

The background of the slide is a map of the United States, showing state boundaries and major cities. The map is slightly faded and serves as a backdrop for the title text.

# Re-Imagined Advocacy Strategy to Promote and Protect BridgeUSA

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# About CIEE

Founded in 1947, CIEE's mission, for over 75 years, is to help people gain understanding, acquire knowledge, and develop skills for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world.

**As a non-profit, CIEE builds bridges between people, countries, and cultures through high-quality study abroad and international exchange programs.**



*1950s CIEE's (formally the Council on Student Travel) "Student Ship Project" which operated decommissioned war ships to transport exchange students for overseas travel.*



# Our Impact

## CIEE Programs

- High School Global Navigator
- College Study Abroad
- Global Internships
- U.S. Department of State's BridgeUSA program

## Impact

- CIEE operates in 30+ countries with ~1,000 employees (500 int'l staff)
- Annually ~45,000 students from more than 130 countries
  - ~30,000 international students who participate in U.S. BridgeUSA Program
  - ~15,000 American college and high school students who study abroad



*2023 CIEE Study Abroad Conference in Seoul, S Korea with CIEE's President and CEO, Dr. James Pellow, in center.*





# Changing Policy and Political Landscape

- **November 2024 Election**
- **January & February 2025**
  - **America First Foreign Policy Executive Order**
  - **Executive Order Requiring the Review of Visa Issuance Process**
  - **Confirmation of U.S. Senator Marco Rubio as U.S. Secretary of State**
  - **Grant Funding Pause -- International Exchange Program Grants**
- **April and March 2025**
  - **Reorganization of the U.S. Department of State**
  - **President's FY26 Budget Proposal – Cut ~90% ECA Budget at State Dept**
- **May 2025**
  - **Pause New Student Visa Interviews**
- **June 2025**
  - **Executive Order Limiting Travel to U.S. from Certain Countries**
  - **Restart Interviews with New Social Media Screening and Vetting Policies**
- **July**
  - **One Big Beautiful Bill – New Visa Integrity Fee**
  - **Proposed Rule Change – Limit Duration of Visas and Overstay Penalties**



# Advocacy Goals

As a result of the changing policy and political landscape, CIEE's CEO, Senior VP of External Affairs, Senior VP of BridgeUSA Programs, and VP of Government Affairs and Advocacy re-imagined its advocacy goals and strategy.

- To promote and protect BridgeUSA,
- To grow BridgeUSA student and professional participation through CIEE, and
- To produce BridgeUSA program champions.



**BridgeUSA:  
Promote,  
Protect, Grow  
Participation,  
and Produce  
Champions**

# Advocacy Strategy

## ❖ Commitment to Promote and Protect the U.S. Department of State's BridgeUSA Program

### ☐ Brand Awareness

- ☐ Logo Updates

- ☐ CIEE and BridgeUSA Synonymous

### ☐ Digital Advocacy

- BridgeUSA Impact Stories from Host Employers, Families, and Leaders

- Educate and Update Partners and Supporters

### ☐ State and Community Events

- BridgeUSA Celebration Tour Events in Strategic States

- Relationship Building in States and Locally

### ☐ Amplify Thought Leadership

- Annual International Exchange Conference

- Fall Advocacy Day

# Strategy Alignment

Coordinate our strategy with the “America First” agenda in promoting and protecting the BridgeUSA Program.

“Every dollar we spend, every program we fund, and every policy we pursue must be justified with the answer to three simple questions.”

*Does it make America safer?*

*Does it make America stronger?*

*Does it make America more prosperous?*





# Measuring Success

- **Promote and Protect BridgeUSA**
  - Is Program Intact?
  - Has Overall Participation Changed? ↑↔↓
  - Policy Impacts -- Positive or Negative
- **Grow BridgeUSA Participation through CIEE**
  - Has CIEE BridgeUSA Participation Grown? Which States? Which Programs and Industries? Which Countries?
- **Produce BridgeUSA Program Champions**
  - Which Emails Most Opened? Topic?
  - More Supporters Receiving Digital Advocacy Outreach or Attending Events? From Which States?
  - Add to Salesforce and Track Communications

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# Brand Awareness

# Logo Updates



## Special Edition: Congressional Current Affairs and Advocacy

We appreciate your commitment to international cultural exchange and thank you for prioritizing student safety and continuing to stay up-to-date on program best practices. With this in mind, on February 20, CIEE sent a note reminding participants to keep their program documents with them, as printed or digital copies, to ensure a smooth and successful experience while participating in a BridgeUSA program.

In continuing CIEE's coverage of current events that relate to international exchange, this special edition newsletter aims to provide a detailed summary of current Congressional activity and other policy and budget interests to our community.





# Digital Advocacy



# BridgeUSA Impact Stories



Good morning,

As one of the largest sponsors of the [U.S. Department of State's BridgeUSA program](#), [CIEE](#) is dedicated to furthering BridgeUSA's positive impact on making America **safer, stronger, and more prosperous**.

Watch the video and read the story below to learn how [Worlds of Fun Theme Park](#), and the surrounding Kansas City area, has benefitted from this **integral exchange program** for the last **17 years**.





# State and Community Events





cíee®



BridgeUSA

# BridgeUSA Celebration Tour





# CIEE BridgeUSA Celebration Tour Highlights How International Exchange Makes America Safer, Stronger, and More Prosperous



Top Row Second from Left: BridgeUSA Champion Awardee with CIEE Senior Leaders. Top Row Remaining Pictures: BridgeUSA participants from Kentucky and Ohio. Bottom Row: Group shots of Celebration Tour attendees at Cedar Point, Kings Island, and Kentucky Kingdom



# Amplify Thought Leadership







# BridgeUSA Network of Advocates

- **BridgeUSA Student Participants & Alumni**
- **American Businesses (Host Employers)**
- **Colleges and Universities**
- **High Schools and High School (Host) Families**
- **Congressional Members and Staff (DC and State)**
- **State and Local Elected Officials**
- **State and Local Chambers of Commerce**
- **State and Local Hospitality and Tourism Associations**
- **International Agents and Businesses**
- **Community Supporters and Other Sponsors**





**THANK YOU!**