that extends far beyond the initial experience.

Do It Scared

MEGAN BROWNE

(STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIP WINNER 2025)



eilExplore
TRAVEL · LEARN · CHANGE

When Megan Browne boarded a plane to Austria, she was terrified. Having never been away from her family for more than a day, the thought of spending three months abroad felt completely outside her comfort zone.

The first few days were especially difficult. Feeling unwell on her first night made the homesickness even harder, and for a while she was convinced she had made a terrible mistake.

Thankfully, she was wrong.

Encouraged to apply by her German teacher, who believed in her language skills and knew the experience would help her grow, Megan embraced the opportunity despite her fears. Looking back, she is grateful she took that leap.

Over the following months, she attended school, lived with a welcoming host family and discovered the beauty of everyday life in Austria. From visiting Schönbrunn Palace and Langbathsee to experiencing Austrian traditions and history, she gained a deeper appreciation for a culture that soon began to feel familiar.

Some of Megan's favourite memories, however, weren't the famous landmarks. They were the ordinary moments, cooking and baking with her host family, hiking together, playing games in the evenings and sharing everyday conversations. Even their dog, Urmel, became an unforgettable part of her time abroad.

At first, speaking German felt intimidating, and there were moments when the words seemed to disappear as soon as someone spoke at normal speed. But with every conversation her confidence grew. She became more comfortable communicating, more independent and increasingly willing to embrace unfamiliar situations.

Most importantly, Megan returned home with lifelong friendships, lasting memories and a confidence she still carries with her today. The experience showed her that she could adapt, overcome challenges and achieve far more than she had ever believed possible.

Looking back, she describes the scholarship as one of the best experiences of her life. Her advice to anyone considering applying is simple: do it scared. You may never feel completely ready, but the greatest rewards often begin by saying yes to something that feels just a little bit frightening.

"Do it scared. Some of the best things in life begin with saying yes to something that feels a little scary."



One Opportunity Can Change Everything

LIAM O' BRIEN (UNDER 18 EXPLORE WINNER 2025)

For Liam O'Brien, travelling to Ecuador was his first time away from home for longer than a week. Spending a month overseas felt like a huge step, and while he expected to face challenges, the support he received from EIL, the local team and his welcoming host family quickly turned uncertainty into excitement.

Throughout his journey, Liam explored Ecuador from the Mindo rainforest to the slopes of Cotopaxi and Chimborazo, experiencing landscapes, communities and cultures unlike anything he had known before. Along the way, he met people from all walks of life, forming friendships that he knows will last a lifetime.

Although language differences seemed daunting at first, basic Spanish lessons and the kindness of the people he met helped him communicate with confidence.

What initially felt unfamiliar soon became part of the adventure.

The confidence he gained abroad continues to shape him today. Learning to navigate unfamiliar situations has strengthened his self-belief, while Living away from home encouraged Liam to become more independent and embrace situations outside his comfort zone. Each new experience strengthened his confidence, resilience and sense of adventure. Friends have since commented on the positive change they have seen in him, recognising a new confidence and willingness to try new things.

Looking back, Liam describes Explore as a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that gave him experiences, friendships and life skills that will stay with him long into the future. More than a journey across the world, it was a journey of personal growth that continues to shape the way he approaches new opportunities.



"The things that seem most difficult at the beginning often become the experiences that teach us the most."





Cultural Groups

Educational Travel That Connects People and Places

Educational travel is about far more than visiting new places. It is about understanding the people, history and communities that shape them.

Throughout 2025, the Cultural Groups Department welcomed more than **1,500 participants** to Ireland through educational travel programmes delivered in partnership with **Road Scholar** and other international organisations. Every itinerary was carefully designed to create meaningful connections between participants and the people, places and stories that make Ireland unique. Participants travelled throughout Ireland, engaging with historians, musicians, farmers, heritage specialists and community organisations. Through these authentic experiences they gained a deeper understanding of Ireland's history, culture and contemporary society while contributing to local economies and supporting regional communities.

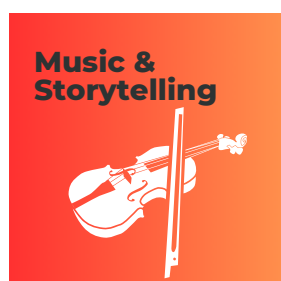
The quality and impact of these experiences were reflected in an outstanding **Net Promoter Score (NPS) of 82**, an increase of eight points on the previous year. This exceptional result demonstrates the value participants placed on authentic cultural engagement, educational content and the warmth of the welcome they received throughout their journeys.

Behind every successful programme is an extensive network of accommodation providers, coach operators, guides, cultural presenters, heritage centres and local businesses. Together, these partnerships ensure that educational travel benefits not only participants but also the communities that welcome them.

Educational Travel in Action



Heritage & History



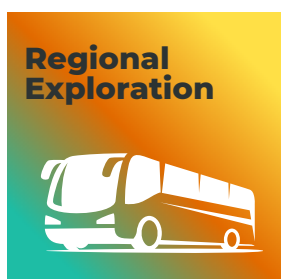
Music & Storytelling



Farms & Rural Communities



Community Connections



Regional Exploration



Educational Talks & Local Experts

1,529
Participants



72
No of Groups



18
Group Leaders



82
Net Promoter Score (NPS)



7
Programme Series



What We Learned in 2025

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES



Cultural Groups programmes support a nationwide network of hotels, guides, coach operators, restaurants, musicians, heritage centres and family-run businesses, ensuring the benefits of educational travel are shared across regional Ireland.

DELIVERING QUALITY EXPERIENCES



Participant evaluations consistently praised:

- educational value
- knowledgeable guides
- authentic cultural experiences
- hospitality
- opportunities to connect with local people

The department also achieved some of the organisation's strongest participant satisfaction and Net Promoter Scores.

STRENGTHENING GLOBAL UNDERSTANDING



Participants consistently reported leaving Ireland with:

- a deeper appreciation of Irish history
- greater understanding of Irish identity
- stronger cultural awareness
- meaningful personal connections

LOOKING AHEAD



Demand for educational travel continues to grow.

Future priorities include:

- refining itineraries
- developing new community partnerships
- improving operational systems
- strengthening supplier relationships
- responding to increasing programme complexity

Challenges

- Rising supplier costs
- Increasing programme complexity
- Managing overlapping programmes nationwide
- Maintaining quality while programme volume grows
- Responding quickly to operational changes

Educational travel creates understanding in ways that traditional tourism cannot. By connecting international visitors with Ireland's people, heritage and communities, Cultural Groups continues to build meaningful relationships that benefit participants, strengthen local economies and showcase Ireland through authentic human experiences.



Volunteers & Communications

The Heartbeat of EIL/AFS Ireland

Behind every exchange programme, scholarship, educational tour and participant journey is a network of people working together to create meaningful opportunities for others.

Volunteers and Communications play a unique role within EIL/AFS Ireland. While participants experience our programmes first-hand, this department provides the connections that make those experiences possible. Volunteers welcome students, support host families, mentor participants, facilitate events, contribute to governance and represent EIL/AFS Ireland within communities across Ireland and internationally.

At the same time, our communications work ensures these experiences are shared, celebrated and understood, strengthening awareness of EIL/AFS Ireland's mission and inspiring others to get involved.

Many of our volunteers first connected with EIL/AFS Ireland as programme participants themselves. Their decision to return and give back reflects the lasting impact of intercultural learning and creates a powerful cycle of participation, leadership and community engagement that continues across generations.

Together, volunteers and communications help ensure that every programme not only delivers meaningful experiences but also builds lasting relationships, strengthens communities and expands EIL/AFS Ireland's reach far beyond individual participants. During 2025, EIL/AFS Ireland also invested in volunteer development by supporting participation in international learning opportunities, such as BAM Training in Bonn, hosted by AFS Germany, and the Volunteer Summer Summit in Turkey.



Supporting Every Programme



Volunteers contributed across Study Abroad, Explore Scholarships, Cultural Groups and organisational events, providing mentoring, participant support and practical assistance throughout the year.

Building Community



Volunteers represented EIL/AFS Ireland in local communities, supported host families, welcomed international participants and strengthened relationships with schools, partners and local organisations.

Lifelong Engagement



Many volunteers are former participants whose own experiences inspired them to return, creating a cycle of learning, leadership and giving back that remains one of EIL/AFS Ireland's greatest strengths.

Leading the Organisation



Volunteers also supported governance, strategic planning, international representation and organisational development, helping shape EIL/AFS Ireland's future alongside staff and the board.

Building Connections Through Communications



During 2025, the appointment of EIL/AFS Ireland's first Communications and Volunteer Manager marked an important milestone in strengthening how the organisation connects with participants, volunteers, alumni and the wider community.

Communications became more than simply sharing information. It became a strategic tool for strengthening relationships, increasing visibility and demonstrating the impact of intercultural learning. Throughout the year, greater emphasis was placed on reconnecting with volunteers and alumni, supporting programme promotion, increasing engagement across digital platforms and sharing the stories that bring EIL/AFS Ireland's mission to life.

By celebrating participant experiences, recognising volunteer contributions and showcasing the impact of our programmes, communications helped build stronger connections within the organisation while encouraging new audiences to engage with EIL/AFS Ireland's work.

2025 Highlights

Strengthening Communications

Expanded EIL/AFS Ireland's visibility through events, partnerships, promotional activity and digital storytelling, helping more people understand the impact of intercultural learning.

Re-engaging Volunteers

Focused on reconnecting with existing volunteers and alumni while creating new opportunities for meaningful involvement across programmes and events.

Growing Community Connections

Supported collaboration between volunteers, participants, schools, host families and community partners, strengthening the relationships that underpin EIL/AFS Ireland's work.

Supporting the Future

Established stronger foundations for volunteer development and organisational communications, supporting the delivery of EIL/AFS Ireland's Strategic Plan 2025–2030.



Looking Ahead

As EIL/AFS Ireland continues to grow, volunteers and communications will remain central to delivering meaningful intercultural learning experiences. Priorities for 2026 include expanding the volunteer network, strengthening alumni engagement, enhancing digital communications, increasing community partnerships and sharing more stories that demonstrate the lasting impact of EIL/AFS Ireland's programmes.

Every story shared inspires another participant. Every volunteer welcomed strengthens a programme. Every connection made helps build a more inclusive, globally minded community.

Financial Highlights



Total Income

€ 5.95 ML



Total Expenditure

€ 5.43 ML



Net surplus

€526,984

Responsible Stewardship

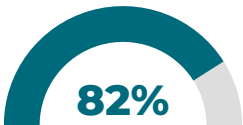
As a mission-driven not-for-profit organisation, EIL is committed to ensuring that every euro entrusted to us is managed responsibly, transparently and in support of our charitable purpose.

In 2025, the organisation delivered a strong financial performance while continuing to invest in programme delivery, participant support, volunteer engagement and organisational development. Total income increased to **€5.95 million**, up **23.3%** from **€4.83 million** in 2023, reflecting sustained growth in programme activity and strengthening the organisation's long-term financial resilience.

Expenditure remained well controlled, increasing by **11.3%** over the same three-year period despite significant growth in activity. Programme costs, including scholarship investment, increased by **18.1%**, reaching **€4.44 million** in 2025. Overall, **82% of expenditure** was invested directly in programme delivery, demonstrating the organisation's continued focus on maximising resources for its charitable mission.

The organisation further strengthened its financial position during the year, with **net assets increasing to €2.26 million** and **cash reserves rising to €2.25 million**. This strong financial foundation provides the capacity to invest in future growth, deliver the organisation's strategic objectives and respond confidently to new opportunities.

PROGRAMME COSTS



of all expenditure for 2025

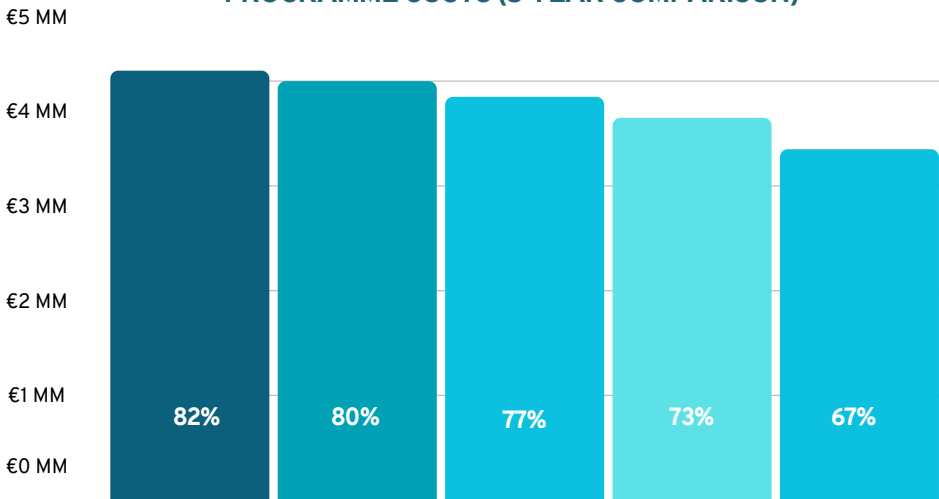
TOTAL INCOME

€ 5,954,583

▲ 7%

● 2025 ● 2024 ● 2023 ● 2022 ● 2021

PROGRAMME COSTS (5 YEAR COMPARISON)



Percentage of total expenditure spent on Programme Delivery

INCOME

Income	2025	2024	2023
Programme Income	5,855,088	5,521,181	4,767,621
Government Grants	42,265	37,218	44,034
Co Funding	20,158	31,972	16,250
Other Income*	57,230	18,500	-
Total Income	5,954,583	5,576,899	4,827,905

*Other Income in 2024 was sale of asset and in 2025 was VAT compensation scheme.

Income increased by **6.8%** in 2025 to **€5.95 million**, reflecting continued demand for the Charity's intercultural learning programmes. Over the past three years, income has grown by **23.3%**, strengthening financial resilience and supporting future investment. Programme income remained the Charity's primary revenue source, accounting for **over 98%** of total income. Government grants and co-funding continued to support scholarships.

EXPENDITURE

Expenditure	2025	2024	2023
Programme Costs	4,440,630	4,308,609	3,758,681
Wages	686,334	826,301	858,408
Overheads	295,805	268,544	251,289
Interest	4,830	3,857	7,343
Total Expenditure	5,427,599	5,407,311	4,875,721
Net Surplus / (Deficit)	526,984	169,588	(47,816)

Total expenditure increased by **0.4%** to **€5.43 million** in 2025, despite continued programme growth. Over the past three years, expenditure has risen by **11.3%**, significantly below the **23.3%** growth in income, demonstrating continued financial sustainability. Programme costs, including scholarships, increased to **€4.44 million**, with **82%** of total expenditure invested in programme delivery and participant support. Administrative and organisational costs remained proportionate, supporting effective governance, compliance and organisational development.

The Charity has strengthened its financial performance significantly over the past three years, moving from a deficit of **€47,816** in 2023 to surpluses of **€169,588** in 2024 and **€526,984** in 2025. This resulted in a turnaround of **€744,388** over the period, strengthening the Charity's financial resilience and providing a solid foundation for future investment in its charitable mission.

Balance Sheet

Balance sheet as at 31 December 2025

Balance Sheet	Year 2025	Year 2024	Year 2023
Assets			
Fixed assets			
Tangible Assets	670,548	690,224	713,606
Current Assets			
Debtors	72,831	90,433	59,003
Cash at bank & in hand	2,246,244	1,691,681	1,543,318
	2,319,075	1,782,114	1,602,321
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year	(725,512)	(735,211)	(748,388)
Net Current Assets	1,593,563	1,046,903	853,933
Total Assets less current liabilities	2,264,111	1,737,127	1,567,539
Reserves			
Designated Scholarship Reserve	633,167	492,871	399,160
Unrestricted Capital Reserves	670,548	690,224	713,606
Unrestricted Operational Reserves	960,396	554,032	454,773
Total Funds	2,264,111	1,737,127	1,567,539

Notes:

The financial statements were approved by the board of directors and authorised for issue on 28 July 2025 and are signed on its behalf by:

Andrew Ormsby
Director

Conor O'Brien
Director

Good Governance and Financial Sustainability

The Charity continued to strengthen its financial position during 2025, with total funds increasing to **€2.26 million**, compared with **€1.74 million** in 2024 and **€1.57 million** in 2023. This represents growth of **44.4%** over the three-year period and reflects sustained operating surpluses, prudent financial management and a continued focus on long-term sustainability.

Cash and cash equivalents increased to **€2.25 million** at year-end, while net current assets grew to **€1.59 million**, providing a strong liquidity position and ensuring the Charity has the resources to meet its ongoing commitments, invest in strategic priorities and respond to future opportunities.

The Board remains committed to maintaining appropriate reserves that support both the Charity's long-term resilience and its charitable mission. During 2025, the Directors approved a transfer of **€175,000** from the General Fund to the Designated Scholarship Reserve, increasing the reserve from **€487,625** to **€627,921**. During the year, **€76,969** was invested in scholarships, supported by **€42,265** in external grant funding, representing a net investment of **€34,704** from the Charity's own resources.

The continued growth of the Designated Scholarship Reserve reflects the board's commitment to widening participation and expanding access to life-changing intercultural learning opportunities, regardless of financial circumstances. At the same time, unrestricted operational reserves increased to **€965,642**, strengthening the Charity's capacity to manage financial risk, support future growth and deliver its strategic objectives, while capital reserves continue to reflect investment in the organisation's operational infrastructure.



Net assets

€2.26 ML



Cash reserves

€ 2.25 ML



**Designated
Scholarship Reserve**

€627,921

EXPERIMENT IN INTERNATIONAL LIVING CLG COMPANY INFORMATION

BOARD

Chairperson

Niamh Hill/Kate O'Brien

Vice Chairperson

Santo Leung
Chair of Governance & HR Committee

Vice Chairperson

Andrew Ormsby
Chair of Audit & Risk Management

Paul Conway

Aedín McAdams

Emma McNally Jacobs

Mairéad Redmond

CONTACT US

Phone Number

+353 21-4551535

Email

info@eilireland.org

www.eilireland.org

The Experiment in International Living
is a company limited by guarantee
not having a share capital, registered
in Dublin, Ireland with offices at:

Classic House

11-13 Washington Street,

Cork T12 NHP1

T/A EIL Intercultural Learning.

Charity Number

20107390

Revenue Charity Number

22114

Registered Company Number

136044



PARTNERS



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An Roinn Leanaí, Comhionannais,
Míchumais, Lánpháirtíochta agus Óige
Department of Children, Equality,
Disability, Integration and Youth



Home and Youth Affairs Bureau
The Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region
of the People's Republic of China



Together, we are opening minds,
changing lives and building global citizens.

EIL Intercultural Learning, Classic House,
11 - 13 Washington Street Cork. T12 NHP1
Tel. +353 21 455 1535 / info@eilireland.org

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