

New 2006 Area Team and Chapter Website Guidelines

The following guidelines are intended to help new Area Team and Chapter webmasters develop their local websites in accordance with strict AFS-USA, Inc. website policies. These guidelines will also serve as a reference for chapters and teams currently maintaining sites. The guidelines were developed based on general website practices and standards, official AFS-USA, Inc. laws, and answers gleaned from volunteer inquiries regarding maintenance of personal AFS websites. Your AFS website should function not only as a tool for students, parents, and community members to learn about the benefits of an AFS experience, but also as a marketing tool, reaching out to a broader world audience who may not know about AFS.

In 2007, our 60th anniversary year, an on-going reinvigoration of our organization on the world stage will be taking place. We encourage you to be creative in your website's design, but we must also ensure a continuity of certain features and graphics in line with AFS policies and procedures. In addition we must adhere to policies and regulations of others, especially new CSJET guidelines and U.S. Department of State J-regulations. For more information on how this affects hosting procedures and publicity, refer to CSJET and J-regulation guidelines in this document. If you have questions that are not covered under these guidelines, or need more specific information, please contact your Field Staff Coordinator or Field Staff Manager who will, if necessary, contact Marketing & Communications.

Thank you.

Your Marketing & Communications Team

The following are strongly recommended for inclusion:

- Introduction Section: "About AFS"; this section can be taken from the main AFS-USA website, http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/view/about_us or a combination of general information from our site.
- Press Kit Folder that includes (at least):
 1. An updated AFS-USA Fact Sheet (http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/view/what_we_do)
 2. Organization History (http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/view/90_year)
 3. Press releases relevant to your area (http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/news/)
 4. Awards announcements such as Galatti Nominees, Awards for Excellence Nominees and Winners, etc. are always good to include.
 5. Contact information for appropriate volunteers and staff (and if necessary general contact information for regional offices: http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/view/contact)
 6. There are also MP3 public service announcements for local radio stations that would be helpful to include on your site.
- Links to:
 1. AFS-USA Website: www.afs.org/usa
 2. AFS International: www.afs.org

3. Apply Now (pre-application link):
<https://www.afsusaweb.org/sending/preapp.aspx>
 4. Volunteer Registration button linked to AFS-USA Volunteer Registration page: http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/focus_on/volunteer
 5. Find out about Hosting an AFS Participant:
http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/focus_on/hosting
 6. Find an AFSe: http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/link/2198
 7. New AFS website updates (most recent and important ones are included in the AFS Highlights section of our News & Press Kit section as well as on the homepage): http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/news/local
- Link to contact your local volunteer in charge of site or webmaster (phone number or email contact, or both is appropriate)
 - Emergency after-hours telephone number for participants: 1-800-876-2376.
 - Include the following sentence in a high trafficked section of the site, visible to the most visitors: **To request a study abroad catalogue, for information on hosting or volunteering with AFS, or to learn more about how you can have AFS make an “It’s Your World” intercultural education presentation in your school, email afsinfo@afs.org, call 1-800-AFS-INFO, or visit www.afs.org/usa.**

Optional but Encouraged Sections:

- Study Abroad FAQ linked to AFS-USA site:
http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/focus_on/faqs/high_school
- Host Family FAQ linked to AFS-USA site:
http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/focus_on/faqs/hosting and link for Host Family Interest Form: <http://www.afsusaweb.org/vforma/formainput.aspx>
- List of Area Team (http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/news/from_the_field/2305) or Chapter Contacts
- Volunteer Opportunities
- What’s Happening (Events section): http://www.usa.afs.org/usa_en/events/
- Sending Bulletin linked to AFS-USA website (students must register for access):
<http://www.afsdiscussion.org/>

Policies:

- Area Team and Chapter websites should not include information on pricing, admission policies, or departure dates. For this type of information, the visitor should contact AFS-USA directly at 1-800-AFS-INFO or send inquiries to www.afs.org/usa where most questions including pricing, can be answered.

Posting student bios is a delicate matter, one that needs to be in accordance with AFS regulations at all times. If chapter teams will be posting student bios, access must be password protected. Volunteers must strictly control the assigning of passwords only to other fully registered and screened AFS volunteers in their Area Team or host family applicants who have submitted their full application to AFS, and completed their criminal background check. A password along with any guidelines for use should be sent to the AFS-USA AFS Online Webmaster (jbaker@afs.org).

- If making hosting announcements, do not use the words *Urgently Needed, Don't let me be homeless, This is an emergency... etc.* CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be acceptable: *Open your hearts and homes, Host a foreign Exchange Student... See additional information regarding hosting advertising below in the CSIET regulations.*

Area Team and Chapter websites must include AFS' 3 Key Rules that all hosted students must abide by::

- No illegal drugs
- No driving
- No hitchhiking

All participants must be law-abiding in their host country. There may be country-specific rules that apply. There also are limits on traveling independently. In a new environment, it's important to be more aware than you might be at home. And remember: if you are an American student studying abroad, you are a student ambassador for the U.S., so it will be important to act respectfully toward others and to give extra attention to being culturally aware.

- Uploading of documents with the signature of any AFS staff person needs to be cleared with the Director of Marketing and Communications: Mbaker@afs.org.
- For all media contacts that come in through your website please make sure to copy Sheila Smith at SSmith@afs.org so that we can update our media lists. You can handle local inquiries media within your area team. However, you are encouraged to seek advice from Marketing and Communications or your field staff coordinator or manager. National inquiries or those of a sensitive or controversial nature, or those having to do with support issues must be sent to Mbaker@afs.org. See Media Policy and Procedures on AFS Online.
- Any student whose photo, quotes, or comments appear on the website must have a signed media consent and release form on file (**signed by both student and natural parent**). You must NOT use student's last name. The student's photo should not be listed next to the high school they are attending, although the participating high schools may be listed separately. All student information and photo(s) must be on a password-protected area of your website with guidelines in place for issuing passwords to registered volunteers (see above). You can download an AFS Media Consent Form from our website: http://www.usa.afs.org/downloads/files/USA/Consent_and_Release_Form_-_Fillable_-_2_Bold.NEW.pdf
- AFS-USA does not pay for the creation or maintenance of local sites or provide users or webmasters with technical support.
- Area teams can only include a discussion area on individual websites if the webmaster monitors it for inappropriate content and updates the web materials in accordance with AFS rules.

Graphics

- The AFS blue is “Pantone 300.” Its equivalent RGB Value is R = 0, G = 112, B = 200.
- Partner Signature & Logo: **Minimum size.** This should never be smaller than 22 millimeters wide. A partner signature is the AFS flag with the partner country’s name.

For specific guidelines of the use of the AFS Logo and Digital Media, see JPEG documents below.

The AFS Logotype

The logotype is a singular unit containing the inter-connected ring symbol and the AFS letters. The elements are always used together as a unit and should never be altered in any way.

Color: The AFS Logotype prints in either Pantone 300 or black. When printing with 4-color process inks, the logotype prints in the process equivalent of Pantone 300, or 100:143m. The symbol and AFS letters always appear as white.

In rare circumstances when printing a dark background, the logotype may print in the reverse. In these cases, the flag appears as white and the symbol and letters print in either Pantone 300, its process equivalent or black.

Minimum size: To maintain optimum reproduction quality and readability, the AFS Logotype should never be reproduced at a size where the logotype is smaller than 18mm wide. *The AFS logotype should always be reproduced from an approved logo sheet.*



18 mm

Area of Isolation

The area of isolation is a visual buffer between the AFS Logotype or Signature and any other elements on a page. No other elements should be placed in this area. The area of isolation is approximately the width of the

letter F in AFS. In some cases, the AFS Logotype or Signature may be placed on top of a light background color or photo, provided it does not interfere with the legibility of the identity.



Incorrect Reproduction Techniques

The AFS Identity Standards have been designed to have a certain amount of flexibility and adaptability. However, in order to maintain a strong recognition factor, certain uses

are not permitted. Shown here are a sample of uses that are not permitted.



Never use a different typeface in a Partner signature.



Never print the symbol and letters in a color.



Never distort or alter the logotype in any way.



Never reproduce the logotype in a different color.



Never separate or alter the elements of the AFS Logotype.



Never allow a background to show through the symbol or AFS letters.

Typography

The typestyle selected for the AFS Identity is called Helvetica Neue Condensed. This type family is internationally available and contains a wide variety of weights. Shown below are the most common weights used in the identity system. Many are identified throughout this manual.

The entire Helvetica Neue Condensed family of typefaces is recommended and should be considered for all

elements of AFS communications, including brochures, advertisements, contracts, forms, etc. This will further ensure a consistent look worldwide.

Many widely available serif fonts, including Garamond and Minion (used here), provide an effective contrast to the Helvetica Neue Condensed family when used for correspondence, brochure copy and other supporting text.

Helvetica Neue Condensed Black
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890

Helvetica Neue Condensed Regular
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890

Helvetica Neue Condensed Regular Oblique
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ 1234567890



Standards for International Educational Travel Programs¹

Agent: Individual or organization authorized to represent or act on behalf of the organization in administering one or more aspects of the program, for example, an overseas partner.

Organization: Entity that sponsors international educational travel activities.

Program: Organized international educational travel activity that begins with participant recruitment and selection, includes the components outlined in the standards which follow, and terminates when the participant returns to his or her point of origin or otherwise severs the relationship with the program sponsor.

Volunteer: 1. a representative who is compensated for out-of-pocket expenses only. If a representative receives regular compensation, such as a per student placement fee, this individual cannot be considered a volunteer. 2. A host family that provides room and board gratis to a student.

STANDARD 1: EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

- A. Programs shall be designed to fulfill educational purposes related to an international experience.
- B. The organization sponsoring the program shall have clearly established goals and learning objectives to fulfill the educational purposes of its programs.

STANDARD 2: ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

- A. The structure and administration of the organization shall be clearly defined.
- B. The organization shall have the personnel needed to administer its programs effectively.
 - 1. The organization is accountable for the full scope of the programs it administers, including actions taken and representations made by its agents, and maintains responsibility for its students both within the US and abroad.

¹ These standards are intended for use in evaluating both inbound and outbound youth exchange programs of eight or more weeks' duration. For programs of shorter duration, please refer to CSIET Standards for Short-Term Programs.

2. The organization shall maintain direct, hands-on control of the placement and supervision of inbound students and the hiring, firing and remuneration of local representatives. It may not enter into a relationship with another entity that appears to exercise such control.
- C. The organization shall be organized under the laws of one of the 50 states of the United States or the District of Columbia.
 - D. The organization shall demonstrate success in international educational travel through at least one full year since its incorporation.

STANDARD 3: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- A. The organization shall be capable of discharging its financial responsibilities to all participants.
- B. The organization shall have sufficient financial backing to protect all monies paid by participants and to ensure fulfillment of all responsibilities to participants.
- C. The organization shall have an independent Certified Public Accountant annually prepare an audited or review financial statement.

STANDARD 4: PROMOTION

- A. The organization's promotional materials shall professionally, ethically and accurately reflect its purposes, activities and sponsorship.
- B. The organization shall not publicize the need for host families via any public media with announcements, notices, advertisements, etc, that:
 - a. are not sufficiently in advance of the student's arrival
 - b. appeal to public pity or guilt
 - c. imply in any way that a student will be denied participation if a host family is not found immediately
 - d. identify photos of individual students and include an appeal for an immediate family.

Following are guidelines for public media advertisements:

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be unacceptable: Urgently Needed, Don't let me be homeless, This is an emergency...

CSIET has found the following words or phrases to be acceptable: Open your hearts and homes, Host a Foreign Exchange Student...

It is permissible to use a picture of a student, a first name, age, country of origin and a composite or generic listing of interests in an advertisement in order to demonstrate the personal nature of the program and the types of interests that students have. It is not permissible to identify that specific student as needing a home, nor is it permissible to

refer to a student's athletic ability or accomplishments. Written waivers must be obtained for the use of any student photographs.

- C. The organization shall not promote or recruit for its programs in any way that compromises the privacy, safety or security of participants, families or schools. Specifically, programs shall not include personal student data or contact information (including address, phone or email addresses) on website or other promotional materials.
- D. All promotional materials/activities shall distinguish the program and the sponsoring organization from others operating under:
 - a. affiliated or related corporate structures
 - b. the same or similar names or symbols.
- E. The organization shall fully disclose all fees, including school tuition, host family reimbursements, and other required or optional costs to prospective students and their natural families before enrollment. *(If host families provide room and board gratis to the students, publicity should state that fees cover "selection and placement in host families" and not imply in any way that the fees paid by the students cover "room and board.")*
- F. Neither the organization nor its agents shall promote its programs as providing opportunities for school athletic participation, high school graduation, driver's education instruction, household domestic service, child care, employment, or other activities that might compromise the student, program, or school. *(Standard 4F specifically prohibits the organization and its agents (this includes foreign partners) from promoting its programs as providing any of the aforementioned activities. The word "promote" as it is used in Standard 4F includes any specific focus on or prominence of pictures and/or text depicting these activities. No prominent pictures and/or text will be considered to be in compliance.)*
- G. The organization shall not state or imply in its promotional materials/activities that persons who are compensated other than out-of-pocket expenses are volunteers.

STANDARD 5: STUDENT SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

- A. The organization shall screen and select student participants on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.

Supplemental Guideline: (This guideline will take affect for exchange students beginning their program in January 2007.

Athletic Participation in the United States: The following statement must be included on either the student application or other written documents: "Athletic eligibility or participation is not guaranteed."

- B. Screening procedures for homestay programs shall include personal interviews with student applicants.
- C. Selection shall be completed sufficiently in advance of the student's departure to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation.
- D. Students shall be given a suitable orientation before departure and after arrival in the host country, including information on how to identify and report cases of suspected student abuse.
- E. All inbound students enrolled in a U.S. high school must have adequate English language proficiency to function successfully.
- F. All inbound and outbound students enrolled in school must have adequate academic preparation to function successfully.

STANDARD 6: STUDENT PLACEMENT

- A. For programs that include a homestay, the organization shall:
 - 1. select host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program.
 - 2. personally interview all prospective host families in their home.
 - 3. match students and host families on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 - 4. complete placement arrangements sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home to ensure adequate time for preparation and orientation of the host family (*Whenever possible, a student should be placed with a host family who has made a long-term commitment to host the student prior to the student's departure from his/her home country. In cases where this is not possible, a student may be placed with a short-term host family until long-term arrangements can be made. All short-term families must be selected and oriented according to the same criteria as are long-term families. The short-term nature of the host family placement must be fully disclosed in advance to the student, his/her natural parents, and the school principal, and be acceptable to them. Short-term families may, of course, also be utilized when a host family placement has not worked out and a new family must be found.*)
 - 5. provide suitable orientation and training to the host family. (*When a family expresses an interest in hosting a student and a representative makes the initial home visit to explain the program, this is not to be considered the "host family orientation." CSIET suggests that host family orientation include information on the student's expectations about family and school life, customs, religion and mores of the student's native country, the academic program in which the student will be enrolled, potential problems in hosting exchange students and suggestions on how to cope with such problems.*)
 - 6. vet all adult members of the host family residing in the home through a national criminal background check in the United States.
- B. Organizations shall not knowingly be party to a placement (inclusive of direct placements) based on athletic abilities, whether initiated by a student, a natural or host

family, a school or any other interested party. A direct placement is one in which either the student or the sending organization in the foreign country is party to an arrangement with any other party, including school personnel, for the student to attend a particular school or live with a particular host family. Such direct placement must be reported to the particular school and the National Federation of State High School Associations prior to the first day of classes.

Supplemental Guideline: Direct Placements Reports:

Direct placement reports should be sorted by U.S. State and include the following information:

- U.S. State:
- Name of Student:
- Country of Origin:
- Local Rep Name/Number:
- Name/City of U.S. Host School:
- Nature of the Direct Placement:

Reports should be emailed to CSIETREPORT@NFHS.org

- C. For programs that include accommodations other than a homestay, the organization shall:
 1. arrange accommodations on the basis of criteria appropriate to the program
 2. ensure the adequacy of the accommodations with respect to location, cleanliness, safety, nutrition, and supervision
 3. confirm the accommodations sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from home.
- D. For programs that include enrollment in US high schools, the organization shall:
 - a. secure written acceptance from the school principal or other designated responsible school administrator prior to the exchange student's departure from his or her home country.
 - b. provide the school with the following information about the student:
 - 1) academic history, including
 - a) academic records, translated into English or other language as appropriate
 - b) number of years of school completed prior to arrival, and number of years required in home country for the completion of secondary school
 - 2) level of English language proficiency (for inbound students only)
 - 3) appropriate background information
 - 4) expectations regarding school experience.

STANDARD 7: OPERATIONS

- A. The organization shall ensure adequate care and supervision of students.

Supplemental Guideline: Programs must register U.S. Students traveling abroad with the U.S. consulate or embassy.

- B. Local representatives of the organization shall maintain regular personal contact with students and host families. *(Contact should be initiated by the organization's representative at least once a month be it by telephone, a visit to the home, personal contact at a gathering or other means. E-mail alone is not considered sufficient personal contact. Regular monthly contact is to include separate communication with the student and the host family in order to provide each with the opportunity to discuss issues they might not raise in the presence of the other. CSIET expects that there be formal documentation of this contact such as a monthly form, written journal, written log, etc. This is not to imply that representatives have to record every interaction. Rather it is to provide a record for the organization's office of the pattern of student and host family adjustments, activities, and relationships through at least monthly contact with each student and host family.)*
- C. The organization shall notify the student, host family, and/or other supervisor of accommodations regarding the travel itinerary sufficiently in advance of the student's departure from the home country.
- D. The organization shall provide adequate support services at the local level to assist with program-related needs and problems, for example, counseling services, travel, medical care, language problems, changes in host family, emergencies.
- E. The organization shall maintain an effective system of screening, (including a national criminal background check for U.S. representatives with direct in-person contact with student participants) selecting, training, and supervising program representatives and group leaders
- F. The organization shall provide all students with an identification card that includes the student's name; the host family's name, address, and telephone; the local representative's name, address, and telephone; the address and telephone of the organization's appropriate national office.
- G. For programs involving school enrollment, the organization shall maintain regular communication with school authorities.
- H. The organization shall provide an opportunity to the student, host family, and school to participate in a post-exchange evaluation.
- I. The organization shall have in place adequate plans and procedures for dealing with emergency situations that may arise during the program.
- J. The organization shall respond in a timely and appropriate fashion to complaints received from students, families, schools or others concerned with the program and its quality.

K For programs utilizing electronic or automatic program databases, a system of recording the date and time of all entries shall be maintained, including the name of the individual entering the data. Programs shall also maintain a backup system. If the program database is made available online, program shall establish a screening process prior to issuing a unique username and password.

STANDARD 8: STUDENT INSURANCE

- A. The organization shall guarantee that every student is covered with adequate health and accident insurance. Such insurance shall:
 - a. Protect students for the duration of their program
 - b. Provide for the return of the student to his/her home in the event of serious illness, accident, or death during the program.
- B. The organization shall provide students, host families, and appropriate supervisor(s) with detailed printed information regarding the terms and limits of insurance coverage and procedures for filing a claim.
- C. Compensated officials and employees of the organization shall not receive compensation from the sale of insurance to its participants.

STANDARD 9: ADHERENCE TO GOVERNMENT REGULATIONS

- A. The organization shall comply with all appropriate government regulations regarding international exchange or any other activity under its auspices.
- B. It shall be the responsibility of the organization to notify the Council of any change in status with respect to government designation, acknowledgment, acceptance, endorsement and/or sanction.