

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES ABROAD

Volunteering abroad is often different from similar experiences in the US. For starters, you may need to pay a fee to an organization or provider in order to volunteer abroad. The fee may be assessed in order to cover housing and food costs, placement fees, airline tickets, or just serve as a donation to the organization with whom you will be working. For this reason, most individuals who choose to volunteer abroad may incorporate it into personal travel, a gap year abroad, or a longer experience overseas in a country or region of interest.

Below are some important questions to consider before starting to plan your volunteer experience abroad. Included is a sample listing of providers and placement organizations to get you started on finding the perfect volunteer assignment for you!

Important Questions

- Why do I want to volunteer abroad? How long can I go?
- What are my goals and expectations for this experience? What do I hope to accomplish?
- What level of immersion in the host culture and language do I want?
- What type of work do I want to do? Do I want to go on my own or with an organization?
- How important is volunteering as a part of my trip? Will I need to fundraise to pay for it?

Some Sample Volunteer Abroad Service Providers

Cultural Embrace (Academic Programs International)

www.culturalembracebyapi.com

Part of the API study abroad family of programs, Cultural Embrace offers short and long-term volunteer placements (three months to nine months) located in Argentina, Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru, Kenya and South Africa. Housing, board, traveler's insurance, pre-departure and local support included. In addition, Cultural Embrace offers short-term unpaid placements to teach a local host family English (and other foreign languages) in Brazil, France, Italy, and Spain in exchange for room and board.

Volunteers For Peace http://www.vfp.org

VFP offers placement in international volunteer projects in more than 100 countries around the world including the US. Projects are part of an international voluntary service movement where volunteers from multiple countries live together while working to improve local communities. Projects provide thousands of opportunities to see the world and make life-long friends while volunteering on a meaningful community service project. Since 1982 VFP has exchanged more than 30,000 volunteers worldwide.

World Endeavors

http://www.worldendeavors.com

World Endeavors provides international internship, study abroad, volunteer abroad, and customized group programs in over 20 countries around the world, with a focus on building meaningful connections between our participants and their host communities.

Cross-Cultural Solutions

http://www.crossculturalsolutions.org

Cross-Cultural Solutions is a nonprofit working to address critical global issues by providing meaningful volunteer service to communities abroad, and contributing responsibly to local economies. A leader in the field of international volunteer travel for over 17 years, CCS has long-standing relationships with local organizations and volunteers work alongside local people to make a sustainable impact. Since 1995, over 30,000 international volunteers have participated in CCS programs in 10 countries.

Experience with Purpose (ELAP)

http://www.myelap.com

ELAP the service learning and internship division of International Studies Abroad (ISA), was founded in 2002 as a way to encourage college students to go abroad, contribute to community development, and experience direct interaction with local communities. ELAP offers structured internship and service learning opportunities year-round, in a variety of fields, yielding valuable personal and professional experience. With its roots in Latin America, ELAP has grown to include programs in Europe, Asia, and North Africa.

International Volunteer Program

http://www.ivpsf.org

The International Volunteer Program (IVP) is a non-profit organization that promotes volunteerism in Europe, the United States and Latin America. Our volunteer programs are designed to facilitate hands-on service and international exchange opportunities in France, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Costa Rica. IVP volunteers work on a variety of projects in the areas of social justice, arts and culture, and the environment.

JET Program

http://www.jetprogramme.org

The Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (JET) seeks to help enhance internationalization in Japan by promoting mutual understanding between Japan and other nations. The program also aims to improve foreign language education in Japan and to encourage international exchange at the local level by fostering ties between Japanese youth and foreign youth.

Peace Corps

http://www.peacecorps.gov

The Peace Corps dates from 1960 when then Senator John F. Kennedy challenged students at the University of Michigan to serve their country in the cause of peace by living and working in developing countries. Today Peace Corps Volunteers live and work abroad in a range of industries from community development and education to health and business development typically for a period of 27 month. Volunteers receive room/board, medical insurance, living stipend and a small readjustment allowance on their return.

World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF)

http://www.wwoof.org/

WWOOF originated in the United Kingdom in 1971 and has grown into a worldwide network of organizations linking volunteers with organic farmers throughout the world to help people share more sustainable ways of living. WWOOF organizations link people who want to volunteer on organic farms or smallholdings with people who are looking for volunteer help. In exchange for volunteer help, WWOOF hosts offer food, accommodation and opportunities to learn about organic lifestyles.