

How can we give every young person the chance to engage with the world beyond where they live?

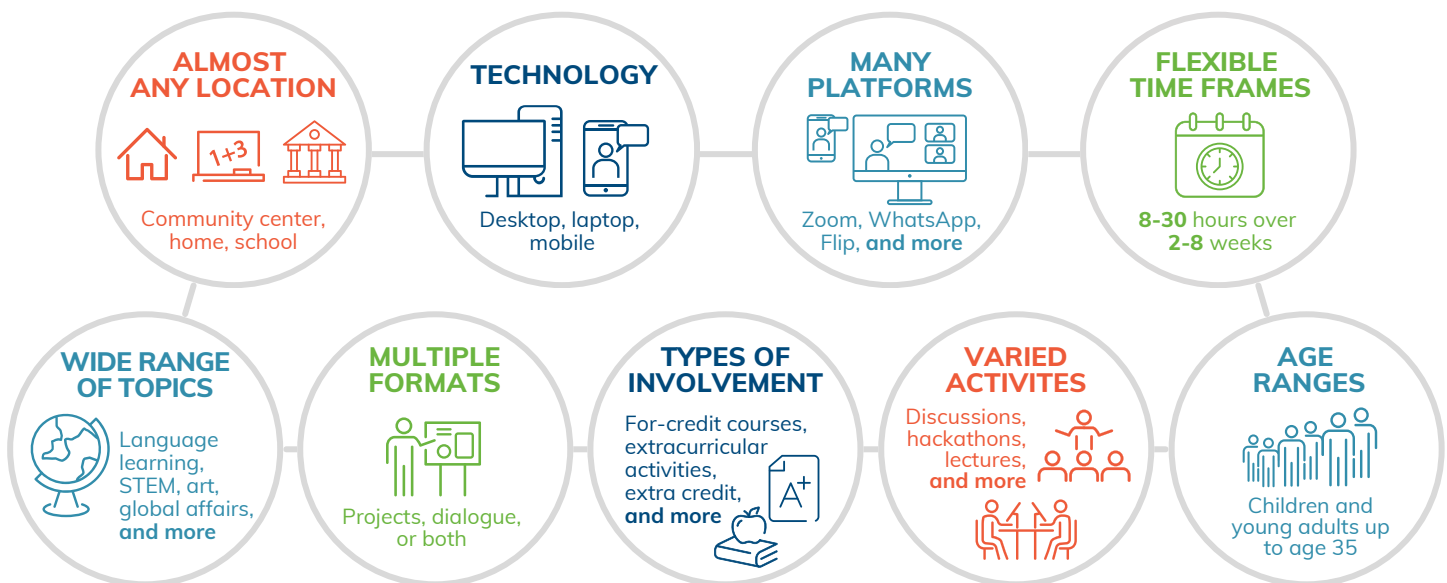
The answer is virtual exchange.

What Virtual Exchange Looks Like

Imagine a French class where for 20 minutes a week, students communicate with native speaking peers in an immersive setting. Imagine a summer program where future marine biologists are designing projects to address ocean health alongside peers in coastal regions around the world. These types of experiences and more are all achievable online through virtual exchange.

Virtual exchange brings young people together from diverse places to learn and collaborate via a mix of innovative and widely-used technology. Facilitated by prepared adults, including educators, virtual exchange programs give young people the skills and confidence to contribute to their communities and succeed in today's global workforce.

Virtual exchange programming is versatile. No two programs look the same because each is designed to meet the unique needs of young people reached.



Why Engage in Virtual Exchange

Virtual exchange creates cross-cultural experiences that build real-world job skills – including communication, collaboration, empathy, language, and problem-solving. Participants gain self-awareness, self-confidence, and the start of a global network of peers. It's also cost-effective, scalable, and uniquely capable of reaching diverse populations that might otherwise not have global experiences.

How to Get Involved in Virtual Exchange

Primary school teachers, college faculty, district superintendents, scout leaders, nonprofit program directors – anyone who works with young people to broaden their skills and horizons can bring virtual exchange to their communities.

- **Join a program.**
Gain access to content, partnership networks, technology, facilitation training, and other forms of guidance and support.
- **Mobilize youth participation.**
Share open enrollment opportunities with young people who can participate on their own time, often from home.
- **Design or implement a program.**
Access resources, training, and funding.

Access all of these engagement opportunities and resources at: stevensinitiative.org/ways-to-engage/ and stevensinitiative.org/resources/. For more information, contact stevensinitiative@aspeninstitute.org.

Sample Programs

IREX's Global Solutions Sustainability Challenge connects community college students in the United States with peers in Jordan and Iraq to collaborate on a sustainable business solution to a challenge prompt.

Plugged In Band Program's Peace Tracks is a cross-cultural, music-focused online youth exchange that provides high school students with an unforgettable opportunity to connect with peers in other countries to collaborate on an original song.



Scan to see more.

The Stevens Initiative is an international leader in virtual exchange, which brings young people from diverse places together to collaborate and connect through everyday technology. Created in 2015 as a lasting tribute to Ambassador J. Christopher Stevens, the Initiative invests in virtual exchange programs; shares research, resources, and promising practices to improve impact; and advocates for broader adoption.

The Stevens Initiative is housed at the Aspen Institute and is supported by the Bezos Family Foundation and the governments of Morocco and the United Arab Emirates. The J. Christopher Stevens Virtual Exchange Initiative is a U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs program administered by the Aspen Institute.

