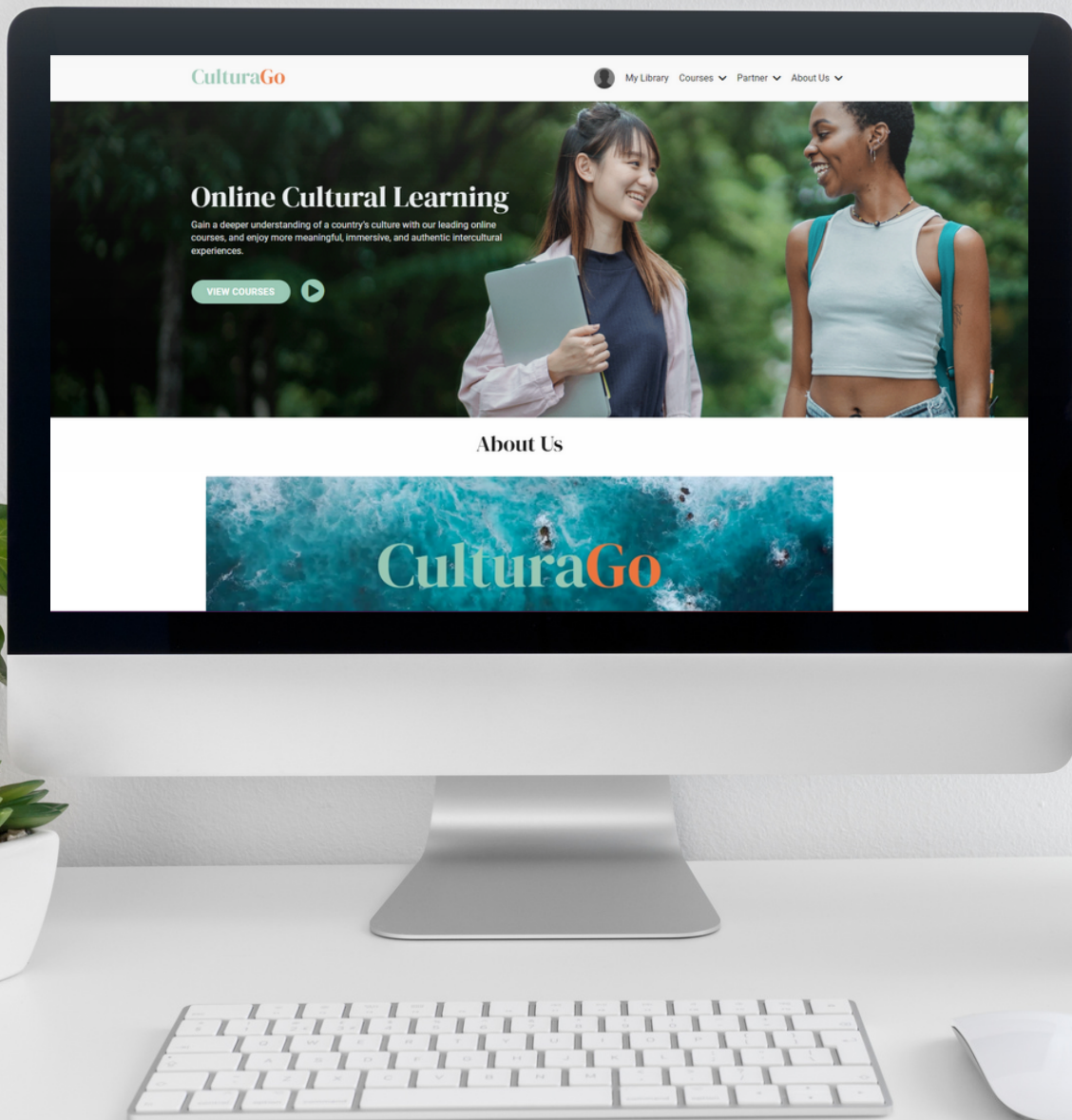

YEAR IN REVIEW

2022

CulturaGo
Online cultural learning.





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LETTER FROM THE CEO



Dear Readers

A warm welcome to CulturaGo's Year in Review 2022.

Less than two years ago, the idea behind CulturaGo was just a dream. Thanks to the coming together of our incredible and diverse global team we have created high-quality, informative, accountable, and truly inclusive cultural learning tools for travelers worldwide - something unique and very much needed in the world today.

We set out to create CulturaGo with the simple vision of educating the world about culture, with the collective belief that the true purpose and benefit of international study and work abroad experiences can be unlocked and supported by creating meaningful connections, powerful encounters and bonds that transcend barriers of culture, nationality, race, ethnicity, sexuality and gender.

To solve some of the world's most complex problems we need to work with the diverse perspectives around us. CulturaGo believes in giving people the chance to engage more effectively with different worldviews from a place of empathy, understanding and competence through cultural preparation.

By fostering cultural preparation, students and young professionals everywhere can avoid putting the benefits of their experiences abroad at risk and develop an essential set of skills for their career readiness and maximum employability in today's globalized job market.

We've come together to create this Year in Review that celebrates the work we've done to date and gives recognition to everyone involved. We provide an account of how CulturaGo's courses have been received and how that precious feedback is informing our future plans. Without the incredible community of investors, mentors, partners, and learners that surrounds CulturaGo and supports its mission, we'd be nowhere. Thank you, all!

We are capping off a fantastic year and we are looking forward to a productive and exciting 2023.

Warm Regards
Liam Kelly

INTRODUCTION

This Year in Review 2022 condenses the achievements of CulturaGo's work for the current year and presents the results of the feedback survey that we administered to our community of learners.

CulturaGo focuses on constantly improving its offering to match an accelerating globalized world. For that reason, tracking, reporting on and learning from our progress is critical.

This Review starts off by introducing CulturaGo as a company, our mission and the strategies we intend to use to tackle some of the most pressing issues in the field of international education and the future of work. We proceed to illustrate how our country-specific and identity-specific courses are made.

We then move on to present the qualitative data that we collected through the feedback survey that we administered to our community of learners and to professionals in the fields of study and work abroad. The section also includes our action plan to improve our resources based on the most asked questions from our respondents in the short, medium and long term.

The final section of this Year in Review 2022 showcases the Partnerships that we forged during the year with Higher Education institutions, professional training providers, and travel organizations. Direct feedback from our community from a variety of sources can be found in this section, right before our Closing Note, highlighting what awaits CulturaGo in 2023.



ABOUT CULTURAGO

CulturaGo, Inc. is a US-based ed-tech company that creates destination-specific and identity-specific online cultural preparation courses. Our mission is to educate the world about culture. We are doing so by creating a global community of culturally aware travelers who are coming together to learn about the cultures they are traveling to, and working with, through the innovative and informative learning experiences that we design.

Our mission is to educate the world about culture.

We are doing so by creating a global community of culturally aware travelers.



Our resources give international students, global workers, travelers and migrants a solid foundation to successfully engage with the culture of the destination they are about to enter or have already entered. The aims of our courses include:

- Enhancing travel experiences.
- Promoting intercultural engagement outside of 'expat bubbles'.
- Amplifying educational and professional outcomes.
- Raising cultural intelligence.



CulturaGo looks to solve an often overlooked problem: cultural integration, or rather, a lack thereof. In an ever-changing globalized world, both digitally and physically, we more than ever need to gather the skills and tools to enhance the benefits of engaging with different cultures, whether that be during studies, travels or in one’s professional life.

We take an intersectional approach to creating our resources. Our identity-based DEI modules look at what it is like to be part of an under-estimated¹ group in each destination, whether that be because of race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender identity, or a combination of these. In the same way as our courses have been created, CulturaGo has been developed by a diverse and decentralized team spanning continents, time zones, identities and skill sets.

We have just reached the milestone of 680 learners² enrolled, we are growing at a steady pace and we are quickly adapting and perfecting our development process as we go. A big thank you goes out to all the learners, partners and professionals in the field who took our courses and shared their valuable feedback with us.

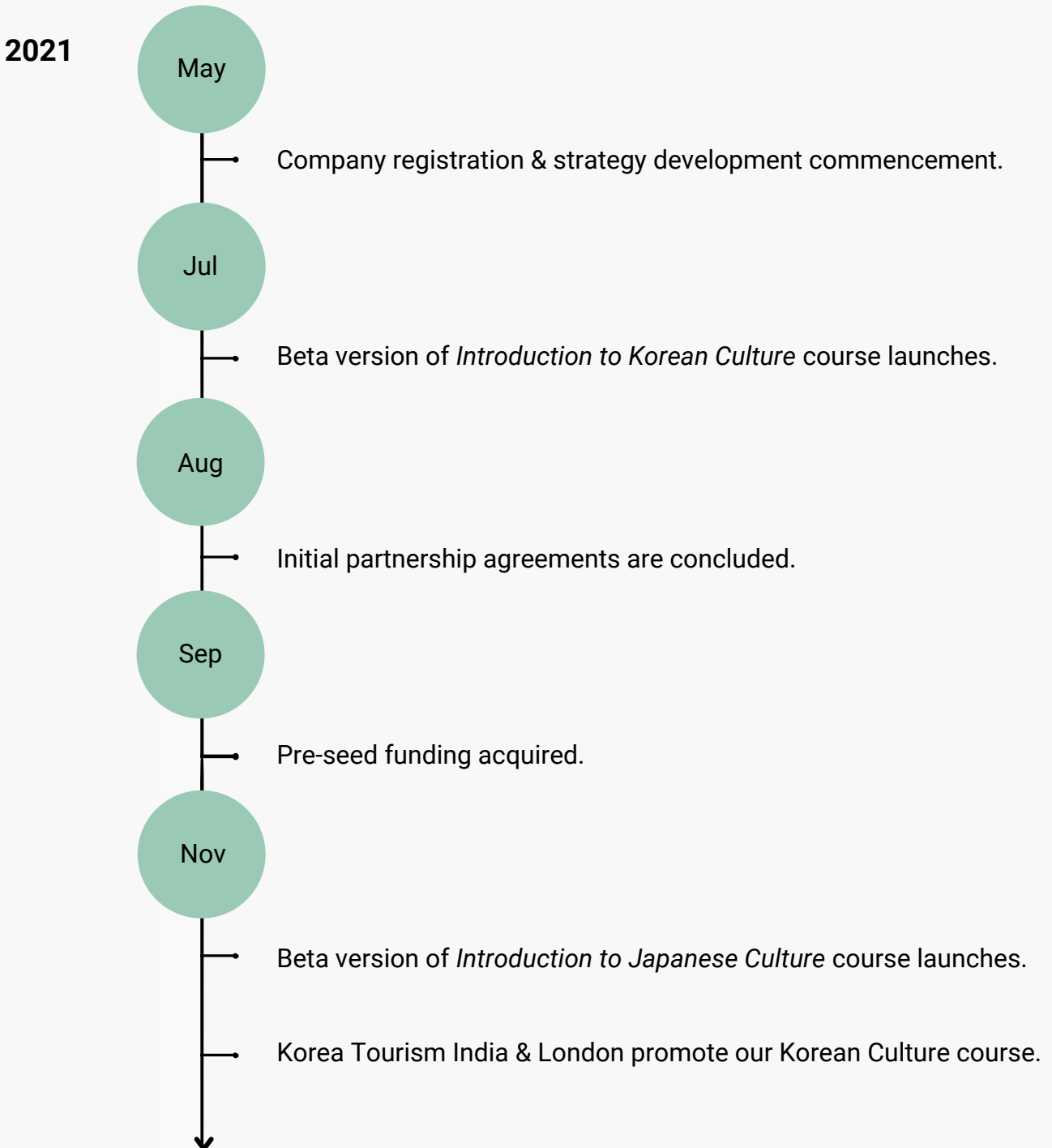
Our learners access our courses by finding us directly online or through our Partners. Our main partners include higher Education institutions, predominantly US universities, as well as TEFL training providers, travel agents and internship providers. We have five culture courses developed: UK, Italy, Spain, South Korea, and Japan, with plans to create new courses on a host of cultures in 2023.



1 R. Tulshyan (2022), *Inclusion on Purpose. An Intersectional Approach to Creating a Culture of Belonging at Work*, Cambridge MA: MIT Press.
 2 Latest update 12/13/2022.

COMPANY MILESTONES

To celebrate CulturaGo’s achievements, here is a chronicle of the key milestones that were reached by the company. As 2021 did not see a Year in Review, we are including it below along with this year’s log.



2021

Dec

- Beta version of *Introduction to Spanish Culture* course launches.
- 4 universities sign up to our free trial.
- Our team continues to grow, as we bring on both specialist consultants and full-time members.

2022

Jan

- *Introduction to Spanish, Korean and Japanese Culture* courses officially launch.
- We sign our first large agreement with Ireland-based PremierTEFL and TEFL Institute.
- The new culturago.com official website is launched.
- Ana Chemaly (Content Lead) and Marcello Francioni (Head of Education) join the team.

Feb

- Maria Mazur (Head of Community), Arien Atterberry (Partnership Manager) and Courage Sengwe (Business Support) join the team.
- Asia Internship Program joins CulturaGo as a Partner.
- First Glocal Partnership signed with FELGTBI+ (Spain).



2022

Mar

We present and launch the beta version of our *Introduction to UK Culture* course at the 2022 Pie Live in London.

Hamilton College signs up as our first US University Partner, along with Asia Institute as our first study abroad provider.

Apr

Over 100 students from 12 universities enroll in our free launch trial.

CulturaGo is nominated for Innovative Technology at the GoAbroad Innovation Awards.

May

George Mason University and the University of Michigan sign up as Partners, resulting in their learners all receiving access to our courses.

300 active learners mark reached within our free trial across more than 15 universities.

Our *Introduction to Italian Culture* course launches.

Jun - Nov

Our Partner network grows to include Spanish Gap Year, Columbus State University, Virginia Wesleyan University, Japan Study (Earlham College), Centre College and Wartburg College.

Identities, Diversity and Inclusion modules for South Korea, Italy and Spain are launched.

Revamp of Japan, South Korea and Spain courses commenced.

December 2022:

CulturaGo receives investment from a US-based higher education industry partner. Official announcement to take place in 2023.

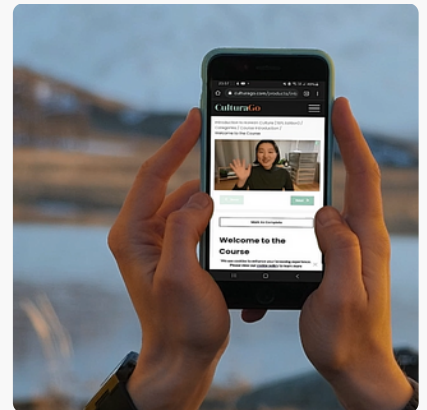
THE PROBLEMS WE'RE SOLVING

Cultural intelligence:

An individual's capability to function effectively in culturally diverse contexts; a key individual attribute that influences the extent to which individuals actively engage in experiential learning during their international work assignments.³

We believe that those working, studying or traveling abroad lack adequate destination-specific and identity-specific cultural preparation designed to help their adjustment into a new cultural environment. By focusing on fostering cultural intelligence (CQ) and easing cultural adjustment, our learners are able to increase their cultural integration and enhance their experience abroad. As a consequence, they can improve their professional and academic prospects.

It is a well-known fact that globalization processes are progressively becoming an integral part of life for people everywhere. More and more people are studying abroad, taking foreign jobs, learning new languages, teaching languages, marrying into new cultures, or simply embarking on more locally attuned travel experiences.



³ Ng, Kok-Yee, Van Dyne, Lynn, & Ang, Soon (2009). 'From experience to experiential learning: Cultural intelligence as a learning capability for global leader development'. *Academy of Management of Management Learning and Education* 8, pp. 511-526.

This trend has generated an increasing demand for people with intercultural and inter-identity competency to seamlessly and effectively engage with different cultures from a place of sensitivity and respect. Cultural preparation is a highly transferable skill set that directly translates into career readiness for students and young professionals facing the present globalized job market. Providing this kind of preparation is exactly the role that CulturaGo is aiming to fill on a global scale.



For employers or institutions, a lack of cultural integration directly links to dropout rates in educational programs, travel experiences and the workplace. Miscommunication can lead to underperformance at university and in the workplace, and strain relationships between institutions.

For travelers, difficulty in adjusting and insufficient cultural integration diminishes the impact and benefit of their experience abroad. Isolation in an unknown cultural environment can affect mental health and exacerbate already existing issues, especially among the youth.



FOCUS ON YOUTH

CulturaGo currently focuses on empowering young adults, who represent a major driving demographic in international travel and education as well as global employment mobility.⁴ Evidence shows that international mobility dramatically increases employability and is linked to higher chances of obtaining top marks for one’s assessments.⁵

However, these benefits can be put at risk by culture shock, that is, being under-prepared for the culture of your destination. CulturaGo is our way of assisting travelers, students and workers world-wide by helping them lay a cultural foundation before departure and during their time abroad.



RESPECTING CULTURES

Insensitive cultural encounters can be harmful to local populations and cultural heritage. This can often stem from travelers not being adequately prepared for their destination's culture and being unaware of the power dynamics at work. There is currently no destination-specific content that provides travelers with the knowledge needed to make every cultural encounter a cultural exchange that enriches both parties.

⁴ <https://www.wysetc.org/research/the-power-of-youth-travel/>

⁵ Nienaber, Birte et al. (2020). 'Challenging Youth Unemployment Through International Mobility'. *Journal of Social and Economic Statistics* 9, pp. 5-27.

FOCUS ON IDENTITIES AND INCLUSION

Global awareness around the need to understand, engage with and support different identities, whether they be related to race, ethnicity, gender, or sexuality, is on the rise. On top of having historically less access to study abroad opportunities, students from under-estimated backgrounds have to adjust to a new cultural environment while navigating how their race, gender presentation, sexual orientation, faith and disabilities will affect their experience. These layers of uncertainty around one's identity can cause anxiety, resulting in longer adjustment time and diminished focus on one's key achievements.



FOR OUR PARTNERS

We acknowledge the immense work, focus and value our partners bring to the industries of higher education, language learning, travel and beyond. We've realized, and tested on the road, that a destination-specific cultural preparation course is a greatly beneficial and highly nuanced offering that requires significant time, human and financial resources to implement. We're here to ease that process.

By becoming Partners of CulturaGo, institutions and organizations can benefit from including our online resources in their pre-departure orientation. Thanks to our versatile Learning Management System and our customized content packages, our courses can be simply and effectively integrated into already existing pre-departure processes. We want to make inclusive and all-round cultural support abroad as easy as possible for our Partners to offer to their communities.

THE SOLUTION WE OFFER

OUR COURSES

CulturaGo is developing a global community of culturally-aware travelers and organizations that collectively respect the need to understand different cultures and value cultural exchange that is curious, informed, aware and rooted in empathy.



CulturaGo

CULTURAL AWARENESS

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE

CULTURAL CURIOSITY

CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING

CulturaGo's online cultural preparation courses achieve precisely that. Academic expertise, first-hand experiences through video interviews from locals and expats, and engaging visuals are mixed in an accessible style and flexible format to introduce local cultures to learners who may have little to no previous knowledge of their destination. By raising relevant issues and providing practical tips, our courses guide travelers in their everyday life abroad so that they can culturally integrate and succeed in their endeavors.

CulturaGo has launched and offers five destination-specific cultural preparation courses:



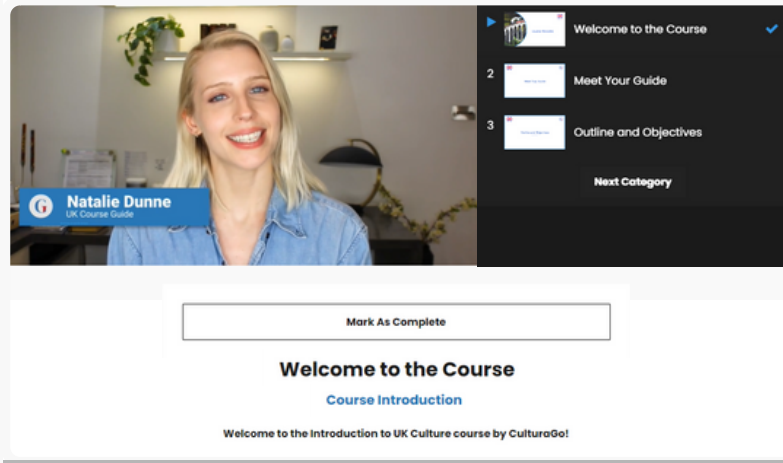
Each course is formed by four to six different modules that cover important topics for everyday life abroad, such as communication style, adjustment strategies, how to behave in public, at the table, at university and at the office, how to enjoy your destination’s culture like a local and what to expect when you are part of a gender, sexual, racial or ethnic minority.

LEARNING EXPERIENCE

In developing our courses, we follow these statements:

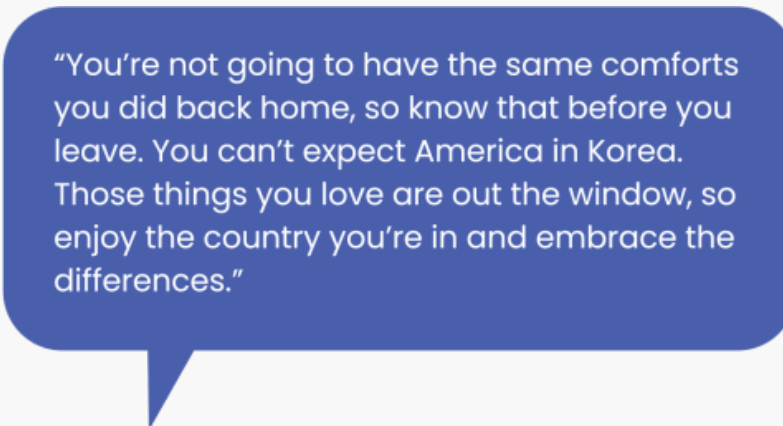
Learning should be immersive.

Follow our engaging course guides in a visually stimulating learning environment, learn from a multitude of identities sharing their experiences via video interviews and test your knowledge through fun quizzes.



Learning should be practical.

Our content is filled with lived experiences, tips and words of advice that are easy to apply to your everyday life abroad.



Learning should be accessible.

We offer a flawless learning experience on mobile and desktop alike. Learners should be able to learn anywhere and on the go.

Learning should follow your pace.

Our asynchronous courses take between 4 and 6 hours to complete, and learners can progress according to their own schedules.



COURSE DEVELOPMENT

We believe in creating fact-checked learning material that is up to date and accountable. In particular, accountability means that the information presented foregrounds cultural bias and it is backed up by the most recent literature in the Social Sciences.

Our courses are authored by experts in the culture of each destination who have established lived experience in the country. Authors include social scientists, researchers, journalists and travel writers.

In addition, the courses are audited by an experienced academic member of staff to ensure that the material presented meets high quality standards and is the most relevant to the learners' upcoming experience.



IDENTITY-BASED MODULES

In our efforts to better support students when it comes to navigating a different culture in terms of their unique identities and the identities of those around them, we equipped each of our courses with an *Identity, Diversity and Inclusion* Module. We adopted both a country-specific and intersectional approach to help all learners, no matter how they identify, an opportunity to foster greater understanding and awareness of the unique challenges that either they or their peers may face, depending on the country they are about to enter.



DEI specialist, Elisabet Garcia, designed a framework specifically for CulturaGo to allow for the highest level of comprehensiveness and awareness.

The topics discussed cover:

Navigating Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Understanding Gender Dynamics

Exploring Sexual and Gender Diversity

Relating with Religions (coming soon)

Dealing with Disabilities (coming soon)

Being a Heritage and Diaspora-Seeker
(coming soon)



CulturaGo GLOCAL PARTNERSHIPS

Cultural preparation catered to your unique identity.



Through our Identity-based modules, we started aligning CulturaGo Glocal Partnerships with a different civil rights organization for each destination. Our first Glocal Partnership was with FELGTBI+, one of Spain's most prominent LGBTQ+ rights associations. Organizations source authors that bring their first-hand experience to the courses.

In return, CulturaGo highlights the organization's work and commits to create bespoke material to support the organization's networks.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

An important component of CulturaGo’s courses is providing learners with a growing amount of Health and Safety guidance with a special focus on assisting the wellbeing of minority identities, whether this be related to race, gender or sexuality.



This content is designed to support learners’ adjustment process and minimize risk while abroad. Our guidance includes:

 Key Tip

Many students feel like they should be ‘always on’ and constantly studying. Keeping set work hours can help avoid this. Even if 9-to-5 hours aren’t practical for you, you should find a way to keep a healthy boundary between work and downtime.



- Emergency contacts in the country
- Local associations to turn to for support
- Practical key tips about going out and dating
- Video testimonials from locals and expats

We keep our content updated and appropriate for each country and implement a mix of visual and written formats to aid information retention for different learning styles. This way, learners understand what to expect and which situations to avoid.



CULTURAGO LEARNER SURVEY FINDINGS

In an effort to better understand the impact we're making and how we can improve, we called for detailed feedback from 50 learners within our community. We want to thank them all for taking the time to give us their feedback.

The Year in Review 2022 represents the first step of a broader internal research project. At the current stage, the scope of our investigation lies in the reception of CulturaGo's courses. Feedback is vital to understand how we can perfect the formula we have crafted in order to create the most compelling and inclusive learning experience possible. An improved and perfected course has the potential to be applied to progressively more new countries, but also inform new types of content aimed at very different segments of the population.

The data generated for this Review will inform the subsequent stages of the project. Further investigation will focus on the benefits of cultural preparation and will compare and contrast sets of respondents who have gone abroad: on the one side, CulturaGo learners, and on the other, interviewees who did not take a CulturaGo course. That way, we will be able to assess how the experience of travelers is influenced by cultural preparation on issues such as adapting, dealing with culture shock and navigating new environments as an individual from an under-estimated group.



We found our learners' perspectives incredibly insightful and decided to build a plan that would incorporate many of their suggestions both in the short and long term. We immediately took action and between May and July 2022 we conducted a systematic revamp of our Japan, Spain and South Korea courses to make them more compact and visually engaging, following the trend of our UK and Italy courses. Other suggestions to be implemented through 2023 are discussed in the *What can we do to improve our courses?* section below.

Between June and August 2022, we also implemented *Identities, Diversity and Inclusion* modules for Italy, Spain and South Korea in order to make our learning experience more complete, inclusive and uniform across all our courses.

It is important to note that, while we strive to provide comprehensive cultural preparation including detailed information on all aspects of moving, studying and working in a different country, learners may need to do some external research on more technical aspects, such as visa requirements and finances. That said, our courses aim to provide insight on whether the processes involved are lengthy, hard or easy, and to point learners toward the kind of information they should seek.

A learner's journey to cultural immersion....

1



2



3



4



5



PARTICIPANTS

The feedback came from 50 students. The largest respondent group is represented by US university students (69.6%), who took CulturaGo’s courses prior to traveling to the UK, Korea, Japan, Spain and Italy. Other respondents include customers of study abroad service providers, interns and ESOL teachers.

As Figure 1 shows, among our university student respondents, the courses that gathered the most attention were South Korea, followed by Spain and the UK. The Italian course was included in the survey but the sample of responses available was too small to be included in the visualizations.

Which country's course did you take?

44 responses

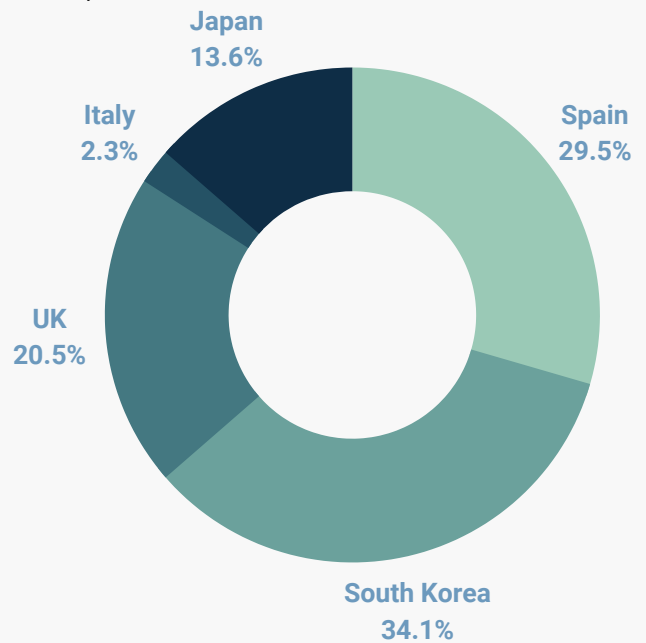


Figure 1: Distribution of courses taken by US university student respondents by country.

METHODOLOGY

Learners accessed our courses through our Learning Management System. After completing the course, they received a Google Form survey containing multiple-choice questions and open questions. Responses were collected from January to July 2022. As our sample was limited in number, we opted for a mixed approach that paired both quantitative and qualitative data analysis to gain a more rounded insight into our learners’ needs.

We recognize that our sample has limitations as far as demographics go to provide definitive answers that are applicable on a global scale. Nonetheless, the following results should be interpreted as a starting point on which to build and keep improving our products and in finetuning our survey methods.

Finally, we administered a survey for courses that presented variation with regards to the module structure and number of modules. This internal variation is due to the rapidly adaptive nature of CulturaGo’s business, with the goal of unifying our courses as much as possible in the future. In our analysis we took into account how the presence or absence of *Identities, Diversity and Inclusion* modules in particular has affected the survey responses.

Analysis was produced using course feedback from learners with regards to the below modules:



Introduction to Spanish Culture

5 modules

(The *Identities* module was introduced in the summer of 2022)



Introduction to Korean Culture

5 modules

(The *Identities* module was introduced in the summer of 2022)



Introduction to Italian Culture

5 modules

(The *Identities* module was introduced in the summer of 2022)



Introduction to Japanese Culture

6 modules

(Including one *Identities* module)



Introduction to UK Culture

4 modules

(Including one *Identities* module)

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research addresses the following questions:

1. How relevant are CulturaGo's courses to the learners' experience?
2. What are CulturaGo's strengths?
3. What can we do to improve our courses?

The quantitative data will address Research Question 1, while the qualitative data will speak to Research Questions 2 and 3.

HOW RELEVANT ARE CULTURAGO'S COURSES

Assessing the relevance of the course material is a key component in order to improve our overall learning experience. We asked our respondents whether they would recommend their providers to make CulturaGo's courses available to their communities in the future. The response was positive across the board (**Figure 2**).

The only negative response came from a US intern about to move to the UK. They believed the cultural differences between the UK and the US were not great enough to warrant such in-depth learning.

For any learning experience to be relevant, it needs to be designed in a way that engages the learners and motivates them to complete the course. As Figure 3 shows, learners have responded very positively to the way our course content was presented, and found CulturaGo's learning experience satisfying, relevant and worth the time investment overall.

Would you recommend that your provider offers this course to other learners in the future?

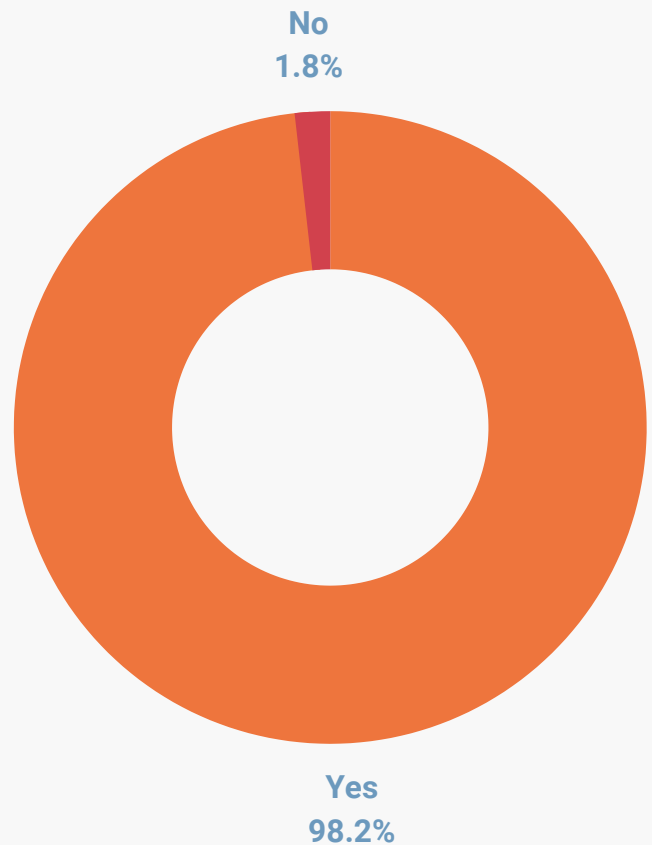


Figure 2: Grouped evaluation of recommendability across all CulturaGo courses.



How did you find the course?

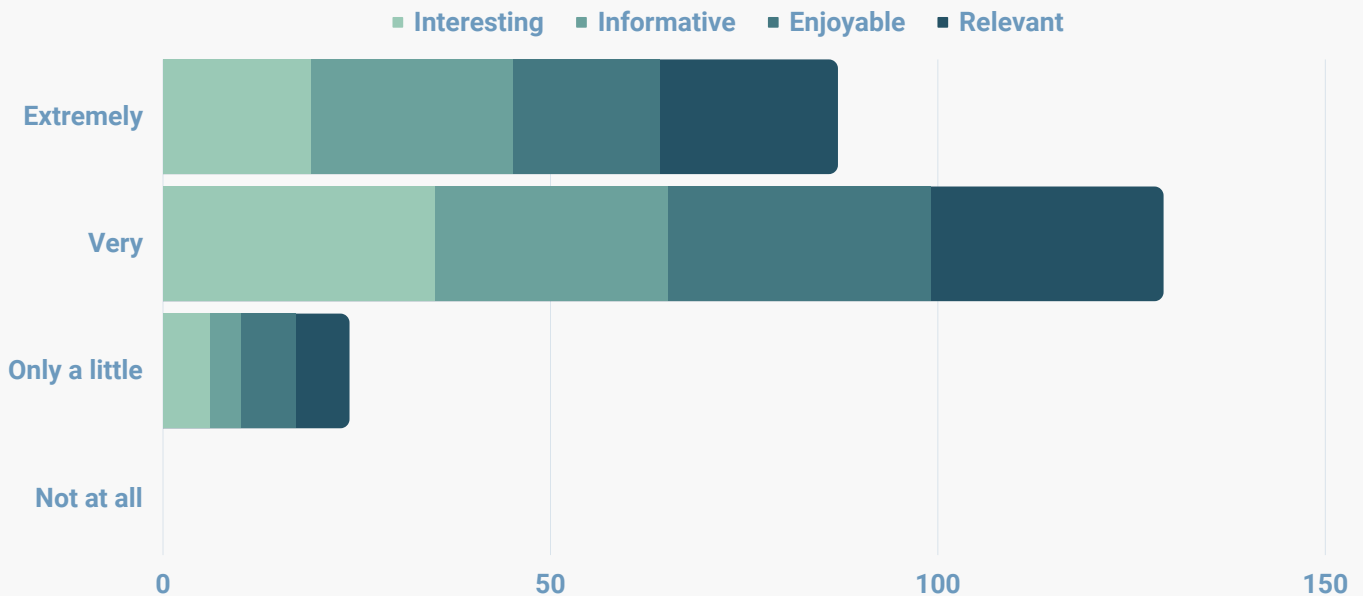


Figure 3: Grouped evaluations across all courses by level of interest, informative content, enjoyability and relevance.

The relevance of learning material can also be measured by whether the students perceive it as a support tool to revisit time and time again for guidance. For us, this is one of the most important ways to gauge the further development of our CulturaGo community. The more learners feel that they can count on CulturaGo, the more supported they will be to excel during their experience abroad.

The data in **Figure 4** shows a majority of the respondents (63.35%) seeing themselves revisit the course, with roughly one-third on the fence. This reflects pre-departure perceptions only, and once the learners are abroad, the data may skew with possibly more learners revisiting the course as they engage with new challenges. However, as a starting point these results are promising, and project CulturaGo’s courses as reliable sources of information and practical advice in the long run.

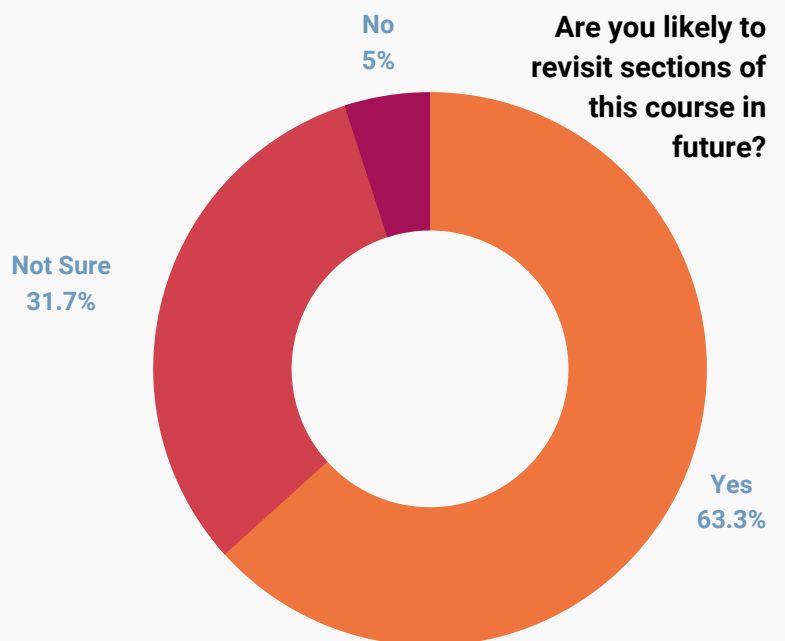


Figure 4: Respondents' opinions on the likelihood of revisiting the material across all courses.

MODULE RANKING

Across the board, the modules *Customs and Etiquette* (for the UK course, it was renamed *Living in the UK*) ranked first, regardless of module structure (four modules versus six) or whether an Identity-based module was included in the course package. This clearly highlights the need for practical pre-departure guidance in how to interact with others successfully and fruitfully when abroad, be it at school, in public or in the workplace.



Wherever an *Identities, Diversity and Inclusion* module was not present, the second most relevant modules were *Adjusting to Life*, which discusses culture shock and strategies to adjust to a new environment, and *Local Lifestyle*, where learners can find tips on how locals spend their free time (Figure 5).

What was the most important module in the course for you?

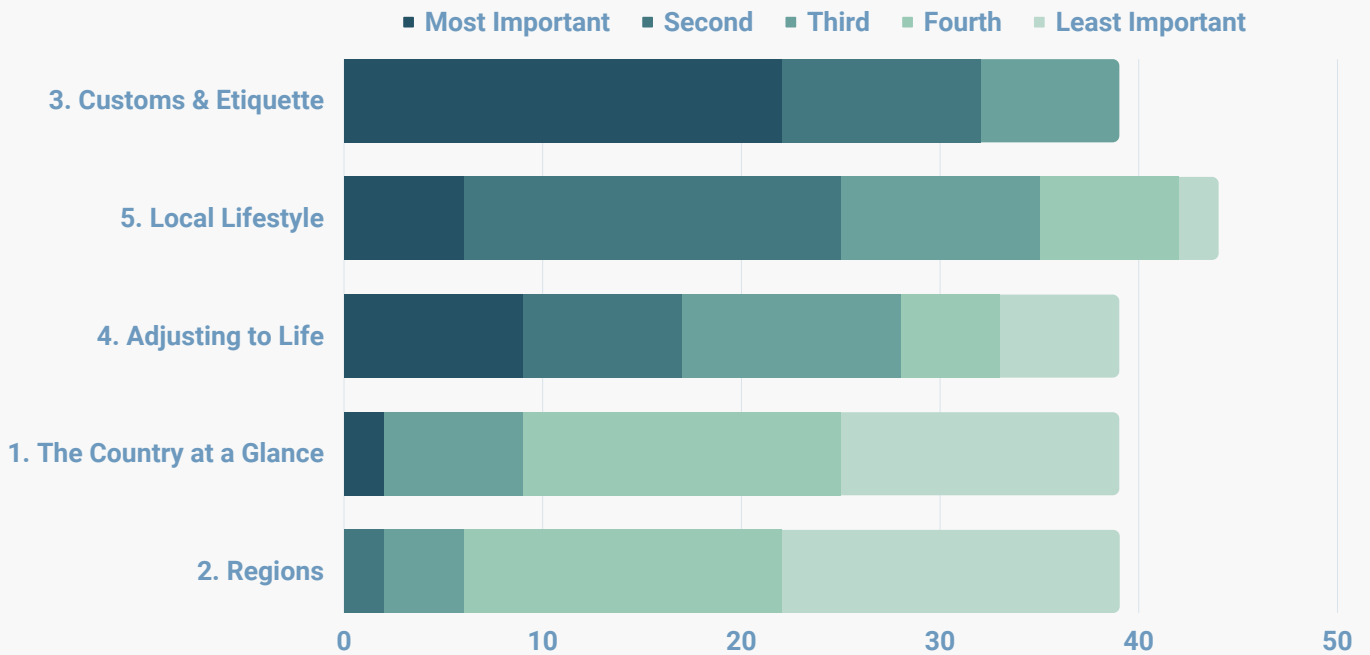


Figure 5: Introduction to Spanish Culture and Introduction to Korean Culture: Combined Module Ranking by Importance (without *Identities* module).

Once the *Identities* module was added to the mix, it either took first place (Japan course, **Figure 6**) or, in the case of the UK course, it ranked third, right after the module *Studying in the UK* which focuses on how to navigate the university system (**Figure 7**). This data is not conclusive given the limited sample of respondents for the Japan and UK courses (6 and 8 respectively), but they nevertheless show a clear interest in destination-specific guidance on what under-estimated groups should expect.

What was the most important module in the course for you?

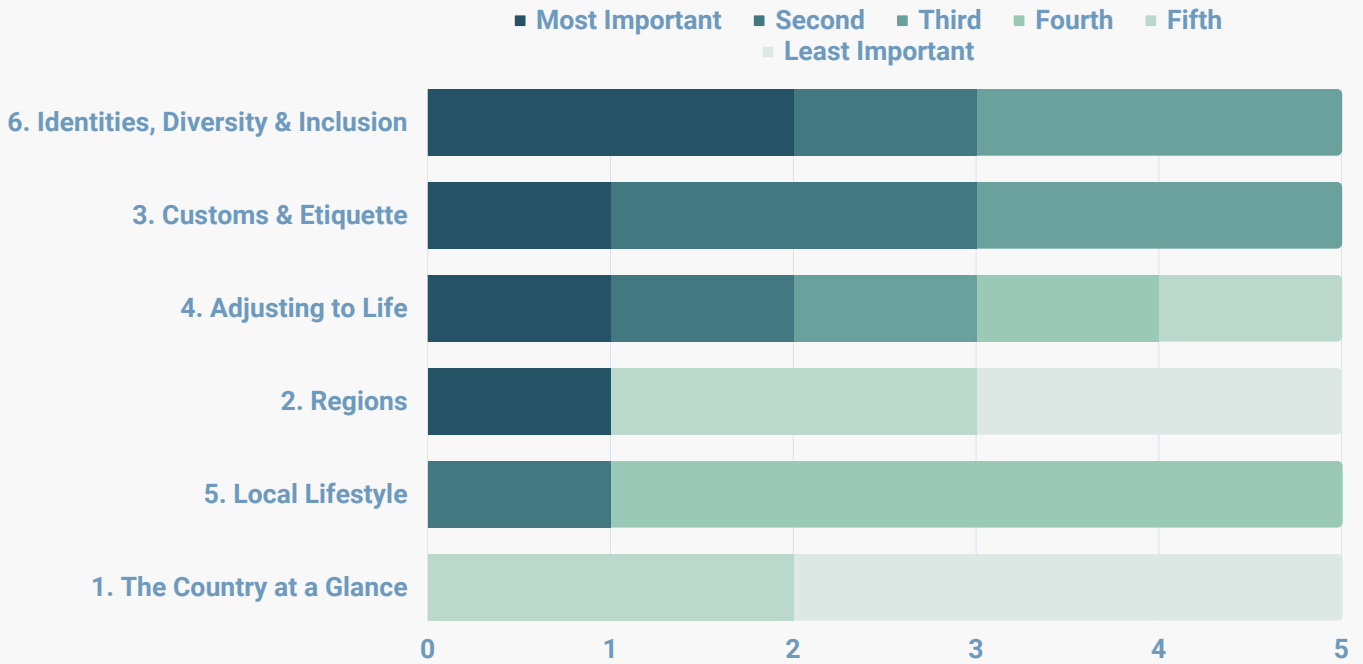


Figure 6: Introduction to Japanese Culture: Module Ranking by Importance (*Identities* module included).



What was the most important module in the course for you?

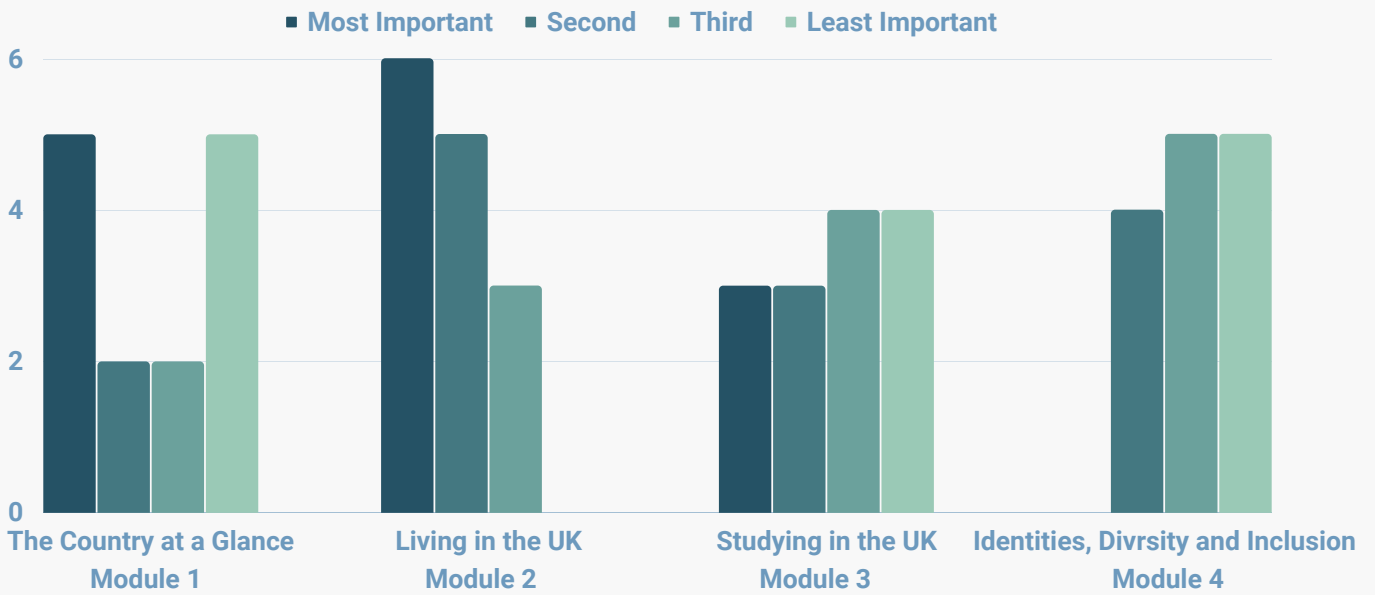


Figure 7: Introduction to UK Culture: Module Ranking by Importance (*Identities* module included).

A breakdown of the respondent group by race, gender and sexuality is not at the moment available, therefore an apparently lower, although still positive, engagement with the *Identities* module on the UK course should be rather linked to a numerically lower presence of individuals from under-estimated groups. Finally, *Introduction to Italian Culture* was launched in spring 2022 with an *Identities* module, but unfortunately the sample was not significant enough.

WHAT ARE CULTURAGO'S STRENGTHS?



As far as the features that learners enjoyed the most, there has been a consistently positive response to the overall quality of the courses. Learners responded well to the structure of the modules. The division into smaller lessons helps them to digest the information faster and better, and to manage their time more efficiently.

Figure 8: Wordcloud combining all text submitted as answers, minimum frequency is 4 times.

Learners enjoyed the quality and relevance of the information provided. This allowed absolute beginners of a destination’s culture to feel more competent and confident at the end of the course, while more advanced connoisseurs were able to consolidate their knowledge and learn something new.

In particular, video interviews that offer first-hand experiences and advice, and highlight potential challenges, received great attention and were seen as extremely valuable teaching tools. This type of experiential information was perceived as easily applicable to everyday situations and helpful to build confidence around a new cultural environment.



As the wordcloud shows (**Figure 8**), the course successfully met the learners’ need to make the most of their experience abroad by taking an active role in preparing for it. Simply being abroad is felt as not enough. Instead, learning about the local perspectives and what to expect before departure in order to avoid friction and potential faux pas is considered conducive to a more meaningful and impactful experience.

TOP 4 SUGGESTIONS FROM THE SURVEY

Learners asked:

Content that relies less on text and is more visually-oriented. At the same time, some of the sub-sections were found too short and not too useful.

Our response:

During the revamp of our original courses (Japan, Spain and South Korea), we edited the text down, incorporated shorter sub-sections, and introduced our visual assets.

Visual Assets

Summary Blocks and Key Takeaways → boost information retention.

Using the correct etiquette for bowing and terms of address is essential for politeness and, if done right, makes a great first impression.

Did You Know? and Key Tip boxes → highlight fun and practical knowledge.

Key Tip

Do not use the term “g*psy” to describe a person from the Traveller community. It is considered a racial slur. Some people from the Traveller community reclaimed it and may use it, but that is their choice. Use the terms “Traveller” or “Roma” instead.



Did You Know?



Under the Gender Recognition Act of 2004, you can apply online and get your chosen name on your legal documents, passport included. The procedure to change your gender, instead, takes longer and you will need a letter from your doctor, too.

Learning from you! questions → encourage reflection and critical thinking.

Learning from you!

What is your best piece of advice for adjusting to Japanese etiquette?

Let us know in the comment section below!

Comments 0

Say Something...

Post Comment

Learners asked:

Extra materials that can be downloaded onto your phone or laptop and accessed without wifi or mobile service, conversation phrases and extra materials to explore the topics discussed.

Our response:

We are working on adding downloadable PDF material to each module in the immediate future.

Downloadable Key Takeaways to revise the material on the go.

Glossaries with key phrases and words relating to each module.

More in-depth text with suggestions for further resources and case studies.

Learners asked:

Make the course materials more accessible to visual and auditory learners, the Deaf community and people with visual impairment.

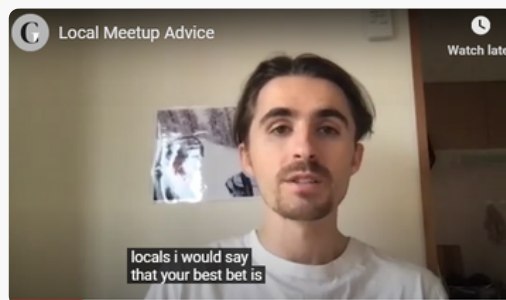
Our response:

This is one of the biggest and most salient tasks we are aiming to tackle in the mid- to long-term. Some of the features we are going to implement include:

Informational videos that guide you through everyday tasks (riding the subway, dining etiquette) and introduce you to key phrases and terminology.

Subtitles for all our videos (already implemented with room for improvement).

Audio format for our courses (audiobook).



Learners asked:

More material targeted to international students specifically.

Our response:

As the number of our higher education partners keep growing, we are aiming to further update our South Korea, Spain and Japan courses to include more information to support international students abroad such as:

The academic system and communication with teaching staff and fellow students.

Clubs, activities and services offered by universities to students.

Tips on accommodation, finances and getting ready for the job market.

More variety among the interviewees to better reflect our learners' community.



OUR PARTNERS

CulturaGo partners with educational institutions such as universities, colleges, study abroad providers and language schools, and with travel and work abroad organizations around the world, to distribute its courses to learners prior to their departure.

We engaged in an extensive open trial from January through the end of July 2022. During the trial, 30 organizations enrolled their learners to test and explore our courses, and help us better understand the impact of our resources on study and work abroad experiences.

Within a short space of time, 15 of these institutions have become official CulturaGo Partners, distributing our courses to their global network of learners and clients. A growing number of institutions, both new and from the initial trial, are progressively following suit.

HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERS



TRAVEL-LINKED ORGANIZATIONS



MESSAGES FROM THE CULTURAGO COMMUNITY

To us, cultural encounters should be about creating meaningful bonds and making a lasting, positive impact in people’s lives. This is why we are building a community that includes our team, our learners and our Partners. A place where everyone’s opinion and experience is an invaluable building block to creating better learning experiences and better cultural experiences.

We asked some of our university Partners to share how they felt about adopting our courses. If you would like to read further feedback, head to our [Google Review page](#).



“*While travel logistics (visas, packing, etc.) are key aspects of preparing, they are only one piece of the puzzle. Students need a better understanding of cultural perspectives, attitudes, practices, and norms before travel. This informs their critical lens so they can approach cross-cultural conversations and situations more intentionally. CulturaGo’s courses will be used as part of our pre-departure preparation to better inform students on their upcoming travels and prompt them to think more critically about their cross-cultural experiences to come.*

- Kelly, George Mason University Program Administrator



“*We provide general pre-departure information for students studying abroad but we found that students were receiving very little country-specific preparation before their experience. CulturaGo’s courses are perfect for small teams who need a little outside help to address the needs of students prior to engaging in an international experience.*

- Madeleine, Hamilton College Assistant Director

Below are some of our learners' responses and reviews to our courses:



“ I was especially thankful to those of you who shared your own experiences with being a minority in Japan - as a bi-racial black and white woman with a great interest in LGBTQ issues, I was so nervous about standing out in a county that is, for the most part, racially and culturally homogenous.

- Holly, George Mason University student in Japan



“ CulturaGo does a great job making researching/learning about other countries easy, enjoyable, and engaging. I hope you will be able to continue to expand the country options in the future! I would definitely use this course again for wherever my next destination may be.

- Marlaina, Grand Valley State University student in South Korea



“ Thank you greatly for offering this course for students getting ready to study abroad. I really appreciated all of the helpful tips and information that I learned after taking the CulturaGo Spain course and I am definitely going to recommend it to others in the future.

- Collin, Warrington College student in Spain



“ I loved the course so much! Now that I have been in Korea I can see how beneficial the program was. I would highly recommend this program for students going abroad. I really learned so much from this course.

- Christine, University of Florida student in South Korea



Below are some of the Google reviews we have received from learners:



Karina Zaldivar

4 reviews



★★★★★ 5 months ago

I was able to take a course for the UK as I will be studying abroad there from the US this upcoming fall. The course was informative, entertaining, and succinct. I really appreciated all of the knowledge that I gained from this great course.



Joseph Falcon

Local Guide · 20 reviews



★★★★★ 5 months ago

CulturaGo provides wonderful courses in becoming well-versed in your travel destination. I plan on studying abroad in Japan soon, and with their course, it has helped me become much more confident in situations regarding etiquette, public transportation, culture shock, and identity. Much time and effort was put into these courses with extensive research and formatting to be able to provide customers an excellent learning experience.



zain chaigneau

1 review



★★★★★ 4 months ago

Great project with even greater vision. I enjoyed all the country culture courses I took and learned a lot about the country's cultures, things I wouldn't have learned from our sources. I always had an interest in Asian cultures and after completing the Japanese and Korean culture courses, I definitely consider spending time in one of the countries as a digital nomad in the near future. The Introduction to Spanish culture was especially interesting, as I lived for 5 years in Spain and still found out new facts and insights about Spanish culture. Thanks for your work and I hope to see more country culture courses by CulturaGo!



Indian Chingu 친구

2 reviews



★★★★★ 5 months ago

Thank you so much for creating such an informative & useful course. I've a huge interest into Korean culture & always ready to know n learn more about Korea. CulturaGo course really helped me to learn and look deep into South Korea, Korean Culture, Korean lifestyle, etiquettes etc. I'm glad & grateful that I attended such a useful course. Everyone, If you want to know the daily life information about Korea, their Culture then I recommend you to must take the course. I get to know & learn so much. Hope you learn Better...Keep learning, Enjoy learning...화이팅!!

Here is what our learners would like to say to their universities for offering CulturaGo's preparation courses:



“ Good on you, George Mason! I had never heard of CulturaGo or anything like it and didn't know exactly what we were getting into, but I think it shows that the GEO department and the school care about the experience their students are going to have and want them to be as prepared as possible for their journey. So overall, I'm just very thankful that they purchased the service to give us some guidance before we head off. Much appreciated :)

- Alysse, George Mason University student in Japan



“ I am thankful that my University was able to point me in the direction to take this course as it was something that I didn't know I needed and didn't know existed but it was exactly what I was looking for.

- Despina, University of Florida student in the UK



“ George Mason University should not stop recommending this course! I think that it's really important that people come into a new country with a cultural awareness of that nation, not only for themselves and their own enrichment but also for the people of the country that they are entering.

- Holly, George Mason University student in Japan

A CLOSING NOTE

As both the year and this Year in Review 2022 comes to an end, we would like to take this opportunity for a last round of acknowledgments.

We want to thank our investors for sharing our vision and joining us while we forge new paths.

We want to thank our Partners for seeing value in what we create and the difference that we can make together.

We want to thank our team for quite literally making a dream come true.

Last but not least, we want to thank our Learners for choosing CulturaGo as their companion on their journeys.

2022 has been a year filled with many challenges but just as many successes. We made pivotal and inspiring encounters that will shape the future of CulturaGo in the years to come, and we created important memories along the way. We anticipate 2023 to be an even bigger year in terms of growth, challenges and learning, both for us and for our Learners. We are so looking forward to it!

Educating the world about culture is CulturaGo's mission but it is also a collaborative effort that requires individuals and organizations worldwide to work alongside us. If you have been inspired by reading this Year in Review, and would like to collaborate in any way, get in touch.

Here's to a successful 2023 ahead!

