



# Critical Language Scholarship Program

## 2022 Alumni Long-Term Impact Survey Report

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## Key Findings

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Following is a detailed narrative report covering the data collected by the 2022 Long-Term Impact Survey of Critical Language Scholarship Program alumni from 2006 to 2021. Several key findings include:

### Demographics:

- 1,019 CLS alumni, or 14% of all alumni of the CLS Program from 2006 to 2021, completed the Long-Term Impact Survey. All years and languages are represented in the survey.
- 77% of alumni would have been unlikely or unable to afford a similar study abroad experience had they not received a scholarship.

### Impacts on Employment:

- 75% of alumni are currently employed. Most are employed in: for-profit companies (25%), education (24%), and government (24%). 93% of alumni say that the CLS Program influenced their career goals.
- 94% of employed alumni identify intercultural communication skills and 79% identify language skills as having made them more competitive candidates when searching for jobs.
- Of currently employed alumni, 41% have jobs that require use of their CLS language. 68% are able to use knowledge of their CLS host country in their current jobs.

### Impacts on Education:

- 28% of alumni are currently enrolled in a wide range of fields at over 120 different higher education institutions in the United States, with the majority (71%) pursuing graduate degrees.
- 88% of alumni who are current students are using knowledge of their CLS host country in their studies, and 78% are using their CLS language in courses and/or extracurricular activities.
- 53% of alumni hold a graduate-level credential.

### Continued Language Use

- 87% of alumni continued to study their CLS language after completing the program.
- 58% of alumni have traveled back to their CLS host country since their program, or another country where their CLS target language is spoken.

### U.S. Government Scholarships

- 44% of alumni have participated in at least one other U.S. government scholarship for language or academic exchange, in addition to the CLS Program.

### Impacts on Other Areas of Life

- 87% of alumni say that the CLS Program has impacted their lives outside of academics and career.
- 99% of alumni have maintained contact with individuals they met during their CLS Program experience, including other CLS scholars, host family members, and host country staff.

### Alumni Engagement

- 67% of alumni have been involved with CLS alumni programming. The most common forms of engagement are mentoring CLS applicants and participants, participating in the Alumni Support Network, membership in the CLS Alumni Society, and performing outreach about the CLS Program on campuses and in communities. A significant number of alumni also participated in CLS Refresh tutoring opportunities for alumni to continue their language learning.

## Introduction

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### Background

The Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) Program is an intensive overseas language and cultural immersion group-based program for American students enrolled at U.S. colleges and universities. Students spend eight to ten weeks abroad studying one of 14 critical languages. The program includes intensive language instruction and structured cultural enrichment experiences designed to promote rapid language gains.

The CLS Program, a program of the U.S. Department of State, is part of a wider government initiative to expand the number of Americans studying and mastering foreign languages that are critical to national security and economic prosperity. CLS plays an important role in preparing students for the 21st century's globalized workforce and increasing national competitiveness.

Most languages offered by the CLS Program do not require applicants to have any experience studying critical languages. The CLS Program seeks participants with diverse interests, and from a wide range of fields of study and career paths, with the purpose of representing the full diversity of the United States. Participants are selected based on their commitment to language learning and plans to apply their language skills to their future academic or professional pursuits.

### Survey Method

Every three years, the CLS Program conducts a long-term impact survey of its alumni to gain insight into the influences that participation in the program has had on their personal, academic, and professional lives thus far. In late 2022, American Councils for International Education administered this survey for the fourth time since 2012. The 2022 Long-Term Impact Survey was administered as an online survey to all 7,600 alumni of the CLS Program who participated from 2006 to 2021.

The survey was open for five months between August 2022 and January 2023. American Councils contacted 7,600 alumni directly by email, where current contact information was available, and provided unique hyperlinks to identify their responses. Reminders were sent regularly during the survey period.

The survey captured responses of some 2022 program alumni, as it was open after the 2022 program ended. These students were not the primary target of this study, although they were not excluded from the data.

In total, 1,019 respondents completed the survey—approximately 13% of alumni targeted.

### Demographics

Respondents represented a diverse range of CLS experiences, including alumni from all program years and all 15 languages offered as part of the CLS Program between 2006 and 2021. Collectively they participated in 65 program sites across 21 different countries and locations. 9.2% of respondents participated in the program more than once. At the time of their participation in the CLS Program, respondents ranged from community college students to doctoral candidates, representing 322 different institutions.

Gender	#	%
Female	648	63.6%
Male	369	36.2%
Other	2	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100%</b>

CLS Program 2022 Long-Term Impact Survey

Education Status at time of CLS	#	%
<b>Undergraduate</b>	786	70.5%
<b>Graduate</b>	329	29.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1115</b>	<b>100%</b>

\* Respondents who participated in the CLS Program multiple times were counted once for each participation.

Do you identify as a first-generation college student?	#	%
<b>Yes</b>	196	19.2%
<b>No</b>	801	78.6%
<b>Did not answer</b>	22	2.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100%</b>

Were you a Pell Grant recipient or Pell Grant-eligible?	#	%
<b>Yes</b>	276	27.09%
<b>No</b>	683	67.03%
<b>Did not answer</b>	60	5.89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100%</b>

Would you have been able to afford a summer study abroad experience like the CLS Program without a scholarship?	#	%
<b>Yes</b>	59	5.8%
<b>Very likely</b>	84	8.2%
<b>Not likely</b>	276	27.1%
<b>No</b>	503	49.4%
<b>Not sure</b>	79	7.8%
<b>Did not answer</b>	18	1.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100%</b>

Respondents were asked to identify the highest degree they had attained thus far. Most respondents had either attained up to a Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science Degree (39.1%) or a Master of Arts or Master of Science Degree (31.4%). A significant portion of respondents had completed a Doctor of Philosophy (11.1%). In total, 40.1% alumni reported completing up to an undergraduate degree and 53.4% reported completing a graduate degree.

Highest degree attained:	#	%
<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>40.1%</b>
Associate degree (A.A./A.S.)	11	1.1%
Bachelor's Degree (B.A./B.S.)	398	39.1%
<b>Graduate</b>	<b>544</b>	<b>53.4%</b>
Master or Arts or Master of Science (M.A./M.S.)	320	31.4%
Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)	14	1.4%
Master of Education (M.Ed.)	12	1.2%
Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.)	11	1.1%
Master of Public Health (M.P.H.)	19	1.9%
Master of Public Policy (M.P.P.)	23	2.3%
Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)	5	0.5%
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)	113	11.1%
Juris Doctor (J.D.)	19	1.9%

Highest degree attained:	#	%
Medical Doctor (M.D.)	8	0.8%
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>5.3%</b>
<b>Did not answer</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Response Rates

Responses to the survey represented all fifteen languages that have been offered by the CLS Program. In absolute terms, the languages with the largest number of alumni also produced the largest number of respondents. The largest groups of participants by language were Arabic (23%), Chinese (21%), and Russian (11%). Languages where a significant portion of their alumni participated in the distant past had lower response rates relative to those whose participation has mostly occurred in the last five years; Portuguese and Swahili had relatively more alumni respond to the survey, compared to Arabic, Indic languages, Chinese, Arabic and Persian.

Language	Respondents	Total Alumni	Response Rate
<b>Arabic</b>	222	2369	9.4%
<b>Azerbaijani</b>	18	101	17.8%
<b>Bangla</b>	37	245	15.1%
<b>Chinese</b>	226	1587	14.2%
<b>Hindi</b>	44	452	9.7%
<b>Indonesian</b>	55	317	17.4%
<b>Japanese</b>	54	339	15.9%
<b>Korean</b>	82	528	15.5%
<b>Persian</b>	37	362	10.2%
<b>Portuguese</b>	17	84	20.2%
<b>Punjabi</b>	13	169	7.7%
<b>Russian</b>	134	959	14.0%
<b>Swahili</b>	46	179	25.7%
<b>Turkish</b>	81	641	12.6%
<b>Urdu</b>	49	357	13.7%

*\* Respondents who participated in the CLS Program multiple times were counted once for each participation.*

Alumni from all program years responded to the survey, with higher response rates from alumni who had participated in the last six years. Eleven alumni who participated in the 2022 institutes also participated in previous years' institutes and were therefore included in the data.

Year	Respondents	Total Alumni	Response Rate
<b>2006</b>	10	162	6.2%
<b>2007</b>	25	363	6.9%
<b>2008</b>	37	516	7.2%
<b>2009</b>	30	521	5.8%
<b>2010</b>	50	567	8.8%
<b>2011</b>	64	587	10.9%
<b>2012</b>	83	627	13.2%
<b>2013</b>	54	587	9.2%
<b>2014</b>	74	536	13.8%
<b>2015</b>	51	535	9.5%

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Year	Respondents	Total Alumni	Response Rate
2016	95	559	17.0%
2017	96	546	17.6%
2018	99	555	17.8%
2019	117	545	21.5%
2020	49	252	19.4%
2021	170	667	25.5%
2022	11	564	2.0%

*\* Respondents who participated in the CLS Program multiple times were counted once for each participation.*

CLS Program 2022 Long-Term Impact Survey

Respondents by Year and Language																		
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
<b>Arabic</b>	4	12	8	6	11	18	16	12	16	16	15	16	13	17	11	31		<b>222</b>
<b>Azerbaijani</b>				2	4	2		2			1	1	2		1	2	1	<b>18</b>
<b>Bangla</b>	2	3	1	1		5	3	2	2	1	4	4	2	2	1	3	1	<b>37</b>
<b>Chinese</b>		2	12	5	7	6	18	8	14	8	19	24	24	29	11	37	2	<b>226</b>
<b>Hindi</b>	1				2	2	3	4	6	3	4	2	4	3	3	6	1	<b>44</b>
<b>Indonesian</b>					2	4	6	2	5	4	4	4	7	5	4	7	1	<b>55</b>
<b>Japanese</b>					4	3	4	4	6		9	3	6	6	2	7		<b>54</b>
<b>Korean</b>		2	1	1	4	2	5	2	3	4	5	6	12	14	4	15	2	<b>82</b>
<b>Persian</b>		2		2	1		4	3	2	3	2	5	4	2		6	1	<b>37</b>
<b>Portuguese</b>														4	3	10		<b>17</b>
<b>Punjabi</b>							2			2	2	3	2	1		1		<b>13</b>
<b>Russian</b>		1	9	7	7	8	11	2	7	4	14	11	10	22	2	19		<b>134</b>
<b>Swahili</b>											6	5	7	8	4	15	1	<b>46</b>
<b>Turkish</b>	3	3	5	5	3	11	8	9	8	2	3	8	2	4	2	4	1	<b>81</b>
<b>Urdu</b>			1	1	5	3	3	4	5	4	7	4	4		1	7		<b>49</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1115</b>

*\* Respondents who participated in the CLS Program multiple times were counted once for each participation.*

## Employment and Education

CLS Program alumni work in and study a diverse range of fields, living in the U.S. and elsewhere in the world; 14.4% of alumni reported being located outside the United States.

The percentage of alumni pursuing higher education fell from 2019 to 2022, continuing a trend that could be explained by the increasing costs of higher education, the aging profile of CLS Program alumni, or by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on participation in higher education. Concurrently, the percentage of respondents engaged in employment activities increased.

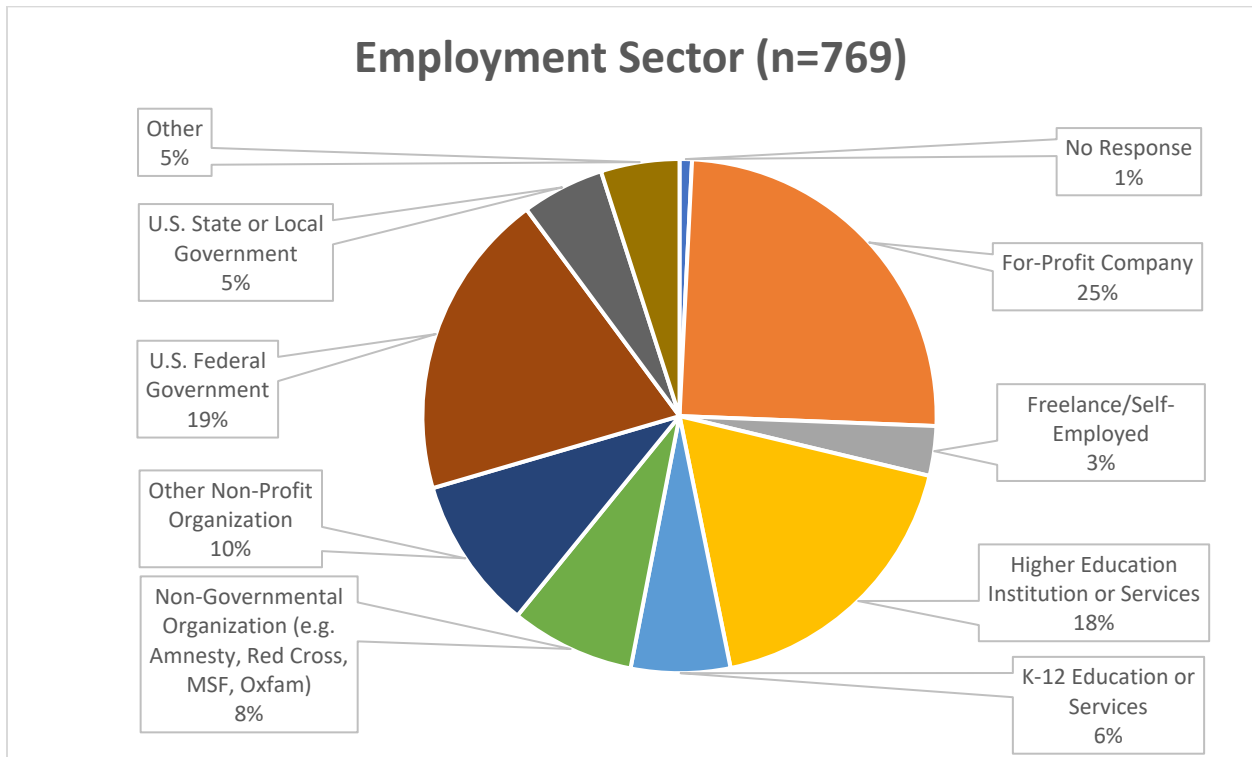
Those who were neither employed nor in school reported that they were either between jobs, applying for graduate school, engaged on fellowships or independent research projects, or caring for family members.

Are you currently	Total	%
<b>Both Employed and in School</b>	86	8.4%
<b>Employed</b>	683	67.0%
<b>In School</b>	197	19.3%
<b>None of the Above</b>	53	5.2%

### Employment

A total of 769 respondents reported being employed or both employed and in school, representing 75.5% of surveyed alumni. The following statistics pertain to only those who reported employment, rather than the full population of respondents. Among those employed, 88.6% were employed full-time, defined as 35 hours per week or more.

CLS Program alumni are employed across a variety of fields, with the largest individual sectors being for-profit companies (25%), education institutions and services (24%), and government (24%).





Employment Sector	#	%
No Response	6	1%
For-Profit Company	191	25%
Freelance/Self-Employed	24	3%
Higher Education Institution or Services	139	18%
K-12 Education or Services	48	6%
Non-Governmental Organization (e.g. Amnesty, Red Cross, MSF, Oxfam)	60	8%
Other Non-Profit Organization	74	10%
U.S. Federal Government	149	19%
U.S. State or Local Government	40	5%
Other	38	5%

### Impact of CLS on Employment

An important component of the CLS Program is its goal of preparing American students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century's globalized workforce and increasing national competitiveness. As such, participants are selected based partly on their ability to connect the study of a particular language with their career and academic goals.

Respondents reported impacts of the CLS Program on their careers in a variety of ways. 92.6% said that participation in the CLS Program influenced their career goals to some or a great extent, and 40.7% reported that their current job requires use of their CLS language. In addition, 67.8% reported that they are able to use knowledge of their CLS host country to some or a great extent in their current job.

To what extent do you think your participation in the CLS Program influenced your career goals?	#	%
Great extent	340	44.2%
Some extent	372	48.4%
Not at all	55	7.2%
No Response	2	0.3%

Does your current job require you to:	Use your CLS target language?		Travel overseas?	
	#	%	#	%
Yes	313	40.7%	302	39.3%
No	453	58.9%	459	59.7%
Did not answer	3	0.4%	8	1%

To what extent are you able to use knowledge of your CLS host country in your current job?	#	%
Great extent	211	27.4%
Some extent	311	40.4%
Not at all	243	31.6%
No Response	4	0.5%

The skills that alumni gained while on the CLS Program have contributed positively to their career prospects and made them more competitive candidates for their jobs. 79.3% of respondents credited their language skills, while 94% credited their skills in intercultural communication.

To what extent do you think each of the following made you a more competitive candidate for your job?	Language skills		Intercultural communication skills		Major/field of specialization		Knowledge of regional/world affairs	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Great extent</b>	327	42.5%	535	69.6%	416	54.1%	417	54.2%
<b>Some extent</b>	283	36.8%	188	24.4%	238	30.9%	233	30.3%
<b>Not at all</b>	154	20.0%	42	5.5%	111	14.4%	115	15.0%
<b>No Response</b>	5	0.7%	4	0.5%	4	0.5%	4	0.5%

## Education

A minority of respondents were actively pursuing higher education. Only 283, or 27.8% of respondents reported being in school, with 17.7% in undergraduate programs and 70.7% reported working toward advanced degrees. The most common graduate degree programs were Master of Arts or Master of Science (25.1%), and Doctor of Philosophy (28.6%), although a number of other degree types were also represented. The following statistics pertain to only those who reported being in school, rather than the full population of respondents.

Degree program enrolled in:	#	%
<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>17.7%</b>
Associate’s Degree (A.A./A.S.)	4	1.4%
Bachelor’s Degree (B.A./B.S.)	46	16.3%
<b>Graduate</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>70.7%</b>
Master or Arts or Master of Science (M.A./M.S.)	71	25.1%
Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.)	8	2.8%
Master of Education (M.Ed.)	3	1.1%
Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.)	1	0.4%
Master of Public Health (M.P.H.)	4	1.4%
Master of Public Policy (M.P.P.)	6	2.1%
Master of Social Work (M.S.W.)	1	0.4%
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)	81	28.6%
Juris Doctor (J.D.)	15	5.3%
Medical Doctor (M.D.)	10	3.5%
<b>Other (please specify)</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>11.3%</b>
<b>Did not answer</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.4%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>100%</b>

Respondents to the survey were asked to indicate their area(s) of study, selecting all that applied where they had more than one field of specialization or major. Many respondents selected more than one area of study; percentages in the table below are calculated against the number of total respondents who indicated that they were currently in school (283). The best represented field was International Relations/Affairs (21.2%) and Foreign Languages (13.4%). Combined, students in the STEM fields (Computer Science, Engineering, Health Sciences, Life Sciences, Mathematics, and Physical Sciences) represented approximately 19.8% of those respondents currently enrolled in school.

Major/field of specialization:	#	%
Anthropology	21	7.4%
Area Studies	32	11.3%
Arts	10	3.5%
Business	15	5.3%
Communications, Journalism, or Media	2	0.7%
Computer Science	10	3.5%
Economics	9	3.2%
Education	13	4.6%
Engineering	5	1.8%
Environmental Studies/Science	10	3.5%
Foreign Languages	38	13.4%
Gender Studies	9	3.2%
Health Sciences or Medicine	27	9.5%
History	16	5.7%
International Relations/Affairs	60	21.2%
Law	15	5.3%
Life Sciences	8	2.8%
Linguistics	12	4.2%
Mathematics	5	1.8%
Philosophy	3	1.1%
Physical Sciences	1	0.4%
Political Science	23	8.1%
Public Administration	8	2.8%
Public Policy/Government	4	1.4%
Psychology	21	7.4%
Religion	10	3.5%
Social Work	1	0.4%
Sociology	9	3.2%
Other	63	22.3%

Respondents attended a wide range of institutions around the U.S.—123 different schools in total, with the most common appearing in the table below.

Top Universities – Currently Enrolled	Total
Columbia University in the City of New York	11
Georgetown University	11
The University of Texas at Austin	10
Johns Hopkins University	9
Harvard University	8
University of California-Berkeley	6
Boston University	5
Yale University	5

## Impact of CLS on Education

Respondents were asked to identify in what ways their participation in the CLS Program had influenced their goals and to what extent they were able to use knowledge gained on the program in their current studies. Overall, 94% of CLS alumni who are currently enrolled in school reported that the program had influenced their career and academic goals to some extent or more, and 93% felt that it has influenced their employability to some extent or more.

To what extent do you think your participation in the CLS Program influenced each of the following:	Academic Goals		Career Goals		Employability	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
<b>Great extent</b>	165	58.3%	151	53.4%	139	49.1%
<b>Some extent</b>	100	35.3%	116	41.0%	124	43.8%
<b>Not at all</b>	16	5.7%	16	5.7%	17	6.0%
<b>Did not answer</b>	2	0.7%	0	0.0%	3	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>100%</b>

Respondents indicated that they were able to actively use the knowledge of the host country and language skills that they gained on the CLS Program in their academic pursuits—85.9% of respondents indicated that they were able to continue using their knowledge of the CLS host country in their current studies to some extent or more. In addition, 76.3% of respondents currently in school reported continuing to use their CLS language in courses, extracurricular activities, or both.

To what extent are you able to use your knowledge of your CLS host country in your current studies?	#	%
<b>Great extent</b>	136	48.1%
<b>Some extent</b>	107	37.8%
<b>Not at all</b>	38	13.4%
<b>Did not answer</b>	2	0.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>100%</b>

Do you use your CLS target language in any of the following?	#	%
<b>Courses</b>	27	9.5%
<b>Extracurricular activities</b>	75	26.5%
<b>Both courses and extracurricular activities</b>	114	40.3%
<b>None of the above</b>	66	23.3%
<b>Did not answer</b>	1	0.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>283</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Continued Language Use and Travel

The CLS Program places an emphasis on continued language learning following the end of the program. Respondents were asked whether they had continued to study the language they learned on the CLS Program after completing the program. 86.8% of respondents (885 individuals) reported that they had, with only 13.2% reporting that they had not. Of those who continued to study their CLS language, a majority have engaged in some kind of in-person study, through formal classes, tutoring, or self-study.

In addition to in-person, online and hybrid learning, 110 respondents reported other activities to continue their language study. The majority of these respondents indicated other government and non-governmental programs, including the Fulbright Program, CLS Refresh, and continued language use in their professional and personal lives as contributing to their language gain post-program.

Nearly all of those who continued their language study (95.6%) indicated that they used their CLS language in academic, professional, social, or entertainment activities in the last year, with the highest percentage category being those who used their language in social activities (78.9%).

Which of the following methods did you use to continue to study your CLS target language(s)? Mark all that apply.	In-person	Online or digital platform	Hybrid (in-person and online)	Total
University class	396	48	61	505
Tutoring	167	222	60	449
Classes through a language school or institute	193	135	37	365
Self-Study	360	262	129	751
Other				100
Percent of Total	70.1%	22.7%	52.8%	885

For which of the following activities have you used your CLS target language in the past year? Mark all that apply	#	%
Academic activities	412	46.6%
Professional activities	455	51.4%
Social activities	698	78.9%
Entertainment	676	76.4%
Other	51	5.8%
Total	885	100%

594 respondents (58.3%) reported having traveled at least once to their CLS host country or another country where their CLS target language was spoken since completing the program.

The 134 respondents who had not continued to study their CLS language after completing the program were asked to rank the top three reasons that this was the case. Only 26 chose to stop studying their CLS language(s) due to a lack of interest in continued study.

Rank the top three reasons you have not continued to study your CLS target language(s)	One	Two	Three	Total	%
I do not have time.	50	25	26	101	75.4%
There are no courses available where I am.	24	11	25	60	44.8%
I do not have the financial resources.	15	25	18	58	43.3%
I am focusing on a different language.	20	18	9	47	35.1%
I have taken all the courses available to me.	15	13	12	40	29.9%
I have achieved my targeted level of proficiency in my CLS target language.	9	8	9	26	19.4%
I am no longer interested in my CLS target language.	10	7	9	26	19.4%
Other. Please specify.	8	5	8	21	15.7%

662 respondents (65%) reported having studied other languages since completing the CLS Program. The most common languages that were not the same language as they had studied on the CLS Program by CLS alumni respondents were:

<b>Other than your CLS target language, please list the languages that you are currently studying or have studied since completing the CLS Program.</b>	<b>#</b>
<b>Spanish</b>	226
<b>French</b>	162
<b>Arabic</b>	66
<b>German</b>	66
<b>Russian</b>	56
<b>Japanese</b>	53
<b>Mandarin Chinese</b>	52

## U.S. Government Scholarships

Out of all respondents, 448 (44%) indicated that they had participated in at least one other U.S. government scholarship for language or academic exchange, besides the CLS Program, with 210 (20.6%) having participated in at least two and 83 (8.1%) having participated in three or more.

<b>Please indicate all U.S. Government scholarships for language or academic exchange you have received (other than CLS).</b>	<b># of respondents</b>
<b>American Overseas Research Center Fellowship</b>	8
<b>American Youth Leadership Program</b>	1
<b>Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship</b>	31
<b>Congress-Bundestag Youth Exchange (CBYX)</b>	6
<b>David L. Boren Scholarship or Fellowship</b>	86
<b>Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) Fellowship</b>	174
<b>Fulbright English Teaching Assistant</b>	97
<b>Fulbright Specialist Program</b>	2
<b>Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program</b>	24
<b>Fulbright U.S. Student Program</b>	66
<b>Fulbright-Hays Faculty Research Abroad Fellowship Program</b>	12
<b>National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) Program</b>	73
<b>Project GO</b>	4
<b>STARTALK</b>	10
<b>The Language Flagship</b>	11
<b>Youth Ambassadors Program</b>	1
<b>Youth Exchange and Study Abroad (YES Abroad)</b>	6
<b>Other</b>	65
<b>Total</b>	667

## Impacts on Other Areas of Life

In addition to building skills and affecting academic and career paths, study abroad can have effects on people's personal lives. Respondents were asked to report on the ways in which their lives outside of career and academics had been impacted by participation in the CLS Program.

Has your participation in the CLS Program impacted your life outside of academics and career?	#	%
<b>Yes</b>	891	87.4%
<b>No</b>	128	12.6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1019</b>	<b>100%</b>

In response to an open-ended question about how the CLS Program had impacted their lives, many wrote about having had their worldviews fundamentally changed by participation in the program, gaining greater self-awareness and self-assurance, developing a deeper understanding of the U.S. due to interactions with both individuals from the host country and their diverse cohorts of Americans, and forming lasting relationships. Themes of gaining adaptability and confidence in unfamiliar situations also appeared frequently.

Additionally, 99% of respondents (all but 10) indicated that they had maintained contact with individuals they had met during their CLS Program experience.

With whom have you kept in touch from your CLS Program experience? (check all that apply)	#	%
<b>Participants from your program cohort</b>	786	77.1%
<b>Host family</b>	234	23.0%
<b>Host country roommate</b>	82	8.0%
<b>Language partner</b>	312	30.6%
<b>Other CLS alumni (not from your cohort)</b>	210	20.6%
<b>Program staff in your CLS host country</b>	228	22.4%
<b>U.S.-based CLS staff</b>	105	10.3%
<b>None</b>	124	12.2%
<b>Other</b>	48	4.7%

## Alumni Engagement

680 respondents (66.7%) indicated that they had been involved with the CLS Program as alumni in at least one activity.

Have you participated in any of the following activities as a CLS alumna/us? (check all that apply)	Total
<b>Applied to be or served as a CLS Alumni Ambassador</b>	157
<b>Participated in regional CLS alumni networking events</b>	107
<b>Served as a mentor for CLS applicants and participants</b>	207
<b>Volunteered to appear in Alumni Support Network Resource Directory</b>	233
<b>Gave a presentation to your local college or school about your CLS experience</b>	160
<b>Served on an alumni panel at pre-departure orientations</b>	70
<b>Applied for a grant through the Alumni Development Fund (small grants for continuing language study or professional development)</b>	83
<b>Participated in CLS Alumni Mentoring Circles</b>	127
<b>Participated in the CLS Refresh program</b>	211
<b>Submitted an entry to the CLS Photo/Video Contest</b>	118
<b>Posted or shared something on CLS social media platforms</b>	92
<b>Joined the CLS Alumni Society</b>	178

Have you participated in any of the following activities as a CLS alumna/us? (check all that apply)	Total
Other	41

Of those who selected “Other,” most had advised or mentored other students who were preparing applications for the CLS Program, and some had served as staff members or Resident Directors for the CLS Program previously.



## Appendix: Stories of Impact

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The following quotes were collected from answers provided by respondents in free-text fields on the survey, including when they were asked to explain how they had made use of their CLS target language since the program, and what impacts the program had on them personally and professionally.

### Personal Impact

The following are responses to the question: “In addition to building skills and affecting academic and career paths, CLS can have effects on people’s personal lives. Has your participation in the CLS Program impacted your life outside of academics and career?”

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Living in Jordan for the summer was incredible. I was able to learn things about myself I had not learned and came back a stronger, more empowered person.

*Participant (Arabic 2017)*

[The CLS Program] helped build my confidence. ... The program was so welcoming and encouraging it helped me feel more confident in my language knowledge and skills.

*Participant (Urdu 2021)*

[The CLS Program] made me more open minded and oriented towards other cultures. It allowed me to grow in my empathy towards others and better connect with people, even in my native language.

*Participant (Russian 2019)*

[The CLS Program] was a formative experience that made me more independent, confident, and comfortable with ambiguity.

*Participant (Punjabi 2012)*

My connection with Korea and its culture has completely changed my life and having a command of the language is a big part of that. When I went back to live and work in Korea, I was so comfortable due to my time in CLS. ... My entire outlook on life and my goals have shifted due to my time in CLS.

*Participant (Korean 2014)*

The CLS scholarship completely transformed the trajectory of my personal, academic and professional life. I applied in community college as a bright eyed 18 year old, in my small town with little financial resources and it showed me that I could travel, experience the world and learn without the money I thought I needed to do such a thing. It pushed me past my limits at a young age and equipped me with the abilities I am still using and developing 6 years later and most definitely for the rest of my life. I went from wanting to be a teacher in my hometown to taking active steps towards a global profession. Personally, it has made me a global citizen and made me realize ... that friends and true strong bonds can be made with people born in other countries.

*Participant (Bangla 2016)*

[The CLS Program] helped me mature as a person, better understand the complexity of the world, [and] be more tolerant of differences and open to other people.

*Participant (Russian 2014)*

CLS gave me the chance to explore a fascinating country halfway around the globe and build relationships with people I never could have encountered at home.

*Participant (Chinese 2019)*

CLS gave me a confidence I didn't know was possible, and a safe environment to push myself intellectually and socially. The leap in language skills I gained during the program has allowed me to connect with many communities ... It has given me lifelong friends and connections with incredible people I feel lucky to have met, and was an experience I would not have been able to afford, have or even find possible without the support it gave me. It made me feel valued and invested in, which has given me an invaluable foundation to build many other experiences on. CLS unequivocally changed my life for the better.

*Participant (Arabic 2012)*

CLS gave me a fresh, new outlook on life. The program allowed me to gain a new sense of self-confidence and readiness to engage with society at-large. I have also developed greater empathy for immigrants and other displaced persons. Moving to another country with a different language and cultural context can be an immense challenge, and by participating in CLS, I gained a small taste of that experience. CLS also allowed me to reflect more on what it means to be an Asian-American and allowed me to develop a greater sense of self-identity, while also sharing what it means to be American with people from other countries.

*Participant (Korean 2021)*

My CLS experience increased my awareness of disability issues, both as applied personally to me (e.g. managing unexpected disability hurdles during my CLS summer) and as it related to activism, because my host sister was involved with disability activism in her country. I learned a lot that summer, and also became interested in learning more about the disabled community.

*Participant (Russian 2019)*

[The CLS Program] really ignited my Chinese language studies, prior to that I had such a shallow grasp and very little motivation to study. In CLS I was able to finally communicate with other Chinese people and express my ideas, albeit poorly. It furthered my interest in China; subsequently, I applied for a Fulbright research award and spent a year in China studying sex education. I am positive I never would have been able to do that without CLS.

*Participant (Chinese 2016)*

When I did CLS Korea, I had just completed my Computer Science B.Sc. Three years after CLS, I decided to pursue my true calling: languages, and I enrolled in a local translation school at the University of Puerto Rico. Today, I hold an M.A. in Translation and I'm starting out as a freelance translator (with views to soon start translating from Japanese). My experience in CLS undoubtedly served as a huge driver in all these decisions.

*Participant (Korean 2012)*

CLS was hugely important for my personal growth. It was one of the most challenging experiences of my life until that point, and certainly required more independence than had ever been expected of me before. Successfully completing the program and seeing how much I got out of it in the end gave me a lot of confidence going forward in my ability to navigate difficult or new situations.

*Participant (Chinese 2019)*

The CLS Program was one of the most impactful experiences of my life. The diverse cohort I was part of exposed me to people across multiple disciplines, geographies, and outlooks. I gained enormous cultural competency and a greater sense of exploration, curiosity, and independence. In many indirect ways, my experience in CLS has shaped my career and myself as a person.

*Participant (Arabic 2007)*

It was the first time I had the chance to travel internationally independently. It raised my confidence because I was thrown into unfamiliar situations without access to the support I normally have. It gave me a chance to see the US from the outside from multiple perspectives.

*Participant (Russian 2016)*

## Career/Academic Language Use

The following are response to the prompt: "Tell us how you use your CLS target language."

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I regularly travel to and from Bangladesh where we are conducting a clinical trial for a dengue-virus vaccine. My role requires extensive cross-cultural competency and interaction with our clinic team in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and participants in our study there, as well as other studies with the partner organization.

*Participant (Swahili 2019)*

I study mathematical properties of machine learning networks. One such application of these networks involves natural language processing (NLP). I have taken some NLP courses and for my final project, I have trained models on Persian-language data. My knowledge of Persian helps me to evaluate the outputs of these models. In the future, I hope to use this experience to study how ML networks trained on Persian data propagate information in comparison to those trained on English, since they are very different structurally.

*Participant (Persian 2021)*

I am an archaeologist working in Cyprus and the Middle East. I have therefore used my Turkish language skills occasionally for communication when we are doing Greek-Turkish bicomunal heritage preservation projects in Nicosia and Famagusta in Cyprus.

*Participant (Turkish 2012)*

I am a Clinical Fellow at the Center for International Human Rights at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. The main focus of the fellowship is managing ongoing Access to Health Projects globally and working on related litigation and advocacy. Due to my ability to speak Russian and Polish, future projects are in the works to address human rights violations in the former Soviet bloc.

*Participant (Russian 2018)*

CLS was a huge part of my immediate government service after college, favored heavily into my role as a Director at the NSC on Russia and Intelligence, and my continued use of the Russian language. I lead Meta's security work on Influence Operations, Espionage, and Adversarial Threats. As part of that work I liase with governments around the world and work to constrain and disrupt threats - including Russian threats - to our users.

*Participant (Russian 2011)*

I lived in Turkey for 6 years total and only returned in 2018 July to attend the AFI Conservatory in Los Angeles. ... My time in Turkey, jump-started by CLS, has been a huge influence on my way of seeing. And even in LA, I continue to work with fellow alumni on film projects -- for example last year I was selected as a Finalist along with Sisi Tang (CLS Turkey 2011) for Disney's Launchpad program out of 2000 applications to have our TV pilot/short film produced and distributed on Disney+. It had nothing to do with Turkey--it was a teen girl fantasy about environmental sustainability--but we have been marked by our time there.

*Participant (Turkish 2011)*

## Other Impact

The following are responses to the question: "Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about yourself since participating in the CLS Program and how participation in the program has influenced your life?"

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Years after I started working in the federal government, I asked the supervisor who hired me how I was selected from the 80+ applicant pool. She told me that there were 10 of us that were very highly qualified and the final decision was made by the hiring panel to select me because I spoke a language no one recognized! My job DID NOT require a second language, but having it made the difference. I have no regrets about my CLS experience and only wish I had known about it sooner so I could have applied to participate more than once before graduation. It was invaluable - especially in gaining insight about another culture through immersion learning. I recommend applying to all the students I mentor.

*Participant (Bangla 2011)*

Participation in [the CLS Program], I think, helped instill in me a level of discipline and cultural awareness. I found myself being more empathetic, and I found it easier to be kind, after finishing the program.

*Participant (Chinese 2016)*

I routinely tell people that CLS was one of the best things to happen to me; I couldn't be more appreciative of the doors it has opened to me academically, professionally, and personally. It has enriched my life in ways that I could never have dreamed when I first applied to the program and continues to do so every year. CLS made it possible for me to get my first research job (conducting research in rural Bangladesh) which ignited an interest in me and has fundamentally reshaped the trajectory of my professional and personal life. My CLS training and research experience then made it possible for me to work full-time in Bangladesh after completing my masters, which then prepared me to be highly competitive and have my pick of doctoral programs, and made it possible for me to conduct my PhD research with collaborators in Bangladesh, which has since led to numerous research collaborations with whom I still work. I have Bangladeshi colleagues in Australia with whom I am able to relate, and my strongest ongoing friendships were fostered during my time based in Dhaka. Being able to communicate in Bangla made it possible to connect with colleagues, community members, and friends in genuine ways that are impossible if we only expect others to communicate in English when doing globally collaborative work.

*Participant (Bangla 2013; Bangla 2012)*

CLS struck the perfect balance of being academically rigorous while also blending in cultural experiences with integration in a host family as well as a language partner. As a result of my CLS and CLS Refresh experiences, I've formed long-term relationships with people abroad who have changed my life and world view, and I will forever be grateful for this wonderful opportunity. My learning at CLS improves my ability to contribute to international scientific research and I have and will continue to engage with my CLS host country and language throughout my life.

*Participant (Chinese 2018)*

I was able to use my Bangla knowledge years later, when I was in grad school, to work on a program building open source synthesized voices for Bangla and other languages of India, with emphasis on aiding the visually impaired community in that part of the world to hear text from their phones and computers spoken aloud. I hope in this way, and in any ways I might in future use these languages in my professional life, I have been able to "give back" to the world's Bangla (and related languages) speakers something worthy of the time and attention and resources I have been given as part of CLS.

*Participant (Bangla 2006)*

My CLS experience was truly a turning point in my life and has left a profound impact on me. As someone from a low-income background, the experience connected me with a group of people who showed me a world beyond the one I grew up with.

*Participant (Urdu 2011)*

This program had much more of an impact that I thought it would. Initially, it was just an exciting opportunity to live abroad and study a language I was interested in. It ended up having a significant impact on my professional and personal life and helped shape who I am today.

*Participant (Arabic 2015)*

The CLS program was the first chance I ever got to go abroad, it improved my language skills by leaps and bounds, and it was absolutely instrumental in determining the course of the rest of my career and life. It's a wonderful program and I'm so grateful to have gotten the chance to participate!

*Participant (Chinese 2018)*

I was lucky to meet other queer Americans studying my target language abroad. Though my host country was not LGBT-friendly and we were unable to really discuss these issues in a classroom environment, I felt safe on my trip and was inspired to see others like me in the group. They were smart, successful and some had similar goals as me, which made me feel confident.

*Participant (Russian 2016)*

[The CLS Program] has changed this small-town girl's life forever—and it was needed. I had no idea how little of the world I knew and how small-minded I was. This experience has forever opened me up to the world. ... I would have never been able to afford an experience like this coming from the background I did. You gave me something that has changed my life forever and I can't express my gratitude enough.

*Participant (Japanese 2010)*