THE IMPORTANCE OF ALUMNI NETWORKS IN ASIA – the case of tourism development

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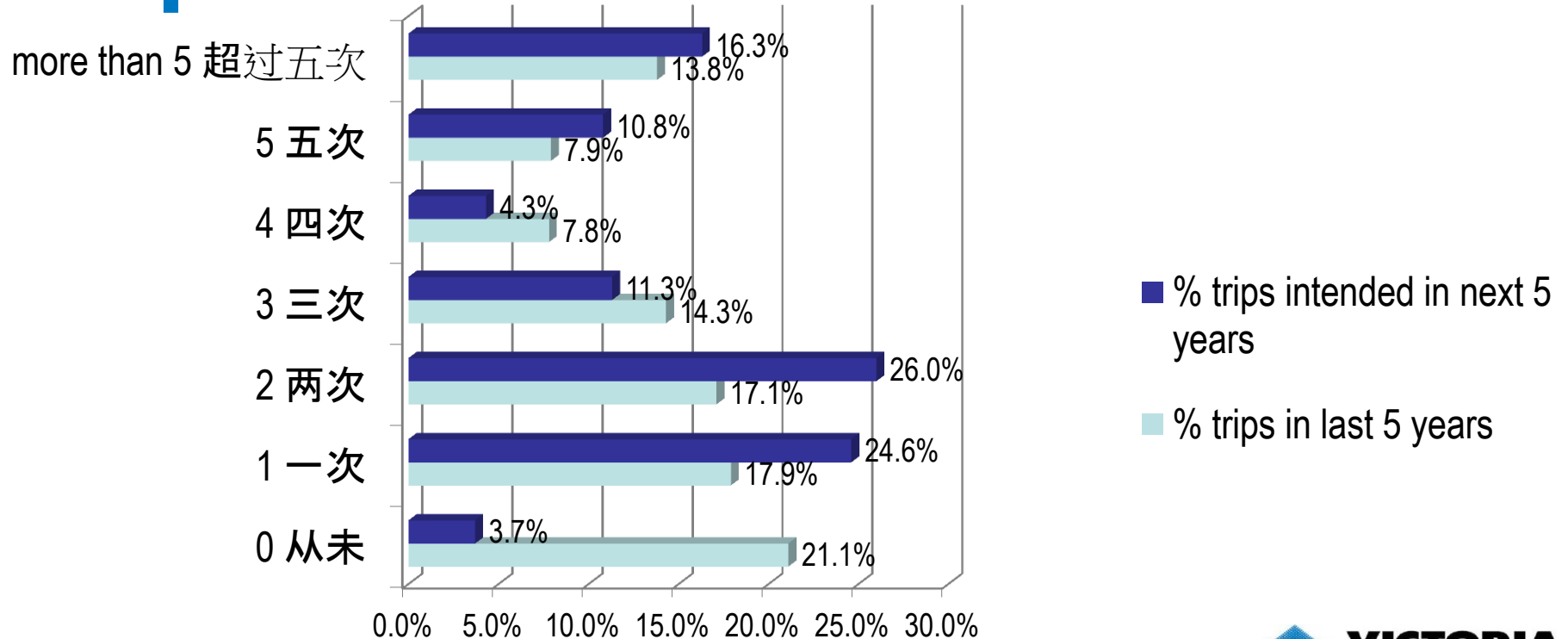# The role and influence of China based alumni on tourism development

A PROJECT PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, THE

CENTRAL UNIVERSITY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMICS (CUFE), BEIJING

and THE AUSTRALIA CHINA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION (ACAA)

- International Alumni – a largely under-utilised resource
- International Education and Tourism – Victoria's largest exports
- Little research on the longer term outcomes of international education
- Little research on 'transnationalism' as new migration

TRANSNATIONALS AND 'BRAIN CIRCULATION'

- Transnationals – the driver of the global flow of skills, knowledge and finance – or 'brain circulation' through:

  - Tourism
  - Travel
  - Communications
  - Trade
  - Financial transfers.

- Capacity dependent on the strength of networks.

Frequency of trips and intended trips to Australia

Bar chart showing frequency of trips with two series: "% trips intended in next 5 years" (dark blue) and "% trips in last 5 years" (light blue).

Frequency	% trips intended in next 5 years	% trips in last 5 years
more than 5 超过五次	16.3%	13.8%
5 五次	10.8%	7.9%
4 四次	4.3%	7.8%
3 三次	11.3%	14.3%
2 两次	26.0%	17.1%
1 一次	24.6%	17.9%
0 从未	3.7%	21.1%

X-axis: 0.0%, 5.0%, 10.0%, 15.0%, 20.0%, 25.0%, 30.0%

Other findings

- The majority (64%) stay for at least two weeks
- Alumni combine many activities: business 31%, education 43%, visiting friends and relatives, and leisure – eg. going to the beach and shopping for pleasure.
- 70% host visitors from Australia in China.
- 83% recommend Australia as a place to visit and study.
- 50% travel to Australia with others.
- Alumni appreciate Australia for natural beauty, clean environment, relaxed lifestyle and multiculturalism.

Barriers

- Australian based networks are less than potential
- Few (16%) travel beyond the major cities
- Visitor visas are difficult/precarious to secure
- Information access – *'Australians don't know what we want to know'*.
- Long and inconvenient flights
- Expense
- Lack of time.

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Conclusions

- Need to strengthen international alumni networks
- Need to strengthen the international student visitor experience
- Good case for tourism/education partnerships
- Need for further research – alumni as repeat visitors