



Update on 2022 programs

Gustolab International continues to closely monitor the Coronavirus pandemic globally, particularly in Italy, Japan and Vietnam. We take the implications of COVID-19 seriously. We are in constant contact with authorities and partners in our ongoing efforts to assess the situation and provide a safe environment for program participants. This is all being done in the context of evolving global and local conditions.

Current Situation: ITALY

As you know, the U.S. CDC has raised the travel alert level for Italy to a Level 3: Avoid Non-Essential Travel to Italy while the U.S. State Department advises U.S. citizens to **avoid all international travel** at this time due to the global impact of COVID-19. Many areas throughout the world are now experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks and taking action that may limit traveler mobility, including quarantines and border restrictions. Even countries, jurisdictions, or areas where cases have not been reported may restrict travel without notice. On March 11, U.S. President Donald Trump signed a proclamation that restricts travel to the United States from foreign nationals who have recently been in certain European countries. This does not apply to U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents. Read the full text of the proclamation [here](#).

The European Union has also proposed restrictions on all nonessential travel into the region.

For Italy, we are following the Italian national and local government recommendations and mandates and providing this update. On 9 March 2020, the government of Italy under Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte imposed a national quarantine on the entire country, restricting the movement of the population except for necessity, work, and health circumstances, in response to the growing outbreak of COVID-19 in the country. On 11 March, Conte announced the lockdown would be tightened, with all commercial and retail businesses except those providing essential services, like grocery stores and pharmacies, closed down. All schools and universities are also closed until April 3.

Current Situation: JAPAN



The U.S. CDC has raised the travel alert level for Japan to a Level 2, Special Precautions for High-Risk Travelers—Ongoing Community Transmission. For Osaka: The Kansai International Airport is closed for international travel as of March 18, 2020.

Current Situation: VIETNAM

From March 18, 2020 Vietnam will stop issuing new visas to all foreign nationals for 30 days in a bid to curb the spread of COVID-19. Travelers from countries with visa exemptions will only be allowed if they can show medical documents certifying they are free of the virus. The suspension also does not apply to diplomats and those entering on government business, however, they will be required to follow quarantine protocols. In addition, all travelers from the US, Europe, and ASEAN countries will be required to undergo medical checks and a 14-day quarantine when entering Vietnam. For restrictions on visitors from the US - Vietnam will consider stopping issuing tourist visas to visitors from the US on a state by state basis, depending on the development of the epidemic in the US.

Useful Links

World Health Organization

US CDC

U.S. STATE DEPARTMENT

<https://www.usa.gov/coronavirus>

<https://www.japan.travel/it/news/coronavirus/>

<https://www.vietnam-briefing.com/news/vietnam-business-operations-and-the-coronavirus-updates.html/>

Gustolab International's response and measures



Spring Program in Italy

All spring program-related programs are modified as follows:

- Gustolab International continues to educate its students and has shifted courses to online delivery using an online platform. Contact gustolaboffice@gustolab.com for more information.
- Our staff is in regular communication with our students, universities, and partners to provide support, assistance, and guidance during this time.

Summer study and intern programs in Italy, Japan and Vietnam

We are confident that this event will pass, and we can resume on-site operations soon. We understand that our partners are in the process of reviewing the Summer programs. At this time, we are planning to run our study abroad programs as scheduled for the summer. Barring other developments vis-a-vis the pandemic, and in the absence of other issues, we will announce a decision on our website to remain open, postpone program start date or shift to online coursework by the dates listed below (one month before program beginning dates):

- Italy Critical Studies on Food Systems and Sustainability: April 25, 2020
- Japan Critical Studies on Food Systems and Sustainability: May 7, 2020
- Italy Summer Internship: May 20, 2020
- Vietnam Critical Studies on Food Systems and Sustainability: May 28, 2020

Additional updates on the Italy Summer Programs

We recognize that potential program participants will need to make a personal decision about how and whether they participate in our Italy programs. For this reason, we will work with our provider partners, universities and faculty to find alternate program solutions.

We will also:

- extend the application deadline for our summer programs to April 5, 2020



- revise our policy for cancellation fees for open enrollment program applicants. Students will be able to withdraw until the first day of the program and receive a full refund.
- refund the “non-refundable fees” for open enrollment program applicants
- provide online or hybrid classes in the case of an ongoing resurgent pandemic.
- work with housing providers who will allow cancellations up to 10 days before the start of the program for accommodations.
- allow students to transfer their applications to our Japan or Vietnam summer open enrollment programs, or to roll over their application to next year’s programs.
- ask students to sign a special waiver for students who would like to continue planning their participation in the summer open enrollment program
- provide logistical information including travel and health considerations.
- follow the recommendations of the Italian and health authorities, and be proactive in our preventative measures and procedures at our on-site programs to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Italy Fall Programs

At this time, we are planning to run our study abroad programs as scheduled for the Fall semester.

The health and safety of our students, faculty and staff is our utmost priority. We will keep you updated as new information or developments emerge. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to us directly with questions or concerns.

Portions of this update are adapted from similar statements used by other international educators in the field.