

Agenda

Qualitative Evaluation Methods for Tracking the Impact and Success of Virtual Exchange September 12, 2019

- 12:00pm** Opening Remarks
Henry Shepherd, Assistant Director of Research and Design, The Stevens Initiative, The Aspen Institute, [@StevensInit](#)
- 12:10pm** Panel Discussion
Dr. Safaa Amer, Senior Researcher, RTI International, [@RTI_Intl](#)
Dr. Mirjam Hauck, Senior Lecturer, The Open University; Senior Fellow, UK Higher Education Academy; and President, EUROCALL, [@MirjamH](#)
Dr. Jennifer Laird, Senior Researcher, RTI International, [@RTI_Intl](#)
Henry Shepherd, Assistant Director of Research and Design, The Stevens Initiative, The Aspen Institute, [@StevensInit](#)
- 12:40pm** Participant Q&A

Panelist Bios

Dr. Safaa Amer has extensive experience in international evaluation and survey research, including impact evaluation design and analysis, mixed method approaches, statistical analysis, and data sciences. Her areas of interest are capacity building and applications within the social sciences in developing countries to contribute to the well-being of those populations as well as bridging between Statistics and Data Science/Analytics. Dr. Amer is an Adjunct Professor at GWU. She has been involved in RTI International's independent evaluation of the Stevens Initiative since 2018, leading the analysis of survey data, advising awardee organizations on quasi-experimental evaluation designs, and conducting site visits to virtual exchange programs, including leading interviews and focus groups in English and Arabic. She is actively involved in statistical and evaluation associations, and has received research innovation and author award on her publications. Dr. Amer works in RTI's Washington, DC office.



Dr. Mirjam Hauck is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Languages and Applied Linguistics at the Open University/UK and a Senior Fellow of the UK's Higher Education Academy. Her scholarly work focuses on intercultural communicative competence in technology-mediated contexts. She presents regularly at conferences, seminars and workshops worldwide. During her secondment (2014-2016) to the SUNY Center for Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL), she was responsible for the professional development in teaching and research of SUNY faculty and their international COIL partners. She is the President of the European Association for Computer Assisted Language Learning (EUROCALL) and training officer of UNICollaboration, a cross-disciplinary professional organisation for Telecollaboration and Virtual Exchange in Higher Education. Her publications are available here. She is also a co-investigator in the EU-funded EVALUATE, EVOLVE and ERASMUS PLUS Virtual Exchange projects which link teachers and learners from Higher Education Institutions round the world in Virtual Exchange Initiatives.

Dr. Jennifer Laird has two decades of experience conducting evaluations of educational programs, focusing primarily on programs designed to support vulnerable youth. She is skilled in evaluation design, quantitative and qualitative data management and analysis, and research project management. She is committed to conducting evaluations that are methodologically sound, transparent, and helpful to practitioners and funders. Dr. Laird has been involved in RTI International's independent evaluation of the Stevens Initiative since 2016, overseeing all aspects of the study. She has conducted site visits of virtual exchanges in Morocco, Jordan, the West Bank, and the United States. Dr. Laird is the Director of RTI's Berkeley, CA Office.

Henry Shepherd is Assistant Director of the Stevens Initiative. Prior to joining the Aspen Institute, he was a student in the Master of Science in Foreign Service program at Georgetown University, where he was research assistant to former Assistant Secretary of State Chester Crocker. Earlier, he coordinated the volunteer training program at Soliya, a New York-based organization that facilitates virtual exchange between young people in Western and predominantly Muslim societies. As an undergraduate at Brown University, he helped launch Strait Talk, an international initiative that conducts youth dialogue across the Taiwan Strait. He is from Boston.

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The Stevens Initiative is an international effort to build global competence for young people in the United States and the Middle East and North Africa by growing and enhancing the field of virtual exchange: online, international, and collaborative learning.