

Journey-Information

Himalaya Volunteer Program for Grown ups



Introduction:

The Indian network for development exchange (IDEX) has been working since year 2002 for promotion of quality volunteer opportunities in India. As our initial venture we have successfully setup and run volunteer programs for young participants from many countries of the world. These programs are presently being run in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Rajasthan and Goa.

After setting up the youth programs successfully and receiving increasing number of applications from more "mature" people in the age group of 30 to 65 years, we decided to setup a separate program for this segment that would cater especially to this segment of people. With a successful running of the program since 2006, we intend to offer the program for interested participants in the year 2010 in the states of Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan.

With our commitment to continuous improvements in the program setup, information and delivery, the "30+ volunteer program" is guaranteed to offer many opportunities of meaningful voluntary work and an unforgettable cultural experience.

Identifying the needs:

In our experience of organizing volunteer placement for the 30+, we have identified certain additional needs for the grown-up volunteers that differ from the needs of the younger ones.

- a) Need for shorter program options due to possible shortage of available time.
- b) Requirement of more private space and accommodation.
- c) Greater interest in learning about local society and culture.
- d) Possibilities for relaxation and personal well-being would be appreciated.
- e) Need for organized travel possibilities during the volunteer program.
- f) Stringent quality control on the work placement.

The target segment for the program is people of 30-65 years who are either working professionally or retired after having acquired certain skills during their professional life.

Features of the proposed volunteering program:

1. **Location:** The volunteering program for grown ups will be offered in the lower Himalayan region in the state of Himachal Pradesh having suitable climatic conditions during most period of the year. The Himachal Pradesh program will run from January until the month of December.

The "30+ Camp" in Himachal Pradesh is situated in the village Sungal of Kangra district of Himachal Pradesh known for its scenic valleys and snow covered mountain peaks.

2. **Available Spaces and Age Limits:** We intend to offer a maximum of 15 spaces per arrival. In order to keep the general atmosphere of the program as intended, only participants aged 30 years or more will be accepted in the program. The maximum age limit for participating in the program would be 65 years. On the maximum age limit, special request from partners can be entertained if good health of the participant has been positively ascertained.

3. **Activities:** As the most crucial quality component of any volunteer opportunity, IDEX strives to ensure challenging, yet rewarding, work opportunities for the participants during the program.

In the second year of operation the following activities will be possible for the volunteer during the program:

- i. Teaching in school
- ii. Childcare work
- iii. Community visits and bridge courses
- iv. Maintenance of rural facilities
- v. Working with adolescent girls and rural women
- vi. Special care and education to mentally challenged children

Volunteer activities:

The activities done by volunteers in our projects primarily relate to education and child care in various institutions that we have identified as appropriate for volunteer and IDEX's intervention. We constantly seek expansion of the positive influence of the programs by including new activities that can engage volunteers in gainful activities for the local population.

Education and Child care are common activities that we offer in the Himalaya region. Details of these activities include:

Education related:

Volunteers' teaching in rural schools has been one of the most successful interventions of IDEX and the most popular activity. Volunteers participate in educational enhancement for students of primary school specifically in the areas of English, Math and enhancing creativity. It is important to note that unlike many participants' expectations, we do not require a formal education and/or experience of teaching from the participants. The reason for this is the assistance that IDEX provides to the participants interested in teaching, in the form of step by step workbooks, guidelines or basic teaching etc.

The volunteer activities in their field include:

1. Regularly teaching children English and Mathematics in the schools.
2. Creating a playful environment and enhance the creativity of the children through painting, playing games, singing etc.
3. Working with local teachers in creating low cost teaching material and to train them in making education more fun for the children.
4. Each volunteer to take responsibility for everyday attendance of a few children to the school, aimed at improving overall interest in the school and reduce drop-out rate.
5. Ensuring regular health check ups of the children in each school through cooperating with the local doctors and hospital staff.
6. Creating basic hygiene awareness amongst children on a regular basis

Child Care related:

In addition to our attention to schools, early childhood care and education is an area of critical need in rural areas.

It is important to inform the participants that a child care centre is a facility that established over a certain population for ensuring healthy growth and stimulation of children in rural areas. At such centre health monitoring, improvement of motor skills, nutritional supplements, vaccination etc. are provided for children from poor or uneducated families.

Drawing upon our experience we have also taken up the responsibility of maintenance and care of local child care centres. Also called "Anganwari", these centres carry out holistic child care in the area. In line with the expected activities of such institutions, the **volunteer activities include:**

1. Ensuring maximum attendance by the children of the area to these centres through awareness building in the community.
2. Personal attention and care to the children coming to the centre everyday.
3. Assistance to the local worker for record maintenance for each child based on health, vaccination, growth and nutritional condition.
4. Making and feeding the children a specially prepared nutritious meal everyday with the help of a local worker.
5. Continuous survey of all pregnant women and new born babies in the area for regular health check ups and vaccination.
6. Creating a colourful and enjoyable environment for the children with games, stories and other creative activities (all material support and training for such activities would be provided by IDEX)
7. Developing the motor skills of the little children by making them use their body parts in various games etc

Other optional and location specific activities

Some optional activities are available at our programs that would help widen the impact of the volunteers' presence in the local area and also provide more opportunities of intervention in the community.

1. **Bridge courses (additional tutoring) for slow learning children:** With the help of regularly updated records of school children, interested volunteers can take up special classes for children that need more tutoring at their homes. This activity can have the additional benefit of building more confidence in the community about volunteers' work and awareness about the need for regular schooling. This activity also provides an additional opportunity to the volunteers for interacting more with the local community.
2. **Maintenance of institutional facilities:** During some afternoons, the volunteers can take up maintenance, renovation and decoration of their various work places like schools, day-care centres etc. Such work will not be available on a continuous basis and hence may be seen as an extra activity that the volunteers would carry out.
3. **Working with adolescent girls and rural women:** Grown up volunteers have shown keen interest in working with teenage girls and rural women for a variety of activities in the year 2007. Inspired by this interest, Idex plans to continue and further strengthen this very useful intervention in the local communities. A variety of such activities would be scheduled during the volunteers' presence at the projects, some of these may include:
 - i. Special English conversation classes. Computer classes for girls
 - ii. Computer training for girls
 - iii. Recreational activities for enhancing self-esteem
 - iv. Being part of organized events of awareness building on issues like personal hygiene, family planning etc.

4. **School for Mentally challenged children:** Idex is going to establish a new school with the help of the local community for mentally challenged children that would be assisted by our Grown up volunteers in Himachal Pradesh. Some of the activities of the grown ups with the children would be:
- Teaching children based on instruction and advice of local teachers
 - Helping the students in completing study assignments.
 - Organizing education and fun activities for the children
 - Visiting students' homes for sensitization of the family towards their children with special needs.

Program Price:

EUR 1.298,- per person for the 4 week program.

EUR 1.968,- per person for the 8 week program.

(Please note that a recently added service tax of 4.9% is included in the above prices. Prices may slightly change due to the service tax component which would be announced in March 2010.)

Price includes

1. Pickup at the New Delhi airport and one night in Delhi hotel on double occupancy basis.
2. One night's stay in Delhi upon return
3. **Visit to Taj Mahal**, the most famous of Indian historical monuments including one night's stay at hotel (in Agra) and local English speaking guide.
4. All transfers by dedicated or public transport required by the program including :
 - a) for orientation program in Jaipur
 - b) local sightseeing (wherever applicable)
 - c) All excursions included in the program.
 - d) Local transport at project locations.
 - e) Overnight train journeys for transfer to project sites at the start and return to Delhi at the end of the program.
5. **Home-stay with local English speaking families** in Jaipur during orientation.
6. **Sightseeing of Amber fort** in Jaipur with **Elephant ride**.

(Please note that we would make all efforts to provide the elephant ride, which, however, can not be guaranteed in case of unforeseen circum-

stances like VIP visits, government restrictions etc. Alternative transfers to the Amber fort would be provided with jeeps, in such cases)

7. Accommodation at the IDEX accommodation facilities on maximum double occupancy basis.
8. **Dedicated transport** during the working days for local use throughout the program.
9. **All meals** during the working and orientation days. (Only breakfast on the first and last day of the program; breakfasts only during excursions, unless otherwise specified.) (Please refer to meal plan advised along with Sample schedule)
10. Dedicated on-site assistance of an **English speaking translator/guide** for the entire duration of the program. In case of availability of a local English-speaking person at the project site (like teacher or doctor), the same may be engaged instead of an in-house translator from IDEX.
11. **Workshop** for the participants on Indian cooking, during the stay at the IDEX Base.
12. A **one-night, two day excursion to Amritsar**, the holy city of Sikh religion, where the volunteers can visit a host of historical and religious sights. The famous Golden temple in Amritsar is the holiest shrine of Sikhism. Participants can also visit the "Wagah border closing ceremony" between India and Pakistan.
13. **All material required** for various activities during the volunteer work like colour pens papers, sports equipment etc.
14. Assistance in **setting up local support** for the volunteers' activities in coordination with the local communities and other NGOs.
15. **Extensive pre-departure information, port-arrival printed material, regular training and support by IDEX** for preparing the volunteers for their experience.

Other facilities provided by IDEX for structured learning, comfort and recreation of volunteers include:

- a. Possibility of **learning Yoga everyday** with a qualified instructor
- b. Availability of **basic and advance Hindi learning** opportunity everyday through professionally structured lessons.
- c. Indian massage at very subsidized rates.
- d. Amenities like refrigerator, music player etc.
- e. Video and books library; Board Games
- f. Information and assistance for independent excursions during the week-ends.
- g. Internet facilities (free of charge) and laundry services (on nominal charges)

Single occupancy supplement (on request, subject to availability):

EUR 344,- per person for the 4 week program (inclusive of Taxes)

The supplement includes accommodation at project location, Delhi and Agra on single occupancy basis.

Please note for the single occupancy supplement that:

1. The accommodation provided at host families in Jaipur may be on double occupancy
2. The single occupancy accommodation at the project sites may not have en-suite toilet and bathing facilities.

Extension supplements:

Extension supplements	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks
double occupancy per person	€ 275,-	€ 415,-	€ 560,-	€ 705,-
single occupancy per person	€ 320,-	€ 504,-	€ 694,-	€ 884,-

(Please note that there may not be an accompanying Idex representative for people choosing any extension length, except for those choosing 4 weeks, on the journey back to Delhi. It would, however, be ensured that the participants are booked in safe and comfortable air-conditioned class train and arrangements for all transfers and accommodation in Delhi would be made)

The supplement includes:

The participants can choose for program extensions with a minimum unit of one week. The services included in the extension prices are:

1. Additional accommodation for the duration chosen on single or double occupancy basis.
2. Specially arranged transfer upon completion of program to train station and assistance at the train.
3. Transfer from Pathankot to Delhi by air conditioned sleeper **(the participants likely to do this overnight journey alone, unless accompanied by another participant returning on the same day)**
4. Assistance and transfer from Delhi train station to hotel for last night's stay.

Program Extensions in a new location

A number of our volunteers have expressed the desire to extend their programs for a certain number of weeks but do not wish to do so in the same location as they have worked before. In order to facilitate this experience enriching possibility, program would offer participants the opportunity to change location between Himachal and Rajasthan.

The following are points to be noted in this case:

- a) The participant would arrive in Dehli at the end of the program as per the schedule of their stay at the first location.
- b) They will then be transferred to the next project by overnight train journey and other means of transport. This journey is likely to be done by the participant without being escorted by an Idex staff. Idex will however make reservations in air-conditioned sleeper class and organize transfers at all necessary points for the safe and comfortable journey of the participant.
- c) The participant will then be able to complete her desired duration of stay at the next location.
- d) The participant may opt for single occupancy in one or both the locations. The confirmation of single occupancy however will be subject to availability.
- e) The opportunity of being able to change location for an extension will only be available from March to mid-December.

Extension supplements

Extension supplements	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks
double occupancy per person	€ 429,-	€ 554,-	€ 691,-	€ 831,-
single occupancy per person	€ 473,-	€ 598,-	€ 735,-	€ 876,-

Sample Schedule

Following is the sample schedule for the volunteering program for grown ups. Although subject to minor change, the schedule would largely follow the described framework:

	Day	Location	Activity	Meal Plan
Mon	Day 1	Delhi	Arrival in Delhi	
Tue	Day 2	Agra	Transfer to Agra, visit to Taj Mahal	B
Wed	Day 3	Jaipur	Transfer to Jaipur, orientation starts	B, D
Thu	Day 4	Jaipur	Orientation program	B, L, D
Fri	Day 5	Jaipur	Orientation program	B, L, D
Sat	Day 6		o/n journey to project location	B, L, D
Sun	Day 7	Himachal	Settling in project area	B, L, D
Mon	Day 8	Himachal	Work Starts	B, L, D
Tue	Day 9	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Wed	Day 10	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Thu	Day 11	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Fri	Day 12	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Sat	Day 13	Himachal	Weekend	B, L, D
Sun	Day 14	Himachal	Weekend	B, L, D
Mon	Day 15	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Tue	Day 16	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Wed	Day 17	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Thu	Day 18	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Fri	Day 19	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Sat	Day 20	Himachal	Amritsar Excursion	B, D
Sun	Day 21	Himachal	Amritsar Excursion	B, D
Mon	Day 22	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Tue	Day 23	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Wed	Day 24	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Thu	Day 25	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Fri	Day 26	Himachal	Work continues	B, L, D
Sat	Day 27	o/n train	o/n train journey to Delhi	B, L, D
Sun	Day 28	Delhi	Arrival in Delhi and departure	B

B = Breakfast

L = Lunch

D = Dinner

Grown-ups program dates for the year 2010

The following would be the starting and completion dates for the volunteer program for grown ups. The system of pickups at arrival and airport transfer on departure would work in the same manner as being presently carried out in our youth volunteer program.

Himachal program 2010 to 2011 – Dates	
4 week Program	8 week Program
Starting Date – Departure Date	Starting Date – Departure Date
April 5 – May 2, 2010	April 5 – May 30, 2010
May 3 – May 30, 2010	May 3 – June 27, 2010
May 31 – June 27, 2010	May 31 – July 25, 2010
June 28 – July 25, 2010	June 28 – August 22, 2010
July 26 – August 22, 2010	July 26 – September 19, 2010
August 23 – September 19, 2010	August 23 – October 17, 2010
September 20 – October 17, 2010	September 20 – November 14, 2010
October 18 – November 14, 2010	October 18 – December 12, 2010
November 15 – December 12, 2010	November 15, 2010 – January 9, 2011
December 13, 2010 – January 9, 2011	December 13, 2010 – February 6, 2011

Please note the following important details about booking flights for the arrival/departure dates and times of volunteers:

1. The program starts on every 4th Monday (with some exceptions) where volunteers are expected to use flights that arrive between 10 AM on Monday to 10 AM on Tuesday (Day 2).
2. In case that a participant has to arrive outside these times, extra airport transfer and hotel nights may need to be booked, requiring additional charges.
3. At the end of the program (4 week or 8 week), volunteers arrive back in Delhi for their flight our latest by 8 pm on a Sunday (Day 28 or Day 56).
4. It is therefore advisable that the return flight be booked for the volunteers between midnight of Sunday or sometime on Monday. Accommodation for the night between Sunday (Day 28 or 56) and Monday (Day 29 or 57) is included in the program price.
5. Airport drop facility will be provided to participants until 10 AM on the day after the last night of the program (usually a Monday). Participants requiring to reach the airport after this period will need to make own arrangement.
6. We strongly recommend that arrival flights after 10 AM on Day 2 (Tuesday) and departure flights before midnight on Sunday (Day 28 or Day 56) not be used as these can cause significant disturbances to the program schedule and are likely to cause additional expenses.

Booking:

Lotus Travel Service GmbH
Baaderstr. 3
80469 Munich, Germany
Tel.: 0049 / 89 / 2 02 08 99-0
Fax: 0049 / 89 / 2 02 08 99-29
www.lotus-volunteer.com