

Journey-Information

Himalaya Volunteer Program for Grown ups



Palampur / Indien

Himalaya Volunteer Program
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 Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh 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 continue offering the program for interested participants in the year 2011 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 Himalayan location is available for participants throughout the year, around the regionally important town of Palampur in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The IDEX "Himalaya Base " is located 30 kms from Dharamsala, the capital of the exiled Tibetan government and centre of Tibetan Buddhist culture, adding another cultural dimension to the numerous opportunities that the program offers.

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 they 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 1.401,- per person for the 4 week program.

EUR 2.174,- 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 next year.)

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. Learning Yoga for one hour classes for one week during the first month of the program.
- b. 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 441,- 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 | € 300,- | € 455,- | € 611,- | € 773,- |
| single occupancy per person | € 366,- | € 586,- | € 809,- | € 1.035,- |

(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.

Satellite accommodation possibility :

Partners should be duly informed that due to certain seasonal cycles, participants may be accommodated in " satellite housing " in case of certain programmes. It is similar to the system of multiple housing units used in the Himalaya by IDEX since 2005.

This essentially means that some of the participants may be accommodated in the "main camp" which would be the main base with the dining facility, the lounge

area, Internet access etc and will be the main meeting point and centre of activity for the program. However, some of the participants will be accommodated for their program in alternative accommodation facilities close to the "main camp". Depending on the provisions of the program, transportation between the satellite accommodation and the main camp may or may not be provided. Please check with IDEX for exact details as per the program.

Kindly note that the satellite accommodation is only meant to be a sleeping place and the participants will be able to avail all the facilities of the camp similarly as any other volunteer. The allocation of housing is done on a non-preferential, first come first serve basis. The standard of housing offered will be the same at each unit.

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 | Jaipur | Transfer to Jaipur, Orientation starts | B |
| Wed | Day 3 | Jaipur | Orientation program | B, D |
| Thu | Day 4 | Jaipur | Orientation program | B, L, D |
| Fri | Day 5 | Agra | Transfer to Agra, visit to Taj Mahal | B, L, D |
| Sat | Day 6 | | o/n journey to project location | B, L, D |
| Sun | Day 7 | Himachal | Settling in project location | 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 | No meals |
| Sun | Day 21 | Himachal | Amritsar Excursion | No meals |
| 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 2011

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 2011 to 2012 – Dates | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 4 week Program | 8 week Program |
| Starting Date – Departure Date | Starting Date – Departure Date |
| January 10 – February 6, 2011 | January 10 – March 6, 2011 |
| February 7 – March 6, 2011 | February 7 – April 3, 2011 |
| March 7 – April 3, 2011 | March 7 – May 1, 2011 |
| April 4 – May 1, 2011 | April 4 – May 29, 2011 |
| May 2 – May 29, 2011 | May 29 – June 26, 2011 |
| May 30 – June 26, 2011 | May 30 – July 24, 2011 |
| June 27 – July 24, 2011 | June 27 – August 21, 2011 |
| July 25 – August 21, 2011 | July 25 – September 18, 2011 |
| August 22 – September 18, 2011 | August 22 – October 16, 2011 |
| September 19 – October 16, 2011 | September 19 – November 13, 2011 |
| October 17 – November 13, 2011 | October 17 – December 11, 2011 |
| November 14 – December 11, 2011 | November 14 – January 8, 2012 |
| December 12, 2011 – January 8, 2012 | December 12, 2011 – February 5, 2012 |

Arrival and Departure Policy

We request you to familiarise yourself properly with the procedures that we follow in this matter. If you feel that something is unclear about the pickup and drop procedures, then please clarify the matters with us:

Pickup policy and procedure on arrival :

1. The pickup is made available for a window of 24 hours from 10 AM on the starting date of the program (counted as Day 1) until 10 AM on the next day (day 2).
2. The time of arrival of a participant is calculated by the scheduled arrival time of the flight on which the person is arriving. This is the policy that we implement and works well irrespective of how much time it takes a participant to come out of the airport to meet our representative. For the sake of clarity and consistency Idex will note the scheduled time of arrival of the flight (not considering , early or delayed arrivals) for assessing if the participant can be picked up within the program services or not.
3. Participants arriving by flights that are outside the included period have to either get their own transport to the hotel, or will have to book additional transfers with Idex to be picked up on extra charges.
4. Please be advised that Idex will not be able to pick up participants that arrive outside the "included" hours and then wish to wait at the airport in order to be picked up. Airports in India can be pretty large and somewhat hard to find people in, once they have come out of the single exit of the airport. We have had a number of experiences, when participants waiting to be picked up after having arrived earlier are unable to find our pickup personnel, leading to frantic calling and eventually complaints.
5. Please ensure to advise all your participants, to look out for the sign board in the name of " Idex" , instead of their personal names, unless specified.

Airport drop policy and procedure on departure:

- a. Participants for all the programs, must book their flights from 8 PM on the last day of the program in all the programs. This is being advised on the general time of arrival of the trains in Delhi/ Mumbai and the very possible delays in train services.

b. Please remember that hotel accommodation for the last night of the program (for example night of day 28 for a 4 week program or night of day 35 on a 5 week program) in Delhi/Mumbai is included in the price of the program.

c. Airport drop facility will be provided to participants until 10 AM on the day after the last night of the program. Participants requiring to reach the airport after this period will need to make own arrangement.

d. Exception to this rule are participants for the Rajasthan programs. The participants on this program should book their journey after spending the last night in Delhi. The reason for this the late arrival of Rajasthan program participants in Delhi (around 2100 hrs or 9 PM on the last day).

Booking:

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