

TRANSNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING IN HONG KONG





WELCOME

GG+A has partnered with institutions around the globe helping them build sustainable fundraising and engagement programs that are customized to their institutional and cultural context. To keep pace with constituents scattered throughout the world, an increasing number of universities and other nonprofit institutions are integrating transnational or international fundraising into their advancement programs.

This innovative approach to fundraising is rapidly making a significant impact. Amy Parker, Vice-President, Asia Pacific, has explored this topic through the lens of Hong Kong where she was dedicated to GG+A business in the region for two years. Hong Kong was one of the first major cities where overseas universities launched transnational programs and continues to serve as a hub for transnational fundraising in Asia today.

This paper is the culmination of a blog series published in seven parts on GG+A's website from October 2018 through April 2019 and presented in summary form at the CASE Asia Pacific Advancement Conference's special session on International Advancement in April 2019.

PART

INTRODUCTION TO TRANSNATIONAL UNIVERSITY FUNDRAISING IN HONG KONG

ONE

“Hong Kong overtook New York to become the world’s largest ultra-high-net-worth city.” Perhaps you saw this widely shared headline from the recently released World Ultra Wealth Report. While it was the latest study to put Hong Kong’s ultra-wealthy in the international spotlight, it is just one of many reports on the theme.

According to the Hurun Global Rich List, Hong Kong had the world’s fastest-growing high-net-worth individual (HNWI) population and fastest-growing HNWI wealth from 2008–2015 (21% and 22% annualized growth, respectively). Hong Kong now has more billionaires than all but two other cities (131 in Beijing, 92 in New York, and 80 in Hong Kong).

With headlines like these, it is no wonder that nonprofit organizations from all over the world have an eye on Hong Kong. In addition to the 9,000 local charities vying for donations from these wealthy individuals, many overseas universities are also actively cultivating their alumni and connections in Hong Kong for major gifts.

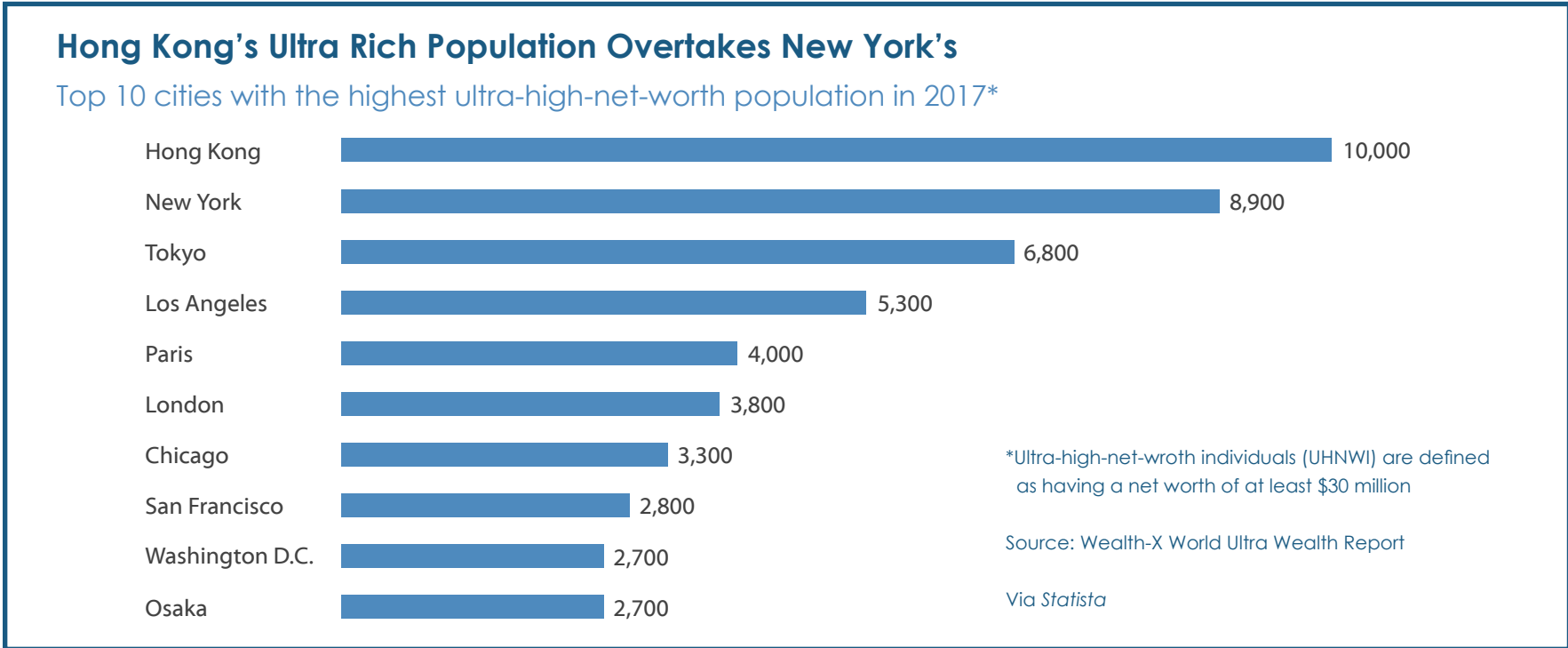
Why universities? While hard data on philanthropy is sparse for Hong Kong and across Asia more broadly, many studies support the fact that education is the region’s top philanthropic cause of choice. In Knight Frank’s Wealth Report, 66% of respondents in Asia chose education as the philanthropic cause donors are most likely to support, higher than the global average of 54%.

So just how do overseas universities fundraise in Hong Kong? Some, like the University of Chicago, have brick-and-mortar enterprises in Hong Kong with programs and staff on site. Others have an office in Hong Kong that supports a variety of the home institution’s work in the region, such as the University of Southern California’s Hong Kong and South China Office or the University of Oxford’s China Office.

Many universities have set up their own registered charities in Hong Kong. According to the list of Charitable Institutions and Trusts registered in Hong Kong, over 50 overseas universities have such charities in place. A sampling of this group, by country, includes:

- + United States: Brown University, Columbia University, Johns Hopkins University, MIT, Tufts University
- + Canada: University of British Columbia, University of Toronto, University of Waterloo
- + Australia: Macquarie University, University of Sydney, University of New South Wales
- + United Kingdom: University of Cambridge, University of Manchester, and Edinburgh Napier University

Another route some universities take is setting up a fund within a family of foundations, allowing Hong Kongers to make tax-advantaged gifts to an organization like The Chapel & York HK Foundation, which processes the donation, issues gift receipts, and passes the gift along to the home institution.



Although Hong Kong has a legendarily low tax rate, the opportunity for a charitable tax deduction is still an important factor for some donors. Under the Inland Revenue Ordinance, individuals may be able to claim deductions for up to 35% of their income or profits. Aside from these monetary savings, having a way to make tax-advantaged gifts also sends an important message to the donor: that the university takes their donations seriously, that they are not the only one in Hong Kong making gifts, and that there is a commitment to the Hong Kong community. And, as Ruth Shapiro argues in the recent book *Pragmatic Philanthropy: Asian Charity Explained*, tax benefits also signal that the local government endorses giving to these organizations, a signal that carries more weight in Asian nations than in many other parts of the world.

Universities take many different approaches to staffing their Hong Kong fundraising operations. At one end of the spectrum, the University of Manchester has a Head of Philanthropy for Asia living and working full-time in Hong Kong. At the other end, institutions like the Carnegie Mellon University and Macquarie University have international engagement officers and fundraisers who are based at the home institution but travel to Hong Kong on a regular basis. In between these two approaches are examples like the University of British Columbia or University of Southern California, with one or more staff in Hong Kong whose wide-ranging job responsibilities include fundraising support.

What's the right approach for your organization to take in Hong Kong? As this overview suggests, there is no one-size-fits-all answer. The following pages share insights from a variety of the institutions above, including why they are set up as they are, the advantages and challenges of their structure, and what advice they have for everyone else reading those global wealth reports and turning an eye to Hong Kong.



PART

COUNTING YOUR ALUMNI

TWO

“We know that’s not an accurate number.” “We are probably undercounting.” “We expect there are many more.” I’ve heard answers like this nearly every time I’ve asked an overseas university to estimate the number of alumni they have in Hong Kong. On the one hand, this lack of confidence in alumni data is not a big surprise, given that maintaining up-to-date physical addresses is notoriously difficult in today’s global world.

As the University of British Columbia’s Director of Development and Alumni Engagement in Asia Mei Yiu put it, “Many alumni believe that if we have their email address, that is enough. But our count of alumni in Hong Kong comes from mailing addresses, and if their mailing address is still listed as Vancouver, that’s how they get classified.”

While institutions like the University of British Columbia, which has 3,000 alumni in Hong Kong and has been working in the region for more than twenty years, would like to have a more accurate count, determining the precise number is not a major concern. When a university is just starting to build its international development plans, however, understanding the number of alumni in a given market is key because it informs strategy and supports the case for increasing staff and program budgets.

Penn State University is a great case in point. In June 2017, Rolf Dietrich joined Penn State as its first Director of International Development. Prior to his appointment, the university’s fundraising efforts were concentrated domestically. With the majority of its 645,000 alumni in the US and half of these in the state of Pennsylvania, there were good reasons for this approach. Yet, like many other institutions, Penn State’s research, faculty, and students are global, and university development has embraced global dimensions, too. Dietrich started by looking at the data.

He spent his first few months on the job thoroughly reviewing data to understand how many alumni were located overseas and where. Dietrich found 200 degreed alumni in Hong Kong plus 180 others who attended the university in some capacity but did not obtain a degree; in China, there were 3,500 degreed alumni and over 13,000 parents and friends. Interestingly, nearly all of Penn State’s “Hong Kong” alumni are ex-pats—either Americans who’ve taken jobs in Hong Kong or alumni from mainland China who are now living and working in Hong Kong.

Dietrich has made Hong Kong a stop on every trip he takes to Asia. It’s a travel hub for his multi-city trips, a place that many alumni from China travel to often, and also a convenient regional gathering place. At a recent alumni event in Hong Kong, for example, several car groups of Penn State’s graduates traveled in from nearby Shenzhen.

This fluidity between Hong Kong and China is one of the challenges institutions face when it comes to “counting” their alumni. For example, some alumni are dual residents who spend time in both locations, and others live in one place but do a great deal of business in the other. As Joanna Chan, Advancement Officer in Asia for the University of Alberta, explained, “In Asia, people are far more mobile. They might have a permanent address in China or Singapore, but you see them more often in Hong Kong.”

Even universities with long-established Hong Kong offices can struggle to account for the entirety of their alumni population here. Canadian institutions, for example, have some of the longest-running local offices in Hong

Kong, stemming from historic ties between the two regions. (Over 300,000 Canadians live in Hong Kong, the largest group of Canadians outside of Canada.)

The University of Alberta’s Hong Kong Alumni Association just celebrated its 39th anniversary, and staff have been fundraising in Hong Kong for at least 15 years. Similarly, the University of Toronto (U of T) has had an office in Hong Kong for 23 years and was active in the region long before that. Yet Michelle Poon, Associate Director for U of T’s Asia-Pacific Advancement Office, finds that counting their alumni here is still a challenge. “We have many multi-generation families of alumni in Hong Kong, where the grandparents, parents, and children all went to U of T, but often they feel that only one of them needs to register with us.”

There’s often a direct correlation between the reach of an institution’s alumni engagement and fundraising programs and the confidence in its global alumni data. Until a university is actively engaged in a given region, the database count of alumni there likely only scratches the surface.

Barney Ellis-Perry, GG+A Senior Vice President and Co-Practice Area Leader for Alumni Relations, shared an example from a university where he worked. The institution had 200,000 alumni in its database, but only nine were listed in all of Greater China. When a few quick searches on LinkedIn showed over 500 in China, he knew his database wasn’t telling the full story.

One strategy Ellis-Perry used to fill in those gaps was hiring international student interns and “unleashing” them on local social media. As he explains, “they often find alumni already had groups that you didn’t know about. Soon you are able to mine names and interests of alumni and reach out with personal invitations to local chapters, events, and student recruitment activities in their cities. Your efforts won’t always result in perfect names and addresses for your English-based systems, which most often don’t accommodate international data in the first place, but they will result in more connections and engagement.”

“Having worked with international alumni for over fourteen years, I have always been struck by the power of alumni to build alumni networks that once you show up in their country, authentically and with a strong value proposition around alumni engagement, will open up and provide a rich matrix of alumni relationships.”

Once you find your alumni, what’s next? What kind of events are universities like these hosting in Hong Kong to engage their alumni, parents, and other friends?



PART

EVENTS GREAT & SMALL

THREE

One of the great things about living in Hong Kong is that so many interesting people are always passing through. In the last few months, I've attended a dinner with American author Cheryl Strayed, listened to a talk by Alexandra Shackleton, granddaughter of the famed British explorer Ernest Shackleton, and learned about Bhutan's political history from anthropologist Françoise Pommaret. Hong Kong brands itself "Asia's World City," and experiences like these exemplify that motto.

Overseas universities have become particularly adept at using Hong Kong's migratory nature to their advantage by building events around faculty who are passing through the city. Nearly everyone I interviewed for this series cited these faculty events as an important part of their engagement strategy. Although the way such events come about may be opportunistic, the strategy around them is anything but.

The University of Chicago (UChicago) has a distinct event planning advantage with its new Hong Kong campus, where they host a robust series of local programs, many of which leverage faculty visits. "We find that events featuring our faculty work best," says David Cashman, Senior Director, Chicago Regional & International Advancement. "Our constituency cares most about the intellectual content, so we try to organize a lecture whenever one of our high profile faculty members will be in Hong Kong."

Hong Kong is one of the cities where UChicago regularly hosts its flagship faculty speaker series, the Harper Lecture. The January 2019 Harper Lecture in Hong Kong featured a faculty member from the university's Institute for Molecular Engineering, who also presented in Shenzhen the following day. Harper Lectures also are recorded and posted on UChicago's YouTube channel, extending their global reach.

While some of these programs come together with rather short notice, UChicago also does long-lead planning around faculty who are scheduled to teach on the Hong Kong campus in the months to come—they already know, for example, which faculty will be in Hong Kong in the winter of 2020. This kind of advance notice can be a great advantage, allowing for more strategic event planning.

For universities without a campus, office, or local staff in Hong Kong, planning an event across the planet can be overwhelming, especially if you are new to international advancement. The key to success is identifying on-the-ground volunteers who can help host and plan. Hong Kong is a "club city," and it's likely that some of your alumni and donors have memberships at The Hong Kong Club, China Club, American Club, Aberdeen Marina Club, Cricket Club, The Helena May, or others. These are great event venues, as the experienced multi-lingual staff can help with every detail, easing the burden of event logistics.

Carnegie Mellon University (CMU), which has around 400 alumni in Hong Kong, has developed a brand for its faculty visits, the "Twelve Tartan Lunches." These informal, intimate lunches focus on each faculty member's area of research, creating a diverse program throughout the year with topics ranging from Tibetan art to biomedical engineering. Because the visiting faculty are often here to speak or conduct research in Hong Kong, or elsewhere in Asia, there's also a local connection that appeals to alumni. CMU's events come together through the help of a vibrant alumni network that makes arrangements and identifies a short list of invitees who would be interested in the topic.

When it comes to larger events, the city's hotels are a popular option. In March 2018, the University of New South Wales (UNSW) hosted The Future of Asia alumni summit at the Conrad Hotel. This full-day conference presented more than 20 speakers on topics relevant to the region, from "Asia in the aging century" to "Accessing contemporary art in/from China and its near neighbors." Sessions featured UNSW faculty in conversation with local leaders and experts, with plenty of opportunities for networking built into the program. For UNSW, Hong Kong is the city with the largest number of alumni outside of Australia, around 7,000, and the event's scale reflected the size of this alumni presence here.

Other large events are driven by a university milestone or campaign. In spring 2018, CMU celebrated 50 years as Carnegie Mellon University at the Four Seasons Hotel in Hong Kong, as well as at events in Shanghai and Beijing. Unlike the smaller Twelve Tartan Lunches, these were large events with over a hundred attendees and multiple staff making the trip just for this celebration.

The University of Queensland's big event in Hong Kong this year was a kick-off for its \$500 million campaign, Not if, when, and annual Hong Kong events are planned going forward as well.

In addition to all of this university-driven activity, most institutions that are active in Hong Kong have local alumni chapters that plan and organize their own events throughout the year. And many have one particular annual event that their alumni have come to count on.

For more than a dozen years, the London Business School (LBS) has hosted a World Alumni Celebration with multiple events in cities around the world.



PART

THE ON-CAMPUS INTERNATIONAL ADVANCEMENT MODEL

FOUR

There are over 28,000 universities worldwide, yet fewer than twenty overseas institutions have advancement staff in Hong Kong. For the vast majority of universities with global advancement programs, staff are based on campus and travel to Hong Kong three or four times per year for meetings and events. What are the success factors for programs like these? What are their challenges? I spoke with six international advancement staff for some insights.

The London Business School (LBS) has around 500 alumni in Hong Kong and has been active in the region since at least 2005. Nina Cohen Bohn, Director of Principal Gifts and External Relations, covers the Asia Pacific region and is typically in Hong Kong four times a year, spending a few days in the city before going on to mainland China, Singapore, and/or Australia. She has over 12 years of experience at LBS and has served in a variety of roles, all with some focus on Asia Pacific.

According to Bohn, that longevity has been instrumental to her success in Hong Kong and elsewhere in Asia. “Relationships take longer here than in the US or UK,” Bohn explains. “You need to show up again and again to demonstrate that your organization is invested in the community. The first £5 million gift I closed in Hong Kong took four years. That donor has said countless times how grateful he is that I took my time. He feels that, throughout the process, I was teaching him how to be a philanthropist and he was teaching me how to be patient and to understand Chinese thinking about philanthropy.”

Bohn recognizes the challenges of travelling far from campus for donor meetings in a foreign country: the fatigue of frequent long-distance travel, the difficulty of scheduling meetings when you have only a dozen days in a country per year, and staying on top of business issues that don’t make the news in London but are top of mind for LBS graduates living and working in Hong Kong. Yet there also are advantages. “Because it’s a novelty when I’m in town, people will make time for meetings,” says Bohn. “They like to hear what’s going on back on campus from someone who is actually there, and they enjoy showing off their town to a visitor.”

Hedda Paisley, Director of Campaign and Principal Gifts at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia, echoes this sentiment. “When you are based on campus, you’re not saturating donors with your presence,” Paisley explains. “They want to see you because you are not there all the time.”

Macquarie has nearly 7,000 alumni in Hong Kong, predominantly graduates of the Macquarie Graduate School of Management (MGSM), which has offered postgraduate programs in Hong Kong since 1994. Although MGSM has some full-time staff in Hong Kong, those staff do not work on development. Macquarie has only been focused on fundraising in Hong Kong for around four years with Paisley at the helm. Prior to this, efforts were focused on engaging the alumni network, which is seeing rewards. Paisley, like Bohn, notes the importance of longevity at an institution.

“Most of the principal gift level donors and prospects I work with in Hong Kong are not alumni,” she says. “They are individuals I’ve connected to over the years and the connections those individuals have introduced me to and so on. You need to take the time to lay the foundation for authentic relationships and do it from the heart, because donors can tell. These relationships are not transactional; they are deep. They want to be partners with the institution.”



Even when she's across the ocean, Paisley is in regular contact with her prospects in Asia. "My WhatsApp and WeChat don't stop," she admits. "My donors know I'm accessible to them 24/7, and because of that it doesn't matter where I am physically. What matters is that we follow through and deliver on our promises."

The University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, Australia also has a centralized fundraising program and, like Macquarie, has 7,000 Hong Kong alumni. It has been active in the region since at least 2005. Over the years, UNSW has experimented with various international advancement models, including in-country staff and in-country consultants. Under the leadership of Jon Paparsenos, Vice President of Philanthropy and CEO of the UNSW Foundation, and Ivan Shin, Executive Director of International Development, UNSW, international advancement was moved back onto campus in 2016.

"We felt that you have to be on campus to build strong relationships with faculty-based colleagues, operations staff, and others and to really have your pulse on what makes UNSW distinct," Shin explains. "This depth of knowledge about the university would be hard to replicate if someone is based in Hong Kong and on campus only a few times a year."

The mobility of UNSW's Hong Kong alumni was another important consideration in UNSW's advancement model. Many of the university's alumni in Hong Kong are only there for short-term assignments and then move on to other locations. As such, Shin finds that managing those relationships through on-campus staff allows the team to think about their engagement holistically, planning and preparing for wherever these alumni move to next.

Like Bohn and Paisley, Shin is in Hong Kong around four times a year and focuses on principal gifts. He reiterated some of the same challenges that Bohn and Paisley describe, adding, "many of the people we'd like to see on a trip are in roles that require a great deal of travel, so even when we are in Hong Kong quarterly, we may not be able to catch up with them for a year or more." Given UNSW's vast alumni base here, they recently hired an additional international advancement officer who will be in Hong Kong more frequently, working primarily with prospects with a giving capacity under \$1 million AUD and helping connect with those hard-to-reach travelers.

At Carnegie Mellon University (CMU) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, international development is a central service, and Mimi Fairman, Executive Director for International Development, covers a vast territory, including Greater China, Korea, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Turkey, and beyond. She passes through Hong Kong at least four times a year.

"What people love are the conversations we have about faculty research and the photos I share," she says. "I don't use stock photos but instead go around campus and take photos on my phone—real, impromptu photos of what's happening right then. Donors love seeing these and hearing that I've just been to the Tepper Quad Opening or that I attended a conference on campus. Alumni are often nostalgic about their time in Pittsburgh, and parents are curious to know more about this foreign city, so it also helps that I'm a native Pittsburgher and know the city inside and out."

The University of Queensland (UQ) in Brisbane, Australia has around 1,800 alumni in Hong Kong and has been actively fundraising in the region for several years. Recently, UQ established a centralized portfolio for Global

and Institutional Philanthropy to help better manage its more decentralized fundraising activities.

Tara Turner, Director, Global and Institutional Philanthropy, is based in the central office, providing strategy and support to staff across the university. Depending on their individual prospect pools, some UQ fundraising staff in the faculties and institutes travel to Hong Kong anywhere from once a year up to five times a year. Turner helps further the donor relationships these staff manage by traveling to Hong Kong herself two or three times a year, meeting with donors and prospects on behalf of the university as well as the faculties and institutes.

In considering the benefits and challenges of the campus-based international advancement program, Turner adds, "Our main advantage is that we are dialed into the culture of the university. We are there on campus with the researchers and students. We know what's happening and what's going to be the next big thing. It does limit how often we can see our donors and makes prospect research more challenging, given that we aren't as familiar with the region as someone on the ground would, but the trade-offs are worth it for us."

The University of Cambridge has over 2,400 alumni in Hong Kong and also has been fundraising successfully in the region for several years. Joanna Tong is Senior Associate Director, International and supports campaign priorities and initiatives across Collegiate Cambridge. Tong travels to Asia every six to eight weeks, and Hong Kong is a stop on nearly every trip.

"The frequent travel is a challenge," Tong admits, "but it is important to be based on campus. When I'm in Cambridge, I spend a lot of time building relationships with a wide range of colleagues within and outside the university development office. In order to collaborate closely with colleagues and fundraisers across Collegiate Cambridge, it's vital to be there."

If universities can have such great success with staff based on campus, why would any consider hiring in-country staff? The next article features a few of the overseas universities that are on the ground in Hong Kong and the benefits and challenges of their models.



PART

THE IN-COUNTRY ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

FIVE

Although I live 8,000 miles from my family, there are a dozen ways we can communicate with one another, instantaneously and at almost no cost. WhatsApp, Skype, Facebook Messenger, iMessage, WeChat, Google Hangouts... the list goes on. Yet no matter how much we connect with the aid of technology, nothing replaces being together in person.

The same is true in advancement, where in-person meetings and events are key to relationship building, no matter how many letters and e-mails we send in between those meetings. So it's no wonder that as universities have looked to build their communities of support, a few have decided to hire in-country staff in one or more overseas markets.

In-country/local advancement staff in Hong Kong fall into two broad categories: those focused exclusively on advancement and those whose jobs include fundraising and alumni engagement among other responsibilities. Some are part of a regional office that advances their university's broader global strategies, while others are part of an office focused on university advancement only. I spoke with staff from seven different universities representing all of these variations to hear their perspectives on the unique value they contribute to their universities' advancement programs.

Prospect Research and Identification

Gathering research on Hong Kong prospects is often a major challenge for overseas universities. Language barriers, the dearth of publicly available information on wealth and income, and lack of familiarity with the national context are just some of the obstacles. Having staff who live and work in Hong Kong can be a game changer. They can enrich prospect research by providing local knowledge and insights that a university may not be able to gather in any other way.

Catherine Leung, Director of the University of Notre Dame's Hong Kong Global Centre, is a case in point. Like many in-country staff, she grew up in Hong Kong. "Because this is my home, I know which families have been wealthy for generations and the histories of those families, who has been divorced or remarried, etc. I know this from my own life experience and don't have to rely on online research, which often doesn't have this level of detailed information anyway."

Staff also can help with prospect prioritization. Etta Wong, Director of the University of Southern California (USC)'s Hong Kong and South China Office, explains, "It's not easy for advancement officers back on campus to know where to start when facing a list of prospects who live in Hong Kong. I can add a lot of value by reviewing their lists and providing insider information that will help them understand who the best prospects are."

In addition to this targeted support, in-country staff also are constantly building up their university's databases as they represent their institution at local events, mingle at alumni events in the region, and network with others in the community as part of their regular, daily lives in Hong Kong.

Visit Support

In-country staff can provide invaluable assistance when advancement staff and campus leaders visit Hong Kong. This often includes everything from

securing meetings, staffing them, debriefing together, and following up afterward.

Joanna Chan, Advancement Officer in Asia for the University of Alberta (U of A) explains, "My role in the process varies case by case, but in general if I have an established relationship with a prospect, I will set up the meeting, choose the location, join the meeting, and do a lot of the preparation and coordination."

When USC's Etta Wong learns that an advancement officer will be visiting Hong Kong, she tries to determine how much they already know and fill in any gaps. "Our role is to ensure they have the information they need to achieve their goals for the trip," Wong says. "When someone flies 15 hours to have a meeting of 50-60 minutes, they need it to be a very fruitful dialogue. We provide the context that helps maximize the effectiveness of these meetings."

Staff also can help facilitate events. With their local knowledge, they often are better equipped to choose event locations, avoid dates that conflict with holidays or other major events, and arrange logistics. When local staff manage RSVPs, donors don't have to go back and forth with someone in a different time zone if they have questions about bringing a guest or how to find the event location. On site, they can manage check-in and other logistics so that those staff traveling from campus can spend their time interacting with attendees.



Cultural Liaison

Working for the university but located on the ground in the local market, in-country staff have a unique insider/outsider role that allows them to bridge communication gaps and facilitate cross-cultural understanding. Staff often find that donors will call them with questions or feedback they'd never share directly with the university's leadership or advancement staff who visit from abroad. This is partly for practical reasons (like the difficulty of picking up the phone for a quick chat with someone in Canada or the UK in the middle of the day) and partly for cultural reasons.

U of A's Joanna Chan observes, "No matter how often staff members come to Hong Kong, alumni still view them as 'just traveling here.' The dynamic is just different when you are local. They see you as one of them. It also helps that I grew up here, I speak the language, and I'm an alumna myself. Alumni are messaging me on WhatsApp and staying in touch regularly, and so when we talk about the university, they are generally a lot more open with me than with visitors."

For example, one staff person I interviewed shared a story about a donor who politely told visiting university leadership he "would consider" a gift proposal. When a campus gift officer visited the donor again a few months later, he again indicated he was considering it. Eventually, however, the donor called the local staff member and shared that he wasn't actually interested in making the gift.

this donor wasn't comfortable giving an outright refusal in those meetings but instead had communicated his disinterest indirectly. From his perspective, he was politely saying "no" in a way that would save face for the high-ranking university leader who obviously had expended great time and expense to travel to the meeting. From the university's perspective, he was saying "maybe." In the end, it was much easier for him to communicate his "no" to the local staff member with whom he had a more personal relationship and for whom an indirect communication style was second nature.

Hong Kong may seem very westernized on the surface, particularly to those who visit for short periods only and stay along the central thoroughfares of Hong Kong Island. The cultural differences are not glaringly obvious—particularly among alumni of elite, overseas universities. But the differences are real, and it takes time to understand and navigate them. This is one reason universities usually prefer to hire Hong Kongers who were born and raised here for their in-country positions. Yet, that's not to say that someone who wasn't born in Hong Kong can't succeed in these roles.

Simon Phillips, for example, is from the UK and made Hong Kong his home more than six years ago. He's worked for a local organization and is raising a family here. When Simon joined the University of Manchester as Head of Philanthropy (Asia) in 2018, he knew that his years of local experience would be invaluable. "I have a feel for the fundraising environment as well as the nuances and subtlety of communication that wouldn't be as obvious to those who are just visiting."

In-country staff also can shape their institutions' strategies to be more culturally relevant. The University of Toronto (U of T), for example, holds its annual fundraising campaign in Hong Kong around Chinese New Year rather than Christmas or the fiscal year end. Michelle Poon, Associate Director for U of T's Asia-Pacific Advancement Office, explains, "We produce lai see (red pockets) with our logo on them and mail them to donors as a thank you for past support and to encourage their contribution for the new year. Our alumni community is very close, and they like having U of T red pockets to give to other alumni during the holidays."

Although language is rarely an obstacle when engaging alumni of English-speaking universities, it can be a barrier when institutions want to engage parents of current students. Chinese and English are both official languages in Hong Kong, but only 4% of Hong Kongers identify English as their usual spoken language. Local staff who are bilingual (English and Cantonese) or trilingual (English, Cantonese, and Putonghua/Mandarin) can build bridges with parents who may not speak fluent English or may simply prefer to speak with someone in their native language.

Cultivation and Stewardship

Local staff can lay the groundwork for on-campus advancement officers. Notre Dame's Catherine Leung, for example, spends a lot of time educating parents and alumni about fundraising and feeling out interest and inclination. "The idea of philanthropy is new to many of our donors," Leung said. "Why do we need the money? How does it benefit the students? I explain the value of donating and determine if they might be interested, or if they may be better suited to volunteering, helping secure internships, or other engagement with the university."



Because in-country staff typically engage more frequently with prospects and in less formal settings, they often can gain a deeper understanding of giving motivations more quickly than their campus-based counterparts can. As U of T's Michelle Poon shared, "I work closely with the campus-based advancement staff. When a gift officer talks with me about their donor strategy, I can have an honest conversation about whether I think it will be successful or not. If I don't think it's the best approach for that prospect, I can explain why, and we can re-strategize together."

By sustaining relationships between visits from campus leadership, in-country staff also can speed up the cultivation process more than would be possible through visits alone. Mei Yiu, Director of Development and Alumni Engagement in Asia for the University of British Columbia (UBC)'s Asia Pacific Regional Office explains, "Sometimes there are a lot of things to do after a first or second meeting with a prospect, and we are the ones who can do that follow through. We also learn what the prospects value and can shape strategies that will help continue the relationship until the next leadership visit."

In-country staff also can deliver the kind of impromptu stewardship that's often impossible from afar. "It's easy for me to reach out to prospects and say something is happening next week, and I have a couple of tickets if they'd like to join me," says U of A's Joanna Chan. "With our close connection to the Canadian Consul General's office, the University is invited to several events throughout the year, and I can easily extend those invitations to our local alumni."

Responsiveness

Located on the University of Chicago's Hong Kong campus, Prescille Chu Cernosia is Director of Global Advancement – Asia for the Booth School of Business. She finds that "being on the ground is really important in Asia. People expect feedback and resolution right away. They like that they can text someone in the same time zone and not wait through a 24-hour delay. They feel taken care of."

Cernosia works throughout Asia and spends 40-50% of her time traveling, but the destinations are much closer to Hong Kong than to Chicago. "Because it's only three hours away, I can plan a last minute trip to Beijing for an important meeting there with only a couple of days' notice and add some other meetings around it. You don't have that ease when planning a trip to Beijing from Chicago."

Manchester's Simon Phillips echoes this sentiment. "I've had donors cancel a meeting on the same day because they suddenly need to fly off to a business meeting in Shanghai or Jakarta. Because I'm based here in Hong Kong, I can just say 'no problem,' and we will reschedule it for the next week. Even if that happens when I'm on a trip in Singapore, it's fine because I'll be back there in a month anyway."

Symbol of Local Commitment

In addition to all of these practical advantages, having someone on the ground in Hong Kong is a symbolic act. It demonstrates in a visible way that the overseas university is committed to the region. As Manchester's

Simon Phillips said, "It sends a very clear message that we take this seriously. There is a person in your city who is going to look after your relationship. He is here to work with you and support you, on hand anytime, in your time zone. Our donors and volunteers have responded very positively to this investment in the region."

The Challenges

The work is not without its challenges, though. Many of the in-country staff in Hong Kong are solo employees, or part of a team of only two or three people. Few people have the drive, independence, and entrepreneurial spirit required to work alone, thousands of miles from their colleagues. It can be isolating and hard to stay motivated, especially for newer programs that are just finding their groove. Professional development opportunities aren't as abundant as they would be on campus, nor are opportunities for career advancement.

There's also the constant struggle of time zones and work hours. Because everyone else is back on campus, in-country staff are the ones who typically bend their schedules to accommodate campus work hours, rather than vice versa. Staff often take phone calls early in the mornings or late in the evenings, in addition to keeping regular Hong Kong business hours to accommodate donors' needs.

And while in-country staff may have deeper relationships with their local prospects, the flip side is that they have to work harder to sustain their knowledge of and connections to the university. They miss out on over-the-cubicle conversations, casual lunches with coworkers, and ad hoc opportunities to get to know faculty and professors.

Having a boss or other point person on campus who can help navigate these challenges is key. As Booth's Prescille Chu Cernosia explains, "There's simply not as much access to the networks and resources on campus. Fortunately, my manager is extremely connected in Chicago and can facilitate these relationships for me and help keep me informed."

Regular visits back to campus are another crucial ingredient, even if they are only once a year, though some staff return as often as quarterly. These are opportunities to see firsthand what's happening on campus, attend events, meet with academics, and build trust with colleagues through time spent together in person. Through regular visits to campus, in-country staff can ground themselves in the mission and vision of the organizations they work for so that they can bring that excitement back to their alumni and donors in Hong Kong.

Whether international advancement staff are based on campus or abroad, these are specialized roles that require unique skill sets.

PART

RECRUITING THE RIGHT **INTERNATIONAL** **ADVANCEMENT STAFF**

SIX

As the world becomes more globalized, the number of international advancement positions is growing. Find the right candidate goes beyond hiring a talented fundraiser who is willing to travel. Let's take a look at what qualities and skills those who have been successful share.

Many of these job postings relegate the most obvious criteria to a small bullet with an overused catch-phrase, "requires frequent travel." While that vague notion might sound appealing, a candidate's definition of "frequent" may not match yours. When creating a job description, it's critical to be as specific as possible about travel expectations. The interview is an opportunity to probe this more deeply, helping candidates understand the reality of dozens of 17-hour flights, 12-hour time zone differences, and ten-course Chinese dinner banquets when your body thinks it's time for breakfast.

Another practical concern is logistics. Overseas travel entails transactions in foreign currencies, receipts in foreign languages, and different forms of payment than the university might prefer. Visits to China, for example, can be especially challenging, as so much of the Chinese economy operates on digital payment platforms that are inaccessible to foreigners. Outside of the central business districts of the larger Chinese cities, many merchants do not accept Visa or MasterCard. Transactions may need to be done in cash, or with the assistance of local volunteers who have access to digital payments.

Many institutions, especially those new to international fundraising, are not equipped to handle the administrative side of such transactions. Because many international advancement positions are the first of their kind at their universities, they are the ones encountering these issues for the first time. Of necessity, they become part of the process of resolving them. Not everyone who is an excellent fundraiser has the attention to detail and patience required to work through issues like these, and this also should be considered at the hiring stage.

On the ground, international advancement staff need excellent problem-solving skills and the ability to think on their feet. On my first trip to Shanghai, for example, I neglected to exchange my Hong Kong dollars to Chinese yuan in advance, thinking I'd do this at the Shanghai airport or just withdraw yuan from an ATM there. But my flight was delayed, the money changers were closed, and none of the ATMs would accept my foreign card. It was late, so I figured I could resolve this problem in the morning and got into a taxi, only to realize that the taxi driver did not know the English name of my hotel or the road it was on. Thankfully I had a SIM

card that worked in both Hong Kong and China and was able to find the name and address in Chinese (using Bing, not Google, of course, as Google doesn't work in China). On arriving at the hotel, I realized that I could not pay with any of my foreign credit cards, and lacking WeChat pay or AliPay on my phone, I had to work with a helpful bilingual member of the hotel staff to find a way to settle the bill. So many lessons learned!

That experience was stressful, but I was there on a personal trip, so the stakes were low. Now imagine that you are the international advancement officer traveling with your university president at your side and trying to get to an important donor meeting when all of those things went wrong. See what I mean about problem-solving skills and thinking on your feet?

Aside from these practical considerations, it's also essential for international advancement staff to be culturally dexterous. The majority of those interviewed for this article have studied and/or lived abroad as expats. Through this experience, they have learned to closely observe and to better understand and respond to a donor's cultural context.

For example, Nina Cohen Bohn, Director of Principal Gifts & External Relations, Asia Pacific, at London Business School is American but has lived and worked in the UK for many years. Rolf Dietrich, Director of International Development for Penn State University is from the US but has a degree in Asian Studies and previously worked in Singapore and Beijing. Joanna Tong, Senior Associate Director, International for the University of Cambridge is from the UK and spent several years working in Canada.

While prior international experiences like these are not a prerequisite for success, they are a strong indicator that the person has the flexibility and adaptability that international work requires. For those who lack such experiences, it is especially important to develop thoughtful interview questions to tease out a candidate's cultural dexterity. Specific knowledge of the country or region where the staff member will work is helpful, but it is less important than the ability to perceive and adapt to cultural nuances, whatever they may be.

Mimi Fairman, Executive Director for International Development at Carnegie Mellon University is a great case in point. "I worked in Europe for most of my career and also did some work in the Middle East. CMU hired me thinking I'd focus on the Middle East, but by the time I came on board, they decided I should focus on China instead. I'd never even been to China! But I'm having a lot of success there now and learning so much. If you go with an open mind and are respectful, the donors will teach you."



Whether based on campus or in-country, international advancement staff are physically removed from people who are essential to their work, either the donors or the other university staff and faculty. Either way, they need to be skilled in maintaining relationships remotely. This can mean everything from waking up at odd hours to be on a conference call with colleagues in order to maintain connection and rapport, to keeping up with a donor over WhatsApp or WeChat. Fundraisers who have excellent in-person skills but are accustomed to working only with donors closer to home may need some guidance and mentorship in order to find ways to translate those skills into more written and digital communications.

Hiring local staff who will be posted in-country, far from their overseas university's campus, poses its special own challenges. Establishing and maintaining a sense of connection to the institution is chief among them. Michelle Poon, Associate Director, Asia-Pacific Advancement Office, for the University of Toronto, explains, "You have to find the right person, someone who has connections to both the institution and to the local environment. They need to be able to work far from the institution but also need to know it inside and out."

Most of the time, this means hiring an alumna/us, whose personal association will lend instant credibility, and/or someone who has prior work experience at the institution. Poon, for example, not only graduated from U of T, but also worked on campus for three years before moving back home to Hong Kong and taking on her in-country role. Joanna Chan, Advancement Officer in Asia for the University of Alberta, worked on campus in Edmonton for five years before starting her current role in Hong Kong. And Mei Yiu, Director of Development and Alumni Engagement in Asia for the University of British Columbia, completed a master's degree at UBC.

David Cashman, Senior Director, Chicago Regional & International Advancement, at the University of Chicago, reflected, "It's important for our staff who are not based in Chicago to be very credible representatives of the University. An alum's credibility comes from a much stronger place than someone who has no prior experience at the university. We have some staff overseas who are not alumni, and they have found success in their roles, but they struggle at times with credibility and connection."

When hiring someone without a prior university affiliation, it is essential to invest in an on-boarding process that includes ample time on campus to experience the institution first-hand as well as a regular schedule of return visits. For example, Simon Phillips, Head of Philanthropy (Asia), is not an alumnus of his institution, the University of Manchester. He did, however, graduate from the University of Leeds, just an hour away, and spent time on the Manchester campus during his university days visiting friends there – both factors that contribute to his credibility and help him foster "a cordial connection" with alumni he meets today. As part of his onboarding process, he spent two full weeks on campus meeting with faculty and staff, attending events, and getting a feel for the culture of the institution today. He also returns to campus quarterly, with visits timed to coincide with important campus events and meetings, further strengthening his bonds.

Another unique challenge for in-country positions is that the majority are blended roles that can include everything from recruiting, marketing, and programming to fundraising and alumni engagement. Funding for the position may come from multiple departments, which complicates hiring decisions, reporting lines, and performance evaluations. And with job

responsibilities crossing so many areas of expertise, it can be hard to find staff who are comfortable with, let alone skilled at, all these different areas.

That said, most of the in-country staff in blended roles do not manage a donor portfolio or have personal performance metrics for visits and proposals. Instead, they support the advancement efforts of their campus-based colleagues, providing insight, connections, planning, and follow-up support that increases their colleagues' effectiveness and efficiency when traveling to Hong Kong.

This is important to keep in mind when recruiting, as "textbook" fundraising experience often is not necessary for success. Those who excel at in-country roles are more likely to have diverse work histories that gave them experience in several different areas. They tend to be self-starters who have an entrepreneurial attitude and broad connections in Hong Kong or wherever they are stationed.

"Your local staff need to be proactive and willing to go out and make things happen," recommends Catherine Leung, Director, Hong Kong Global Centre for the University of Notre Dame. "If you hire an introverted person who is just sitting around waiting for direction from campus, they simply will not succeed. These roles are what you make of them."

International advancement positions are increasing around the world, and best practice is only beginning to be defined. Yet it's clear that those who possess certain qualities and skills are more likely to succeed in these roles. They are entrepreneurial self-starters. They are flexible, adaptable, and patient. And they are culturally dexterous.

Recruiting the right talent is key, but what else should a university consider in their journey of international advancement?



PART

CONCLUSION - EMERGING BEST PRACTICES IN INTERNATIONAL ADVANCEMENT

SEVEN

It all started with two notable gifts from Hong Kong: Gordon Wu's \$100 million to Princeton in 1995 and the Chan family's \$350 million to Harvard in 2014. Wu's was the first major gift from a Hong Kong philanthropist to a US university, while the Chans' gift made global headlines as the largest donation to Harvard in its history.

Gifts like these inspired universities throughout the world to take a second look at how they were (or were not) engaging their alumni, friends, and donors who lived far beyond campus. By putting transnational university fundraising in the spotlight, they helped build a case for international advancement.

Although the number of universities engaged in international advancement has been increasing ever since – and especially since 2014 – it is still a relatively young specialization. Nonetheless, the community of international advancement professionals is starting to coalesce and identify best practices.

In this conclusion to the series, I share seven tips for organizations just starting to plan their own international advancement programs.

First, do your homework

An international advancement program requires significant budgetary resources, uniquely qualified staff, and a good deal of time before you will see a positive ROI. Do your homework before making the jump.

Which regions align with your institution's strategic priorities? (This is a big one... more on this below.) In which global markets do you have significant cohorts of alumni? Where do you already have close friends and advocates who can help with strategy and networking? Where are there existing networks, such as alumni associations or clubs that you can build on? What does the data tell you about your prospects and their potential?

At the same time, don't get stuck on issues like whether or not you need a local foundation or in-country giving vehicle, as these can be sorted out in due time. While many of the overseas institutions that are very active in Hong Kong have a local foundation under Section 88 of the tax code, most launched their foundations only after their programs had established some traction. Many other institutions ask their donors to make gifts to the institution directly and find that this is sufficient, particularly if they are focusing only on major and principal gifts.

Involve your institutional leadership

To succeed in international advancement, you need to focus on markets that align with your institution's strategic priorities. You should be able to answer the question, "Why are you focusing on Hong Kong [or anywhere else]" with a rationale that reflects back on your strategic plan. Without this, you risk the perception that you've chosen the region only because there are wealthy alumni who you want to solicit for initiatives that have no resonance in the local market.

No matter how skilled and charismatic your international advancement staff are, they cannot do this work alone. The physical presence of your institutional leadership is vital to your success. Your university president, vice chancellor, provost, and/or deans need to visit the region regularly,

helping forge connections that will advance the institution's strategic goals in the region as well as its fundraising goals.

For example, one institution with an exceptionally strong advancement program in Hong Kong shared that they owe their success in part to their university president's active presence in the region. While many institutions' leaders through Asia once every 12-18 months, their president is in Asia multiple times a year with at least one visit to Hong Kong every year. Another institution's president demonstrated his commitment to the region by traveling to Hong Kong just two months after assuming his post.

Determining the right pattern and frequency of leadership visits should be one of the earliest steps in building your international advancement program. What's right for one institution is not necessarily right for another, but it's safe to say that if a region is a clear priority for your institution's leadership, your institution is more likely to be a priority for those donors.

Make a long-term commitment

If you haven't yet started your international advancement journey, you may be tempted to start out with a small pilot program, e.g., hiring a single staff person on a 2-year contract to see what progress s/he can make and then determining whether to continue the program based on that person's success. Those in the field, however, strongly advise against the "pilot" approach.

Michelle Poon, Associate Director for the Asia-Pacific Advancement Office of the University of Toronto, explains, "Our alumni and donors want a deep, long-term engagement with the university, and those relationships take time to build. If donors know you are committing to two years only, they will be less likely to get engaged at all. On the other hand, if you have some small successes in those first two years but back out because it was not as much success as you hoped, you will have to do serious damage control."

Ivan Shin, Executive Director of International Development at the University of New South Wales, adds, "If you are going to make Hong Kong a priority, you need to commit for the long-term. Building relationships takes time, especially in Asia. The institution has to be authentically committed. Current and prospective donors don't want to feel like you are testing the waters and might pull back at any moment."

This is especially true if you are considering a local/in-county hire. Joanna Chan, who is posted in Hong Kong as Advancement Officer in Asia for the University of Alberta, advises, "You can't think short-term if you are placing someone in an international market. Business in Asia is based on relationships. Donors want to get to know you and need to trust you as a person. If they know you are only temporary, they won't want to invest in building that long-term relationship with you."

You will need your volunteers more than ever

"Find great volunteers. You will need to depend on them," advises Tara Turner, Director, Global and Institutional Philanthropy for the University of Queensland. Volunteers will prove helpful in all the usual ways—networking, advising, event planning, fundraising—and their value will be further amplified by their overseas location. They are the experts you can tap for

advice about the local market. They can be your cultural liaisons, helping you navigate cultural nuances and making sure your materials and messages are appropriate. They can help with logistics that might seem insurmountably difficult from afar, such as finding an appropriate venue for a lunch meeting in a city you've never visited to arranging an alumni event that might involve coordination with venue staff who speak a foreign language. If you will have staff in-country, your volunteers might even be able to provide low or no-cost office space, legal advice, or other in-kind support.

Volunteers also provide essential knowledge about your prospects' networks, interests, and values – insights that simply are not available through research alone. Their introductions can open the doors to meetings you would not be able to secure otherwise.

Tune in to cultural difference

"Don't make assumptions," cautions Joanna Tong, Senior Associate Director, International for the University of Cambridge. "Hong Kong is very westernized, but don't take it for granted that donors are thinking the same way you do."

When you and the donor both speak English, it can be especially easy to fall into the trap of thinking that you both see a conversation the same way. It's important to tune in to non-verbal clues that indicate when you are saying one thing but the donor is hearing something different. Because of the importance of "face" in Asian cultures, a donor might prefer to let a misunderstanding slide by rather than directly state that they don't understand you (or that you aren't understanding them). Listening carefully, asking questions to ensure shared understanding, and restating important ideas in a few different ways can help ensure you both walk away with the same impression of the conversation.

One especially sensitive area where this comes up is around the question of whether a donation might help a donor's son or daughter gain admission into the university. Despite policies against "pay for play" admissions, some donors, especially those who are new to philanthropy, still wonder if their gift might open a door. Few will ask the question outright however. Instead, they are more likely to bring it up indirectly and will expect an equally indirect answer from you. In cases like this, it is essential to bring the question to the surface, address it head-on, and leave no room for interpretation.

You can't rely on sweeping generalizations

It's natural to look for generalizations, especially when trying to make sense of a new and unfamiliar situation. Unfortunately, they are rarely accurate or helpful. Each university has its own strategic priorities, a distinct culture, and a range of different individual personalities it brings to the table. This makes it difficult to compare different institutions' fundraising experiences in Hong Kong or any other market.

For example, when I asked institutions which giving priorities were most attractive to their donors in Hong Kong, answers were all over the map. Some said that scholarships were far and away the most popular giving opportunity among their Hong Kong donors. Yet others spoke just as strongly about faculty support, medical research, entrepreneurship initiatives, or capital projects.

Answers were rooted more in each institution's priorities and how long it had been working in the region than in any "rule of thumb" about donors from Hong Kong. Scholarships, for example, are often popular among first-time donors the world over, as they provide a modestly priced way to have a direct and easily understandable impact. They are great "entry" or "test" gifts. As a result, those institutions that are newer to fundraising in Hong Kong are more likely to see a lot of interest in scholarships, whereas those that have been active in the region for a longer time might have donors supporting a more diverse array of giving priorities.

Over time, you will uncover some commonalities among your own alumni and donors, from which you might make generalizations that will help new staff understand the environment. But until you really know your own community, be wary of formulating strategies based on sweeping generalizations about the market.



Hong Kong Is/Isn't China

At Hong Kong's recent Art Central fair, artist Ko Siu Lan presented the artwork *New Territories, Old Territories*, an interactive piece made up of three rotating pillars with the word pairs "Hong Kong/China," "is/isn't," "China/Hong Kong." As I looked at the piece, I thought, this is perhaps the best possible way to sum up the complex relationship between the SAR and the PRC. Hong Kong is part of China. And it also is not.

In this blog series, I've focused on Hong Kong because this is where I live and work, but the reality is that every institution working in Hong Kong also is engaging its alumni and building relationships with potential donors in mainland China. The reason is simple: China is the world's largest source country for international students and likely will remain so for years to come.

In 2017, there were over 1,450,000 Chinese students enrolled in overseas higher education institutions. In the United Kingdom, Chinese students make up 33% of all non-EU students, and they constitute nearly the same percent of all international students in the United States. In Australia and New Zealand, it's even higher—43% and 57% respectively.

There is great opportunity in China, but it comes with additional challenges. While no visa is required for travel to Hong Kong from 170 countries, most everyone needs a visa to enter China. While Hong Kong prides itself on freedom of speech and press, Chinese censorship prevents access to websites like Facebook and Google, a huge obstacle for institutions that rely on these platforms. While a donor from Hong Kong can contribute as much or little to your institution as s/he would like, foreign exchange controls limit the funds that can leave mainland China.

And then there's China's new Charity Law. Enacted in 2016, the Charity Law prohibits foreign organizations from soliciting donations in China. Its intention was to establish legal regulations that would help build trust and accountability in the country's philanthropic sector, not to prohibit overseas universities from engaging their alumni in China. Even so, the letter of the law does not make this differentiation.

As is common in Chinese lawmaking, the Charity Law provides a high-level blueprint and the specifics of its implementation and enforcement will be worked out over time. In the meantime, organizations have to make their own assessment of which activities they feel are in line with the law and which are not. Two helpful resources are the International Center for Not-for-Profit Law's FAQ sheet, which provide a fairly concise overview of the law, and the United Nations Development Programme's Handbook of Charity Law of the People's Republic of China, which gives a much more extensive history, context, and analysis of the law and its implications.

For all these reasons, many institutions use Hong Kong as their home base for fundraising in China.

While they might host cultivation events on the mainland, the actual solicitation will take place in Hong Kong. With increasingly easy access between the mainland and Hong Kong, it's also common to find more and more mainland Chinese alumni attending events held in Hong Kong.

At a recent event that Penn State University held in Hong Kong, for example, a third of the attendees were from the mainland. Rolf Dietrich, Director

of International Development, shared, "The majority of Penn State's alumni in Hong Kong are expats, either American ex-pats or Chinese ex-pats who are running a business in Hong Kong. Hong Kong today has to be viewed within the context of China and the 'Greater Bay Area.' You can't view your work there in isolation anymore."

When China regained sovereignty over Hong Kong in 1997, the principle of "one country, two systems" was put into place with an expiration date of 2047. While there's no clear understanding about what that date will bring, many Hong Kong residents already feel the SAR's shift toward the mainland. Last year saw the opening of a new high speed railway station in Hong Kong and the Hong Kong-Zhuhai-Macao Bridge—both of which create faster and easier access across the border. The boundaries are blurring.





Conclusion

International Advancement is a growing industry and has become a critical component of many institutions' engagement and fundraising strategies. For the advancement professional, navigating evolving political landscapes, learning new cultures, and building connections internationally is challenging, exciting and rewarding.

If you are just beginning to explore international advancement and make plans for your own program, GG+A invites you to contact us for a conversation about your goals and how we can support them. We also suggest that you check out the following additional resources:

- + The Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) has a wealth of information on this topic, including a collection of articles in their Subject Guide to International Fundraising multi-day, immersive International Fundraising Study Tours; International Advancement conferences; and more.
- + The Charities Aid Foundation's World Giving Index and the Centre for Asian Philanthropy and Society's (CAPS's) Doing Good Index provide excellent overviews of the philanthropic environment in countries across the globe.
- + Published in January 2018, the CAPS publication Pragmatic Philanthropy: Asian Charity Explained is a book I wish had been written before I moved to Asia. The chapter on the history of giving in Asia includes summaries of eleven Asian economies that will help you understand the basis for each country's current understanding of and practices of philanthropy.
- + Many organizations publish global and regional wealth reports, including Capgemini, Credit Suisse, Knight Frank, Coutts, and WealthX. All can be found online and downloaded free of charge.
- + The Hurun Report is best known for its China Rich List but also has many other valuable resources. Lists provides both name-level data and big-picture insights (e.g, half of those on the China Rich List live in just seven Chinese cities, with Beijing and Shenzhen leading the pack). Most Hurun lists can even be exported into Excel.
- + The Hong Kong Tatler also publishes a variety of philanthropy lists, including the recent list of "50 Philanthropists in Asia Who Are Changing the World."
- + Fundraising Across Borders is a LinkedIn group for advancement professionals at universities and other organizations that are fundraising transnationally, where individuals can share insights, ask questions, and network with others in similar roles.

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