

The State of Equitable Global Engagement in Pittsburgh

September 2021

David E. K. Smith
Dr. Keith Trahan

UNIVERSITY OF PITTSBURGH

Collaborative for Evaluation
and Assessment Capacity

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CEAC

The Global
SWITCHBOARD

Background and Context

The State of Equitable Global Engagement in Pittsburgh (SEGEP) is a report that describes the significance of **equitable global engagement** and qualifies two key focus areas through which we can gauge global engagement in Pittsburgh: **(1) global learning and education** and **(2) immigrant and refugee inclusion**. SEGEP identifies intervention gaps in both of these areas, and presents The Global Switchboard's approach to gathering and sharing this information.

Equitable global engagement is when people and organizations act in the world in ways that are inclusive, socially responsible, and attuned to the realities of structural injustice. It requires that they are responsive to the communities in which they work, provide fair and equal opportunities for global engagement to everyone, and ensure that everyone benefits equally from global engagement's positive benefits. The Global Switchboard stewards a network of people and organizations in the Pittsburgh region that collaborates to promote equitable global engagement through the lens of target areas: education & global learning and immigrant & refugee inclusion.

This report positions The Global Switchboard to launch a longer-term project to expand the scope of data collection and reporting, and track progress and changes in global engagement in the region over time. SEGEP and the future SEGEP II will be housed virtually within The Global Switchboard's online Hub. In aligning with the development of the Hub as a central access point into global engagement in Pittsburgh, viewers can access SEGEP alongside updates about The Global Switchboard's Coalitions: All for All and the Global Learning Coalition. This allows the fullest possible picture of the gaps, progress, and achievements in creating equitable global engagement in Pittsburgh.

SEGEPI Intervention Categories

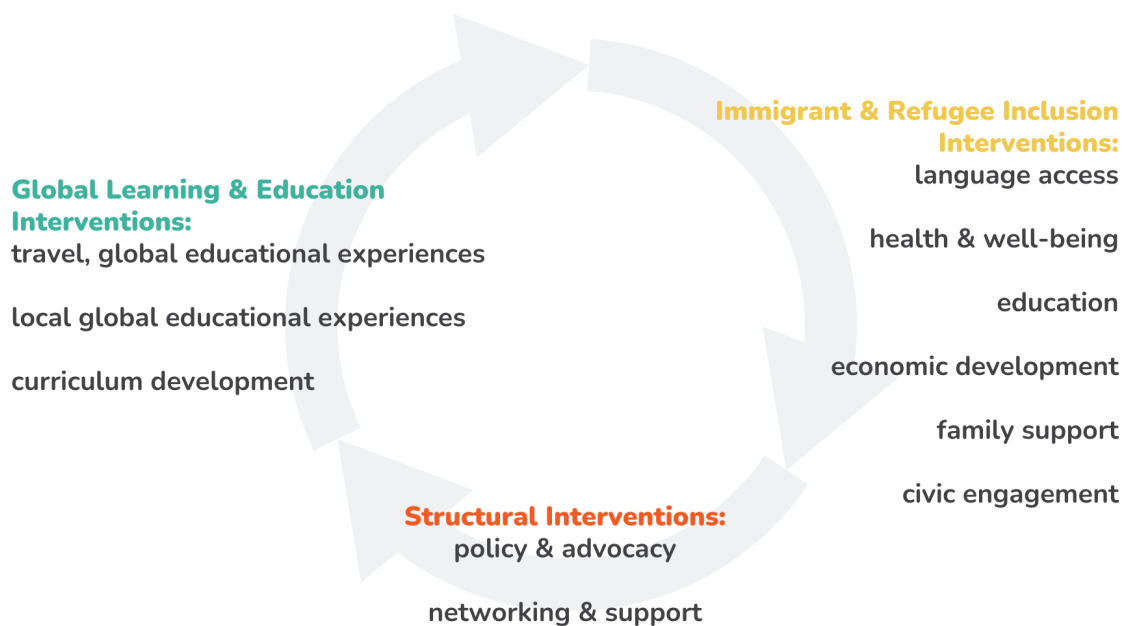
The following intervention categories organize and map existing global engagement interventions in the greater Pittsburgh area. Overarching criteria for any organization or intervention to be placed within these categories is that the intervention works toward equitable global engagement; when people and organizations act in the world in ways that are inclusive, socially responsible, and attuned to the realities of structural injustice. **These interventions strive to be responsive to the communities in which they work, provide fair and equal opportunities for global engagement to everyone, and ensure that everyone benefits equally from global engagement's positive outcomes.**

The **Global Learning and Education interventions** are derived from a comprehensive study of existing interventions in the space and the categories are designed to include both formal and informal learning experiences. Formal education refers to systematic, curriculum-based, teacher-directed learning that happens within an institution such as a school, college, or university. Informal education refers to learning that results from activities outside of these contexts.

The **Immigrant and Refugee Inclusion interventions** are drawn from the Immigrant Community Blueprint Action Plans and refined to be inclusive of as many existing and necessary interventions as possible.

The **Structural interventions** encompass additional work done to connect global minded organizations and advocate for increased awareness and funding. Interventions in this category are also distinct in that they work on the inter-organizational and governmental levels to support the other two global engagement intervention categories.

While organized as a set of distinct types of interventions, **the global engagement landscape is highly interconnected**. Organizations may work across many of these categories and individual interventions may also fall into multiple categories. Understanding this complexity and connection, for the purposes of clarity and mapping, this report categorizes interventions by their best fit with one or two categories.



Global Learning and Education Interventions

→ Travel, global educational experiences

Provide the opportunity for members of the Pittsburgh community to travel and learn internationally. This includes all interventions that bring Pittsburgh residents outside of the greater Pittsburgh area.

→ Local global educational experiences

Allow for members of the Pittsburgh community to engage with global experiences in the greater Pittsburgh area. This includes international members having global experiences through their engagement with other members of the Pittsburgh community. Both formal and informal educational programming fall into this category.

→ Curriculum development

Develop thoughtful, inclusive, and global-minded curricula. This category only includes curriculum development within formal education.

The Global Switchboard's Global Learning Coalition assembles eight local organizations that currently offer global learning and education interventions to the Pittsburgh area.

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) supports opportunities, programs, and policies that improve outcomes and the lived experiences of Black men and boys through cross-sector collective impact. As a collective impact initiative, MBK seeks to highlight, uplift, and support opportunities for Black youth

and families and global learning opportunities represent excellent ways for our youth and families to grow and thrive.

In the future, MBK aims to provide and/or align sustainable funding for Black youth and students to travel and study abroad. In the meantime, MBK advocates and connects for the purpose of supporting existing programs both in quality and quantity and to see Black youth and families access those programs as the space grows and improves. MBK aims to emphasize our roles as global citizens and to highlight and support Pittsburgh's global relevance and connectedness. As we collectively seek to make Pittsburgh and the greater region more livable for those living here, we also seek to build up globally-minded youth and families.

- Josiah Gilliam, My Brother's Keeper Coordinator, Office of Mayor Bill Peduto

The mission of the **World Affairs Council** is to convene and connect people around global issues to build a thriving, competitive and inclusive Pittsburgh. The Council's programs have been an avenue for young people, educators, business leaders, and the community-at-large to come together to network and to learn from experts on a range of global topics. Seen as a trusted convener and connector, we will continue to expand education outreach to a broader section of the public, with particular emphasis on increasing engagement by BIPOC, refugee, and immigrant communities.



The World Affairs Council's programs have been an avenue for young people, educators, business leaders, and the community-at-large to come together to connect and learn from experts on a range of global topics.



Tommy Walter
Managing Director
World Affairs Council



As the World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh seeks to elevate its role as trusted convener on global issues in the region, we plan to serve as an engaging and inclusive platform for diverse audiences and

speakers to come together to build stronger, more resilient connections that transcend all communities so that as we move forward, we will be stronger together.

- Tommy Walter, Managing Director, World Affairs Council

The **University Center for International Studies (UCIS)** serves as the “nerve center” of Pitt’s global engagement. It initiates, supports, and coordinates international activities across all the campuses at the University of Pittsburgh and it champions in multiple ways the development of a global mindset across all areas of the University. The center’s work encompasses education, research, public service, and (more recently) global operations support. UCIS is one of the few centers in the U.S. that advances global engagement with embedded expertise.

UCIS takes a critical and intersectional approach to DEI questions and aspires to be a leader at Pitt on these issues for the various communities it serves. In addition to the Latinx Faculty Cluster Hire Initiative, UCIS units work collaboratively with stakeholders at the University (like the Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, relevant vice provosts) and within its own structures like the Office of International Services. It is also a crucial interlocutor and partner for external communities like the ethnic, migrant, and refugee communities and the organizations which represent them with which our respective regional studies centers and the Nationality Rooms and Intercultural Exchange Programs have extensive links.

- Jeff Whitehead, Director of University Center for International Studies

Gaps in Global Learning and Education Interventions

Members of the Global Learning Coalition noted a **lack of equity in access for travel global educational experiences**. Travel opportunities were described as being more readily available to students at well-funded schools and universities and/or coming from more economically privileged backgrounds. This disparity in accessibility was attributed to a mixture of travel and global educational interventions being inherently more expensive and little to no funding being directed at lowering this cost. Ultimately, travel global educational experiences were described as rarely being available to students in both rural and urban underfunded schools. For those opportunities that are available, concerns were raised about how little these programs were promoted, with difficulties getting information around scholarships and even the programs themselves to students.

For local global educational interventions, the members of the Global Learning Coalition were encouraged by the number of available activities, but highlighted that **the primary barrier to participation is the availability and accessibility of information about local global educational interventions**. While some online resources exist that share events, it can be difficult for people who are less familiar with the global learning community to find these databases and know where to look. Many events were described as often being contained within the specific neighborhood or community

hosting the event. Because of this, there is potential for more cross-program collaboration to connect the diverse neighborhoods and communities of the greater Pittsburgh area.

Curriculum development interventions were described as often underfunded and under-supported, especially at the higher administrative, state, and federal levels. Language and culture courses in formal education settings are often the first to be cut when budgets are reduced. Additionally, Coalition members noted a potential for longer term curricula spanning multiple years, providing richer experiences for students.

Immigrant and Refugee Inclusion Interventions

→ Language Access

Provide access for residents with limited English proficiency (LEP) and increase the ability of LEP residents to exercise and advocate for their language rights.

→ Health and Well-Being

Help make high quality, culturally and linguistically appropriate physical and behavioral healthcare readily accessible to immigrant residents.

→ Education

Enable educators to support immigrant student success, family engagement, and lifelong learning.

→ Economic Development

Promote career, entrepreneurial, and other economic opportunities for immigrant residents, including access to affordable housing, childcare and transportation.

→ Family Support

Strengthen family centers with immigrant-specific programs and enable existing family services and systems to reach immigrant residents and communities.

→ Civic Engagement

Provide opportunities for immigrants to participate fully in the civic life of the community.

The All for All Coalition is made up of 30 organizations that currently offer immigrant and refugee inclusion interventions to the Pittsburgh region. The Global Switchboard surveyed all member organizations for this report.

The **Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh** (BCAP)'s mission is to support our families in their integration in Pittsburgh through culturally informed services and activities, and in their goals towards high quality of life.



The Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh works with a lot of refugee and immigrant serving agencies to provide culturally informed services to the biggest newer refugee community in the region.



Khara Timsina
Executive Director
Bhutanese Community
Association of Pittsburgh



The organization works in collaboration and partnership with a lot of refugee and immigrant serving agencies Allegheny County and the City of Pittsburgh, including DHS I & I Advisory County, Welcoming Pittsburgh Community, All for All, Jefferson Regional Collaborative, etc. Ours is so far the biggest newer refugee community in the region and makes a big impact in the local economy, with a large number of ethnic businesses. BCAP has been playing its role in the region's collective efforts in immigrant and refugee inclusion. BCAP has played an important role in the Community Blueprint (now All for All) and plans to continue to work with other agencies in creating a globally engaged region, sharing our resources with others and taking theirs' to our community's benefit.

- Khara Timsina, Executive Director, Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh

The mission of **Jewish Family & Community Services (JFCS)** refugee and immigrant programs is to provide support to refugees and immigrants living in Pittsburgh, connect them with resources, and help them live happy and productive lives. We are at the forefront of immigrant and refugee inclusion in Pittsburgh. We are constantly advocating for improving services available for refugees and immigrants, and we partner and collaborate with communities, non-profit organizations, the government, and foundations to eliminate barriers that hinder the ability of refugees and immigrants to thrive and stay in Pittsburgh. We are moving towards a community approach to implementing refugee resettlement. Our goal is to increase opportunities for community members and faith-based organizations to support refugees in the region and create spaces for them to connect and learn from each other. We are working towards creating a model that takes into account power dynamics and structural inequalities for more people to have opportunities to learn about the world without traveling abroad.

- Ivonne Smith-Tapia, Director, Refugee & Immigrant Services JFCS

Global Wordsmiths' goal is to create and advance a culture of language access awareness, so that translations and interpreters will become more widely available for individuals who need them in order to access services, to integrate and to thrive. Language access is often an afterthought; that is to say, most people don't understand the degree to which constant language barriers affect individuals who do not speak English. Any time an individual who does not speak English attempts to connect with resources, information and services, they are simply unable to do so because of the persistent lack of language assistance resources in Pittsburgh. This constant inability to access services, resources and information causes people to shut down, and stop trying. It makes people feel frustrated, isolated, ashamed, and unwelcome. As a result, Pittsburgh's immigrant and refugee communities remain segregated and are unable to integrate. Global Wordsmiths attempts to stop this cycle by teaching service providers how to provide linguistically accessible services, by providing direct translation and interpretation assistance services, and by executing social impact initiatives centered around language access in order to improve Pittsburgh's language accessibility landscape.

- Mary Jayne, Chief Executive Officer Global Wordsmiths

Gaps in Immigrant and Refugee Inclusion Interventions

Members of the All for All Coalition described **a disconnect between smaller organizations focused on language access interventions and larger corporations or governmental organizations focused on support services.** These larger organizations often rely on the smaller organizations to fill gaps in the larger organizations' language assistance services. This creates financial and logistical strains on the smaller organizations, while limiting access to immigrant and refugee populations.

The larger organizations described included gas, electricity, and internet service providers, healthcare providers, and many city departments. Suggested additional interventions included formalized training of all organizational and city staff members, increased public emphasis on the importance of translation services, and education around the legal requirements of language access.

Language access was also described as a significant barrier in health and well being, family support, education, and civic engagement interventions where the demand appears to outstrip the available resources. There are limited translation centers available to families, school districts currently do not have the resources to communicate with parents in their native languages, and government officials need to be trained in more languages.



Any time an individual who does not speak English attempts to connect with resources, information and services, they are simply unable to do so because of the **persistent lack of language assistance resources in Pittsburgh.**

This constant inability to access services, resources and information causes people to shut down and stop trying.

It makes people feel frustrated, isolated, ashamed, and unwelcome.

As a result, Pittsburgh's immigrant and refugee communities remain segregated and are unable to integrate.



Mary Jayne McCullough
Chief Executive Officer
Global Wordsmiths



The most additional gaps in immigrant and refugee inclusion interventions were identified in the health and wellness and family support categories. These intervention gaps include:

- Health and wellness
 - Mental healthcare services
 - Cultural competence training for mental health services
 - Support for those without a social security number, including medical access and work opportunities
 - Play areas for ethnic sports
- Education
 - Educational resources for students and families with limited English
- Family Support
 - Training for childcare providers to engage with immigrant and refugee populations
 - Support for domestic abuse
 - Support for drug and alcohol abuse
- Civic Engagement
 - Leadership/advocacy capacity building for immigrants and refugees

Structural Interventions

Policy and advocacy

Engage local, state, and federal policymakers to promote equitable global engagement including immigrant and refugee inclusion and global learning and education.

Networking and support

Connect and provide resources to organizations that conduct equitable global engagement interventions.

Highlighted Interventions/Organizations



The Global Switchboard fosters collaboration and resource-sharing among organizations and individuals. Our vision for the region involves strong networks that build one another's capacity to create and sustain interventions in their communities.



Nathan Darity
Executive Director
The Global Switchboard

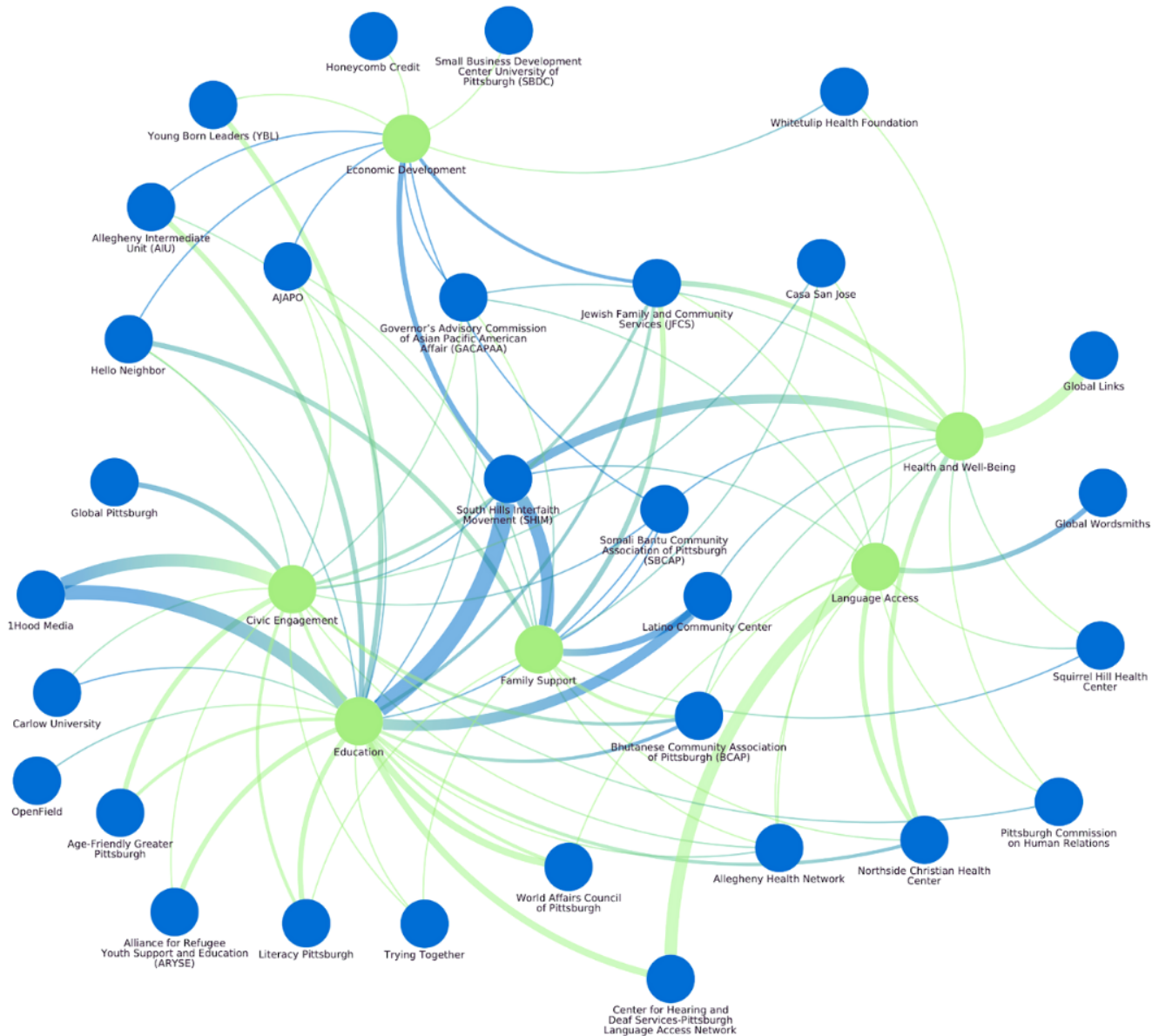


The Global Switchboard stewards a diverse network of people and organizations to promote equitable global engagement in the Pittsburgh region. As a network steward, we convene two Coalitions that have shared global engagement goals. We connect organizations and individuals to foster collaboration and resource sharing. Our vision for the region involves strong networks that build one another's capacity to create and sustain interventions in their communities. We strive to build a region where all people value diversity, practice empathy, and work together to create a more just and peaceful world.

- Nathan Darity, Executive Director, The Global Switchboard

Mapping the All for All Coalition

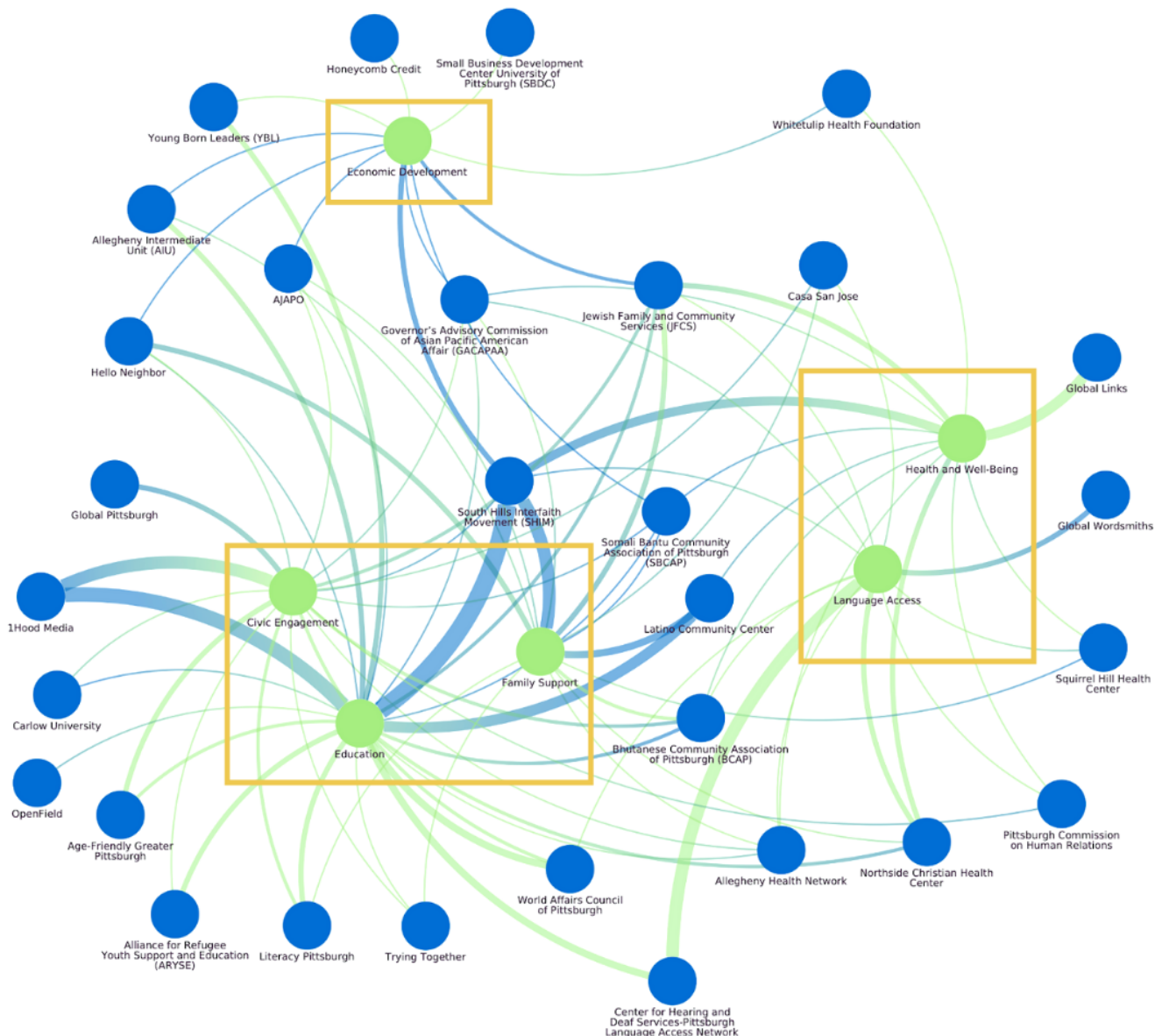
The diagram below shows the relationships between the interventions of All for All Coalition members working in the immigrant and refugee inclusion space. The six green dots represent the six intervention categories detailed in this report. The blue dots are Coalition members. The lines represent an organization's programming in an intervention category. The thicker the line, the more interventions of that type the organization runs.



The clustering of the **civic engagement**, **education**, and **family support** intervention categories shows that there is a close relationship between these categories with organizations working in one of these categories likely to also work in one or more of the others.

Language access and **health and well-being** interventions are similarly clustered.

Economic development interventions are more isolated, indicating that these interventions are more likely to be the primary focus of organizations working in that space.



Conclusion

In beginning to map the state of global engagement in the greater Pittsburgh area, it is clear that there are a significant number of organizations successfully working to enhance global engagement, but considerable gaps in both resources and interventions still remain.

Pittsburgh-based organizations work in all of the eleven identified intervention categories included in this report, but discussions and survey responses from these organizations indicate that **all eleven categories also require additional interventions.**

In **global learning and education interventions**, the largest area for growth is the need for an accessible and promoted catch-all database for global learning activities, and a similar database for funding opportunities. **Centralizing information and making it accessible** to both the public and potential funders would allow for increased participation in global learning and education interventions while also connecting and sharing resources between organizations.

A number of new **immigrant and refugee inclusion interventions** are needed, especially as new immigrant and refugee populations continue to arrive in the greater Pittsburgh area. Running as a consistent theme across these necessary interventions is an **expansion of language access resources and training.** These are needed at a small organizational level, but especially among larger organizations less familiar with working with immigrants and refugees, and at the city level.

Across all global engagement interventions in the greater Pittsburgh area there is a lack of existing centralized participation data. This makes it difficult to see the comparative and direct impact of interventions on their targeted population and assess the total number of participants. One example of this is the intervention and organization network map included in this report. While the thickness of the lines shows the number of interventions, we cannot yet illustrate the number of immigrants and refugees that participate in an intervention. Some organizations may only have one thin line representing a single focused intervention, but this intervention may be large-scale, involving many immigrants and refugees. **Further data gathering and centralized data would allow for a clearer chart showing the true affected population.**

Future mapping of the state of global engagement should expand beyond the Global Learning and All for All Coalitions to reach all organizations, and additionally include government actors on city, state, and federal levels. While these Coalitions represent a large portion of organizations working in the global engagement space in the greater Pittsburgh area, they are not comprehensive. Additionally, next steps to explore global engagement must move beyond the organizational level to reach individuals participating in and affected by global engagement interventions. **Future reports should look to engage directly with immigrants and refugees, as well as global learning and education**

participants. These voices are critical in understanding how global engagement happens in the greater Pittsburgh area.

Methodology

This report was generated through an iterative and collaborative evaluation approach. The Global Switchboard and the University of Pittsburgh's Collaborative for Evaluation and Assessment Capacity (CEAC) worked together to create an actionable framework fusing scholarly conceptions of global engagement, research methods, and evaluation design with the local expertise of The Global Switchboard as a hub for international organizations. The framework identified the three focus areas and the eleven intervention categories. The interventions of the All for All and Global Learning Coalition members were then sorted into these categories and analyzed using Kumu network mapping software.

Using this expanded understanding of the global engagement space, different surveys for each Coalition were developed aimed at targeting gaps in existing global engagement interventions. The surveys drew from the Global Engagement Survey (GES), the Global Engagement and Innovation Tool (GEIT), and the Children's Engagement Questionnaire (CEQ). These surveys were administered during Coalition meetings. Additionally, a twenty-minute focus group was conducted during the Global Learning Coalition meeting to add more context to survey answers, as the Global Learning Coalition is a small body. The surveys and focus group were analyzed using NVivo qualitative data analysis software and results included in this summary report.

The data-gathering for this report was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, during which the primary focus is staying safe and healthy. This made it more difficult to engage with participants, affecting both survey response rate and data gathering methodology.

Dissemination and Future Study

This report will be shared directly with the All for All Coalition and the Global Learning Coalition for review and feedback. The report will also be publicly available on The Global Switchboard's website.

Preliminary focus areas for SEGEP II

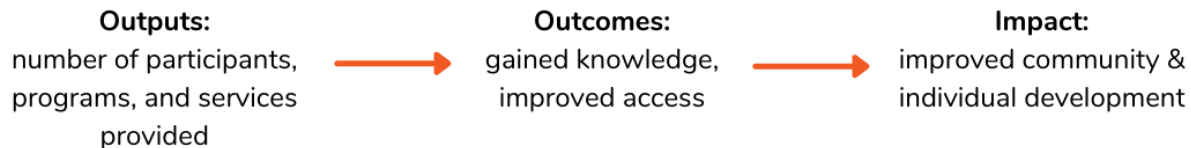
Further investigation into gaps that exist due to a lack or absence of programs/interventions: SEGEP II will build on the findings of SEGEP to engage Coalition members in a review and further exploration of the identified gaps.

Guiding questions:

- Which of the intervention categories is in need of further investigation?
- Where do SEGEP findings not align with your experiences as a direct service provider?
- Why do interventions not exist that are needed?
- What would be an effective strategy to disseminate SEGEP gap analysis within the international and immigrant communities to confirm, refute, and/or add to the gaps identified?

Investigation of gaps that exist due to inaccessible or ineffective programs/interventions: Work with Coalition members to gather information and evidence/data about specific programs/interventions and their effectiveness. Gather program/intervention level evidence/data regarding direct services to individuals and communities.

Trajectory for program interventions efficacy:



As the focus of SEGEP was primarily intervention and organization-based, the next step for investigation into the state of Global Engagement must look beyond organizations to the individuals that are participating in, and affected by the global engagement interventions. A complete perspective on the participation, efficacy, and outcomes of the different interventions requires exploring individual experience. This added perspective will also confirm and/or highlight new and different gaps in global engagement interventions. SEGEP II will (1) gather output and outcome data across Coalition members and (2) engage in direct data collection from communities engaged with Coalition members.

In beginning to reach the communities and individuals, SEGEP II will consider the following questions as a starting point:

- Who [communities and individuals] is directly served and how is the effectiveness of that service evaluated?
- Which organizations/programs gather direct service data that could be used as evidence for the state of global engagement?
- Which programs/interventions are in need of further data collection and evaluation?
- Are organizations interested and/or do they have the capacity to participate in a process to foster/improve data collection and dissemination efforts?
 - If so, then Coalition members will be partners in gathering these measurements; starting with participation numbers and then moving to outcome measures from surveys, interviews, artifacts, etc.

SEGEF Participants

All for All Coalition Members

1Hood Media
Age-Friendly Greater Pittsburgh
Allegheny Health Network
Allegheny Intermediate Unit
Alliance for Refugee Youth Support and Education
Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh
Carlow University
Casa San Jose
Center for Hearing and Deaf Services - Pittsburgh Language Access Network
Governor's Advisory Commission of Asian Pacific American Affairs
Global Links
Global Pittsburgh
Global Wordsmiths
Hello Neighbor
Honeycomb Credit
Jewish Family and Community Services
Latino Community Center
Literacy Pittsburgh
Northside Christian Health Center
Open Field
Pennsylvania Women Work
Pittsburgh Commission on Human Relations
Small Business Development Center, University of Pittsburgh
Somali Bantu Community Association of Pittsburgh
South Hills Interfaith Movement
Squirrel Hill Health Center
Trying Together
Whitetulip Health Foundation
World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh
Young Born Leaders

Global Learning Coalition Members

1Hood Media
Amizade
Building New Hope
Global Studies Center, University of Pittsburgh
Japan-America Society of Pennsylvania
PittGlobal | Study Abroad
Welcoming Pittsburgh
World Affairs Council of Pittsburgh

