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**DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
AND INTERNATIONAL TRADE CANADA**

**A Handbook for  
Leverage and Network Strategy  
for International Conferences**

## IMPRINT

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND NOTES

### Conference Abbreviations

AIEA	Association of International Education Administrators (United States)
AIEC	Australian International Education Conference (organized by IDP and the International Education Association of Australia [IEAA]) (Australia)
APAIE	Asia Pacific Association for International Education (Asia Pacific)
CAIE	Conference of the Americas on International Education (North America)
CONAHEC	Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (North America)
EAIE	European Association for International Education (Europe)
ENZ	Education New Zealand (New Zealand)
GG	Going Global (organized by the British Council) (United Kingdom)
IECHE	International Exhibition and Conference for Higher Education (Saudi Arabia)
MAPLE	Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Middle East and Africa Professional Leaders in Education) Conference and Exhibition (Middle East and Africa)
NAFSA	Association of International Educators (United States)
QS APPLE	Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) Asia Pacific Professional Leaders in Education Conference and Exhibition (Asia Pacific)

### Notes

All currency conversions in this handbook were calculated based on 1 July 2010 interbank exchange rates.

In order to reduce the length of the handbook graphs or data tables are not included in this document. These are contained in Appendix I. Appendix II contains the 2010 NAFSA exhibition hall impressions capsule.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This handbook is intended for Canadian stakeholders engaged in international education – from educational institutions to governmental agencies to associations – who participate in, or are responsible for, their organization’s approach to and participation in important international education conferences<sup>1</sup>.

The objective of the handbook is to provide these stakeholders with a guide to optimize their conference attendance strategy. The goal is to enable these stakeholders to improve their decision-making, presence, networking and ultimately impact.

The four key findings of this handbook are:

- 1) Canada has notably improved its visibility at international education conferences since 2009 (much owing to Edu-Canada efforts). At the same time, many competitors have increased their efforts as well, and some with considerably more resources than Canada. As a result, Canada has made decent progress overall, but only moderate progress relative to some.
- 2) Conferences have morphed from a small, “nice to see you” circuit, to a full-blown battleground for attention, resources, and competitive advantage. Institutions which responded to this trend early have claimed strong footprints. Canadian institutions are still adjusting to this reality.
- 3) Gaining influence and gathering important intelligence through conference attendance is not an accidental outcome, but rather one based on minute preparation and strategizing. In the past, most Canadian institutions have not pursued a professional conference attendance approach. It is apparent, however, that NAFSA 2011 in Vancouver has triggered an awakening.
- 4) Challenges to creating systematic improvements in Canada’s conference footprint are rooted in the complex federal-provincial structure, pervasive under-funding, and the absence of a national international education marketing agency. Progress has been made with regards to the first issue, and the second and third issues have been positioned on the policy agenda for 2011.

This handbook is structured into four areas of analysis and perspectives:

- 1) Chapter 1 offers an introduction and largely technical information on the handbook’s background, research methodology, as well as data gathering and analysis limitations.

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<sup>1</sup> Conferences covered in the report are: AIEA, AIEC, APAIE, CAIE, CONAHEC, EAIE, ENZ, Going Global, IEHE, NAFSA, QS APPLE, and QS MAPLE.

- 2) Chapter 2 briefly introduces changing conference parameters, ranging from attendee growth to increasing commercialization dynamics. It makes the case for treating conference attendance strategically, and highlights in a case study how a strong conference footprint can turn into tangible competition success. The chapter's core message is: The international education conference world has changed notably, and in order to succeed attendees need to address this change.
- 3) In Chapter 3, twelve major international education conferences and exhibitions are analyzed with a view on participants, speakers, chairs, and exhibitor populations; governance structures; cost; and the presence and representation of Canadian stakeholders.

One finding is that Canada has a tendency to be underrepresented. At NAFSA, for example, Canada accounted for only half the share of speakers relative to its share of attendees (2010). Thus, one recommendation is to raise the number of Canadian participants and active contributors at key conferences.

Another finding is that countries with which Canada competes have professionalized their conference attendance, often investing many times over the resources available to Canadian representatives. This has historically included Australia and the UK and more recently Germany, Korea, and Taiwan.

While Canada's presence has significantly improved since the launch of the "Education au/in Canada" brand and a concerted exhibition hall presence, the continued under-resourcing of these initiatives diminishes much of the recent gains. The recommendation is to increase funding to a competitive level.

- 4) Chapter 4 offers a four-item planning and analysis toolkit. A Decision-Making Matrix constitutes the first tool which assists institutions with identifying the proper set of conferences to attend, a rationale for determining objectives, and methodology for selecting which staff member(s) to send. This Matrix was drawn up in reaction to the often ad hoc approach to conference attendance by Canadian institutions, which in turn yielded little leverage.

The second tool is a conference planner which allows for a full planning cycle one year ahead of a given conference. This tool drives home the point that only timely actions will result in an optimal conference attendance result, whereas belated actions can turn quite costly.

A third tool set offers detailed suggestions concerning mode of attendance, conference contributions, exhibition presences, event hosting, networking strategies, etc. Essentially, this tool set offers a pragmatic "do" and "don't" list.

The final tool set is a case study of how to minimize the cost of attending a conference. Contrary to a widely held belief, attending a conference, especially in North America, can be done for little money with the right amount of up-front planning and volunteering.

The handbook does not close with sweeping recommendations. Rather, it is intended to assist Canadian stakeholders by offering quantitative and qualitative analysis matched to specific, detailed recommendations and tools.

Research for this handbook included extensive quantitative analysis. which has been largely cut form this version due to size constraints. The authors can make relevant data available if requested.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

### Background and Goal

Over the last decade, Canadian higher education institutions have steadily increased their enrolment of international students based on three factors: the attractiveness of Canada as a destination, the comparatively moderate cost associated with attaining education, and the high quality of institutional teaching and research.<sup>2</sup>

While Canada has experienced student enrolment growth, it is widely acknowledged that marketing and networking efforts continue to trail those of leading competitors such as Australia and the United Kingdom. This is especially visible at key international education conferences, including at seven of the conferences covered in this handbook: AIEA, AIEC, APAIE, CONAHEC, EAIE, Going Global, NAFSA, and QS APPLE.

In a departure from the past, most of these conferences have begun to move away from a simple “meet and greet” experience to providing multi-faceted and high impact leverage as well as networking platforms. With the international education environment becoming increasingly more fragmented, dynamic, and competitive, Canadian higher education institutions’ lack of a conference strategy has turned into a significant disadvantage.

This handbook aims to assist Canadian stakeholders by introducing a strategic approach to their participation at international education conferences. Analysis and recommendations address a number of performance areas:

- Increasing the effective usage of resources
- Mitigating opportunity losses from positioning misalignments
- Improving networking capabilities
- Accelerating institutional learning curves
- Providing systemic benefits for the entire brand
- Overall: Increasing competitiveness (efficiency)

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<sup>2</sup> This handbook focuses on higher education institutions – universities and colleges – which remain at the center of activity in the eight analysed conferences. In addition, Canadian higher education institutions hold by far the largest footprint amongst Canadian conference attendees.

## Scope

This handbook is defined by the following overall scoping considerations:

- Geographic spread. Covered conferences range over a wide geographic spread: Asia-Pacific (APAIE, ENZ, QS APPLE), Europe (EAIE, Going Global), the Middle East and North Africa (EIHE, QS MAPLE), and the Americas (AIEC, CAIE, CONAHEC, NAFSA).
- Conference history. Conferences covered include well-established conferences such as EAIE and NAFSA, as well as relative newcomers such as APAIE and Going Global.
- Attendee balance. Canadian attendees frequent some conferences in large numbers (especially NAFSA), while other conferences are largely “undiscovered”.
- Learning potential. This includes learning about a country or region, as well as hearing various perspectives on international education issues.

Specific and technical scoping considerations:

- Metrics. The handbook contains an extensive quantitative analysis component. In-depth data on attendees, presenters, and exhibitors is presented in order to paint a picture of who attends and who presents, and offers perspective on the underlying meaning of such data. Please note that most data and graphs have been moved to a separate Appendix to reduce the length of this handbook version.
- Qualitative considerations. Conferences have different political purposes, tonalities, and networking dynamics. The handbook touches on these in order to provide important policy context.
- Potential for Canadian stakeholders. With the exception of NAFSA, Canada has not taken a deep, coordinated, and influential part in the conferences covered in this handbook. The handbook highlights the potential for a more substantial role.
- Planning tools. The back section of the handbook includes planning tools such as a timeline and checklists. These tools are offered as a reflection on some Canadian attendees’ lack of in-depth preparation and strategic planning.

Exclusions:

- Conference themes and sessions. Not only would this be unfeasible – given their sheer number – but also meaningless since themes and sessions change every year.

## A Perspective on Canada's Past Conference Footprint

### Past Canadian Conference Attendance

Canadian participation at international education conferences varies significantly depending on geographic proximity, conference relevance, and speaking roles.

Most recent available Canadian attendee counts (rank in brackets):

- NAFSA 2009: 240 (2<sup>nd</sup>)
- EAIE 2009: 58 (17<sup>th</sup>)
- APAIE 2010: 41 (6<sup>th</sup>)
- CONAHEC 2010: 17 (3<sup>rd</sup>)
- AIEA 2010: 12 (2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Going Global 2010: 10 (17<sup>th</sup>)
- QS APPLE 2009: 2 (21<sup>st</sup>)
- ENZ 2009: 1 (4<sup>th</sup>)
- AIEC 2009, QS MAPLE 2011: not available
- CAIE 2010, IEHE 2010: not analyzed

This data indicates a three segment pattern. The first segment includes NAFSA and the rising EAIE and APAIE conferences, with NAFSA as the clear leader owing to sheer volume (over 7,000 attendees) and its relative proximity to, or taking place in, Canada.

The second segment includes the more focused CONAHEC, AIEA, and Going Global conferences. Both are limited in the level of its attendees and CONAHEC is somewhat thematically narrow; thus these conferences only appeal to select Canadian stakeholders.

Canadian participation at QS APPLE and ENZ conferences, both running at around 400 attendees, has been limited to one or two attendees each due to geographic distance and their specific focus. AIEC data were not available but observation also suggests a very small Canadian participation rate. QS MAPLE will be first run in 2011.

Both CAIE and IEHE were not quantitatively analyzed given their location in Canada (CAIE) and their sheer size (IEHE).

## Past Canadian Conference Presentations

Presenter counts at conferences analyzed (country rank in brackets):

- NAFSA 2009: 19 (3<sup>rd</sup>)
- CONAHEC 2010: 6 (3<sup>rd</sup>)
- AIEA 2010: 5 (4<sup>th</sup>)
- Going Global 2010: 4 (7<sup>th</sup>)
- APAIE 2010: 3 (5<sup>th</sup>)
- EAIE 2009: 2 (24<sup>th</sup>)
- AIEC 2010, ENZ 2009, QS APPLE 2009: 0
- QS MAPLE 2011: not available
- CAIE 2010, IEHE 2010: not analyzed

Canadian stakeholders' footprint at international education conferences when measured by presenter roles shows they are politically and thematically well embedded in four conferences – NAFSA, CONAHEC, AIEA, and APAIE – as evidenced by the high country share rank.

With the exception of NAFSA, at which Canada carries some political clout, overall presenter slots run at very low numbers, ranging from three to six slots for most conferences. This trend suggests a core group of active Canadian stakeholders, albeit at a low level.

Canada has a very limited or non-existent footprint at four conferences – EAIE, AIEC, ENZ, and QS Apple. Reasons vary, and in the case of ENZ and QS APPLE are a function of geographic distance and conference size. However, the lack of a presenter footprint at EAIE is noteworthy.

## Past Canadian Conference Impact

Based on interviews with Canadian stakeholders, international education experts and “conference circuit regulars”, as well as technical analysis and observation, one message emerges: Canada's political, networking, and thematic impact at these conferences leaves room for improvement.

Compared with countries like Australia – which has been highly aggressive with regards to pursuing policy goals through conference management – or the United States – which can dominate conferences by virtue of scale and brand position – Canada has not positioned itself in a leadership role. Even small countries such as the Netherlands or New Zealand take on more active and/or impactful roles at conferences.

Over the last two years, changes have been undertaken to address this competitive misalignment. They include the introduction of the *Education au/in Canada* brand, the commissioning of competitive analysis research, a rise in stakeholder coordination, and the roll-out of a sophisticated Canada Pavilion.

## 1.2 Methodology

Research for this handbook is based on three approaches. First, bench research and analysis was undertaken, including Internet-based research as well as the sharing of perspectives and findings with select experts in order to validate the aforementioned research.

ICG also conducted 25 interviews with various Canadian entities, including ten higher education institutions, eight professional associations, five provincial governments and associations, and two federal government agencies.

As a general policy ICG does not identify individual interviewees or quote from interviews directly to protect the interviewees' anonymity and to avoid using quotes rather than analysis to arrive at a policy conclusion.

Correspondence and discussions with conference organizers (associations and agencies) as well as attendees were initiated, including:

- AIEA, AIEC, APAIE, CONAHEC, EAIE, ENZ, Going Global, NAFSA, and QS APPLE
- Please see the next section on limitations that arose from a lack of cooperation by some conference organizers.

A wide spectrum of conference data and information was gathered – from attendees, to presenters, to cost factors. Data was aggregated and in many instances evaluated for rank order, share, or representativeness. Qualitative research focused on the tone and overall quality of a conference.

## 1.3 Limitations

### Cooperation and data availability

All eight conference organizers were approached with a formal, DFAIT-led request to assist with data collection, as well as with a few additional questions such as information about conferences' future direction.

The following conference organizers cooperated (fully) with the information request: AIEA, CONAHEC, EAIE, ENZ, GG, and QS.<sup>3</sup> The following conference organizer provided some of the requested information: NAFSA.

Regarding the AIEC conference, IDP did not respond to half a dozen contact attempts. The APAIE Secretariat also did not respond to numerous communication attempts. As a result, the analysis of conferences which did not make some or any information available is limited to whatever information could be retrieved publicly.

### Data quality and completeness

A number of data retrieval issues impacted the analysis of conference attendee, presenter, and exhibitor data. Amongst these are:

Data completeness. For example, most conferences allow attendees to opt out of the public sharing of their contact information, affiliation, or even attendance; a small number of attendees also provide incomplete registration information. Thus any analysis presented in this handbook carries a margin of error due to some completeness issues.

Data misidentification. There are two modes of misidentification. One is "accidental", a mode in which, for example, an individual is identified as being affiliated with the wrong entity. The second mode is "intentional". In this case, an individual, increasingly a consultant, purposefully assumes an affiliation with an organization he or she is not entitled to represent, or with which he or she is only superficially connected.

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<sup>3</sup> Data regarding Going Global was retrieved directly by ICG.

## 2. CONFERENCES: CHANGING PARAMETERS, STRATEGY, AND RESULTS

### Changing Conference Parameters

Over the last decade, international education conferences have seen a number of changes, including growth and diversification, tone, activity scope, governance, and rising thematic complexity. A few observations are listed below:

- Growth – number of conferences. Paralleling the overall growth of international education, more and more conferences are taking place. Examples of recently created conferences include APAIE (5th conference hosted in 2010), QS APPLE (6th conference hosted in 2010), CAIE (1<sup>st</sup> conference hosted in 2010) and QS-MAPLE (1<sup>st</sup> conference scheduled in 2011).
- Growth – number of attendees. Most conferences have experienced persistent growth while a few have experienced especially strong growth. A good number have surpassed the 1,000 attendee mark while EAIE attracts over 3,000 attendees and NAFSA over 7,000.
- Attendee portfolio. Most long-standing conferences have broadened their attendee portfolio, including a broader geographic intake, as well as a more diverse audience with significantly increased numbers of commercial sector representatives.
- Themes. Many conferences offer an increasingly wider spectrum of themes. These include marketing and recruiting, international alumni networks, new teaching and networking technologies, work placement, etc. A conference's size does not directly correlate with thematic diversification; it is EAIE rather than NAFSA which leads in this area.
- Tone. Many conferences previously exuded a “family-style” atmosphere but most have now become professional if not outright commercial in their nature.
- Activity scope. One aspect of the ongoing professionalization of conferences is the growing scope of activities. Many conferences now offer local site visits, upfront training sessions and workshops (on a charge basis, with AIEC having taken a high cost lead), select invitation-only events, and so on.
- Governance. Six of the twelve conferences covered in this handbook are organized by associations. Conference governance has become an issue for some conferences, driven by the power conference board members wield regarding venue selection, session approval and the setting of thematic streams. Major conflicts are already foreseeable.

## A Rationale for a Strategic Approach

The changes listed above have fundamentally reshaped the conditions necessary for successful and strategically valuable conference participation and networking approaches. Key aspects of such approaches include:

- **Role.** Conferences (should) play an important role in an organization's international marketing and outreach, partnering, and intelligence acquisition goals. The combination of attendee numbers, interaction intensity, and comprehensively available intelligence offer an effective and efficient way to pursue these goals. In order to leverage a conference attendance successfully, however, it must be part of an integrated rather than an ad hoc, short term, and disjointed approach.
- **Mode.** Conference attendance can take place in a variety of modes, from entirely passive to highly active. The choice of mode must be driven by pre-defined goals and objectives. In some cases, briefly and quietly attending selected sessions and meetings might be preferable to presenting or volunteering for the duration of a conference. The mode must fit the goal, not the other way around.
- **Networking.** Strategic networking has little to do with random hand shaking or an overly social focus. Maximizing conference attendance requires careful identification and prioritization of attendance goals and contacts to be approached (and similarly the management of incoming meeting requests), the setting of a realistic schedule, and a proper meeting preparation and follow-up. More advanced aspects include relationship triangulation approaches (i.e. using a mutually familiar third party introduction), circumstantial credibility leverage, and trade-off scenarios (e.g. trading knowledge for access).
- **Leverage and impact.** These two concepts reflect the ability to achieve substantial and/or lasting impact by contributing to a conference or by maximizing the returns from other activities, for example presenting in a session and leveraging the benefits vis-à-vis multiple audiences (the conference organizer, general session attendees, fellow presenters, potential partners and contacts, etc.). Impact generation denotes the effect an activity has on the aforementioned audiences. Sought-after presenters tend to create positive brand recognition for their institution, which in turn lessens future transaction costs.

## How Networking and Leverage Produce Results

Many experts interviewed for this handbook agree that being deeply embedded in a conference's political and content landscape, as well as also being able to

tap into a wide network of professional contacts, are beneficial to both the participants and their institution. While this may seem self-evident for those active in the international education landscape, it is much less obvious within institutions.

This may be partially due to the challenge of demonstrating a clear connection between the ephemeral aspects of networking and the tangible returns on investment-based outcomes. Translating global relationships into a concise ROI is difficult at best, but the following case study demonstrates the significant contribution networking as well as relationship-centric and leverage-based behaviour can make.

In 2007, the Freie Universität Berlin, against considerable odds, was awarded one of nine “universities of excellence” spots in Germany’s *Exzellenzinitiative*. This highly coveted award is expected to yield more than EUR 30 million funding for FU Berlin.

The theme of FU Berlin’s successful application was “international network university”. The theme was co-created and embodied by Dr. Wedigo de Vivanco, then Dean of International Affairs. At the time, Dr. de Vivanco was one of the best connected international education administrators. His interpersonal skills and strategic creation as well as his management of relationships with leading universities around the world – many of which would not have linked up deeply with FU Berlin otherwise – were instrumental in building the successful application’s foundation. Much of these skills were on display at international education conferences at which Dr. Vivanco commanded a larger than life presence. One anecdote suggested that every time Dr. de Vivanco crossed the exhibition hall at NAFSA, he walked away with three new student exchange agreements.

Expert networking, strategic relationship building, and leverage-based behaviour can therefore be instrumental in achieving tangible returns for an institution. Even if these approaches do not yield dozens of millions of dollars every time, there is no doubt that they contribute positively to an institution’s overall positioning.

## 3. CONFERENCES

### 3.1 AIEA

#### Conference Capsule

The 2010 AIEA Conference was held from 22 to 25 February in Washington DC. The conference was attended by 514 registered participants and featured 192 speakers. Attendees originated from 26 different countries, with 81.7 percent of attendees and 79.2 percent of speakers from the United States (Canada: respectively 2.3 and 2.6 percent).<sup>4</sup>

#### Conference Organizer

The 2010 Annual Conference was organized by the Association of International Education Administrators (AIEA), a membership organization of senior-level international education administrators, representatives from education institutions, and international education professionals. The organization works to advance internationalization in education institutions and US national-level policy.

The AIEA Secretariat, currently located at Duke University, is in charge of preparing and running the Annual Conference. Its responsibilities include the review of conference proposals, scheduling, and the registration of sponsors and exhibitors.

#### The Role of the Conference

##### Scope

Owing to its focus on senior and executive leaders, the AIEA conference is unique amongst international education conferences and remains comparatively small – in 2010, more than 500 participants took part.

##### Reach

Similar to AIEA's membership, the conference predominantly attracts institutional leaders from the United States. It has begun to draw a small yet rising number of European and Australian attendees however, due to the presence of senior and executive staff from US education institutions.

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<sup>4</sup> Data reflects information published by the AIEA on its website.

## Flavour

The AIEA conference retains a US-heavy view on international education. The breadth of issues is somewhat narrower than at other major education conferences, especially with regards to themes such as marketing, recruiting, and selective competition issues.

The conference is characterized by networking and high-level discussions around strategic development issues. The tone of the conference is rather discussion and relationship-focused and in many ways, AIEA conferences have maintained a collegial and familiar atmosphere. A related case in point is the AIEA exhibition area which, while growing, remains quite small and not heavily trafficked.

## Themes

Past AIEA Conferences have focused on institutional engagement and multi-level internationalization. The 2010 conference included sessions on globalizing curricula, increasing access to international education, the involvement of institutional leadership, as well as fundraising.

## Relevance for Canadian Institutions

### Overall Conference Direction

The AIEA conference has steadily become a more relevant international education conference. It is not defined by its large number of attendees, but by their seniority level. While the conference has attempted to shift away from its highly US-centric mode and broaden its thematic footprint, it remains largely centered on a US perspective on international education. The slowly growing share of non-US attendees is likely to contribute to this shift.

### Recent Canadian Presence

Despite their geographic proximity, senior Canadian international education stakeholders have not systematically attended AIEA. At the 2010 Conference, the twelve Canadian participants accounted for only 2.3 percent of participants. Canada's share of speaking and chairing roles also ranged in the low single digits.

### Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

The AIEA conference serves as an influential forum for leadership-relevant issues in international education. Given its clear senior and executive staff attendee profile, the most suitable attendee categories would be the senior international officer of a university, a senior representative from a major (international) education association, and governmental representatives with relevant portfolios.

Canadian stakeholders' modest attendance numbers hinder Canada's efforts to properly represent and position Canadian international education. Given the conference's moderate size, raising the number of Canadian attendees by half a dozen would result in a notable increase in Canada's clout at AIEA.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

A total of 514 participants attended the 2010 Conference. They represented the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 369 (71.8 percent)
- Commercial sector: 60 (11.7 percent)
- Government/public sector: 56 (10.9 percent)
- Other: 29 (5.6 percent)

AIEA continues to be a conference centered on academic administrators, with only a small – albeit growing – commercial attendance pool.

Attendees hailed from the following countries (Top 10, tied 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>):

- United States: 420 (81.7 percent)
- Canada, United Kingdom (each): 12 (2.3 percent)
- Australia: 11 (2.1 percent)
- Germany, Russia (each): 7 (1.4 percent)
- Italy: 6 (1.2 percent)
- Mexico: 5 (1.0 percent)
- Singapore: 4 (0.8 percent)
- Japan, Netherlands, Spain (each): 3 (0.6 percent)
- All other countries: 21 (4.1 percent)

With over 80 percent of participants hailing from the United States, AIEA remains somewhat mono-cultural. Except for Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom no other country sends attendees to the conference in the double digits.

### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2010 AIEA conference featured a total of 192 presenters from the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 131 (68.2 percent)
- Government/public sector: 42 (21.8 percent)
- Commercial sector: 11 (5.7 percent)
- Other: 8 (4.2 percent)

Presenters originated from the following countries (Top 10; tied 11<sup>th</sup> through 18th):

- United States: 152 (79.2 percent)
- Australia: 8 (4.2 percent)
- United Kingdom: 7 (3.7 percent)
- Canada: 5 (2.6 percent)
- France, Mexico (each): 3 (1.6 percent)
- Netherlands, New Zealand (each): 2 (1.0 percent)
- Belgium, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Mongolia, Qatar, Singapore, South Africa: 1 (0.5 percent)

### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

Of the 17 members of the 2010 AIEA Conference's Committee, 14 hailed from the United States and one each from Australia, Singapore, and Turkey. Eleven members represented the institutional/academic sector, four the commercial sector, and one each the government/public as well as 'other' sectors.

### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2010 Conference hosted a total of 31 exhibitors. The exhibitors held the following affiliations:

- Commercial sector: 15 (48.4 percent)
- Government/public sector: 9 (29.0 percent)
- Institutional/academic sector: 4 (12.9 percent)
- Other: 3 (9.7 percent)

The AIEA's exhibitor pool is small and in 2010 the commercial and governmental sectors accounted for more than three-quarters of exhibitors, while only four academic institutions exhibited.

Exhibitors represented the following ten countries:

- United States: 21 (67.7 percent)
- United Kingdom: 2 (6.5 percent)
- Australia, Canada, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Spain (each): 1 (3.2 percent)

### **Participation Cost**

The 2010 AIEA Conference levied the following fee schedule:

- Attendee (full fee): USD 600 (CAD 633)
- Attendee (day fee): USD 400 (CAD 422)
- Exhibitor (full fee): USD 1,200 (CAD 1,267) (includes booth)

### **Relevance of Membership for Canadian Institutions**

Institutional AIEA membership runs at USD 400 (CAD 428). The AIEA maintains an active and relevant mailing list, and offers frequent webinars. Members benefit from a discounted conference attendance rate.

### **Information Provided by AIEA**

#### **Purpose**

“The key purpose of the AIEA Annual Conference is to bring together senior-level leaders in the field of international education to discuss important issues in the field. Through networking, interactive dialogue, and sharing of best practices, leaders grow professionally as well as advance the internationalization of higher education on their campuses and beyond.”

#### **Near-term Development Trajectory**

“It is difficult at this point to project conference attendance given the current economy. However, we do know the average attendance has been around 400 and that attendance is usually higher when the conference is held in Washington DC.”

### **Next Conference Venue**

The 2011 conference will take place in San Francisco, California, from 20-23 February.

## 3.2 AIEC

### Conference Capsule

The 23<sup>rd</sup> annual Australian International Education Conference (AIEC) was held from 13 to 16 October 2009 at the Sydney Convention and Exhibition Centre. The conference was attended by 1,333 participants from 42 countries, 166 of which served as presenters.

It is estimated that the share of Australian attendees at AIEC ran at 80 percent, with more than 69 percent of the presenters hailing from the host country.<sup>5</sup> The second and third largest groups represented the United States and the United Kingdom, respectively. Information on Canadian participation was not available.

### Conference Organizer

For the fourth year running, IDP Education and the International Education Association of Australia (IEAA) co-hosted the conference. IDP is one of the world's largest international student placement services. It is jointly owned by 38 Australian universities and SEEK Limited, an Australian online employment service.

IEAA is a multi-sectoral organization composed of individuals from higher education, vocational education, business/corporate sectors and government working to advance the quality and standing of Australian international education.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

While attendance has grown not only in numbers but also in diversity, AIEC continues to offer a primarily Australian view on international education. By increasingly attracting participants from different countries, institutions, government and the commercial sector however, AIEC covers a range of topics in international education with more and more reach beyond the Australian context. Starting in 2008, efforts were made to de-emphasize the conference's commercially-oriented flavour.

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<sup>5</sup> All data on the AIEC conference was sourced from a public, IDP-run website. IDP did not cooperate with research on the AIEC conference. Thus, no data on the breakdown of attendees is available.

## Reach

As the largest international education conference in the Asia-Pacific region, AIEC has established a sizable presence in the field of international education. In 2009, conference presenters hailed from twelve countries, representing the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, and North America.

## Flavour

The AIEC conference remains the premier conference for the “business of international education” as exemplified by numerous workshops and session about marketing, recruiting, and management issues. Despite attempts to shift the perception of the conference having a purely domestic, commercial tone, much of the data and research presented remains centered on Australia and commercial concerns.

The AIEC conferences tend to be rather politicized. Messaging, speaker roles and other opportunities are awarded based on criteria at times driven by seeking competitive advantage for Australia and/or the conference organizers. In turn, the representativeness and/or veracity of some information presented have been called into question.

## Themes

AIEC Conference themes differ as the conference’s organizers seek to promote timely topics. Broader, overarching themes include student mobility and experience, policy and research, learning and teaching, as well as marketing and recruitment.

More recently, AIEC conference organizers have addressed how external forces such as the global economy affect international education. The 2010 conference focuses on long-term engagement and planning to combat potentially detrimental effects of unexpected events.

## **Relevance for Canadian Institutions**

### Overall Conference Direction

Having grown to more than 1,300 participants, AIEC has become the largest international education conference in Asia-Pacific. It remains Australia-centric in many ways despite recent efforts to broaden its appeal.

The conference’s continued commercial focus should prove attractive to Canadian attendees. AIEC is a leader in offering quality workshops and

sessions on technical and tactical aspects of marketing and recruitment, as well as other commercial aspects of international education, and provides the opportunity to survey and meet a cross-section of commercial entities.

The tone of the conference is business-like both in terms of organization as well as attendee interaction. AIEC has established itself as one of the better run conferences, with a high service level.

#### Recent Canadian Presence

Canadian participation in past AIEC conferences has been very small, with two speaking and one chairing role on record for 2009.

#### Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

The geographical distance of the AIEC conference requires a clear calculation of the expected benefits of attending. Participation is justified when specific skills-building (including the acquisition of competitive intelligence), as well as building or maintaining contacts in Australia matter. As opposed to EAIE and NASFA, AIEC is not a globalized networking conference.

Australia has identified Canada as a quickly emerging competitor and it stands to reason that an increased Canadian presence would be both welcomed as well as carefully observed.

The most suitable attendee categories would include a university director-level international officer, a senior representative from a major (international) education association, and governmental representatives with relevant portfolios.

### **Attendees and Exhibitors**

#### Attendees

The official attendee count for the 2009 AIEC Conference stood at 1,333. A break-down of attendees by country and sector is not available due to IDP not having cooperated with research on the conference.

#### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 conference hosted a total of 166 presenters with the following sector affiliation:

- Institutional/academic sector: 88 (53.0 percent)
- Commercial sector: 50 (30.1 percent)
- Government/public sector: 16 (9.6 percent)
- Other: 12 (7.2 percent)

Presenters originated from the following countries (Top 10, with tied 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>):

- Australia: 115 (69.3 percent)
- United States: 18 (10.8 percent)
- United Kingdom: 11 (6.6 percent)
- Canada, Hong Kong, Italy (each): 4 (2.4 percent)
- Mexico, Netherlands (each): 3 (1.8 percent)
- China, India, New Zealand, Scotland (each): 1 (0.6 percent)

#### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 conference drew on nine committee members – all hailing from Australia – with the following sector affiliation: Six members represented the commercial sector, two the institutional/academic sector, one from an unidentified sector, and none represented the government/public sector.

#### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

A total of 36 exhibitors were featured at the 2009 conference with the following sector affiliation:

- Commercial sector: 26 (72.2 percent)
- Institutional/academic sector: 4 (11.1 percent)
- Government/public sector: 4 (11.1 percent)
- Other: 2 (5.6 percent)

Exhibitors originated from the following five countries:

- Australia: 31 (86.1 percent)
- United States: 2 (5.6 percent)
- Germany, Japan, United Kingdom (each): 1 (2.8 percent)

#### Participation Cost

The AIEC conference in October 2010 utilized the following fee schedule:

- Attendee (full fee): AUD 1,450 (CAD 1,300)
- Attendee (day): AUD 600 (CAD 538)
- Exhibitor (full fee): AUD 4,500 (CAD 4,034) (includes booth, table, one conference registration, two exhibitor passes and a conference program promotions page)

### **Next Conference Venue**

The 2010 conference was held from 13 to 15 October in Sydney (after closing research for the handbook). The 2011 conference is scheduled to take place from 11 to 14 October 2011 in Adelaide.

### **3.3 APAIE**

#### **Conference Capsule**

The 2010 APAIE Conference and Exhibition was held in Broadbeach, Australia from 14 to 16 April. Hosted by Griffith University, the Conference announced a total of 826 registered participants, including 104 speakers.<sup>6</sup> Conference attendees originated from 36 countries, with Australians representing the largest share at 32.8 percent (248 attendees). Canadians accounted for 5.4 percent of attendees (41), and 2.9 percent of presenters (3).

#### **Conference Organizer**

The 2010 Conference and Exhibition was run by the Asia-Pacific Association for International Education (APAIE), a non-profit, constituent-led organization of international education administrators, post-secondary education institutions and international education consultants with a focus on the Asia-Pacific region. APAIE promotes dialogue between institutions and professionals within the region and beyond.

The annual Conference and Exhibition is organized by the APAIE secretariat at Seoul's Korea University, while APAIE member institutions host the event.

#### **The Role of the Conference**

##### **Scope**

First held in 2006, the APAIE Conference and Exhibition has become a key conference for international education in the Asia-Pacific region and the latter's importance for institutional and country-level engagement in international education is reflected in gradually growing attendance numbers: An announced 826 in 2010, up from 400 in 2006.

##### **Reach**

Just trailing NAFSA, APAIE attracted the highest number of participants from Australia, China, Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. The region's

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<sup>6</sup> No definitive number of conference attendees at APAIE 2010 is available. Various lists being published ranged from 756 to 882 attendees. An informal poll of attendees suggests that the total present attendee count was closer to 500 to 600 attendees. Most cited information was made available by the conference host, Griffith University.

importance for international student recruiting as well as the opportunity to connect with executive staff from regional institutions contributed to rising attendance numbers from Europe and North America, in particular Canada (41 attendees in 2010), Germany (47), the United States (36), and the United Kingdom (21).

#### Flavour

APAIE attendees and conference themes continue to focus on regional development and cooperation, institutional partnering, and student recruiting in the region. In 2010, 78.4 percent of attendees and 70.2 percent of speakers represented education institutions, underlining the conference's ongoing focus on academic entities.

Attendees repeatedly stated that session participation, networking dynamics and discussions were subject to a cultural disjoint between Asian and non-Asian attendees. This was particularly noteworthy for European and North American attendees who had attended APAIE on the premise that it would allow them to interact with Asian attendees.

#### Themes

APAIE's past conferences have placed primary thematic emphasis on international student recruiting, intra-regional cooperation, and institutional partnering. The 2010 Conference shed light on these issues in the context of extreme events such as the global financial crises, climate change, and the advancement of communication technology.

### **Relevance of Presence for Canadian Institutions**

#### Overall Conference Direction

The APAIE Conference has quickly become the most relevant international education conference in the Asia-Pacific region for many higher education institutions. It has attempted to follow EIAE and NAFSA's conference format while imparting its own regional flavour and tonality .

The 2010 conference was widely considered a welcome departure from previous conferences (Tokyo 2008 and Beijing 2009). The 2008 and 2009 conferences suffered from a number of issues, including basic organizational deficiencies, programmatic weaknesses, and a lack of transparency. At the time, numerous attendees indicated that future APAIE conference participation was doubtful.

Griffith University's on-the-ground organization and thematic stewardship of the 2010 conference resulted in an improved experience for participants. Notable concern exists as to whether the 2011 conference will carry this performance improvement forward.

#### Recent Canadian Presence

2010 saw a strong Canadian turnout at APAIE. A total of 41 Canadians attended the conference (5.4 percent) and three held presenter roles (2.9 percent). These numbers represent an increase over previous years, largely driven by the increasing interest in partnering and recruiting in the Asia-Pacific region.

#### Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

APAIE is one of three large international education conferences in the Asia-Pacific region together with AIEC and QS APPLE. The latter are organized by commercial entities and are more limited in their international (global) scope, themes, and functionality. Neither AIEC nor QS APPLE conferences are tied into senior international education leadership networks the way EAIE or NAFSA are, or APAIE attempts to be.

Indeed, much of the growth APAIE has experienced since 2006 is based on the fact that it attracts an audience interested in a more academic and institutional networking-centric conference, one which follows established conference protocols.

Given the Asia-Pacific region's importance to Canadian international education, the conference should appeal to a number of Canadian stakeholders, including university senior leadership (director-level and above), representatives from public and governmental agencies, and the leadership of relevant education associations or membership bodies.

In most instances, APAIE attendance should be combined with other activities in the region because of the substantial amount of travel required.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2010 Conference featured 826 official attendants (reported by APAIE), 756 of whom were included in the official attendee list and affiliated with the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 593 (78.4 percent)
- Government/public sector: 77 (10.2 percent)
- Commercial sector: 66 (8.7 percent)
- Other: 20 (2.7 percent)

Attendees hailed from the following countries (Top 10):

- Australia: 248 (32.8 percent)
- Taiwan: 66 (8.7 percent)
- South Korea: 63 (8.3 percent)
- Germany: 47 (6.2 percent)
- China: 43 (5.7 percent)
- Canada: 41 (5.4 percent)
- United States: 36 (4.8 percent)
- Japan: 23 (3 percent)
- United Kingdom: 21 (2.8 percent)
- France: 20 (2.6 percent)
- All Other: 148 (19.6 percent)

### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2010 Conference featured 104 presenters. In terms of sector affiliation, presenters were divided as follows:

- Institutional/academic sector: 73 (70.2 percent)
- Government/public sector: 12 (11.5 percent)
- Commercial sector: 13 (12.5 percent)
- Other: 6 (5.8 percent)

The country distribution of presenters is as follows (Top 10, tied 11<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup>):

- Australia: 46 (44.2 percent)
- New Zealand: 10 (9.6 percent)
- United States: 6 (5.7 percent)
- China: 5 (4.8 percent)

- Canada, Italy, Netherlands, South Korea, Taiwan (each): 3 (2.9 percent)
- Austria, France, Japan, Malaysia, Switzerland (each): 2 (1.9 percent)
- All Other: 12 (11.5 percent)

#### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

No information on committee members' countries of origin or sectors was available.

#### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

The conference attracted 62 exhibitors with a total staff count of 188; 56 of the latter did not register for the conference. The exhibitors represented the following sector affiliation:

- Commercial sector: 10 (16.1 percent)
- Institutional/academic sector: 35 (56.5 percent)
- Government/public sector: 14 (22.6 percent)
- Other: 3 (4.8 percent)

Exhibitors originated from the following countries:

- South Korea: 16 (25.8 percent)
- Australia: 12 (19.4 percent)
- Germany: 7 (11.3 percent)
- Japan, United States (each): 4 (6.5 percent)
- Canada, China (each): 3 (4.8 percent)
- New Zealand, Singapore, Taiwan, Thailand (each): 2 (3.2 percent)
- Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Saudi Arabia, United Kingdom (each): 1 (1.6 percent)

#### Participation Cost

The fee schedule for attendance in 2010 was as follows:

- Attendee (full fee): USD 800 (CAD 844)
- Exhibitor (minimum full fee): USD 3,000 (CAD 3,167) (includes furniture package and conference registration; USD 2,500 (CAD 2,639) for non-profit organizations; other packages were available

## **Relevance of Membership for Canadian Institutions**

Institutional APAIE membership runs at USD 650 (CAD 696). APAIE membership offers little benefits aside from a discounted conference attendance rate. Individual membership at USD 100 (CAD 107) seems to offer better value.

## **Next Conference Venue**

The 2011 conference is scheduled from 9 to 11 March in Taipei, Taiwan.

## 3.4 CONAHEC

### Conference Capsule

CONAHEC's 13<sup>th</sup> North American Higher Education Conference was held from 21 to 23 April 2010 at Rice University in Houston. The conference was attended by 219 participants from 16 countries, 89 of whom served as presenters. Around 87 percent of attendees originated from Canada, Mexico, and the United States.

### Conference Organizer

The Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) is a tri-national network of over 130 accredited member institutions and higher education organizations in Canada, Mexico and the United States. The consortium includes affiliate members located in Europe, South America, and Asia.

Founded in 1993, CONAHEC works to advise and connect higher education institutions in North America and abroad. Its annual North American Higher Education Conference serves as a key promotional event. The conference is organized jointly by the host institution and the CONAHEC office at the University of Arizona.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

The CONAHEC conference remains focused on exchange and relationship-oriented issues. Its emphasis on collaboration and community building in North America mirrors that of participants who are also active in, for example, trilateral exchanges and partnering.

#### Reach

The conference's distinct regional focus has effectively limited interest in the conference to attendees from Canada, Mexico, and the United States. At the 2010 conference, only 12.8 percent of attendees originated from outside the NAFTA region.

## Flavour

CONAHEC is characterized by its narrow regional focus, specific thematic preferences, and small attendee size.<sup>7</sup> As a result, CONAHEC attracts a somewhat different set of attendees when compared with other conferences. The conference is decidedly non-commercial in tone – in 2010 over 90 percent of attendees represented education institutions or the government/public sector – with a strong focus on cooperation models.

## Themes

Session topics and discussions have focused on student exchange and cultural diplomacy, with topics including inclusiveness promotion and community building in international education. The 2010 edition stressed innovative engagement options for institutional internationalization, international student and faculty exchange as well as local development.

## Relevance for Canadian Institutions

### Overall Conference Direction

Despite having experienced a notable drop in attendance in 2010, CONAHEC remains relevant to institutions and North American public sector officials who engage within CONAHEC's thematic framework. Its decision to jointly host the 2010 Conference of the Americas on International Education (CAIE) from 20 to 23 October 2010 in Calgary underlines its regional focus, which shows limited engagement objectives overlap with potential conference attendees outside the NAFTA region.

### Recent Canadian Presence

Canada's presence at the 2010 CONAHEC conference was rather modest – a total of 17 Canadian representatives (7.8 percent), compared with 79 attendees from Mexico and 95 from the United States. One possible reason is the overlap with the Conference of the Americas mentioned above. Canada did contribute higher rates of session chairs (13.8 percent) and conference committee members (12.5 percent) however, but actual headcounts in these categories ran at low single digits.

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<sup>7</sup> Attendance at the 2010 conference was unusually low, possibly due to the overlap with the inaugural Conference of the Americas in Calgary in October 2010. Attendance in 2011 is expected to increase.

## Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

CONAHEC conferences are relevant to Canadian stakeholders who engage within its regional and thematic framework. CONAHEC offers them a unique platform since its narrow thematic and regional focus trades off depth for breadth. The conference's small size is especially conducive to easy networking, not least because finding like-minded attendees is essentially a given.

In light of other conferences' tendency of growing in attendance and becoming more thematically diverse, CONAHEC offers a distinctly focused conference. In turn, the conference is not for everyone. CONAHEC seems most relevant to Director-level but certainly not to junior staff members. A unique feature of CONAHEC is the concurrently run Student Organization of North America (SONA) conference.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

The 219 conference attendees represented the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 169 (77.2 percent)
- Government/public sector: 30 (13.7 percent)
- Commercial sector: 17 (7.8 percent)
- Other: 3 (1.4 percent)

Attendees hailed from the following countries (Top 10):

- United States: 95 (43.4 percent)
- Mexico: 79 (36.1 percent)
- Canada: 17 (7.8 percent)
- Colombia: 7 (3.2 percent)
- Argentina, South Korea, Puerto Rico (each): 3 (1.4 percent)
- Chile, Honduras, Spain (each): 2 (0.9 percent)
- All Other: 6 (2.7 percent)

### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2010 conference registered a total of 89 presenters with the following sector affiliations:

- Institutional/academic sector: 62 (69.7 percent)
- Government/public sector: 21 (23.6 percent)

- Commercial sector: 6 (6.7 percent)
- Other: 0 (0.0 percent)

Conference presenters originated from the following countries (Top 10, tied 11<sup>th</sup>):

- United States: 51 (57.3 percent)
- Mexico: 23 (25.8 percent)
- Canada: 6 (6.7 percent)
- Chile: 2 (2.2 percent)
- Australia, Columbia, France, India, South Korea, Spain, United Kingdom (each): 1 (1.1 percent)

#### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

CONAHEC featured 16 committee members affiliated with two sectors: The institutional/academic sector with 10 members, and the government/public sector with 6 members. The representatives originated from four countries: The United States (10), Mexico (3), Canada (2) and Chile (1).

#### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

CONAHEC featured seven exhibitors: Five from the United States and two from Canada. They represented the following sectors: Two from the institutional/academic sector, two from the government/public sector, one from the commercial sector, and two from other sectors.

#### Participation Cost

CONAHEC charged the following fees:

- Attendee (full fee): USD 550 (CAD 581)
- Exhibitor (full fee): USD 1,500 (CAD 1,583) (includes booth, table, one conference registration and conference-provided meals)
- Students (full fee, SONA): USD 150 (CAD 158)

### **Relevance of Membership for Canadian Institutions**

Institutional CONAHEC membership runs at USD 1,800 (CAD 1,926). This relatively high fee level has limited Canadian membership to 16 institutions, associations, and public agencies. Members benefit from a discounted conference fee.

### **Next Conference Venue**

CONAHEC's 14<sup>th</sup> North American Higher Education Conference is scheduled to be held in Mérida, Mexico in October 2011.

## 3.5 EAIE

### Conference Capsule

The 21<sup>st</sup> EAIE Annual Conference was held from 16 to 19 September 2009 in Madrid. Conference attendance ran at 2,918 registered participants and 371 exhibitors from 76 countries<sup>8</sup>. The leading sending country was the Netherlands with 354 attendees (12.1 percent), while Canada was represented by 58 attendees (2.0 percent; the 17th strongest representation). The Netherlands also captured the most presenter slots with 39 (14.8 percent), while Canada only supplied two speakers (0.8 percent; the 24th strongest position).

The following analysis is based on data from both 2009 and 2010.

### Conference Organizer

The Amsterdam-based European Association for International Education (EAIE) is a member-led organization of international education professionals, dedicated to fostering internationalization of higher education in and beyond Europe. It acts as a facilitator by linking international education professionals through training, executive fora, its MyEAIE online networking portal, and an annual conference.

Since 1989, EAIE has acted as sole organizer of its conference and parallel exhibition. The EAIE office in Amsterdam is in charge of all aspects of conference preparation, including visa support when necessary.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

Starting with just under 600 attendees at the first conference in Amsterdam in 1989, the EAIE Conference has grown to become the second largest conference on international education after NAFSA. Conference session and workshop themes encompass a wide range of salient issues in international education, and attendees cover all geographic areas, seniority levels, and institutional sectors. The EAIE conference can reasonably be termed the most balanced international education conference.

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<sup>8</sup> All information was provided by the EAIE.

## Reach

As reflected in the broad focus of session and workshop topics, the EAIE conference has become increasingly relevant for international education professionals and education institutions outside Europe.

In 2009, 725 attendees (24.8 percent) hailed from outside Europe, most prominently from the United States (146), Japan (61), Canada (58), and South Korea (52). The EAIE conference also attracts a fair amount of international education leaders and experts, some of whom have organized in the *Researchers in International Education* special interest group.

## Flavour

The EAIE conference is not the largest international education conference, but has nevertheless become the most relevant based on three factors. First, it is balanced with regards to its attendees' geographic origin. Amongst the top 20 sending countries, six are from outside Europe. In 2009 the leading sending country, the Netherlands, stood at a moderate 12.1 percent share.

Second, the EAIE as an association has successfully installed a special interest group model which operates as an intellectual backbone for many content aspects of the conference. With many of these groups also geographically well balanced, session and workshop contents tend to be relevant and fresh.

Third, the EAIE has established a culture of innovation which has resulted in repeated forays into new thematic and organizational areas. Its relative freedom from overt commercial concerns or the dominance of one country's international education landscape has also proven beneficial.

While the conference has reached the 3,000 attendee threshold, it still maintains a "small conference" culture. Any further growth is likely to change this, which many regular attendees would consider as unfortunate.

## Themes

Recent EAIE Conferences have made a conscious effort to de-emphasize Euro-centric discussion topics such as the Bologna Process and ECTS credits. As a result, sessions and workshops are neither limited to European case studies, nor are they restricted in terms of dimensions of internationalization. Under the motto "Making Knowledge Work", the 2010

conference emphasises good practice in various fields of engagement, such as institutional entrepreneurialism, recruitment, partnering, as well as the widening gap between academic core values and the commercialization of higher education.

## Relevance for Canadian Institutions

### Overall Relevance

The EAIE conference has steadily gained in importance for Canadian stakeholders. While it has not reached the “must attend” status of NAFSA, many Canadian administrators have added the EAIE to their wish list, or have made definitive plans to attend future conferences, for three reasons.

First, the conference is large enough that it attracts attendees from around the world in significant numbers, thereby increasing the possibility for setting up meetings which otherwise could only take place at NAFSA or at a regional conference.

Second, its thematic depth and diversification as well as quality of sessions for any seniority level, coupled with the importance of policy developments such as the Bologna process, are attractive.

Third, due to its location, attending the EAIE conference offers a convenient opportunity to visit multiple partners in a short amount of time and with little travel.

### Recent Canadian Presence

Canada so far has taken a slightly undersized albeit growing presence at the EAIE conference. Canadian attendees accounted for 2.0 percent of all attendees but only 0.8 percent of presenters and no chairs in 2010.

The sector composition of Canadian EAIE conference attendees has been heavily skewed towards educational institutions (52 attendees or 89.7 percent), while governmental (3 attendees or 5.2 percent) and commercial (2 attendees, or 3.5 percent) representatives have played a minor role (one “other” attendee). Presenters were solely recruited from educational institutions. This attendance pattern hints at Canadian participants not being deeply embedded in the EAIE’s structure.

## Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

It should prove relatively easy to strengthen Canada's position at the EAIE conference. For one, EAIE is set up as a participatory association which rapidly allows for active members to contribute to its conference as a speaker or chair. To make this a reality, however, Canadian international education experts would have to integrate into the EAIE landscape much deeper.

Second, Canada's "awakening" in international education is of great interest to many European institutions, both from a competition as well as a potential partnering perspective. An increased Canadian presence would be quite likely welcomed from a mutual learning, exchange, and intelligence acquisition perspective.

Third, Canada's international education landscape offers a wide range of potential attendees who have yet to discover the EAIE conference. This natural growth pool offers unique perspectives on the complexities of coordinating and promoting international education from a Canadian viewpoint which should be of interest to many EAIE conference attendees.

The most suitable attendee category includes director-level and executive-level representatives.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 EAIE Conference in Madrid was attended by 2,918 participants, including 371 exhibitors. Attendees represented the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 2,441 (83.6 percent)
- Government/public sector: 192 (6.6 percent)
- Commercial sector: 211 (7.2 percent)
- Other: 74 (2.5 percent)

Conference attendees hailed from 76 countries, including (Top 10):

- Netherlands: 354 (12.1 percent)
- Sweden: 205 (7.0 percent)
- Finland: 204 (7.0 percent)
- Germany: 182 (6.2 percent)
- Spain: 170 (5.8 percent)
- France: 162 (5.6 percent)

- Norway: 155 (5.3 percent)
- United States: 146 (5.0 percent)
- United Kingdom: 112 (3.8 percent)
- Belgium: 100 (3.4 percent)
- All Other: 1,128 (38.7 percent)

#### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

At the 2010 EAIE Conference, 64 presenters from more than 30 countries had been registered to speak. Presenters were divided into the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 160 (60.6 percent)
- Government/public sector: 55 (20.8 percent)
- Commercial sector: 32 (12.1 percent)
- Other: 17 (6.4 percent)

Presenters originated from the following countries (Top 10, tied 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>):

- Netherlands: 39 (14.8 percent)
- Belgium: 31 (11.7 percent)
- United States: 29 (11 percent)
- Germany: 19 (7.2 percent)
- France: 17 (6.4 percent)
- United Kingdom: 15 (5.7 percent)
- Sweden: 12 (4.6 percent)
- Austria: 10 (3.8 percent)
- Denmark: 9 (3.4 percent)
- Australia, Italy, Norway: 8 (3 percent)
- All Other: 59 (22.4 percent)

#### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2010 Conference Committee comprised twelve members, six of whom hailed from France, and one each from Denmark, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Eleven members represented the institutional/academic sector, and one the government/public sector.

#### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 conference registered a total of 371 exhibitors (staff members) from 36 countries:

- Institutional/academic sector: 247 (66.6 percent)
- Commercial sector: 61 (16.4 percent)
- Government/public sector: 41 (11.1 percent)
- Other: 22 (5.9 percent)

Exhibitors originated from the following countries (Top 10):

- Spain: 62 (16.7 percent)
- Germany: 54 (14.6 percent)
- South Korea: 39 (10.5 percent)
- United Kingdom: 26 (7 percent)
- Poland: 20 (5.4 percent)
- Turkey: 18 (4.9 percent)
- France: 17 (4.6 percent)
- Australia: 14 (3.8 percent)
- Taiwan, United States (each): 13 (3.5 percent)
- All Other: 95 (25.6 percent)

### Participation Cost

The 2010 EAIE Conference charged attendees and exhibitors according to the following fee schedule:

- Attendee (full fee): EUR 775 (CAD 1,002)
- Exhibitor (full fee): EUR 2,691 (CAD 3,479) for a 6m<sup>2</sup> booth; EUR 4,037 (CAD 5,220) for a 9m<sup>2</sup> booth; EUR 5,382 (CAD 6,959) for a 12m<sup>2</sup> booth; EUR 6,728 (CAD 8,699) for a 15m<sup>2</sup> booth; EUR 8,073 (CAD 10,438) for a 18m<sup>2</sup> booth; EUR 10,764 (CAD 13,917) for a 24m<sup>2</sup> booth

### Relevance of Membership for Canadian Institutions

The EAIE does not offer institutional membership. Instead, it operates with an individual membership model running at Euro 190 (CAD 246). Members benefit from a discounted conference fee. EAIE membership offers access to a wide spectrum of publications, special interest groups, and training opportunities. It also serves as a key facilitator for an active conference role.

### Next Conference Venue

The next EAIE conference is scheduled to take place from 13 to 16 October 2011 in Copenhagen.

## 3.6 Going Global

### Conference Capsule

Going Global 4, the British Council's international education conference, was held in London from 24 to 26 March 2010. In total, 1,099 participants attended the conference. Conference participants hailed from 72 countries, with 50.2 percent originating from the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom also boasted the largest share of presenters at 46.1 percent. Canadian participants numbered ten (0.9 percent share), and Canadian presenters numbered four (2.4 percent share).

### Conference Organizer

The Going Global International Education Conference is organized by the British Council, the United Kingdom's primary organization for fostering global educational and cultural relations. The British Council's mission is to both engage the United Kingdom in international cultural exchange and to promote its cultural values through a variety of activities and initiatives. These include international student support, building libraries in developing countries, and providing free online English language resources.

Since 1934, the British Council has been operating as a non-profit intercultural relations charity backed by government funding. The Going Global conference provides forums for networking and discussing trends in international education, a sign of the British Council's engagement in both international education and cultural relations.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

Since the Going Global 1 Conference in 2004, both the number of attendees and the breadth of session topics have attracted growing numbers of representatives from around the world. In 2010, government representatives, many of whom originated from Commonwealth countries, represented 37.7 percent of attendees, the largest share of any international education conference. The Going Global conference's continued focus on cross-border mobility of staff, students, and knowledge also proves attractive for many higher education institutions.

#### Reach

At past Going Global conferences, the share of attendees originating from the United Kingdom proved to be surprisingly modest, accounting for just half of all attendees in 2010. No country, aside from the United Kingdom, accounted for more than three percent of the total attendee count. The 2011 Conference in Hong Kong will be the first Going Global conference held outside the United Kingdom. The British Council has stated that it will move towards a rotation schedule going forward with the Going Global alternating between the United Kingdom and an overseas location.

## Flavour

The Going Global 4 Conference attracted attendees from a wide variety of countries and affiliations. Conference participants were divided into balanced proportions of government officials, commercial providers, and education institutions. With 37.7 percent of attendees affiliated with national and regional governments, the Going Global 4 conference hosted a larger share of government attendees than any other major international education conference.

In addition, a sizable share of attendees (12.6 percent) and presenters (19.2 percent) represented the commercial sector which further contributed to the diversity of discussion topics and session themes.

The 2010 Going Global Conference had a distinct technological flavour. The use of “Spotme” Technology gave participants the opportunity to use wireless handheld networking devices to locate delegates, take notes, and electronically exchange business cards. The technology generated mixed reviews; some attendees praised the devices as highly convenient, while others considered the use rather distracting.

Going Global 4 was significantly better received by attendees than Going Global 3 which suffered from an inconvenient location, a belated program composition, and no clear thematic direction.

## Themes

At Going Global 4, themes included: Potential implications of the global recession for international education; collaborative strategies undertaken by universities and governments; combating the inward orientation of institutions and national education systems; and the impact of the global labor market’s changing skill requirements on education systems and curricula.

## Relevance for Canadian Institutions

### Overall Conference Direction

Given the uprooting of Going Global from its traditional UK location in favour of a 2011 Hong Kong-based conference in 2011 it is difficult to predict how this conference will develop. A few backward-looking observations can be shared, however.

First, the conference will now take place annually instead of bi-annually. This signals that the British Council considers the conference a success and is willing to make further investments despite a challenging national budget situation.

Second, the fact that the British Council organizes the conference implies a high participation share for governmental and public agencies. While this approach has yielded a unique balance amongst attendees, it also involves clear limits. Further attendee growth should ideally be drawn from (higher) education institutions.

Third, the conference's tone has tended to be very UK-centric. While this is to some degree a reflection of the United Kingdom's strong role in international education, it has also contributed to a limited set of topics at the conference. This narrow topic range, in turn, has resulted in Going Global not yet belonging to the "must attend" category.

### Recent Canadian Presence

Canada's presence at past Going Global conferences has been limited, with 10 attendees participating in Going Global 4. In comparative terms, Canada's attendance count is similar than that of Australia (9), France (10), and Ghana (10).

Going Global's generally high share of government attendees was amplified in Canada's case, with half of its attendees representing national or provincial governments. The fact that Canadian representatives secured four speaking slots is a positive sign.

### Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

Going Global offers a number of select and at times unique networking and leverage opportunities. For example, the conference offers participants access to a large pool of attendees from Commonwealth

countries. It is also conceived as a network-centric conference with features such as the “SpotMe” service. Given the move to Hong Kong in 2011, any analysis of networking and leverage possibilities would only amount to speculation.

Going Global is best suited to director-level staff members and the attendance of junior staff members is not recommended. The conference in Hong Kong might also offer opportunities for executive-level attendance.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

In total, 1,099 attendees, including 167 presenters, took part in the 2010 conference. Attendees represented the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 534 (48.6 percent)
- Government/public sector: 414 (37.7 percent)
- Commercial sector: 138 (12.6 percent)
- Other: 13 (1.2 percent)

Attendees originated from the following countries (Top 10, tied 9<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>):

- United Kingdom: 552 (50.2 percent)
- United States: 33 (3 percent)
- Vietnam: 26 (2.4 percent)
- Pakistan: 25 (2.3 percent)
- Ireland, Egypt, Hong Kong (each): 21 (1.9 percent)
- United Arab Emirates: 20 (1.8 percent)
- Nigeria, Germany, China: 19 (1.7 percent)
- All Other: 323 (29.4 percent)

### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

167 presenters with the following sector affiliations participated in 2010:

- Institutional/academic sector: 75 (44.9 percent)
- Government/public sector: 60 (35.9 percent)
- Commercial sector: 32 (19.2 percent)
- Other: 0 (0.0 percent)

Presenters hailed from the following countries (Top 10):

- United Kingdom: 77 (46.1 percent)
- United States: 9 (5.4 percent)
- Hong Kong: 7 (4.2 percent)
- Australia: 6 (3.6 percent)
- China, United Arab Emirates (each): 5 (3.0 percent)
- Canada, Egypt, Germany, Iraq (each): 4 (2.4 percent)
- All Other: 42 (25.1 percent)

Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

Committee member statistics for 2010 were not available.

Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

Going Global 4 hosted 30 exhibitors from the following sectors:

- Commercial sector: 15 (50 percent)
- Government/public sector: 11 (36.7 percent)
- Institutional/academic sector: 3 (10 percent)
- Other: 1 (3.3 percent)

Exhibitors at Going Global 4 represented five countries:

- United Kingdom: 22 (73.3 percent)
- Germany, United States (each): 3 (10.0 percent)
- Spain, Italy (each): 1 (3.3 percent)

Participation Cost

Going Global 4 employed the following fee schedule:

- Attendee (full fee): GBP 600 (CAD 950)
- Attendee (one day pass): GBP 450 (CAD 712)
- Exhibitor (full fee): GBP 3,000 (CAD 4,750) (12m<sup>2</sup> booth)

### **Next Conference Venue**

Going Global 5 is scheduled to take place from 10 to 12 March 2011 in Hong Kong.

## 3.7 NAFSA

### Conference Capsule

NAFSA's 2009 Annual Conference and Expo was held from 26 to 29 May 2009 in Los Angeles. Over 7,000 participants from 115 countries attended the conference, 1,116 of whom served as presenters.<sup>9</sup> A majority (59.9 percent) of attendees and of presenters (79.4 percent) originated from the United States. Canadians accounted for a 3.4 percent share of attendees and a 1.7 percent share of presenters.

### Conference Organizer

NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, is a membership organization of education professionals representing accredited schools, colleges and universities, US government officials, commercial providers and post-secondary students.

Founded in 1948 as the National Association of Foreign Student Advisors, NAFSA's initial mission was to promote the professional development of staff assisting foreign students in the United States. Since then, the association has grown to close to 10,000 members.

It operates with three strategic focus areas: influencing public policy; sharing knowledge through publications and training; and serving its members by providing a networking and ideas exchange platform.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

With 7,072 registered, publicly named participants at the 2009 conference, NAFSA continues to operate as the largest international education conference by far. NAFSA in many calendars is marked as a "must attend" event, although reasons for attending vary notably.

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<sup>9</sup> NAFSA did not share statistics on attendees, presenters, or exhibitors short of aggregate, approximate figures. These figures differ from ICG research, largely owing to a different counting methodology. NAFSA claims an attendance of "approximately 7,500 individuals", and presentations by "approximately 700 speakers". The ICG attendance figure of 7,072 is lower because individuals who did not want to be listed in the conference directory were not counted. ICG's figure for speakers is higher since in the case of NAFSA speaking slots were counted. NAFSA also indicated the participation of "approximately 350 exhibitors", where as ICG counted exhibitor staff (1,265).

## Reach

NAFSA is unique in attendee count and diversity of countries represented. With participants hailing from 115 different nations, NAFSA enjoys the widest reach of all international education conferences (ahead of EAIE). Eleven countries sent more than 100 attendees; Canada was the second-largest sender in 2009 with 240 attendees. NAFSA attracts attendees from all sectors and seniority levels, although not at the relative rate of AIEA with regards to the latter.

## Flavour

NAFSA's flavour and conference culture in many ways are determined by its size. NAFSA – theoretically – offers participants the opportunity to meet and network with thousands of fellow international education practitioners. To do so in a productive manner, any NAFSA attendance must be diligently planned in order to be able to navigate the actual conference.

Owing to the organizational complexities inherent to a conference the size of NAFSA's, the conference operates more as a business than as an education conference. This operational approach is visible in the high quality on-site logistics and technology support, and NAFSA surpasses all other conferences but AIEC in depth and professionalism.

At its “cultural center”, NAFSA has retained little of the more personalized experiences other conferences offer. Such experiences still abound, yet many are increasingly taking place outside the conference itself.

The above hints at a fundamental challenge, especially to newcomers – NAFSA has become fragmented and in many instances privatized, i.e. events, meetings, and networking are taking place not only outside the confines of the conference, but also entirely independently. Taking full advantage of NAFSA's opportunities effectively requires both professional experience as well as previous experience at NAFSA; it is not a conference an inexperienced attendee can easily navigate.

Two somewhat related issues have become points of contention between NAFSA and an increasing number of (senior) non-American international educators. For one, NAFSA's intellectual profile is considered as lacking. Many conference sessions are seen as relevant to junior staff only, and even senior level workshops are largely thought of as insufficient.

Second, NAFSA places a heavy emphasis on US-centric themes which in many instances have resulted in NAFSA session contents having little to do with strategic and competition issues other conferences cover well.

### Themes

Session topics and discussions at past NAFSA conferences have been largely devoted to foreign students entering the United States to study, and US students departing for other countries to enhance their education. Topics continue to focus on traditional aspects of international education, emphasizing cultural exchange and development cooperation.

The theme of the 2009 conference was “Fostering Global Engagement through International Education”. The conference stressed the importance of outreach to international students, as well as the need to better understand underrepresented cultures in order to better attract international students and assist them once they have reached the United States.

### **Relevance for Canadian Institutions**

#### Overall Conference Direction

NAFSA has established by far the largest international education conference and there is no indication that this situation will change anytime soon. Its size is a key attraction as it guarantees ample opportunities for networking and other institutional development initiatives. At the same time, NAFSA’s size has created a “shadow conference” which uses the actual conference as a springboard for a wide range of activities, ranging from private expert learning sessions to agent training and so on.

NAFSA heavily favours US-based presenters: While US attendance ran at 59.5 percent, the share of US presenters was 79.4 percent. By contrast, Canada’s attendance ran at 3.4 percent while its share of presenters stood at 1.7 percent. French attendees fared much worse – a 2.7 percent attendance share translated into a mere 0.2 percent presenter share. These imbalances have not gone unnoticed and contribute to further privatization behaviour of non-US attendees.

NAFSA has adopted salient themes such as marketing and recruiting, national competition, the usage of Web 2.0 tools, and so on. However, with many experts in these areas residing outside the United States, NAFSA’s continued over-reliance on US speakers is bound to relegate many sessions on these topics to a low expertise experience.

## Recent Canadian Presence

In recent years, Canada has contributed one of the largest non-US presences at NAFSA conferences. At the 2009 Conference, Canada sent the second-strongest contingent. The Canadian public and government sector sent more attendees than the commercial sector did, whereas this relationship is reversed for the conference overall.

Aside from 19 presenters (1.7 percent share), Canada also supplied five chairs (1.7 percent share). Given Canada's large footprint at NAFSA with 240 attendees (3.4 percent), there is ample room it to claim a more balanced role.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 conference was attended by 7,072 named participants, and 1,116 presentations were delivered. Attendees represented the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 4,962 (70.2 percent)
- Government/public sector: 639 (9.0 percent)
- Commercial sector: 1,006 (14.2 percent)
- Other: 465 (6.6 percent)

Attendees hailed from the following countries (Top 10):

- United States: 4,233 (59.9 percent)
- Canada: 240 (3.4 percent)
- United Kingdom: 228 (3.2 percent)
- France: 192 (2.7 percent)
- Australia: 187 (2.6 percent)
- Japan: 147 (2.1 percent)
- Germany: 145 (2.1 percent)
- South Korea: 141 (2.0 percent)
- China: 131 (1.9 percent)
- Spain: 127 (1.8 percent)
- All Other: 1,301 (18.4 percent)

### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

A total of 1,116 presentations with the following sector affiliations were delivered at the 2009 conference:

- Institutional/academic sector: 721 (64.6 percent)
- Government/public sector: 154 (13.8 percent)
- Commercial sector: 139 (12.5 percent)
- Other: 102 (9.1 percent)

Presenters originated from the following countries (Top 10; tied 9th through 11th):

- United States: 886 (79.4 percent)
- Mexico: 20 (1.8 percent)
- Canada: 19 (1.7 percent)
- Japan: 10 (0.9 percent)
- Australia, Netherlands (each): 9 (0.8 percent)
- Austria, United Kingdom (each): 8 (0.7 percent)
- Belgium, South Korea, Spain (each): 7 (0.6 percent)
- All Other: 126 (11.3 percent)

### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 Conference featured twelve conference committee members affiliated with the following sectors: Seven from the institutional/academic sector, two from the government/public sector, one from the commercial sector, and two other sectors. The twelve committee members originated from two countries: the United States with eleven members, and Zimbabwe with one member.

### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

The NAFSA Annual Conference and Exposition hosted 1,265 exhibitor staff members from the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 632 (50.0 percent)
- Commercial sector: 381 (30.1 percent)
- Government/public sector: 204 (16.1 percent)
- Other: 48 (3.8 percent)

Countries of origin of conference exhibitors included (Top 10):

- United States: 490 (38.7 percent)
- United Kingdom: 101 (8.0 percent)
- Spain: 80 (6.3 percent)
- Mexico: 56 (4.4 percent)
- Australia: 55 (4.3 percent)
- South Korea: 45 (3.6 percent)
- Canada, France (each): 38 (3.0 percent)
- China: 35 (2.8 percent)
- Germany: 32 (2.5 percent)
- All Other: 295 (23.3 percent)

### Participation Cost

The 2009 NAFSA conference charged the following fee schedule:

- Attendee (full fee): USD 819 (CAD 865)
- Attendee (day fee): USD 340 (CAD 359)
- Exhibitor (full fee): USD 3,400 (CAD 3,589) (includes booth)

### Relevance of Membership for Canadian Institutions

NAFSA's "Global Partnership Program" which provides institutional membership starts at USD 3,500 (CAD 3,745). Regular, individual membership runs at USD 365 (CAD 391). NAFSA membership offers access to a wide spectrum of mailing lists, publications, special interest groups, and training opportunities. Membership benefits include a discounted conference fee.

### Next Conference

#### **Vancouver 2011: Specific Network and Leverage Relevance for Canadian Stakeholders**

##### General Benefits of Hosting a Conference

Hosting a conference of the order of magnitude of NAFSA exposes any host (city, region, and participating institutions) to in-depth international attention. Typically, this attention can be channelled into a set of coordinated marketing and relationship-building initiatives – provided Canadian institutions make an effort to turn out in large numbers.

In the case of 2011 NAFSA at Vancouver, spill over effects from such initiatives should also come into play. It should be noted in this context that Vancouver, British Columbia, and Canada itself are already the subject of high and increasing levels of attention in international education circles.

Thus, the key benefits from hosting the 2011 NAFSA will most likely center on solidifying a growing, positive brand awareness; the possibility to raise the profile of smaller regional institutions through a variety of events; and the ability to continue to showcase Canada as an educational destination.

### Coordination and Messaging

Coordination and messaging activities need to be as closely aligned as possible yet also demand a leading role by different stake holders. Given NAFSA's operational role and communication leadership, NAFSA should be in charge of messaging the conference worldwide with input from institutions such as DFAIT and the British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE).

The overall conference coordination should be governed by NAFSA with the input of a wide range of Canadian stakeholders (BCCIE, DFAIT, regional institutions). Events and initiatives showcasing Vancouver, British Columbia, and Canada should be solely run and coordinated by the respective stakeholders.

### Opportunities for Local Events and Activities

NAFSA conferences typically offer a "menu" of local events and activities. Some are driven by NAFSA and can be rather entertainment oriented. Local and regional institutions typically offer campus visits (familiarization tours), special receptions, targeted seminars, and so on. Much of this has a "tried and true" character which leaves little to the imagination.

Owing to its high aesthetic appeal, Vancouver stands to do especially well in this regard. However, an opportunity would be lost if the high level of generic interest would not be channelled into more advanced networking and knowledge-sharing events, some of which could be scheduled for the week leading up to the conference.

## Policy and Politics

An often experienced challenge is the conflict between the approach, culture, and economic needs of a conference organizer vis-à-vis a host. In this situation, it will be important to make sure all aspects of the Vancouver/British Columbia/Canada story are heard in light of NAFSA essentially representing US international education interests. Yard sticks to measure an appropriate representation include speaking and chair roles awarded to Canadian representatives – especially since Canada has been notably underrepresented in this regard.

### Future Conference Locations:

- Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada, 29 May to 3 June 2011
- Houston, Texas, United States, 27 May to 1 June 2012
- Louisville, Kentucky, United States, 26 to 31 May 2013

## Information Provided by NAFSA

### Goals of NAFSA's Annual Conference:

NAFSA: Association of International Educators hosts a conference each year to bring together international educators from around the world for training, professional development, networking, exposure to new programs, products and services, and advocating for international education and exchange. The goal of the NAFSA Annual Conference is to advance knowledge in the field of international education and exchange and global workforce development and to provide for dissemination and promotion of professional standards and best practices. The Annual Conference also provides opportunities for attendees to learn about the Association and its mission, values, and educational programs, products, and services, and for exhibitors and sponsors to showcase their programs, products, and services that serve the field.

## 3.8 QS APPLE

### Conference Capsule

The 5<sup>th</sup> annual QS APPLE Conference and Exhibition was held from 24 to 26 November 2009 in Kuala Lumpur. Conference organizers reported 700 participants from 32 countries, 63 of whom served as presenters.<sup>10</sup>

### Conference Organizer

Established in 1990, Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) is a global career and education network with a focus on business-oriented education and careers. QS runs a university ranking system which includes the QS World University Rankings and the separate QS Asian University Rankings.<sup>11</sup>

The QS-Asia Pacific Professional Leaders in Education Conference (QS-APPLE) was first held in 2004. Each QS-APPLE conference is jointly hosted by QS and one or several Asian university partners. The 2009 conference was jointly hosted by two university partners, the University of Malaya and Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM). As university partners change annually, the location and participant demographics can differ widely.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

Given QS-APPLE's distinct regional focus on Asia-Pacific, conference attendees and discussion topics are primarily concerned with intra-regional student mobility and regional networking. Attendance has been mid-sized with 421 named attendees in 2009.

#### Reach

The conference's Asian focus is reflected in both conference attendees and session topics. In 2009, 88.6 percent of attendees hailed from Asian countries. With 23.8 percent of presenters originating from outside the Asia-Pacific region, QS-APPLE provides a forum for discussion of broader international education issues. Nevertheless, a majority of talks are set in the context of the Asian university.

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<sup>10</sup> The official participant list contained 421 named attendees.

<sup>11</sup> The QS World University Rankings were published jointly with the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) until 2009. THES severed this relationship in 2010 amidst intense criticism of the QS World University Ranking's quality.

## Flavour

At the 2009 conference, 92.2 percent of attendees represented education institutions, 3.3 percent attendees hailed from the public sector, and 4.3 percent represented commercial providers (one attendee was classified as other). The distribution of presenters closely mirrored that of attendees with 87.3 percent representing education institutions.

It is noteworthy that the conference organizers stress the linkages (“natural synergy”) between the QS World University Rankings as well as the QS Asian University Rankings with the conference in general, and the conference tracks specifically.<sup>12</sup> This approach has caused a certain degree of unease amongst some international education stakeholders given the potential conflict of interest and the overt commercial nature of the conference.

## Themes

In the past, QS-Apple Conferences have sought to broadly address “big picture” issues including resourcing, campus internationalization, trends in university governance, and intra-regional student mobility. At the 2009 edition, session topics and discussions centered largely on challenges confronting Asian institutions with a partial focus on capacity issues and institutional strategy. Many sessions involved curricular and program-specific topics such as cultural diplomacy and student experiences.

## Relevance for Canadian Institutions

### Overall Conference Direction

QS-APPLE is still a relatively young conference with a content framework most relevant to Asian universities. Given the linkage between the conference and QS’ commercial services, it is not surprising that QS is driving for further, strong conference attendee growth.

### Recent Canadian Presence

Canadian engagement with QS-APPLE so far has been marginal. Two Canadian university representatives attended the 2009 conference.

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<sup>12</sup> For details, see the QS University Rankings and Evaluation Workshop webpage on the 2010 QS-APPLE conference website.

## Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

QS-APPLE offers learning and networking opportunities which are distinct from other regional conferences. One driver is the ability to meet university representatives from countries which normally do not participate in international education conferences in large numbers (short of NASFA). Specific attendee patterns depend on a given conference's location; for example, in 2009, 24.2 percent of attendees originated from Malaysia and 16.9 percent from Saudi Arabia.

Canadian stakeholders who are considering attending QS-APPLE are advised to take the conference's location as much as the topics and the role of QS into account. This conference is best suited for Director-level international office staff.

## Conference Participation Statistics

### Attendee Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 conference reported 700 official attendees, 421 of which were named in the official registration list, which also featured 63 presenters. These 421 attendees were affiliated with the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 388 (92.2 percent)
- Government/public sector: 14 (3.3 percent)
- Commercial sector: 18 (4.3 percent)
- Other: 1 (0.2 percent)

In terms of country of origin, attendees were split as follows (Top 10), with two Canadian attendees:

- Malaysia: 102 (24.2 percent)
- Saudi Arabia: 71 (16.9 percent)
- South Korea: 55 (13.1 percent)
- Thailand: 51 (12.1 percent)
- Japan: 23 (5.5 percent)
- United Kingdom: 18 (4.3 percent)
- Singapore: 13 (3.1 percent)
- Iran: 12 (2.9 percent)
- Indonesia: 10 (2.4 percent)
- Cambodia: 9 (2.1 percent)
- All Other: 57 (13.5 percent)

### Presenter Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 Conference featured 63 presenters. In terms of sector affiliation, presenters were split as follows:

- Institutional/academic sector: 55 (87.3 percent)
- Government/public sector: 4 (6.3 percent)
- Commercial sector: 4 (6.3 percent)
- Other: 0 (0.0 percent)

Presenters originated from the following countries (Top 10, tied 7<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>):

- Malaysia: 16 (25.4 percent)
- Thailand: 9 (14.3 percent)
- Australia, United Kingdom (each): 7 (11.1 percent)
- Indonesia, Philippines (each): 3 (4.8 percent)
- China, France, Hong Kong, New Zealand, South Korea: 2 (3.2 percent)
- All Other: 8 (12.7 percent)

#### Conference Committee Member Statistics: Sector and Country

The 2009 conference featured 22 committee members, all of whom were affiliated with the institutional/academic sector.

The committee members originated from the following countries (Top 10, tied 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup>):

- Malaysia: 4 (18.2 percent)
- Hong Kong, South Korea (each): 3 (13.6 percent)
- Australia, Indonesia, New Zealand, Taiwan (each): 2 (9.1 percent)
- Canada, Japan, Singapore, Thailand (each): 1 (4.6 percent)

#### Exhibitor Statistics: Sector and Country

Official host data from QS Apple recorded 54 exhibitors in 2009. Exhibitors were divided into the following sectors:

- Institutional/academic sector: 40 (74.1 percent)
- Government/public sector : 2 (3.7 percent)
- Commercial sector: 11 (20.4 percent)
- Other: 1 (1.9 percent)

Exhibitors hailed from the following countries (Top 10, tied 10<sup>th</sup> through 13<sup>th</sup>):

- South Korea: 16 (29.6 percent)
- Australia: 9 (16.7 percent)
- United Kingdom: 8 (14.8 percent)
- Cambodia, Malaysia (each): 4 (7.4 percent)
- Indonesia: 3 (5.6 percent)
- Canada, Singapore, United States (each): 2 (3.7 percent)
- Germany, Ireland, Japan, Mexico: 1 (1.9 percent)

### Participation Cost

The conference fee schedule in 2009 was as follows:

- Attendee (full fee): USD 730 (CAD 771)
- Exhibitor (full fee): USD 3,200 (CAD 3,378) (includes furniture package and one full conference registration)

### Next Conference Venues

The 2010 conference will take place in Singapore from 17-19 November 2010. Future conferences will take place in Manila, Philippines in 2011; Bogor, Indonesia in 2012; Seoul, South Korea in 2013; and Taipei, Taiwan in 2014.

### Information provided by QS

#### Key purpose of the conference

QS Asia Pacific Professional Leaders in Education (QS-APPLE) is the prime conference and exhibition for international educators in Asia, Europe, America and Australasia. The 6th QS-APPLE will continue rigorously with QS' well-established tradition of advancing international recognition and globalisation of Asian universities that underpins its mission to help build world-class universities for Asia-Pacific communities through global partnership and collaboration. The conference supports Asian universities' efforts to internationalise by providing valuable opportunities for networking, exchanging best practices and debating new developments in higher education in Asia.

#### Projected attendance

Expected 15 percent growth in attendance per year i.e. 800 attendees in 2010, 920 in 2011, and 1,060 in 2012.

## 3.9 Other Conferences

### CAIE

#### Conference Capsule

The first Conference of the Americas on International Education (CAIE) was held from 20 to 23 October 2010 in Calgary. Co-organized by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), the Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration (CONAHEC) and the Inter-American Organization for Higher Education (IOHE), the conference aimed to enhance the interconnectedness of education sectors and institutions within the Americas and beyond.

The conference was supported by Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade and the Alberta Ministry of Advanced Education.

#### The Role of the Conference

##### Scope

The CAIE conference focused on a relationship-oriented engagement within the Americas. By providing a forum for international education professionals from North, South, and Central America as well as the Caribbean, the CAIE catered to the interests of institutional staff members engaged in student exchange as well as institutional leadership seeking to strengthen ties within the hemisphere.

##### Reach

The conference's explicit focus on international education in the Americas cut two ways: On the one hand, it was the first hemisphere-wide meeting of its kind which attracted a considerable number of attendees from the Americas, with an overall attendance of more than 600 attendees. On the other hand, the size of the conference could have been even larger if not for the CAIE's emphasis on regional issues, as promoted by its organizers.

## Flavour

Intended to foster cooperation amongst institutions and government agencies across the Americas, the CAIE conference flavour was largely non-commercial. In 2010, a total of 79.7 percent of speakers represented either the institutional/academic sector (55.6 percent) or the government/public sector (24.1 percent), whereas commercial providers combined for just 5.6 percent.

## Themes

Session topics at the 2010 Conference centered on cooperation and internationalization models within the Americas. The breadth of themes exceeded those of most other regional conferences. With workshops on web technology, performance metrics, student data analysis, and policy cooperation models, the CAIE sought to address a diverse set of issues in international education.

## Relevance for Canadian Institutions

With the inaugural 2010 conference in Calgary essentially having served as a pilot, it is difficult to evaluate CAIE's long-term trajectory. Given the success of the conference in attracting attendees, however, a strong case can be made for the conference's attractiveness.

## Next Conference Venue

It is planned to hold the next CAIE conference from April 25 to 28, 2012 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

## ENZ

### Conference Capsule

ENZ's 2010 conference was held in Christchurch from 5 to 6 August 2010. The conference charged the following fee schedule: NZD 655 (CAD 477) for attendees, and NZD 1,500 (CAD 1,093) for exhibitors.

Education New Zealand is a non-profit umbrella organization which establishes and maintains partnerships to support New Zealand as an international study destination. Its annual conference brings together New Zealand's higher education institutions, K-12 educators, ESL programs, and the New Zealand Government with international networks and commercial providers.

### Specific Network and Leverage Relevance

Amongst the smaller conferences analyzed, ENZ offers a focused, network-heavy, and intellectually unafraid conference. Its coverage of a wide range of topics also germane to Canadian stakeholders should make ENZ attractive to anyone who could combine attendance with other activities in the Asia-Pacific region, and possibly obtain a presenter role. ENZ is best suited to a director-level attendee from a higher education institution.

ENZ's cultural tonality allows for, if not outright encourages, open and frank dialogue and challenges certain orthodoxies in international education. The conference focuses primarily on New Zealand-related international education issues, though sessions at the 2010 conference included key external trends in international education landscape such as the global recession, the decline of Australia's export education market, as well as Web 2.0 and recruitment.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Reach

At the August 2009 edition of the conference, 94.4 percent of attendees and 84.6 percent of presenters hailed from New Zealand, with none from Canada. Nevertheless, the conference actively welcomes non-New Zealand presenters and exhibitors.

## Scope

A unique and attractive feature of the ENZ conference is its effort to aggregate perspectives from all educational sectors. None of the other seven conferences covered offers this breadth of sectoral perspectives. The Government/public sector represented a little more than half (53.8 percent), followed by the commercial sector (21.2 percent), other sectors (15.4 percent), and the institutional/academic sector (9.6 percent).

## Overall Conference Direction

The 2009 conference featured 432 attendees, primarily from the institutional/academic sector (73.6 percent), the Government/public sector (7.9 percent), the commercial sector (6.5 percent) and various other sectors (12.0 percent). There are limits, however, to the number of attendees it can attract from within New Zealand. This may open the door for a Canadian presence.

## Next Conference Venue

The next ENZ conference is scheduled to take place in Auckland from 11 to 12 August 2011.

## IECHE Saudi Arabia

### Conference Capsule

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's first International Exhibition and Conference on Higher Education (IECHE) was held from 26 to 29 January 2010 in Riyadh. Primarily set up as a recruitment fair, the event, which was hosted by the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education, drew an official 250,184 visitors.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

Though IECHE hosts a number of seminars and workshops as well as a few partnership-building and networking events, it is largely characterized by its function as a sizable student recruitment fair. In 2010, IECHE registered an official 400 exhibitors, 317 of whom represented the institutional/academic sector.

#### Reach

Rooted in the development objectives pursued by the Saudi Ministry of Higher Education, IECHE's focus on national development and cooperation between the Saudi higher education sector and leading institutions abroad has given rise to a predominantly student-centric exhibition. The exhibition's emphasis on educational opportunities and scholarships for Saudi students has contributed to around 75 percent of attendees hailing from Saudi Arabia.

#### Flavour

In 2010, education institutions combined for 92.8 percent of all IECHE exhibitors, making the exhibition one of the largest student recruitment fairs in the Middle East. Aside from reaching out to potential students, institutions used the exhibition and adjacent sessions to explore partnership opportunities, resulting in more than 40 MOAs and MOUs.

#### Themes

The IECHE's seminars and workshops featured 55 speakers originating from 26 countries. Presentations highlighted Saudi Arabia-

centric development issues, ranging from the socio-economic impact of higher education to campus internationalization and benchmarking.

### **Relevance for Canadian Institutions**

The IECHE mainly offers opportunities for direct access to Saudi study prospects which some attendees characterized as overwhelming and not necessarily well targeted. Institutional partnering is an option as well, and may grow in importance going forward. Given the complex nature of the Saudi Arabian higher education landscape, an on-site presence may suit institutions which desire to engage with Saudi Arabia in a concerted manner.

### **Next Conference Venue**

The next Exhibition will take place in Riyadh from 19 to 22 April, 2011.

## QS MAPLE

### Conference Capsule

The first-ever QS MAPLE Conference and Exhibition is scheduled to be held from 1 to 2 May 2011 in Dubai. The date and venue was selected after three failed attempts to run this conference in 2009 and 2010.

Co-hosted by Dubai International Academic City (DIAC), the conference aspires to join together senior academic staff and public sector officials from the Middle East, Africa, and beyond to foster the development and internationalization of higher education in the region.

### The Role of the Conference

#### Scope

Similar to QS APPLE, the QS MAPLE Conference and Exhibition is expected to place primary emphasis on intra-regional networking and development.

#### Reach

Advertised as one of the first international education conferences with a distinct focus on the Middle East and Africa, QS MAPLE is expected to primarily attract attendees from within the region. Despite efforts to invite conference participants, and in particular presenters from Asia-Pacific, Europe and North America, the majority of conference interaction is expected to center on regional topics.

#### Flavour

Similar to past QS APPLE conferences, QS MAPLE has reached out to educational institutions and government organizations to send delegates.

QS MAPLE is tied into the QS World University Rankings as well as the QS Asian University Rankings (“evaluation of Middle East universities”), which speaks to the commercial nature of the conference.

#### Themes

Despite the absence of an official conference program, it has been announced that the first QS MAPLE Conference and Exhibition would focus on “big picture” issues including regional reform forces, market pressures, regional student mobility, internationalization and institutional governance.

Topics are reported to be embedded in an assessment of Middle East institutions in a regional and global context, once again emphasizing touch points with QS university rankings.

### **Relevance for Canadian Institutions**

Canadian institutions have begun to increasingly pay attention to the Middle East. Local travel, observations, and stakeholder discussions are a critical aspect of understanding the region; in many ways, successful engagement depends on such activities.

Given the relative lack of attendance of Canadian institutions at QS APPLE conferences, it is an open question whether QS MAPLE will offer a compelling reason to attend to Canadian attendee. This question also reflects the fact that QS has repeatedly postponed the launch of QS MAPLE.

### **Initial Conference Venue**

The 2011 Conference is scheduled to be held from 1 to 2 May 2011 in Dubai.

## 4. TOOLKIT

### 4.1 Decision-Making Matrix

#### Deciding on Participation

The first step in deciding to participate at a conference is to establish the strategic rationale for participation for the institution. Factors include:

- Leadership roles (within an association, the international education community, on a national level, etc.)
- Business development purposes (ranging from partnering to recruiting to acquiring competitive intelligence, etc.)
- Networking (i.e. relationship building and maintenance on a personal and institutional level)
- Leverage effects (e.g., cost savings relative to alternate activities)
- Unique value propositions (such as access to people and information otherwise difficult to reach or the possibility to combine multiple travel-based activities with a conference)
- Political obligations (such as overarching representative tasks, quid pro quo scenarios, etc.)
- Trade off factors and constraints (based on fiscal resources and staff time considerations)
- Others

Once the totality of factors has been assessed and weighted, an institution can determine its specific attendance mode with regards to the appropriate attendee(s) based on seniority, experience, and the most applicable set of objectives. This process is described below.

#### Determination whether External Funding Is Available

A frequent comment in interviews with Canadian stakeholders centered on the costs associated with attending conferences (either a specific conference owing to travel requirements or in general). Sources for funding exist but in general seem to be sparse. Some Provincial ministries (such as the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, and Alberta Advanced Education and Technology) and promotion agencies (e.g., BCCIE or CREPUQ) offer direct assistance with some expenses or through in-kind contributions by contributing staff time or direct sponsoring of, for example, receptions.

Many conferences offer discounts to both members of a hosting association as well as to contributors (e.g., speaker, chair, volunteer). In some instances, attendance fees are waived entirely. In rare circumstances conference organizers offer to subsidize or cover travel costs; however, Canadian institutions would typically not qualify on a need basis.

## Introduction to the Decision-Making Matrix

Once an institution has determined which conference or conferences it wants to attend and which purpose attendance should serve – e.g., partner meetings, professional development, or networking – it must decide on which staff member or members should attend a given conference.

The following Decision-Making Matrix serves as a decision-making guide to the relative value and suitability of a given conference by level of staff member seniority (executive, director, junior) at Canadian institutions.

The Matrix is primarily intended for higher education institutions as they account for the majority of Canadian attendees of international education conferences. It equally applies to other entities on a structural level, however.

The Matrix is based on five major activities: recruiting (indirect); marketing and outreach (institutional); partnering (exchanges, etc.); learning (professional development) and intelligence acquisition; and networking (personal):

- Recruiting (indirect). Contrary to the wide-spread perception that conferences are not – or only selectively – suitable for recruiting purposes, recruiting activities can play a notable if indirect role<sup>13</sup>. For one, setting up student exchanges is in effect a recruiting function. Second, the increasing presence of agents and related commercial service providers has resulted in a host of recruiting-directed activities, with events typically taking place off-site. ICEF's activities at NAFSA are an example. Third, an expertly executed conference attendance can trickle down onto perceptions which in turn can lead to increased interest in a given institution. This activity is typically led by a Director-level staff member.
- Marketing and outreach (institutional). Promoting an institution at a conference is a core function of any staff member's attendance. This

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<sup>13</sup> Over the last couple of years, many conferences have seen student recruiting functions emerge. Often, this has taken place outside the actual conference agenda and has been driven by commercial providers. By contrast, some recruiting-centric events have begun to position themselves more along the line of a conference. One conference covered in this report, IEHE, effectively constitutes a (very large) recruiting fair.

handbook comments on the multitude of individual actions which underpin this activity. This activity is typically led by a director-level staff member, although a few conferences offer executive-level staff good opportunities to promote their institution as well.

- Partnering (exchanges, etc.). Partnering activities, ranging from maintaining or deepening existing partnerships to developing new relationships, are another core conference attendee function. Higher education sector attendees often spend the majority of their time on partnering-related activities. Partnering should be defined as a broad set of activities which include a wide range of entities and arrangements. Given the need to represent and potentially execute on arrangements, this activity is the domain of director- and executive-level staff.
- Learning (professional development) and intelligence acquisition. Examples of this activity include attending sessions and workshops, taking part in expert discussions, and assessing competitor activities (for example their exhibition hall presence). This activity requires more professional experience and is therefore mostly the domain of director-level staff. Junior staff members can play a role as well at large conferences (especially EAIE and NAFSA), as these cannot be covered by a sole staff member.
- Networking (personal). Also discussed in other parts of the handbook, networking is a core aspect of every conference. This is especially the case for director-level staff members who can use their personal network very effectively for the advancement of their institution's goals. Executive level staff members are in a similar position, but typically require a set of peers which may not always be present at smaller conferences. Junior staff members can effectively network at large conferences such as NAFSA and EAIE, but much less so at other conferences (partially because some of these conferences attract few junior staff members).

### Matrix Interpretation

The Matrix plots conferences over the five above referenced activities, and splits the latter into three seniority brackets. This framework entails a certain degree of unavoidable generalization, and no claim is made that this Matrix accounts for specific experiences. Rather, it is intended as a general guidance tool.

Technical notes: A “+” in black color denotes a high degree of suitability. A “+” in grey color denotes a moderate degree of suitability. The absence of a “+” does not indicate a categorical lack of suitability as individual experiences inevitably vary.

## Conference Suitability Decision-Making Matrix

	Recruiting (Indirect)			Marketing/Outreach (Institutional)			Partnering (Exchanges, etc.)			Learning / Intelligence Acquisition			Networking (Personal)		
	Executive	Director	Junior	Executive	Director	Junior	Executive	Director	Junior	Executive	Director	Junior	Executive	Director	Junior
AIEA				+			+	+		+	+		+	+	
AIEC		+			+		+	+		+	+	+	+	+	
APAIE				+	+		+	+		+	+		+	+	
CONA-HEC							+	+		+	+		+	+	
EAIE				+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+
Going Global					+			+					+	+	
NAFSA				+	+	+	+	+				+	+	+	+
QS		+			+			+						+	

## 4.2 Conference Planners

### Conference Preparation: General Conference Logistics

	Action Item	Timeframe (before conference)	Rationale	Action Item Owner	Complete
<b>General Conference Logistics</b>	Determine conference fit vis-à-vis overall international outreach and marketing strategy	52 to 26 weeks	A decision on institutional conference attendance should be made as early as possible, and be informed by an assessment of conference size, themes and likely attendees. Specific decisions are driven by how the conference fits an institution's overall international outreach and marketing strategy.		
	Register for conference	16 (early bird) <sup>14</sup> to 12 weeks	Early decisions about conference participation can reduce registration costs via early bird rates.		
	Finalize travel arrangements	12 to 4 weeks	Since 2008, travel costs have been on a marked rise. Taking advantage of cost-reducing approaches should therefore be a priority. These include taking advantage of conference travel discounts, early booking windows, and discount services such as Priceline or Hotwire. Late travel arrangements can result in significant cost increases and a lack of travel options particularly if a conference is being held in a remote destination.		
	Book accommodation	12 to 4 weeks	Securing a reasonably priced hotel room within close proximity to a conference venue often requires staying at conference-sanctioned hotels which can quickly become fully booked. In some instances, booking rooms as soon as they become available is necessary.		

<sup>14</sup> Early bird registration deadlines differ between conferences and range from two to four months.

### Conference Preparation: Networking

	Action Item	Timeframe (before conference )	Rationale	Action Item Owner	Complete
<b>Attendee Preparation</b>	Determine conference fit vis-à-vis overall international outreach and marketing strategy	52 to 26 weeks	A decision on individual conference attendance should be made as early as possible, and be informed by an assessment of conference size, themes and likely attendees. The driver for specific decisions is how the conference fits an individual's responsibilities.		
	Register for the Canada pavilion with DFAIT; for NAFSA: register for reception and other activities for Canadians	Different deadlines, as early as possible is advisable	Country-based presences in an exhibition hall, as well as receptions, typically create a powerful draw for attendees. These events also serve a multiplication and contextualization function which especially smaller institutions can take advantage of. Moreover, these events constitute a prime investment leverage opportunity based on federal investments.		
	Identify conference participant patterns	26 to 2 weeks (rolling)	Each conference has a distinct attendee pattern based on geographic coverage (regional, global), seniority, and institutional segment (e.g. HEI, commercial). This handbook provides detailed guidance on discerning these patterns to facilitate fact-based decision-making.		
	Set objectives for network outcome	12 weeks	Successful networking, especially at large conferences, requires balancing and trading off meeting and networking opportunities. Decision-making should be driven by the specific strategic value of a given networking opportunity.		
	Analyze conference schedule and facilities for network opportunities	12 to 4 weeks	A conference's venue and schedule shape networking opportunities on a practical level. Determining locations, time slots, and requirements (e.g. close versus quiet) should be done as early as possible.		
	Scan attendee list	12 to 2 weeks (rolling)	Most (but not all) conferences publish attendee lists ahead of time, often as part of a directory on the conference organizers' website. Such lists should be		

			scanned weekly in a rolling fashion to learn about existing and potential partners, contacts, and experts attending a given conference. A few conferences offer directory customization options which allow for "looking for/offering" information modes.		
	Draft daily conference (networking) schedule	12 to 1 weeks (rolling)	Networking schedules should be organized in as much detail as possible, including the creation of new contact profiles, an agenda, a clearly communicated timeframe, and the selection of an appropriate location.		
	Draft follow-up strategy	4 to 1 weeks	Conference attendance can involve heavy scheduling which leaves little time for follow-up coordination or actions. Best practice approaches center on setting (especially administrative) follow-up measures ahead of time.		
	At the conference: Daily de-brief with colleagues (if applicable)	N.A.	Attending a conference with colleagues offers the potential for a highly coordinated networking approach which aims to maximise impact, reach, depth, etc. In order to control, troubleshoot, and optimize the aforementioned goals, end-of-day de-briefs should be conducted throughout the conference. These can be held in person or with the help of online collaboration tools.		
	After the conference: Immediate follow-up	+ 0 weeks	Networking does not come to an end with the conclusion of a conference. Not only should follow-up activities be prompt (i.e. within days) but also contextually specific and embedded in an institutional strategy.		

## Conference Preparation: Sessions and Workshops

	Action Item	Timeframe (before conference )	Rationale	Action Item Owner	Complete
<b>Contributor Preparation</b>	Determine conference fit vis-à-vis overall international outreach and marketing strategy	52 to 26 weeks	A decision on individual conference attendance should be made as early as possible, and be informed by an assessment of conference size, themes and likely attendees. Specific decisions are driven by how the conference fits an institution's overall international outreach and marketing strategy.		
	Draft and submit a proposal	50 to 20 weeks (rolling)	Depending on the conference and type of contribution (workshop, session, chair, poster presentation, etc.), proposals must be submitted several months ahead. Since quality proposals which involve a group of presenters can require extensive coordination, starting as soon as the call for proposals opens is advisable.		
	Prepare content, arrange logistics	12 to 2 weeks	Depending on the type of contribution, preparation can be extensive. Organizing a successful session requires the consideration of multiple aspects, ranging from content development to co-presenter briefings to arranging for technological equipment, etc. Sessions and workshops should be organized into a comprehensive and detailed briefing note which encapsulates all relevant information—down to the mobile phone numbers of co-presenters.		
	Scan attendee list	12 to 2 weeks (rolling)	Actively generating attendee interest in contributions to sessions, workshops, etc. can be achieved by not only notifying contacts ahead of time, but also by scanning attendee lists with a focus on inviting potentially interested attendees.		
	Prepare poster, presentation, slides, handouts, collateral, etc.	8 to 2 weeks (rolling)	Contributions which are research-intensive or which require coordination amongst co-presenters should be initiated around eight weeks prior to a conference. Some		

			conferences require the up-front submission of materials and presentations for inclusion in conference documentation and websites with deadlines often set at four to six weeks out.		
	At the conference: Documentation and feedback	N.A.	In order to leverage the sharing of information and the exposure to a potentially wide audience, it is advisable to offer contact information and documentation in an easy and accessible manner.		
	After the conference: Follow-up	+ 0 weeks	Follow-up measures include a wide number of activities, ranging from thank you notes, to a custom-tailored e-mail relaying a presentation, to communication and feedback to the conference organizers.		

## 4.3 Recommended Actions and Approaches at a Conference

### Introduction

The following list contains recommended actions and approaches at conferences across six areas: Sessions and workshops; events and meetings; exhibition; networking; leverage; and management and resources. This list is intended for a broad audience and therefore touches on many – largely tactical – issues but does not discuss these issues in depth.

### Sessions and Workshops:

- The most salient advice is to take on an active contributor role at a conference by submitting quality proposals for sessions and workshops. Succeeding with proposals requires an understanding of a conference's thematic streams and political dynamics, something which would benefit an attendee even were a proposal not to be accepted. By presenting, attendees sharply raise their leverage at a conference.
- Another recommended activity is to scan the conference schedule for all sessions and workshops to learn about new themes, who is presenting on which themes, and discover multi-presenters who are either popular or politically well connected. This activity offers a comprehensive snapshot of how a given conference views international education.
- The chance to present or chair at a conference should be treated as a privilege which in turn demands proper preparation, delivery, and, if applicable, co-presenter selection. Unprepared, uninspired, and ill-executed sessions can create a strongly negative brand effect not just for a presenter but also for the presenter's institution (stories of badly received presentations can carry forward for years to come).

### Events and Meetings

- Events and meetings are catch-all terms that include receptions, dinners, existing partner meetings, formal meetings, award ceremonies, etc.
- Events and meetings are at the core of many attendees' agenda which can start with a 7:00 am breakfast meeting and conclude with the closing of a reception around midnight. Managing the sheer volume and scheduling complexity of a fully booked schedule (which can include more than a dozen meetings in a single day) is a key task which requires starting conference attendance planning months ahead (see the previous section for details).

- Location and circumstance matter. Some conferences provide dedicated meeting and/or networking facilities, although not all tend to be practical given noise levels and/or a lack of privacy. In many instances, attendees should prepare a set of options, including (conference) on-site meeting places, close-by cafés and restaurants, hotel lounges and conference rooms, etc. Meeting facilities should reflect the purpose of a meeting, the seniority of attendees, and the brand message implied.
- Incongruent, over-priced, or ill-prepared events can reflect quite negatively on a host. Examples of to-be-avoided mishaps include a German State which hosted a “Moroccan night” reception while playing loud pop music to a sparse and nearly exclusively German audience (no leverage effects); a Canadian university hiring professional female dancers to greet and dance with guests who were left puzzled about the propriety and thematic connection (lack of judgment); or the partner reception of an Australian university which was hosted in the most expensive venue available when an alternative venue would have priced at less than a quarter (partners subsequently questioned the university’s spending priorities).

### **Exhibition Presence**

- N.B. Appendix II contains a four page capsule of the 2010 NAFSA exhibition hall with commentary on booths and pavilions. Key observations include: The visual quality of a booth matters, but is outweighed by a proactive, well informed, and engaging staff (language skills are a strong plus). A schedule, should a booth or pavilion not be staffed throughout the exhibition hall hours, is instrumental. Collateral should be professional and conform to international standards and be available in sufficient quantity. Pavilions should include a proper meeting place which offers a modicum of line of sight privacy.
- The purpose of a booth (or pavilion) at a conference is six-fold:
  - Visibility. Especially at large conferences such as NAFSA and EAIE, a booth or pavilion yields essential visibility, critically turning such a presence into a defensive activity with the aim of not getting overlooked amongst 100s of other exhibitors.
  - Meeting point (physical). Best of class pavilions (and larger booths) incorporate a meeting place function, which is both effective as well as welcoming. This includes, for example, a diverse array of seating options and the shielding from distractions.
  - Inquiry/lead generation. A key function which can be organized in a number of technical and organizational ways. From a technical stand point, information acquisition can be entirely manual (paper-based) or include live, digital data capture. From an organizational perspective,

institutional representatives and/or marketing specialists can staff booths or pavilions.

- Networking and events (in a broad sense). Separate from a meeting place function, booth and pavilions offer networking opportunities through events and receptions which can draw well over 100 attendees at conferences such as NAFSA.
- Brand presence amplification. Building on the value of creating a basic, defensive visibility, booths and pavilions can actively and forcefully introduce or amplify a brand presence. Examples are the connecting of a physical presence with different types of high quality collateral with a range of events – all carefully intertwined.
- Resource aggregation. A key benefit of especially (national/regional/group) pavilions is the ability to pool resources. As a result, every participating member typically gains a larger presence, and in certain situations, any kind of presence at all (if costs are prohibitive otherwise).
- Decision-making considerations need to reflect the fact that exhibiting at conferences is costly – a booth can easily run at more than CAD 5,000, and a large pavilion can top CAD 100,000 (all-in costs). Given these expense levels, organizations are well advised to exhibit only if clear benefits can be demonstrated. These include: Reach – an exhibition presence is the most effective way to reach a given target audience. Signalling – an exhibition presence signals the seriousness, commitment, and resources of an exhibitor. Transactional – an exhibition presence can be used for a variety of transactional purposes such as hosting meetings. Defensive action – an exhibition presence is required since an absence would raise questions about an exhibitor's viability, resources, or commitment.
- Common mistakes with regards to exhibition presences include the lack of proper selection and training of exhibitor staff who prove to be culturally unaware, linguistically incapable, or otherwise unable to properly interact with visitors. Staffing a booth or pavilion is neither to be delegated to inexperienced junior staff members (possibly as a condition of conference attendance), nor should it be left to senior staff members who may be too busy to actively engage with visitors. The biggest mistake is to delegate staff members who have little interest in personal interaction as was observed by a handful of pavilions at 2010 NAFSA (visitors were plainly ignored or sent away).
- A coordinated, high quality Canadian booth and pavilion presence at key conferences (APAIE, EAIE, and NAFSA) has been in place since 2009.
  - At NAFSA (2010), DFAIT organized a Canada pavilion measuring 2,800 square feet. Participants included Provincial Governments, provincial and national associations, and institutions from eight

provinces. Quebec participated with its own pavilion; Prince Edward Island did not participate. Participating provinces have their own respective space within the Canada pavilion, with the size allocation reflecting their respective contribution. Institutions utilizing the pavilion did not have to pay a contribution.

- At APAIE (2010), DFAIT organized a Canada booth measuring 24 square meters which integrated Quebec. Participants included provincial and national associations, and around 20 institutions. Activities included a roundtable on partnership developments with the host country institutions followed by a reception. Institutions did not have to share in costs.
- At EAIE (2010), DFAIT organized a Canada booth measuring 27 square meters; Quebec's booth was located adjacent. Participants included CREPUQ, provincial and national associations, and 20 institutions of which almost half hailed from Quebec. Activities included a roundtable on partnership developments with the host country institutions followed by a reception. Institutions did not have to share in costs.

### **Benefits of a Unified versus Stand-Alone Presence**

Many of the benefits of participating based on a unified presence – whether as part of a commonly branded approach or in terms of a shared physical presence – have already been highlighted earlier in this chapter. The fundamental question any Canadian institution (or organization) has to address is which attendance approach yields the better strategic fit relative to their defined objectives.

In most if not all instances, the answer will not result in an either-or scenario, but a blended approach. For example, institutions which do not participate in a nationally-themed pavilion nonetheless often attend national receptions and social events. By contrast, institutions which rely on shared resources to enable their conference presence typically still pursue their own meeting, partnering, and networking agenda.

In a few instances, institutions may be better off to organize their own stand-alone presence. Such is the case when an institution's brand or intended message deviates widely from the brand message implied by a shared presence to a point which would be detrimental to the institution. Another factor is whether an institution could obtain more leverage from other activities. As pointed out above, these reasons would inhibit participation with regards to public presences, but would apply less so (or not at all) to other activities such as social events or content contributions such as session presentations.

## Networking and Leverage

- Conference attendance can be reduced to a few objectives, and one if not the key objective is leverage. Leverage is based on “multiplication effects” relative to the invested time and resources. At conferences, leverage includes: Trading time for money and access such as in the case of qualifying for reduced speaker rates while at the same time being able to reach a large audience; by volunteering, including serving on conference committees which in turn provides for political influence and superior information gathering; or by hosting events which become widely popular (such as the Australian reception at NAFSA) and create a self-propelling demand dynamic. At NAFSA, the Canada Special Interest Group organizes a reception on Wednesdays (heavily attended in 2010) while Quebec hosts a reception on Tuesday nights.
- A common mistake regarding networking execution is to give in to the temptation to network with friends and – especially – colleagues from one’s own institution. This does not constitute networking, and is little more than a social activity. A prominent example is an Australian university which sent twelve staff members to NAFSA, most of which were junior and could be observed spending time with each other at the university’s booth.

## Competitive Intelligence

- Conferences offer probably the most comprehensive and in-depth opportunity to gather intelligence. This includes observing traffic and interactions at competitors’ booths; attending sessions to gather knowledge and assess the capabilities of presenters and attendees asking questions; taking stock of the quality of receptions and the quantity and composition of attendees; playing a “mystery shopper” and approach competitors directly with requests for information; triangulating perspectives with colleagues; etc. All of these measures should be part of an integrated, documented approach which relies on metrics rather than just “impressions”.

## Management

- Many good management practices are simple: the identification of all relevant potential contacts ahead of the conference; daily conference debriefings with staff members; prompt follow up actions after the conference if not already at the conference; the written documentation of acquired learning and information gathered, etc. Most conference attendees would probably profess to adhering to such practices, but in reality execution of these practices differs notably.

- Less can be more. Many conferences are structured to encourage attendance from the first to the last day. For most attendees, this is not necessarily a requirement, especially since conferences have begun to frontload their schedules with workshops and sessions to the point of having created a six-day schedule. Managing for impact rather than an extended presence should be a goal.
- Some of the most substantial instances of under-performance have arisen from a lack of expert, or for that matter any, conference management. Examples include the senior representative of a German university who took a four week vacation immediately after a NAFSA conference which held back any follow-up activity, or the representatives of an Asia-Pacific country who, in the face of missing promotional material, abandoned their pavilion rather than making a concerted effort.

## 4.4 Conference Attendance on a Budget

### Introduction

Some Canadian stakeholders remarked in interviews that conference costs are a major inhibitor with regards to attendance. While attending conferences in Australia or Delhi certainly requires important time and financial resources, many other conferences can be attended on a budget if an attendee is well organized, focused, and cost-conscious.

The following discussion lays out a cost minimization approach to attending NAFSA, and uses the 2010 NAFSA conference in Kansas City as an example. The discussion demonstrates that attending NAFSA can be accomplished with a minimalist budget.

### Attending NAFSA on a Budget

The following discussion includes an analysis of air travel, ground transportation, accommodation, registration fees, and additional fees.<sup>15</sup> It does not comment on meals and entertainment expenses as these vary greatly depending on the individual.

It should be noted that attending a conference such as NAFSA and spending little to nothing on meals and entertainment given the conference's offerings as well as the plethora of events and receptions a participant can attend is easily feasible.

### Air Travel

To calculate air travel, the route Toronto-Kansas City was selected. A round-trip, non-stop flight from Toronto to Kansas City (one week duration), starts at USD 491, with a total trip time of 2 hours 37 minutes. A round-trip flight with one connection starts at USD 346, with a total trip time of 5 hours 9 minutes. The aforementioned fares refer to bookings completed three months in advance.

NAFSA and its travel partner coordinator, Travel Partners LLC, had negotiated airfare discounts with American Airlines, Delta/Northwest/Air France Airlines, Midwest Airlines, and United Airlines. These discount codes were posted on the NAFSA 2010 conference website.

### Ground Transportation (at conference venue)

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<sup>15</sup> All cost data are actual 2010 data, or retroactively computed data.

A one-way, shared-ride shuttle via Super Shuttle from the Kansas City Airport to a downtown hotel runs as low as USD 17. An exclusive 3-passenger van costs USD 39, and an exclusive 10-passenger van costs USD 64. As with airfare, NAFSA provided a discount code for attendees wishing to travel via Super Shuttle. Alternatively, a taxi fare is estimated to cost USD 52.

NAFSA provided complimentary shuttle service to twelve hotels near the Kansas City Convention Centre, with five additional hotels located less than three blocks away from the conference venue. The shuttles ran every ten minutes during peak hours and every thirty minutes during off-peak hours.

While in Kansas City, attendees could additionally purchase a 3-day Visitor's Pass from KCATA which would allow unlimited travel on all Metro and public transit routes for USD 10.

## Hotels

Prices for a single-occupancy hotel room near the convention centre in Kansas City ranged from USD 129 to 170 per person per night under the NAFSA discount rate. Similarly, prices for a double-occupancy hotel room ranged from USD 65 to 85 per person per night.

Alternative booking sources such as Priceline allowed attendees to stay at hotels within a similar radius of the Kansas City Convention Centre for under USD 100 per night in a single-occupancy room and USD 50 per person per night in a double-occupancy room. Room-sharing with colleagues at conferences is a common method of defraying costs.

## Registration Fees

For NAFSA members, the regular (5-day) registration fee for "early bird" registrations (registrations received by April 23rd) was USD 459; for on-site registrations the fee was USD 549. Members also had the option of purchasing a day pass for USD 260, regardless of time of registration. Associate NAFSA members' weekly registration fee for early bird registration was USD 230; for on-site registrations the fee was USD 270. Associate members could alternatively purchase a day pass for USD 135. The non-members' regular early bird registration fee was USD 689; for on-site registrations the fee was USD 819. Day passes for non-members were priced at USD 360.

Membership prices for NAFSA were priced at USD 365 for regular

membership and USD 122 for associate membership. Additional charges of USD 20 for new members and USD 70 for applications from outside North America applied.

Registration fee discounts were made available to conference volunteers, who were first required to register and pay all required registration fees. Volunteers who documented 20 or more hours were entitled to reimbursement between 50 and 100 percent of the general conference registration, to be made 4 to 6 weeks after the conclusion of the conference.

### **Additional Event Fees**

Workshops took place on all days of the conference. Fees to attend these workshops ranged from USD 259 to 329 per workshop for members and from USD 389 to 479 per workshop for non-members.

Additional special events, such as reception and luncheons, ranged from USD 30 to 65 per event (per attendee). Unique learning opportunities, such as symposiums and colloquiums, were also available, ranging from USD 200 to 729 for members and USD 280 to 879 for non-members.

These fees were dependent on whether attendees had registered for the conference, or chose to solely attend a workshop.

### **Sample Cost Calculation**

The costs of attending the NAFSA 2010 conference for NAFSA members who did not share any costs and completed an early bird registration are summarized below:

	<b>Two days USD</b>	<b>Five days USD</b>
Round-trip airfare (1-stop)	346	346
Ground transport Toronto (e)	50	50
Ground transport Kansas City	34	34
Accommodation (including tax [e])	142	568
Conference registration (1 day, full)	260	459
<b>Total</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>1,457</b>

Notes: Some costs are estimated and marked with (e). Incidentals, communication, and meals are not included.

### **Summary**

The above sample cost calculation demonstrates that it is entirely possible to attend a conference such as NAFSA for less than USD 1,000. An attendee who would have volunteered extensively on behalf of NAFSA and who would have shared accommodation with a colleague could have attended the entire NAFSA conference for around USD 700 (before incidentals, communication, and meals). This is a minimal amount relative to the value of attending the largest international education conference.

