# We Develop Active Global Citizens

AFS ANNUAL REPORT **2025**

AFS Intercultural Programs

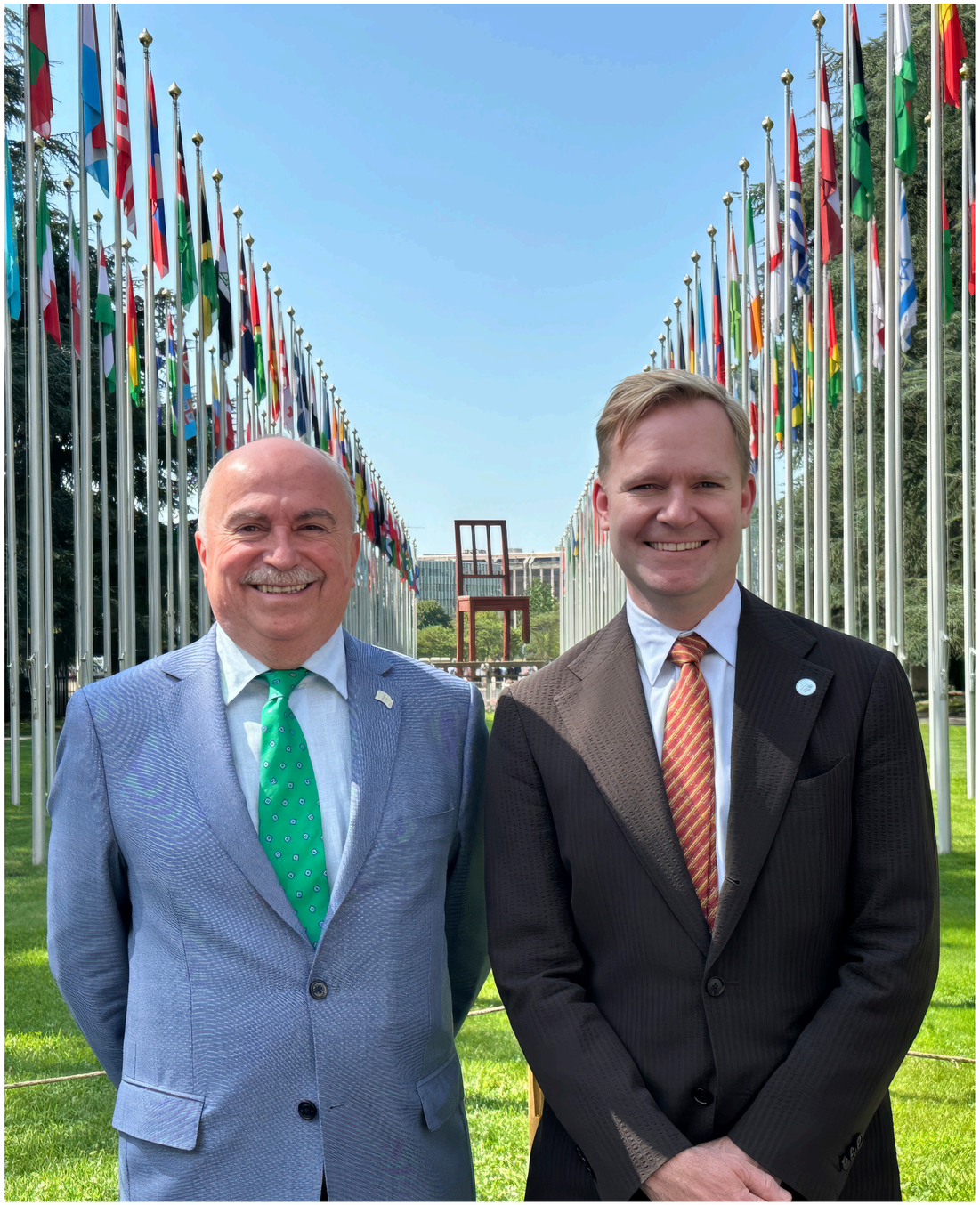

2025 AFS Reach at a Glance

Creating Active Global Citizens with Study Abroad and Virtual Exchange

Advancing Global Citizenship with Schools and Educators

Fostering Impact Worldwide with Volunteer and Youth Leadership



# Letter from the CEO & Chair

As we present the AFS Intercultural Programs 2025 Annual Report, we reflect on a year of growth, connection, and purpose. Together, we remain committed to a more peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable future.

Dear Friends of AFS,

**Driven by a profound sense of purpose, our vision is to ensure a more peaceful, just, equitable, and sustainable future**. In an increasingly interconnected yet polarized world, we believe that developing active global citizens is the key to bridging divides and fostering true understanding. As we reflect on 2025, we celebrate **a year of expanded horizons, deepened impact, and an unwavering commitment to the mission** started by our founders more than 100 years ago.

AFS remains focused on our strategic commitments: **expanding scholarship opportunities for more young people to experience other cultures, deepening educational partnerships, and cultivating an even larger and more empowered volunteer community**. Our impact is felt most deeply at the local level across 100 countries. It is the incredible work of our AFS Network around the world that allows us to equip individuals to navigate our complex world with confidence and purpose.

We are incredibly proud to have expanded our reach by welcoming **the first exchange students to Vietnam and Mongolia**, celebrating the 10th anniversary of the award-winning AFS Global Competence Certificate, and acquiring the virtual dialogue leader **Soliya**. We expanded partnerships, strengthened our grassroots foundation by hosting the inaugural **Chapter Leadership Summit** in Spain, and elevated youth voices in international diplomacy at the 30th AFS Youth Assembly in New York City and the first-ever Regional **AFS Youth Assembly** in Cairo.

None of this would be possible without the profound generosity of our community. In 2025, the **AFS Network raised nearly $40 million, enabling us to provide financial support to 54 percent of our program participants**.

**We extend our deepest gratitude to our volunteers, host families, participants, educators, and donors**. Together, we are bridging divides and building a brighter future.

With gratitude,

**Ernesto ReyMoreno (AFS 1977)**
Chair, Board of Trustees

**Daniel Obst**
President and Chief Executive Officer

# 2025 AFS Reach at a Glance



AFS empowers all participants with essential global skills—and the passion for making a difference. As a global organization with 100+ years of experience, we envision a world in which people from all backgrounds embrace differences and believe that we are stronger because of them, a world where individuals and institutions are empowered to actively work towards advancing global understanding, and take action for collective well-being and sustainable development.

AFS has participants in
**100**
Countries

**34,968**
AFS Volunteers

**500,000+**
Exchange program alumni

**53**
AFS Network Organizations

**26,506**
Schools we work with

## 2025 PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

**25,000+** Total Participants in AFS Programs

**7,231** AFS Study Abroad Participants

**5,780** Virtual Exchange Participants, including Educators

**8,126** AFS Host Families

**1,103** Classroom Exchange Participants

**3,277** Domestic Exchange Participants

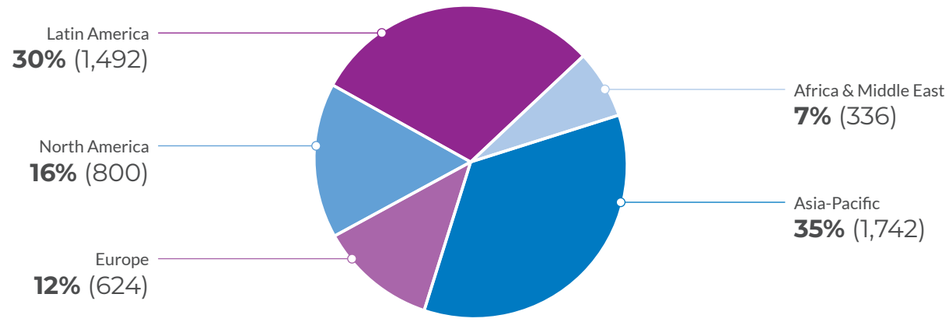
**523** Delegates and Observers at the AFS Youth Assembly

## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF AFS STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

| | Where students come from | Where students are hosted |
|---|---|---|
| Latin America | 1,121 | 1,434 |
| North America | 494 | 1,361 |
| Europe | 4,099 | 3,114 |
| Asia - Pacific | 1,367 | 1,160 |
| Africa & Middle East | 150 | 162 |

## GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF AFS VIRTUAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

Where students come from



## WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDERS SAY ABOUT THEIR AFS EXPERIENCE

### AFS EXCHANGE STUDENTS

**90%**

say they made *significant* improvements in key global skills

**ADAPTABILITY, COMMUNICATION, AND UNDERSTANDING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

### AFS VOLUNTEERS

**86%**

are planning to volunteer with AFS next year

2025
2026

### SCHOOLS

**95%**

say they want to host again in the future

### AFS HOST FAMILIES

**94%**

say they improved their ability to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others

### PARENTS

whose children participated in an AFS exchange

**87%**

are either satisfied or very satisfied with their experience overall

## AFS THEORY OF CHANGE

How AFS Develops Active Global Citizens
The AFS Theory of Change = how we create impact

**EXPERIENCE**
We provide people with genuine, first-hand interactions with differences

**LEARN**
We support people with structured and facilitated learning journeys

**PRACTICE**
We give people exposure to real-world social impact and changemaking tools

= **ACTIVE GLOBAL CITIZENS** → Create a more just, equitable, peaceful and sustainable world



## FUNDRAISING TO SUPPORT GLOBAL IMPACT

In 2025, the AFS Network raised

**$39,848,041**

in funds which provided financial support to

**54%**

of our participants in in-person and virtual exchange programs.

We are grateful for the support from governments, foundations, corporations, and generous individuals who make this possible.

# Creating Active Global Citizens with Study Abroad and Virtual Exchange





*My AFS experience has been nothing short of life-changing. The program exceeded my expectations in every way, offering not only cultural immersion but also personal and professional growth. AFS has truly shaped me into a more open-minded, empathetic, and culturally aware individual.*

— *AFS exchange student from India*



*Being part of the AFS family network changed our family's life. Having the opportunity to discover other cultures, cuisines, and languages—learning to love a young person as a member of our own family, listening to him in the afternoons when he returned from school, watching his Spanish improve day by day, and seeing him off as a more self-assured, independent individual who had mastered the language—ranks among the most gratifying experiences imaginable. You know that you played a part in that personal growth, and you will carry him in your heart forever, just like a son who lives far away.*

— *AFS host family from Costa Rica*



*AFS didn't just give our daughter a life-changing opportunity but rather paved a way for her younger siblings. Her host family treated her like one of their own. Everything about this program was just extraordinary. We are now officially part of the AFS family... and we are not willing to trade this for anything.*

— *Family of an AFS exchange student from South Africa*



For almost 80 years, AFS has remained a global leader in intercultural education, transforming lives through immersive study abroad experiences.

Our study abroad programs—ranging from academic year, semester or trimester exchanges to specialized STEM and virtual initiatives—are designed to bridge cultural divides and empower individuals to become active global citizens.







## FOSTERING ACTIVE GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP THROUGH INTERCULTURAL EXCHANGE

Our high school exchange programs remain a constant force for good, shaping lives and creating connections for a lifetime. **AFS offers a truly community-owned exchange model, designed to transform lives through deep immersion**. In 2025, more than 13,000 people participated in our exchange programs or virtual learning programs.

### The student journey of growth and belonging

AFS students are not merely visitors: they are **active members of their host communities**. By integrating in host families, attending local schools and navigating life in a new language, the students' experience is not just about visiting a country—it is about belonging to one.

Our research indicates that **87% of alumni** credit their AFS experience with developing their identity as global citizens. Students gain essential 21st-century skills, including **adaptability, empathy, and critical thinking**. These competencies provide a distinct academic and professional advantage, preparing the next generation to lead in an increasingly interconnected and complex world.

To ensure these life-changing journeys are accessible to diverse learners, **AFS leads with a commitment to scholarship support**, reducing financial barriers worldwide. AFS fundraises from governments, corporations, foundations and individuals, and provides funds from our own resources to secure scholarships. In 2025, AFS raised nearly $40 million to support 54% of our participants.

### The host family experience brings impact to local communities

Host families are the bedrock of the AFS experience, welcoming students into their homes as sons and daughters. This journey fosters "**global learning at home**," allowing families to experience new cultures, traditions, and perspectives without leaving their communities.

**AFS provides a unique foundation of trust**: every host family is supported by local "neighbors"—dedicated volunteers who live in the same communities and prioritize safety and authentic connection.

According to our latest impact reports, **85% of host families report significant growth in open-mindedness and intercultural communication**. By sharing their daily lives, families build lifelong bonds that expand their worldviews and contribute to more inclusive local societies.

We offer **different program durations** - from one school year, semester or trimester, to enable more students and more families to participate.




## 10 YEARS OF IMPACT THROUGH THE AFS GLOBAL COMPETENCE CERTIFICATE

We celebrated the **10th anniversary of the AFS Global Competence Certificate** (GCC), highlighting a decade of global competence development. Since 2015, the program has reached over **40,000 learners and more than 1,000 Qualified Facilitators in more than 160 countries**, and it continues to grow.

The AFS Global Competence Certificate is an **award-winning, research-based virtual educational solution** that equips youth, educators, professionals, and community leaders with essential global skills. The curriculum focuses on increasing self-awareness, recognizing the perspectives of others, managing emotional responses in unfamiliar contexts, and learning to bridge across differences.



## VIRTUAL EXCHANGE EXPANDS ACCESS TO INTERCULTURAL PROGRAMS

Distance is no barrier to building a global community. In 2025, over **400 teenagers from around the world completed their AFS Global You virtual exchanges**, exploring identity, culture, and social change.

We also successfully concluded the **Global Up Americas** virtual exchange program, which connected over 3,000 students and 122 educators across Colombia, Mexico, and the U.S. for more than 24,000 hours of virtual exchange learning. This program, supported by the **Stevens Initiative at the Aspen Institute** earned the prestigious **Global Impact Award from DA Global**.

## BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS TO STEM EDUCATION

2025 was the fourth year for the **AFS Global STEM Changemakers Initiative**, a suite of six full scholarship programs **sponsored by bp, a global energy company**. The AFS Global STEM Changemakers Initiative received The Forum on Education Abroad's prestigious ***Award for Advancing the UN SDGs through Education Abroad*** which recognizes innovative programs that promote sustainability through education abroad.

The following highlights showcase the year's key results, milestones, and impact in action in 2025.



**1,154 SCHOLARSHIPS**
awarded across 6 programs

**SUSTAINABILITY AWARD**
from The Forum on Education Abroad

**4.8/5 RATING**
overall satisfaction

**92 COUNTRIES**
represented

**2 NEW PROGRAMS**
launched in India & USA

**25 STUDENTS WHO ARE REFUGEES OR DISPLACED**
from Afghanistan, Cameroon, Haiti, and Ukraine

**11,900+ APPLICANTS**
from around the world

**+38% GROWTH**
in Alumni Community members

**30 INDIGENOUS SCHOLARS**
from Papua Indonesia, Australia, and New Zealand/Aotearoa.

**104 PEER MENTORS**
supporting current scholars

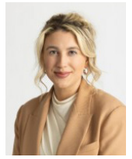
**985 CERTIFICATES**
issued by AFS & Penn CSIS

Since the Initiative began in 2022, 1,738 scholars from 76 countries have traveled on Global STEM mobility programs and an additional 2,176 scholars from 125 countries have participated in fully-virtual Global STEM exchanges. **These programs expand access to intercultural learning, meet the growing demand for critical digital proficiencies, and include underrepresented groups who face barriers to traditional study abroad experiences, like refugees, displaced or indigenous scholars**.



***"The workshop helped me step out of my comfort zone and become more brave and confident, thanks to the support from the people there. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to be part of the program and for creating such a beautiful and unforgettable memory."***

— *Valentini Tande Rante, Innovator from Bintuni, Papua Barat, Indonesia*



***"To meet the world's energy needs, we need fresh perspectives and bold ideas – and that's where you come in. We're proud of our partnership with AFS and the power of this group... the ripple effect. The energy you take back, that's where real change begins."***

— *Nadine McCrory, Head of Education & Employability, bp*

## OUR STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS REACHED NEW DESTINATIONS AND ADVANCED PARTNERSHIPS:

As our programs reach new destinations, host families welcomed our first exchange students to **Vietnam and Mongolia**.

We expanded partnerships worldwide.

- **Future Learning in Ireland** and the **Institute for Leadership and Communication Studies (ILCS) in Morocco** joined us as new **AFS Global Affiliates**.
- We strengthened our partnership with **EIL – Worldwide Network of The Experiment in International Living** to advance international educational exchanges.
- We launched a strategic collaboration with **Sierra Leone's Ministry of Information and Civic Education** to empower local youth through STEM and exchange programs.






**AFS Japan** has been implementing the **Asia Kakehashi Project** sponsored by the **Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)** since 2018. The program has provided **1,132 high school students from 27 countries and regions** with the opportunity to study at 330 high schools in 47 prefectures across Japan. In August 2025, 100 new students joined the program.

**AFS Brazil** partnered with the **Helena Antipoff Foundation** in Minas Gerais to create international exchange opportunities for students and teachers, particularly through scholarship programs that promote educational equity. This partnership, with grant support of more than $3 million, is designed to foster intercultural understanding, providing full scholarships to 150+ students to participate in AFS exchange programs.

**AFS New Zealand's volunteer Gordon Prowse** donated an ambulance to New Zealand's primary ambulance service provider, Hato Hone St John. This is a reminder of AFS's history as an ambulance service in the two World Wars.

**AFS Japan and AFS-USA** received grant funding for a high school exchange program through the **Mineta Ambassador Program (MAP)**, an education endowment program that supports exchange opportunities between the two countries.

**AFS Dominican Republic** has partnered with their **Ministry of Education** to launch a pilot program sending 11 students and 3 teachers from public polytechnic schools abroad with **full scholarships to Guatemala**.

**AFS Kenya** organized their annual summer exchange program connecting environmental action, cultural immersion and community service, started in 2016. From the Nairobi National Park to Maasai Mara, students witnessed incredible wildlife while exploring the impacts of climate change and local sustainability efforts. The cohort gave back by volunteering at a local children's care center.



# Expanding the AFS Peacebuilding Portfolio through the Acquisition of Soliya

In 2025, Soliya—a recognized global nonprofit leader in virtual dialogue and exchange—became a subsidiary of AFS.








This acquisition aligns AFS's century-long expertise in intercultural exchange with Soliya's pioneering leadership in facilitated digital learning. Together, we are **expanding access to intercultural education and creating a comprehensive continuum of intercultural experiences** that seamlessly links virtual exchange, leadership development, and in-person mobility programs.

## ABOUT SOLIYA

- FOUNDED IN 2002
- 75,000 PROGRAM ALUMNI
- 120 NATIONALITIES
- 1,000+ FACILITATORS
- 300+ UNIVERSITY PARTNERS
  in 37 countries around the world and 33 US states and territories



## SOLIYA'S VIRTUAL PROGRAMS

**Connect Program** (offered in English & Arabic) partners with universities and youth organizations to give students a space to connect and talk honestly across divides — about identity, conflict, and what it really means to live and lead in today's world.

**Global Circles** is a pro-facilitated, accelerated dialogue experience that engages participants across differences on the global issues shaping our societies.

**Facilitation Training Program** equips emerging and global leaders to guide meaningful dialogue across differences. Graduates earn a UN-endorsed Facilitation Certification and leave with real-world skills in communication, inclusion, and group dynamics.

Soliya also hosts a diversity of **custom dialogue and training programs**.

## SOLIYA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Daniel Obst (Chair)**
President & CEO,
AFS Intercultural Programs



**Martyn Barrett**
Emeritus Professor of Psychology at the University of Surrey, UK



**Eloise Dolan**
Advisor at the Australian International Trade and Investment Commission



**Adam Hood**
Principal/Partner,
PwC



**Michael Shipler**
Vice President, Leadership and Networks, Search for Common Ground

## SOLIYA'S CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER



**Cameron Chisholm**
CEO,
Soliya

> ***The best thing about Soliya's program was the opportunity to connect with people from different cultures and backgrounds in a safe and respectful space. It was eye-opening to hear diverse perspectives and realize how much we share in common despite our differences. The program created a unique environment for honest conversations, which made the experience deeply meaningful and memorable.***
>
> *— Moroccan participant in Soliya's Connect Program*

## KEY PARTNERS

- Aspen Institute
- Ford Foundation
- The Stevens Initiative
- T. Rowe Price Foundation
- Qatar Foundation
- The PwC Charitable Foundation
- Global Affairs Canada
- United States Department of State
- European Union / European Commission
- UN Habitat
- UNESCO
- International Monetary Fund
- The World Bank
- Search for Common Ground
- NODA
- Semester at Sea
- Google
- London School of Economics
- Harvard University
- Stanford University

For a full list of program partners, please see
*soliya.net/connect-program-partners*

# Advancing Global Citizenship with Schools and Educators



***Hosting international students has enabled us to foster interculturality within our community and validate the instrumental importance of learning to communicate in other languages. Our students are educated with a global citizenship perspective—one in which borders are merely ways of organizing the planet, but limits do not exist. Thank you, AFS, for making us part of this initiative.***

*— School from Chile that hosted an AFS exchange student*

AFS defines **Active Global Citizens** as people whose informed, compassionate, and ethical compass drives them to lead lives and make decisions that contribute to a more just, equitable, peaceful and sustainable world.

The **AFS Framework for Active Global Citizenship** is also AFS's contribution to the international education field and other educational organizations – both formal and non-formal – that seek to develop active global citizens.

Download the Framework at
***afs.org/education***



## AFS EMPOWERS EDUCATORS TO BRING GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP DIRECTLY INTO THEIR CLASSROOMS

Generously supported by the **Cyril Taylor Charitable Foundation**, 300 educators from 44 countries completed the **AFS Effect+ for the Classroom** virtual program in 2025, allowing them to earn their Global Competence Certificate.

The program culminated in the Sir Cyril Taylor Young Leaders Awards, with the top prize going to the "Goalkeepers" project from SSVM School of Excellence in India for their innovative game teaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

***"I truly valued the chance to collaborate with educators from diverse backgrounds, sharing insights and effective teaching strategies. This course has been a transformative journey, enhancing both my professional development and my approach to teaching."***

*— Educator from Indonesia who participated in the Effect+ program*






## ENCOURAGING VALUE BASED BEHAVIORS: FROM PUPILS' MOBILITY TO CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

This was the main theme of the **2025 Forum on Intercultural Learning and Exchange**, a bi-annual event co-organised by Fondazione Intercultura, the European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL) and AFS Intercultural Programs to gather experts, researchers, and practitioners in international youth exchanges and intercultural learning.

Researchers shared outcomes of their studies on **value change in participants of study abroad programs, how to engage young people in civic action, how volunteerism supports the development of active citizenship, and explored the topic of digital citizenship education**.

## YOUNG PEOPLE DEVELOP GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP VALUES THANKS TO EXCHANGES

Research conducted by **Fondazione Intercultura** examined how studying abroad affects the participants' values and concluded that **international mobility serves as a catalyst for turning pre-existing global values into tangible, resilient civic actions, like volunteering**.

The study included students in one-year and three-month exchange programs.

The study, published in 2025, was conducted by Roberto Ruffino and Mattia Baiutti (Fondazione Intercultura), Anat Bardi (Royal Holloway, University of London), and Michele Vecchione (Sapienza University of Rome).

## RESEARCH DEMONSTRATES THE EDUCATIONAL VALUE OF VIRTUAL EXCHANGE

AFS partnered with **Global Cities, Inc., a Program of Bloomberg Philanthropies** to launch a new research on ***Measuring Global Learning among Students in AFS Virtual Exchanges***, utilizing the Codebook for Global Student Learning Outcomes to prove that structured virtual exchange delivers measurable, long-term impacts. The findings **confirm the educational effectiveness of global virtual programming**.

This report will serve as an **indispensable resource for educators and policymakers** worldwide who share our vision of a more peaceful, equitable, and sustainable world.

AFS presented the outcomes of this research at the International Virtual Exchange Conference (IVEC) in Heraklion, Greece. Find out more at:
*afs.org/research*

## DEEPENING THE PARTNERSHIP WITH UNESCO IN LATIN AMERICA

The **Latin American Alliance for Intercultural Education (ALEI)**, the regional body of AFS organizations in Latin America, has reinforced our cooperation with **UNESCO**, with a newly signed agreement reaffirming our joint commitment to education for peace, inclusion, and global citizenship.

AFS has held consultative status with UNESCO since 2014, and this new collaboration will continue to **grow student and teacher education and exchange programs in Latin America and the Caribbean, expand joint fundraising efforts and research projects on intercultural education, peace, and global citizenship**.

**Maria Clara Almeida, Board Chair of AFS Brazil**, was selected to join the prestigious **Youth Working Group of the NGO-UNESCO Liaison Committee**.



## OUR PRESENCE IN THE GLOBAL EDUCATION COMMUNITY EXPANDED SIGNIFICANTLY:

We hosted a robust virtual series engaging over 2,200 educators, students, and global experts during the **International Education Week**. Attendees discussed global competence, digital sanctuaries, and the transformational power of intercultural exchange for Gen Z.

**AFS Venezuela** partnered with **Universidad Católica Andrés Bello (UCAB)**, one of the country's leading academic institutions. This collaboration will integrate the **AFS Global Up program and the Global Competence Certificate (GCC)** into the university's academic and student life, providing a robust framework for developing essential intercultural skills.

**AFS Ghana School Clubs** continue to be the successful initiative started in 1968 by AFS alumni as a platform to share experiences and promote peace through intercultural learning. Today, there are **41 active clubs in senior high schools nationwide, with over 2,000 student members**, making them one of the most vibrant and preferred student organizations on campus.

**AFS Türkiye** hosted the 8th **Spectrum of Education Conference** centered on the theme ***How to Become a Digital Global Citizen***? The event explored the evolving role of technology in education and the responsibilities of schools in fostering active global citizenship. Sessions highlighted the use of AI in educational design, as well as AFS's leadership in virtual exchange and strategies for promoting equity through digital programs.

**AFS China** organized a special study tour to **Duke Kunshan University (DKU)** for 100 AFS exchange students. Students also enjoyed an immersive cultural experience hosted by local Changzhou schools and families.

**AFS India** convened **Member Schools National Meet 2025** for over 100 educators and 400+ students from 69 schools under the theme ***Bridging Cultures — Building Futures***. The meet was a rich cultural exchange, including group dances, community meals, keynote sessions, and traditional activities.

**AFS Philippines** officially partnered with the **Department of Education** through a Memorandum of Agreement. This milestone marks a significant step forward in their commitment to promoting intercultural learning and global citizenship education in the Philippines.

**AFS Indonesia** partnered with their government through the SKK Migas agency to enrich the **Global Future Leaders Network** sponsored program by integrating the Global Competence Certificate. This initiative equipped 50+ students with vital skills, demonstrating how AFS digital products can elevate local initiatives with external funders.

# Fostering Impact Worldwide with Volunteer and Youth Leadership




*I feel that AFS motivates me to make a change, to strive to generate an impact that will change lives. I feel that everything I give to AFS comes back to me in the form of unforgettable learning and experiences.*

— *Joaquín Dalla Fontana, AFS Argentina & Uruguay Volunteer*

More than 100 years ago, AFS started as a volunteer-powered organization, shaped by the AFS Volunteer Ambulance Drivers in the two World Wars. AFS volunteers open their homes, their schools, and their communities because they believe this matters. Today, AFS has 35,000 volunteers who:

- Support exchange students, host families and schools to create bridges between communities and countries
- Lead workshops and educational activities to empower young people with global skills and perspectives
- Develop their own personal and professional skills, and build connections that last a lifetime
- Create impact to foster peace, understanding, and cooperation in an increasingly divided world.



## AFS VOLUNTEERS CONNECT TO LEAD AND INSPIRE

To strengthen our local impact, in 2025 AFS launched the first-ever **Chapter Leadership Summit** in Mollina, Spain, bringing together volunteer leaders from around the world under the guiding principles to *Lead, Connect, Inspire*.

This Summit is key to our commitment to create active global citizens and create the best volunteer experience. More than **100 dedicated AFS volunteers representing over 30 countries** immersed themselves in learning about leadership, volunteer development, achieving program excellence and impact, and amplifying the AFS effect to expand our global footprint.

*We are an ecosystem where every idea matters, every voice counts, and every person feels part of something larger than themselves. That is the AFS we believe in. That is the AFS we are building — together. Everything we do, everything we believe in, always returns to the heart of AFS: Our volunteers.*

*The future of AFS is built in chapters, by volunteers, guided by leaders like you. Thank you for being part of this mission—for believing in our power to change the world, one young person, one family, one school, one community, at a time. A better world is what humanity needs and it is what we stand for here.*

— *Ernesto ReyMoreno, Chair, AFS International Board of Trustees Closing Remarks of the AFS Chapter Leadership Summit in Spain, November 2025*

## CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY: AFS VOLUNTEER AWARD WINNERS

### THE AFS GALATTI AWARD

*Established to honor the organization's founder and recognize volunteers whose lifelong dedication actively advances the mission of AFS*



**Nelly Salazar de Gasia**
***AFS Venezuela***
Nelly Salazar de Gasia has served as an indispensable pillar for AFS Venezuela since 1989, utilizing her legal expertise to navigate severe national crises and ensure the continuous cultivation of global mindsets for countless young leaders.

### THE AFS PEGGY AND ART HOWE AWARD

*Honors volunteer families whose multi-generational dedication sustains the mission of intercultural exchange*



**The Torp Rivas Family**
***AFS Norway***
The Torp Rivas Family of AFS Norway has contributed their hospitality and leadership for two decades. On top of hosting AFS exchange students, family members served on AFS boards, provided training and support to exchange students, and engaged in leadership roles on the local, national and European level, even winning the Spirit of AFS Norway Prize in 2013.

### THE YOUNG AFS VOLUNTEER AWARD

*Established to highlight the role of youth leadership for individuals under 30 who make fundamental contributions to intercultural understanding*



**Priya Jadav**
***AFS Canada***
Using the global perspective gained during her own exchange from India to Czechia, recipient Priya Jadav of AFS Canada has delivered intercultural training and mobilized alumni initiatives across communities and schools.

### THE AFS COMMUNITY IMPACT AWARD

*Recognizes standout local chapters that demonstrate exceptional daily efforts to advance the mission of intercultural exchange*




**The Popayán Chapter**
***AFS Colombia***
The Popayán Chapter of AFS Colombia leverages nearly four decades of grassroots experience to champion diversity, utilizing innovative outreach and inclusive programming to embed global perspectives directly into their local community.

## DEFYING ADVERSITY: EMPOWERING YOUNG GLOBAL CITIZENS TO LEAD

***Participating in the 30th AFS Youth Assembly was one of the most defining experiences of my life. Surrounded by passionate changemakers from across the globe, I found my perspectives widened, and my sense of purpose deepened. The conversations, challenges, and connections reminded me that leadership is not a title but a commitment to show up, to listen, and to act.***

*— Karabo Ntjana, AFS Youth Assembly delegate from South Africa*

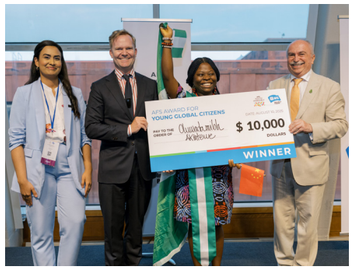
At the **30th session of the AFS Youth Assembly** hundreds of young leaders gathered under the theme ***Defying Adversity: Empowering Young Global Citizens to Lead*** to tackle the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Hosted at **New York University's (NYU) Kimmel Center**, the conference explored the **future of peace, green skills, mental health and women's leadership**, and put the work of young leaders at the center.

**212 Delegates received scholarships** to join the program, thanks to the support of **bp, Cyril Taylor Charitable Foundation, AstraZeneca, DHL, Schwarzman Scholars, AKCG, the Government of Salta in Argentina, and the Morimura Houmekiai Foundation**.

Delegates of the AFS Youth Assembly co-created a **Declaration for Impact**—a shared commitment to driving positive change in their communities.
This Declaration emphasizes the **importance of partnerships and collective responsibility in addressing global challenges**.

We thank our Program Partners, including **UNESCO, University of Pennsylvania Center for Social Impact Strategy, NYU, University for Peace, The Ban Ki Moon Foundation, The Stevens Initiative, Global Gateway Advisors, Climate Cardinals, Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs**, and many more who helped us create an inspiring program.






**Oluwadamilola Akintewe,**
a Nigerian lawyer and activist, was honored as the **winner of the AFS Award for Young Global Citizens**, which includes a $10,000 prize and recognizes young leaders who are creating a more just, peaceful, and tolerant world. Akintewe was selected for her impactful work with Project Rebirth, a youth-led initiative focused on empowering women in Nigeria's underserved communities.



**Odunayo Aliu**
**was recognized as the Outstanding Youth Delegate**, a recognition for showing an unwavering commitment to a better world, stellar leadership skills, and tangible impact. Aliu is the Executive Director and Founder of Bramble Network in Nigeria which creates community-based learning centres for young people living in rural and marginalised communities.

## STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIPS FOR INTERNATIONAL YOUTH DAY

AFS partnered with the **United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and the Permanent Mission of Malta to the UN** to organize the official celebration of the **2025 International Youth Day**. This public event provided a dynamic platform for young leaders, policymakers, diplomats, innovators, and civil society actors to engage in a conversation on how technology and partnerships can strengthen global cooperation.









## FOCUS ON AFRICA: INVESTING IN YOUNG LEADERS

The **Cyril Taylor Charitable Foundation** provided funding for the Youth Assembly Impact Program for Africa, empowering 10 young African leaders with capacity building, seed funding and resources to further impact initiatives that promote sustainable development in their local communities. A total of $5,000 USD in seed funding was also awarded to the Young Leaders to carry forward their impact initiatives, including:

- Inclusion and literacy in Ghana
- Education, development, research and policy in Kenya
- STEM and digital innovation in South Africa
- Grassroots mobilization and climate action in Nigeria

## EMPOWERING YOUTH IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND AFRICA

At the **first-ever Regional AFS Youth Assembly**, over 150 young changemakers from the Middle East and Africa convened for a dynamic intergenerational dialogue in Cairo, Egypt in 2025. The event centered around the theme of ***Leading with Purpose: Empowering Generations to Create the World We Want***, and it served as a dynamic platform for learning and collaboration. A distinguished panel of speakers, including **His Excellency Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Minister of Youth and Sports in Egypt**, and representatives from over 20 prominent organizations, like different **UN agencies, Center for Social Impact Strategy (CSIS) at the University of Pennsylvania, Fulbright Commission**, and more shared their expertise with the young leaders.

## EXPANDING YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH VIRTUAL PROGRAMMING

What does it take to be a leader in today's world? 2025 was the year we officially launched the ***Virtual Global Leadership Program: International Affairs in a Transforming World***, a dynamic initiative tailored for young people globally, developed in partnership with the **UN-established University for Peace (UPEACE)** to offer a dual certificate in leadership and international affairs.

Speakers



**Mohit Mukherjee**
*Founding Director of the UPEACE Centre for Executive Education, established by the United Nations*



**Joel Rosenthal**
*President of Carnegie Council for Ethics in International Affairs*



**Dr. Amr Abdalla**
*Professor Emeritus, United Nations - mandated University for Peace (UPEACE)*

## OUR COMMUNITY IMPACT WAS GLOBAL THANKS TO VOLUNTEERS AND YOUTH LEADERS:

**Intercultura (AFS Italy)** hosted 50 experienced volunteer facilitators and 10 regional volunteer development coordinators for the annual **Summer School for Trainers**. This yearly event lays the foundation for all volunteer training activities throughout the year. This training focused on the crucial role and skills of facilitation by piloting the Italian edition of the **AFS PEAK Certified Facilitators Training**.

**AFS Spain** volunteers organized a **fundraising campaign** to support families affected by floods in Valencia. The funds raised have been distributed among 16 families in the area, bringing them support and hope at such a difficult time.

**European Federation for Intercultural Learning (EFIL)**, the regional body of AFS organizations in Europe, organized the ***Experts for Sustainable Volunteer-Based Youth Work*** event, kicking-off the Workplan 2025 funded by the **European outh Foundation of the Council of Europe**. This gathering brought together volunteer managers, new volunteers and experienced professionals to build capacity and ensure the sustainability of volunteer-based youth work structures at national and local levels.

**AFS Germany's subsidiary InterCultur** partnered with **Stiftung Mercator** and **Karlshochschule International University** to host the 2025 Summer Academy, ***Building Bridges: Future Skills for Global Changemakers***. Young leaders engaged in lectures on international relations theory and hands-on workshops on leadership, conflict resolution, and intercultural collaboration.

# Donors, Sponsors and Funding Organizations



Thank you to all AFS Intercultural Programs contributors. With your support, AFS provides scholarships to young people, intercultural educational resources for teachers and volunteer training programs.

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# Finances



## AFS International Finances

| **Statement of Financial Position** (in US dollars) | **2025** | **2024** |
|---|---|---|
| **ASSETS** | | |
| **Current assets** | | |
| Cash and cash equivalents | 11,637,019 | 3,241,355 |
| Investments | 2,954,212 | 2,779,397 |
| Other assets | 7,328,426 | 7,322,538 |
| Total current assets | **21,919,657** | **13,343,290** |
| **Noncurrent assets** | | |
| Property and equipment, net | 94,851 | 38,601 |
| Collective insurance account, net | 1,678,483 | 1,618,139 |
| Total noncurrent assets | **1,773,334** | **1,656,740** |
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | **23,692,991** | **15,000,030** |
| **LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** | | |
| **Liabilities** | | |
| Accounts payable and accrued expenses | 1,044,468 | 810,820 |
| Due to partner organizations in clearinghouse | 825,988 | 769,505 |
| Other liabilities | 12,862,622 | 6,149,734 |
| Total liabilities | **14,733,078** | **7,730,059** |
| **Net assets** | | |
| Without donor restrictions | 6,306,858 | 5,124,321 |
| With donor restrictions: | | |
| Time and purpose restrictions | 1,317,724 | 864,666 |
| Perpetual in nature | 1,335,331 | 1,280,984 |
| Total net assets | **8,959,913** | **7,269,971** |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** | **23,692,991** | **15,000,030** |

| **Statement of Activities** (in US dollars) | **2025** | **2024** |
|---|---|---|
| **OPERATING ACTIVITIES** | | |
| **Public support and revenue** | | |
| Fees from partner organizations | 9,820,038 | 11,200,144 |
| Contributions and goverment grants | 5,692,028 | 4,620,777 |
| International conference fees and projects | 1,296,731 | 1,095,619 |
| Investment return | 319,245 | 298,847 |
| Other Income | 31,755 | 59,551 |
| **TOTAL PUBLIC SUPPORT AND REVENUE** | **17,159,797** | **17,274,938** |
| **EXPENSES** | | |
| **Program services** | | |
| Partner services | 10,003,842 | 9,523,866 |
| Network Fund services | 5,028,075 | 6,149,570 |
| Total program services | **15,031,917** | **15,673,436** |
| **Suporting services** | | |
| Administration | 1,349,185 | 1,365,628 |
| Fundraising | 23,547 | 22,116 |
| Total supporting services | **1,372,732** | **1,387,744** |
| **TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES** | **16,404,649** | **17,061,180** |
| **Change in net assets from operations** | **755,148** | **213,758** |
| **Non-operating activities (net)** | **934,794** | **187,620** |
| **Change in net assets** | 1,689,942 | 401,378 |
| **Net assets at beginning of year** | 7,269,971 | 6,868,593 |
| **Net assets at end of year** | 8,959,913 | 7,269,971 |

## AFS CONSOLIDATED FINANCES

Soliya Inc. (“Soliya”) was acquired by AFS International on October 29, 2025. Soliya is a New York based not-for-profit corporation incorporated in July 2022, with a mission focusing on strengthening relationships and fostering cooperation between youth from Western and Muslim societies.

The chart on the left reflects the financials from the consolidated financial statements of the two organizations after the acquisition, audited by PKF O’Connor Davies, LLP. The full financial statements can be found at:

*afs.org/about-afs*

## AFS INTERNATIONAL FINANCES

AFS Intercultural Programs, Inc. (“AFS International”) is a not-for-profit organization incorporated under the laws of New York State, USA, and is a tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3) of the United States of America. The chart on the left is an excerpt from the consolidated financial statements of AFS International and Soliya, reflecting exclusively the financials of AFS International.





## AFS NETWORK FINANCES

The AFS Network Finances reflect the combined financial activity of all AFS Partner organizations, which are incorporated under the laws of the country in which they are located, and likewise prepare financial statements and tax reports as required by the jurisdictions in their respective countries. Each Partner undergoes an annual fiscal audit and presents to AFS International a copy of the independent auditor's opinion along with its financial statements.

The information for the two years shown has been gathered from the audited financial statements of all the Partners and AFS International for these years. The resulting tables reflect the combined financial activity in the AFS worldwide network of Partners. The compilation of the 2025 financial statements will be available once the annual audits around the world are completed.

*The tables presented on this page are not the result of an audit performed by one firm.*

AFS Network Finances

| **Balance Sheets** (in US dollars) | **2024** | **2023** |
|---|---|---|
| **TOTAL ASSETS** | **165,724,675** | **157,060,193** |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES** | **85,623,050** | **80,191,897** |
| **Unrestricted assets** | 65,527,127 | 63,041,386 |
| **Restricted assets** | 14,574,498 | 13,826,910 |
| **TOTAL NET ASSETS** | **80,101,625** | **76,868,296** |
| **TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS** | **165,724,675** | **157,060,193** |

| **Statement of Activities** (in US dollars) | **2024** | **2023** |
|---|---|---|
| **Program Revenues** | 113,696,535 | 115,221,904 |
| **Contributions Received from** | | |
| Corporations, Foundations, Governments and Individuals | 41,811,554 | 43,544,679 |
| Interest Income & Other Income | 3,598,230 | 3,493,832 |
| **TOTAL REVENUES** | **159,106,319** | **162,260,415** |
| **Program expenses** | 80,968,152 | 84,864,605 |
| **Other expenses (Administrative and financial)** | 75,795,225 | 73,986,287 |
| **TOTAL EXPENSES** | **156,763,377** | **158,850,892** |
| **SURPLUS (DEFICIT)** | 2,342,942 | 3,409,523 |

# Leadership

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AFS is proud to partner with a large network of Global And Local Affiliates around the world. Below are the Global Affiliates of AFS:

- AIPC Pandora (Spain)
- Asia Exchange / Beyond Abroad (Asia)
- Better World (South Korea)
- Celtic English Academy (United Kingdom)
- CLLC (Canadian Language Learning Center, Canada)
- Future Learning (Ireland)
- GROW Abroad (South Africa)
- Knowledge Platform (Pakistan)
- NSTS (Malta)
- Sprachcaffe (Malta, Germany, Italy, England, France, Spain, Canada, China, Morocco, Cuba)
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# #AFSeffect

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