



Barton
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Op-Ed

A New World?

Hoping for good luck or focusing on your goals?

As we look back on a year crowded with change and challenge, a year where we were forced to question some of our most basic assumptions about how the world of international education works; we look forward, more in hope than expectation, that 2018 will be less traumatic than the year we've just lived through.

In this opinion piece we examine some emerging trends in international education and think about how we can best keep our feet in this increasingly competitive, challenging and complicated world.

Barton Carlyle consults regularly on strategy and trends in international education, offering advising, training and presentations worldwide. Contact us to see how we could support you: pamela@bartoncarlyle.com

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The preamble for the World Economic Forum Summit

in Davos this week paints a bleak picture of today's global context: "geostrategic fissures have re-emerged on multiple fronts with wide-ranging political, economic and social consequences. Realpolitik is no longer just a relic of the Cold War. Economic prosperity and social cohesion are not one and the same. The global commons cannot protect or heal itself." The statement continues: "Politically, new and divisive narratives are transforming governance. Economically, policies are being formulated to preserve the benefits of global integration while limiting shared obligations..... Socially, citizens yearn for responsive leadership; yet, a collective purpose remains elusive despite ever-expanding social networks."*

This hasn't happened overnight: the benefits of globalization

have been and continue to be uneven and challenging for many. And yet the rise of the so-called "popular nationalism" in the USA and parts of Europe has come as a shock. We had taken for granted that globalization was an accepted reality, and one that brought unquestionable benefits to our students, to our educational institutions, and to the communities in which they reside.

Those of us who work in international education in the

major English-speaking destination countries: USA, UK, Australia, Canada and New Zealand, had predicated our assumptions about the continuing growth of international education on our ability to shape these programs to contribute to the health of our institutions overall. Now institutions in the USA and UK face uncertainty, while Canada, which has embraced immigration and international education as a pathway to citizenship, must wrestle with how best to secure diversity and meaningful educational outcomes in a climate where education can be seen as a route through, rather than a destination with specific outcomes, thereby changing the relationship between students and educators.

The landscape has been changing for some time. As we

noted in "Beyond the Horizon..." ** in 2016, themes have been emerging which have added to the complexity of the international education field: patterns of delivery – technological and geographical – have resulted in more choice and more competition for globally mobile students and have fundamentally shifted the risk landscape.

It's clear that we now need a greater degree of intentionality

about our field: working harder to describe the benefits, and not just the features, of international education. In 2018 let's:

Invest in markets

Ensure that you understand the markets in which your institution operates and in particular, be mindful of the changes in the competitive environment. We need to start thinking about opportunities to collaborate where previously we were competing, and to think creatively about how our institution's goals can best be served, rather than just how many students we can recruit.

Invest in campus and community climate

We need to attend to the quality of the international student experience, not just to ensure that we are differentiating ourselves from other institutions, or even that #YouAreWelcomeHere, but to be a positive advocate for the benefits of internationalization on our campus and communities. Let's win the argument.

Invest in the alignment of our work.

What we do on a daily basis tends to be informed by the important, but more often, the urgent issues at hand. This year, let's prioritize aligning the urgent and important work that we do to the broader field in which we work.

Let's consider 2018 as an opportunity to re-engage and reimagine international education. #BeBold

NOTES AND RESOURCES

NAFSA International Educator: Jan/Feb 2018. Forum article by David diMaria: "Eight Developments to Expect in 2018"

www.nxtbook.com/nxtbooks/nafsa/ie_20180102/index.php#/40

www.icefmonitor.com The best aggregator of market news and research for international recruitment and marketing professionals. See also **thepienews.com**

* Quote above from the World Economic Forum at: www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting-2018

** "**Beyond the Horizon: The Near Future of International Education**" by Barton Carlyle & ICEF Monitor. (Free to download www.icef.com/beyondthehorizon)

