



ON DEMAND WEBINAR

Higher Ed Roundtable

Looking ahead to
2026



About Keystone Education Group

Keystone is a global leader in student marketing and recruitment, helping over 5,000 educational institutions reach, recruit, and enroll prospective students in more than 190 countries.

Student Marketing Services



PROMOTE PROGRAMS ACROSS OUR SITES, INCLUDING:

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FindAMasters.com Bwl-studieren.com
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 **SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS**

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 **EMAIL MARKETING**

 **SMARTHUB CRM**

 **CAMPUS STORIES**

Academic & Student Athlete Recruitment



STUDENT ADVISORY & APPLICATION SUPPORT

BEYOND ABROAD 

STUDENT-ATHLETE RECRUITMENT

 **KEYSTONE SPORTS**

Enrollment Services



PROSPECT & APPLICATION MANAGEMENT KEYSTONE APPLY

ADMISSIONS SERVICES OFFER

OFFER & ADMIT CONVERSION CONVERT

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Professional Education & Training



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findcourses.co.uk topformation.fr
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Our panel

HOST



Dr. Maureen Manning

Founder
Global Nexus Collective



Christopher Hill

Vice President, Global
Engagement
Canadian University Dubai



Lily Rumsey

Independent Higher Education
Expert (UK)



Dr. Jill Blondin

Vice Provost for Global Initiatives
**Virginia Commonwealth
University**

- **Audio and video are disabled by default:** you can only hear and see the panel.
- **The webinar will be recorded** and we will email you the recording tomorrow.
- **Need help?** If you encounter any technical issues, please email marketing@keg.com or write in the chat if you can.

Do you have a question?

Feel free to ask! Use the Chat or Q&A tab and we will answer as many as possible at the end!



The ROI driven mindset



Focus on **career readiness, internships & employability** – degrees seen as investments.

#2

ROI is the second most cited reason students want to study internationally is to **qualify for a specific career.**

40%

of students believe academic institutions lead to **better job opportunities.**



OPT on the rise in the U.S.

- OPT participation is up **21%** this year (Open Doors 2025).
- **86%** of prospective international students are now considering staying in the U.S. to work post-graduation.

Communications shift in recruitment



▶ In 2023, just 9% of all inbound student communications were on **WhatsApp**. In 2025, it has more than doubled to **20%**.

▶ When universities implemented **WhatsApp** effectively, students returned to conversations an average of **five times**.

*Keystone Enrollment Services Data

Adding just one additional **phone call** to the recruitment funnel increases the likelihood of a student firmly accepting their offer by



9%

Staying internationally at home



In July, we saw a **25 %** increase in students who want to study online, for all study destinations.



Interest in studying fully online in the U.S. has **increased by +50%** to over a fifth in 2025.



36% of prospective international students say they would consider studying at a TNE campus in their home country, with a similar share indicating they 'maybe' would consider it.

Demographic shifts in 2025

BIG 4

- US: Interest almost halved since Fall 2023 (**-47%**).
- Australia: **-53%**.
- Canada: **-55%**.
- UK: Applications for international student visas are **up 7%** on 2024 as of September.

MENA

- UAE experienced **+90%** in interest March - June 2025.
- *In Africa*, interest in West African study destinations **grew by 25%** April - July 2025.

ASIA

- **+19%** March to June 2025.
- Malaysia up **54%** and Singapore by **51%** April-May 2025 versus March 2025.
- South Korea enters top 10 destinations for 1st time in Keystone's State of Student Recruitment report.

Looking ahead to 2026



What are your predictions for next year?

**What is the one thing you hope to
happen in 2026?**

**Let us know your predictions
in the comments!**



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Questions?