



Virtual Educator Impact Exchange 2025

OCTOBER 1, 2025

Cultural Exchange

Curriculum Development

Language Teaching

Professional Development

San Antonio, Texas

Teacher Training

United States

Virtual Educator

Washington, D.C.

Virtual Educators Celebrating Global Connections and Innovation

In summer 2025, English Language Programs launched the Virtual Educator Impact Exchange, a groundbreaking two-week initiative that spotlighted the transformative power of educational technology in global language instruction. Held June 23–July 5, the exchange bridged digital collaboration with in-person innovation, culminating in a high-impact presence at the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTELive 25) and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) Annual Conference—two of the most

influential gatherings in the edtech world with thousands of educators and technology experts in attendance.

This unprecedented event brought together 20 Virtual English Language Educators and their international counterparts, many meeting face-to-face for the first time after a year or two of virtual collaboration. The exchange underscored how technology not only connects classrooms across continents but also fosters enduring professional relationships.



Virtual Educator Kanak “Kay” Bhasin and her host coordinator Ghislain Kisenge, from the Democratic Republic of the Congo, pose with an English Language Programs selfie frame

Week One: Tech-Driven Learning and Cultural Exchange in Washington D.C.

Celebrating U.S. History & Museums

Participants gathered in the nation’s capital for a dynamic mix of cultural and professional activities. They toured the city by bus, explored museums such as Planet Word (a fitting stop for this language-focused group), and joined a series of professional development workshops.



Virtual Educators and international host coordinators exploring Washington, D.C. during the first week of the Impact Exchange

Workshops & Tools

The workshops offered both practical strategies and creative inspiration. Sessions like *Hosting for Impact* gave Virtual Educators and host institutions tools to strengthen future projects and partnerships, while *Sharing Your Story* encouraged participants to amplify their exchange experiences through social media, press, and public storytelling.



Virtual Educators and host coordinators participating in the professional development workshops

One of the most valuable moments of the exchange was a panel discussion with Regional English Language Officers (RELOs). RELOs based in Kyiv, Manila, Brasilia, and Washington, D.C. shared how Virtual Educator projects have made an impact across their regions and how these initiatives connect to broader diplomatic goals. Participants heard candid reflections on both the challenges of launching and sustaining programs and the innovative ways RELOs work to build strong partnerships and long-term success.

Meeting Americans at American University

Located in Washington, D.C., American University is renowned for its excellence in global engagement and public affairs, making it a fitting backdrop for the Exchange. For both the Virtual

Educators and their international counterparts, the visit underscored the U.S.'s long-standing strengths in diplomacy, politics, law, public service, and communications—areas of excellence that continue to shape America's leadership on the global stage.

During the visit, American University hosted a day of campus tours and professional workshops, highlighted by the *Cascading Knowledge* workshop led by Dr. Tabitha Kidwell and a *Technology Tools Showcase* workshop presented by Dr. Polina Vinogradova and her students.



Exchange participants pose for a group picture in front of American University

Beyond the formal sessions, participants shared meals, coffee chats, and personal stories—deepening the connections that had first begun online.



Virtual Educators, host coordinators, and staff sharing dinner at a restaurant

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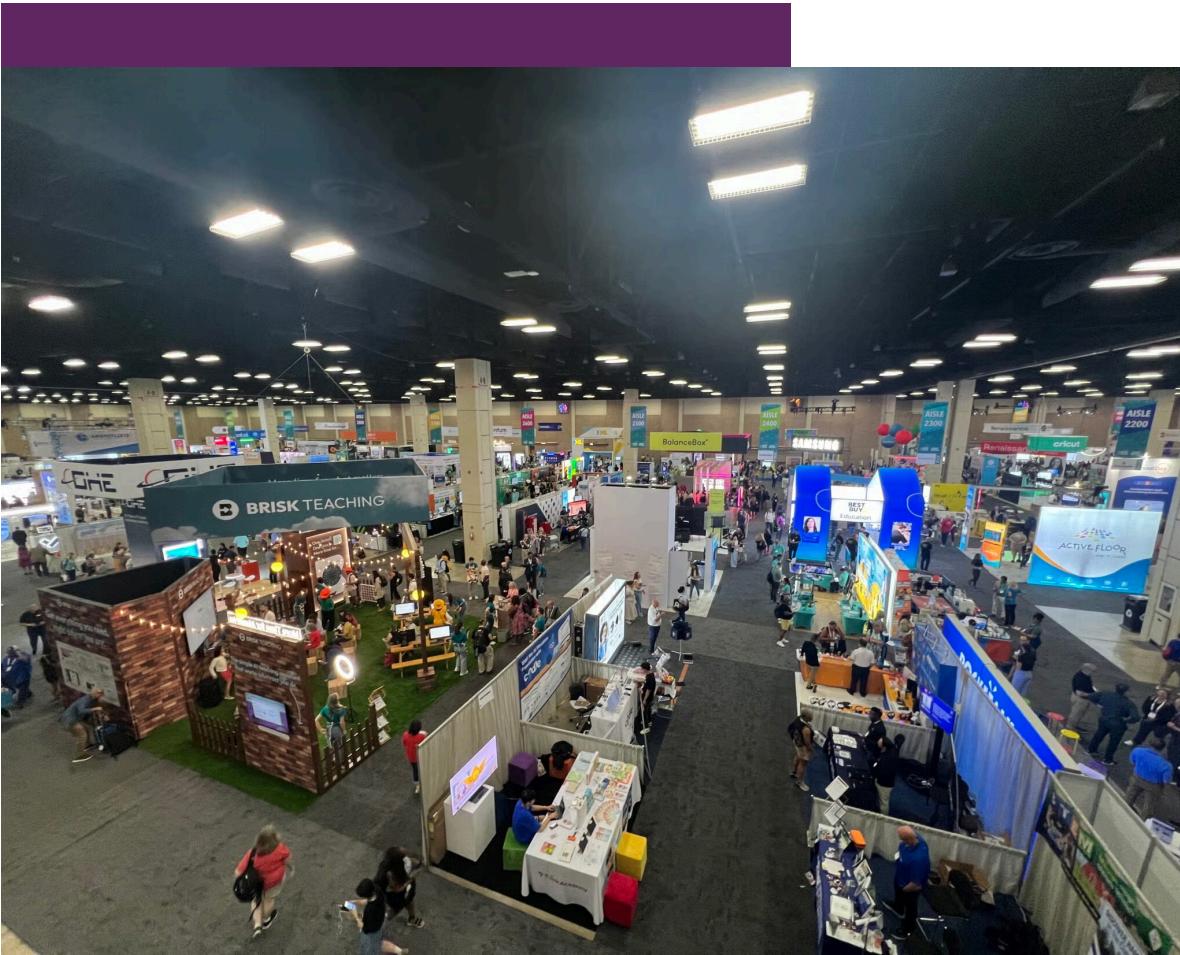
“On my first morning in Washington, D.C., I walked downstairs to breakfast and saw Olena sitting at the table. I was overjoyed that she was able to make it to the States, and I was so happy she was willing to travel as far as she did. After months of texting and Zoom calls, we were finally able to meet in person.”—Elizabeth Basok, Virtual Educator 2023-2025



Virtual Educator Elizabeth Basok with her host coordinator, Olena Kan from Ukraine, tour Washington, D.C.

Week Two: Immersive EdTech at ISTE Live 25 + ASCD in San Antonio, Texas

ISTE's Innovative Solutions HUB Expo



The ISTE Live 25 HUB Expo, seen from above, where thousands of educators explored the latest in edtech

The group then traveled with the English Language Programs and FHI 360 teams—who partnered to organize the exchange—to San Antonio to attend the ISTE Live 25 + ASCD Annual Conference, one of the largest and most influential educational technology gatherings in the world. The two events, together, drew more than 17,000 educators. The expo hall buzzed with energy, featuring nearly 500 exhibitors ranging from global education companies to innovative startups. Attendees explored towering booths packed with interactive displays, robotics demonstrations, and the latest edtech tools. Stages throughout the hall hosted live presentations and product showcases, while hands-on zones invited educators to test new technologies, experiment with gamified learning platforms, and imagine fresh possibilities for their classrooms. The space felt less like a

traditional exhibit floor and more like an immersive learning studio of ideas, innovation, and collaboration. For the first time, English Language Programs hosted a booth at ISTE—spotlighting how edtech intersects with international education and proudly bringing the “I” to ISTE. Staff connected with educators to share opportunities for teaching English abroad and online.



English Language Programs' staff member, Laura Leslie, converses with a booth visitor at ISTE's HUB Expo

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“I had the opportunity to participate in the Educator Preparation Program forum with two other Virtual Educators. The focus of the forum

was computational thinking across the curriculum. Our experiences and perspectives as international instructors shed a different light on how to contextualize what pre-service teachers need based on where they are in the world.”—Norma Gorham, Virtual Educator 2024-2025

Poster Sessions & EdTech Mixer

Beyond the HUB Expo, the entire edtech conference space proved to be the perfect waters for Virtual Educators, who navigated it with ease as they shared their knowledge with teachers attending the conference.

On the opening day of the ISTE conference, Virtual Educators presented in poster sessions, showcasing how they integrate edtech tools into their projects. That evening, English Language Programs hosted the EdTech Mixer—an ideal chance for potential applicants to connect with English Language Programs alumni and for alumni to network with leading voices in educational technology.



Exchange participants presenting at their Poster session and connecting at English Language Programs' EdTech Mixer

Global EdTech Innovations: Empowering Language Learning Playground Session

Another highlight of the week was the English Language Programs' *Global EdTech Innovations: Empowering Language Learning* Playground session, one of the most popular formats at ISTE. Unlike formal presentations, Playground sessions are interactive, hands-on spaces where attendees move between stations to try out tools, strategies, and ideas in real time.

During the two-hour session, 10 Virtual Educators ran rotating demonstration stations and 10 international counterparts gave

brief stage talks on program impact on their institutions and communities. To encourage exploration across each station, the session featured an interactive passport activity. Visitors received a passport-style booklet and collected stamps and stickers by engaging with each station, gaining insights into how various edtech tools are integrated into Virtual Educator projects. Once their passport was complete, they returned to the entrance to learn more about English Language Programs and receive a prize. The format not only sparked curiosity but also highlighted its global reach. The energy was nonstop, and the session drew more than 200 attendees, positioning English Language Programs as a visible leader at the intersection of edtech and international education.



At ISTE, Monica Lakhwani (Virtual Educator & Fellow, top) and Katie Skipper (Virtual Educator & Specialist, bottom) present during English

Language Programs' Playground session

Sean Dailey, a 2024–2025 Virtual Educator, described presenting at the ISTE Playground Session as a uniquely rewarding experience. He noted that unlike a traditional workshop, the format allowed him to connect directly with educators from around the world and share tools in real time. “The best part was being able to instantly share our toolkit with teachers who said it addressed challenges they were facing,” Dailey said.



Sean Dailey recognized for his contributions as a Virtual English Language Educator, 2024–2025

A Dazzling End to a Transformative Exchange

After the ISTE conference, the exchange concluded with two days of cultural activities that participants enjoyed together before saying their goodbyes and returning home. Highlights included a baseball game, a visit to the Alamo in San Antonio, and a dazzling Fourth of July fireworks display—the perfect finale to an enriching and meaningful experience.

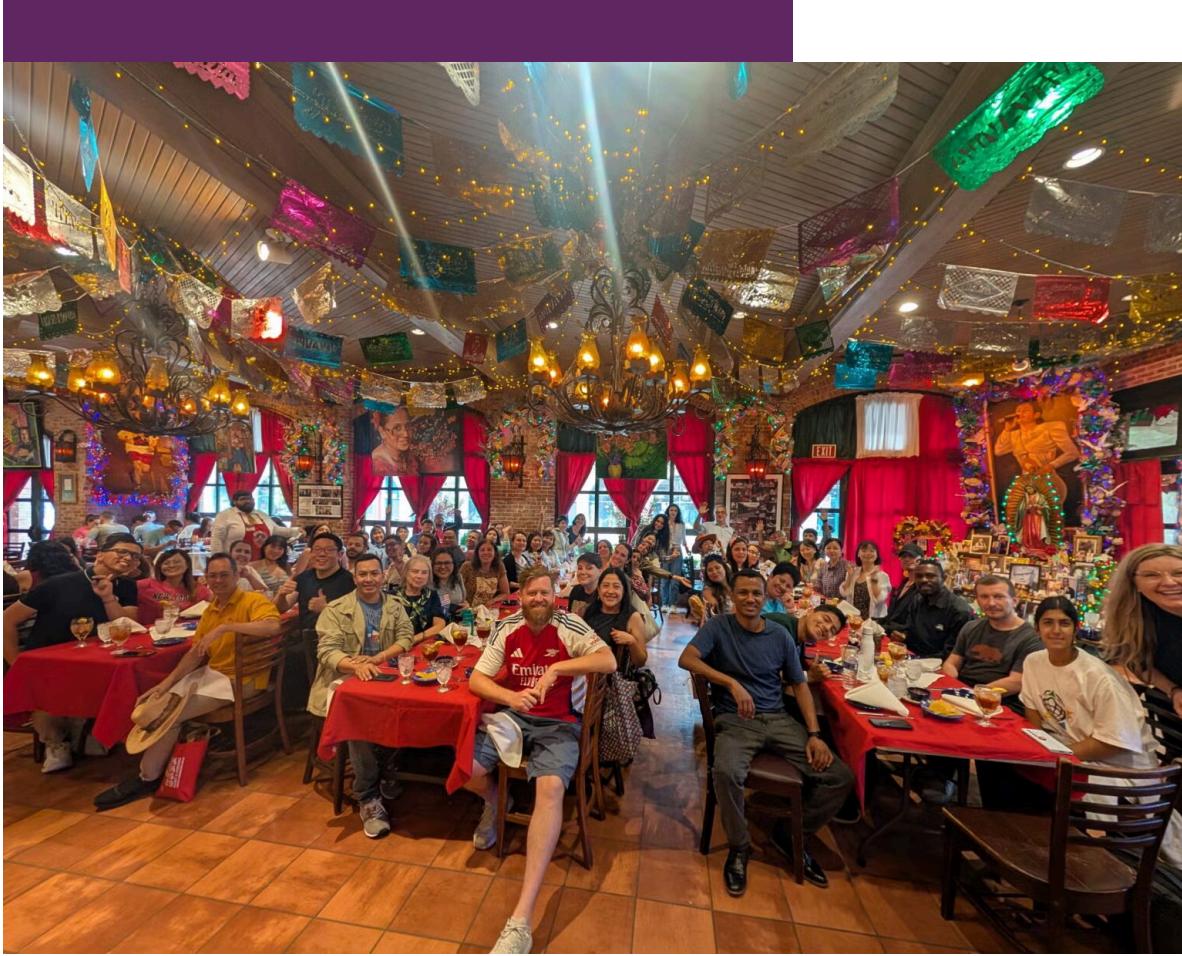
The ISTE Conference & Expo is the largest edtech event in the United States and a global hub for educators, innovators, and leaders shaping the future of learning. For English Language Programs, this platform was an opportunity to showcase how the Virtual English Language Educator Program—launched in 2022 as its newest initiative—has already established itself as a driver of innovation. Participation in this conference demonstrates how English Language Programs is adapting to a rapidly evolving educational landscape through creative innovation, technology, and reinvention.

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During my almost 15-year teaching career, my [Virtual Educator] project in Jordan is the most meaningful professional work I've ever done ... Beyond teaching, both my project in Jordan and the exchange ... taught me the importance of language in everyday diplomacy and how the U.S. can strengthen its ties abroad.”—Zach Stalnaker, Virtual Educator 2023–2024



Virtual Educator 2023–2024 Zach Stalnaker presenting at the English Language Programs' Playground session in San Antonio



Exchange participants enjoying a restaurant together on the 4th of July



Exchange participants celebrating the U.S. Independence Day together on the 4th of July in San Antonio, Texas

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