

Graduate School Admissions & Global Engagement (GSAGE Initiative)

Strategic Plan Theme: Student Success

Funding Level: Below \$1 million

Facility Needs: No new facilities will be needed

Submitting Unit: Office of Admissions

Collaborating colleges/departments/units involved with this proposal.

The Graduate School, Office of Admissions, campus-wide graduate program recruiters and international units.

What is the proposal's big theme or idea?

In MSU's 2030 Strategic Plan under the Student Success theme, Objective #2 focuses on the increased diversity within graduate programs along with an increased number of fellowships aimed at improved graduate recruitment. The Strategic Plan also solicits modern Land-Grant University leaders "from institutions of global reach, significant scope and scale, and preeminence in areas of global grand challenges to address the pressing issues of our time and be leaders in creating opportunities for tomorrow." To ensure that MSU is positioned to tackle the increased complexity and competition of an ever-changing recruitment and retention environment, especially in a post-COVID era, we propose the Graduate School Admissions and Global Engagement (GSAGE) initiative. The mission of GSAGE is to provide guided coordination and strategic growth focused on increased collaboration with new and existing internal/external partnerships to recruit and retain a larger number of international graduate students and postdoc scholars. MSU's internationalization efforts focus on global research and engagement at the nexus of institutional strengths, regional expertise, and global partnerships. This initiative is aimed at centralizing global engagement at The Graduate School (TGS) level to support international graduate admissions, with a focus on diversifying and increasing international sponsored students and scholars.

What is the proposal's goal?

The four main objectives that guide this initiative include: (1) central support for graduate-level recruitment and outreach efforts; (2) partnership development and relationship building; (3) data collection, monitoring, and dissemination; and (4) developing external financial support streams.

Offering central support for graduate-level recruitment and outreach efforts provides departments and campus partners with the guided information to expand international recruitment, research, and scholarship. This centralized coordination would leverage financial resources and administrative services, especially for smaller departments with limited bandwidth and funding. GSAGE would also intentionally develop an MSU branding and marketing campaign in these global spaces, focused on TGS global engagement. The second objective focuses on partnership development and relationship building, both internally and externally. This allows for strategic recruitment growth in target and emerging markets by researching, cultivating, and expanding relationships with current and new government, private, and corporate sponsors. This would also simultaneously expand the competitive global research opportunities for MSU graduate students through these same partnerships. GSAGE would hire a central liaison to coordinate with Admissions and graduate departments/units, disseminating information on global opportunities and mechanisms to recruit international students and scholars and to actively pursue agreements and pathway programs that recruit top-notch students from abroad. The third objective of data collection, monitoring, and dissemination, recognizes that there is

not currently a database that provides updated and current tracking of international graduate admissions, global sponsored student programs, or agreements aimed at achieving these goals. The initiative underscores the critical need for this data to assist with informed decision making; accordingly, we seek to develop and manage interactive platforms (e.g., SLATE) to track and evaluate data related to international graduate admissions and global outreach efforts. Lastly, the fourth objective focuses on the development of financial support streams. In collaboration with University Advancement and Graduate School Development, the initiative would support efforts to increase funding for student scholarships, global research, and programmatic initiatives.

Define the significance, or impact of your big idea.

The GSAGE initiative is strategically aligned with MSU’s 2030 Plan, MSU’s DEI Plan, and The Graduate School priority goals. We have identified preliminary outcomes–based on our key objectives–as targeted areas to measure significant impact and success. This GSAGE Initiative encompasses five thematic areas of the University Strategic Plan: Student Success; Faculty Success; Innovation for Global Impact; Stewardship & Sustainability; and Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion. It is also strategically aligned with MSU’s Diversity Equity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, especially the university’s priority placed on Global DEI and developing “resources that reinforce inclusive practices in a global context. . . and programs to support an educational, equitable, inclusive, and welcoming environment for all with a specific lens on nuances related to internationalization.” It would also directly contribute to the Discovery, Creativity and Innovation for Excellence and Global Impact goal of pursuing “excellence in service to the common good, generating new knowledge and applying it in practical ways to address complex societal problems. . . and expand capacity for local and global impact.” The Graduate School: GSAGE integrates TGS’s three primary goals: Goal 1: Student Success–The initiative will promote MSU’s nationally recognized graduate degrees and wellness programs to global partners that support students to successful completion. Goal 2: Diverse and Inclusive Communities–TGS programs and initiatives support and enhance diversity. The initiative will expand campus and external partnerships to implement inclusive recruitment and retention practices, targeting under-represented regions and strategic global markets. Goal 3: Interconnectedness–TGS actively collaborates with campus and external partners to innovate across all dimensions of graduate education. GSAGE will create and support global networks that increase collaborations and improve educational opportunities. Targeted outcomes of our success include: Faculty and staff committee developed [MSU International Recruitment and Outreach (IRO)], aimed at increasing interest in and facilitating global engagement and recruitment. Campus-wide stakeholders cross-trained and information disseminated on current and emerging opportunities. Branded webinars created and co-presented to sponsoring agencies. MSU participation in global sponsor networking and niche academic programming events. Relationships cultivated with key loan programs in priority countries that fund advanced degrees in the US. Data collected on international graduate student admissions and enrollment trends and housed on centralized platform (e.g., information related to key sponsors, top producing countries/regions, priority disciplines/departments, etc.). Funding opportunities explored, available through US federal grants, NGO’s and home-country education ministries. MSU’s cost-share capacity expanded to entice prospective sponsored students to make

Who will be impacted?

The primary beneficiaries of this initiative will be graduate departments/units and new and current international students and scholars. GSAGE will have the ability to support departments/units looking to diversify cohorts and engage in capacity building to contribute to the well-being of others globally. By providing centralized admission support to graduate departments and units, GSAGE hopes to increase the recruitment of top-quality international students and scholars, with a focus on under-represented regions, and leveraging resources to be able to expand research activities with international partners, either on-campus or at universities abroad. By expanding international sponsoring agency partners (e.g., IIE, World Learning, IREX, ARAMCO), diversify financial support streams to offset the cost of attendance for international students with demonstrated financial need.

What does sustainability for your proposal look like?

In partnership with sponsored student agencies, university advancement and donors from around the globe, GSAGE will leverage resources to successfully increase our international student enrollment and diversify representation. We will also seek longer-term financial resources to not only recruit international students but support and retain students and enhance their professional development to ensure success through graduation and beyond. While pursuing advanced and professional degrees and post-doc research at MSU, international graduate students and scholars significantly expand faculty research capacity. Upon graduation and securing employment, these alumni represent networks of prospective research partners for MSU faculty, expanding our global research capacity in the long run.