

General Guidelines

As a sponsor, you should be familiar with your own city, state, and country. Be prepared to answer LOTS of questions.

Invitations. When you extend an invitation, be sure it is clear in explaining the time, place, type of activity and type of dress require.

Tardiness. Concepts of what is "on time" is not as rigid in other countries as in the U.S. You may want to pick the IF up the first time so they understand the importance of being on time.

Food and Drink. Be considerate of your guest's basic food restrictions imposed by religious/cultural traditions. All you need do is ask!

Gifts. Exchange of gifts will depend on each sponsor/IMS relationship. You should be careful not to obligate the IMS or feel obligated yourself. Gestures of friendliness should not be a burden either financially or socially. Remember that many cultures believe strongly in returning favors and gifts with greater favors or gifts. Be careful that you do not place your guest in an awkward position where he or she will feel obligated to reciprocate, but may not be able to.



National Defense University

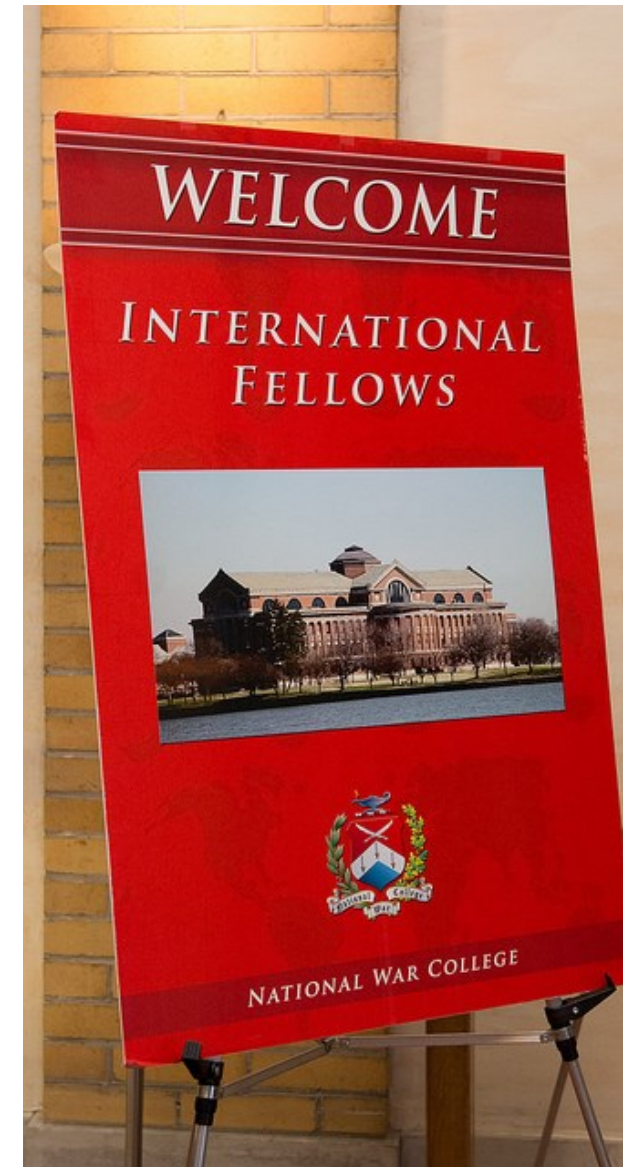
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NOW WHAT?

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NDU Sponsorship Program

Conversation Starters

Now that you're a sponsor, you're probably wondering how to best start your new friendship. A few examples of topics of conversation that can help break the ice are listed below:

- Ask about their national dishes
- Ask about festivals held in their country
- Talk about sports or hobbies
- Ask about family life/lifestyles in their country
- Discuss other countries you've been to
- Ask what the IF would like to see in the U.S.

Remember, we encourage open and respectful discussions about religion and politics, but it is not an appropriate ice breaker topic.

Things to do:

Below are a few simple suggestions of things to do that may spark an interest with you and the IF:

- Invitations to holiday activities/festivals
- Sporting events
- Plays or concerts
- Backyard barbeque/picnics
- Fishing
- Sightseeing
- Parades/Circus/Fair
- Visit your place of work

And many more...

“Do’s”

- Learn something about your IF’s country before your first meeting
- Be aware of dietary restrictions
- Learn to pronounce your new friend’s name and help him or her learn to pronounce yours. Speak clearly and not too quickly. Try to avoid slang or idioms. If used, stop and explain them
- Try to contact your IF at least twice a month. Recognize when your message is not getting through
- Maintain feelings of mutual respect
- Take cues on cultural taboos from the IF
- Be patient, understanding, accepting and culturally sensitive

“Don’ts”

- Loan the IF money
- Assume your guest understands because they smile and nod "yes"
- Stereotype your guest, or make assumptions about them
- Make promises you’ll be unable to keep
- Use body language that could be misinterpreted
- Assume your international guest is interested in meeting all your American friends with roots in his or her country
- Hesitate to call ISMO if there is a problem or for clarification.

