

Keys to Successful Graduate Research Abroad: A Maryland-Russia Case Study. (A01-froese144735-Oral)

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Abstract:

Conducting graduate research abroad presents participating individuals and institutions with many risks and substantial potential benefits. The experience of a University of Maryland Ph.D. student conducting field research in Russia is examined and keys to successful graduate research abroad are discussed. The graduate student spent two summers (May-September) doing field research on canola production in SW Siberia. The success of graduate research abroad is critically dependent upon the suitability of the international partner - primarily their technical expertise, research infrastructure and buy-in of key individuals. Secondly, projects that lend themselves to international collaboration are, among other things, of interest and benefit to all participants and not overly risky. Thirdly, characteristics of the graduate student should include language ability, flexibility and cultural sensitivity. Additional considerations consist of the handling of financial matters, project preparation (particularly the movement of research goods between countries) and communication. The principles discussed assist all parties in maximizing the benefits of graduate research abroad.

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