

**Journey-Information**

# **Youth Volunteer Program - Himalaya**



Palampur / Indien

Himalaya Volunteer Program

## **Introduction**

The Youth volunteer program of IDEX has been operational since year 2002. Started in the desert state of Rajasthan and the beautiful Himalayan region during the summer period for interested participants.

With the diverse experience, we have made significant improvements in our programs and have hence successfully organized placements, travels and learning opportunities for many volunteers since the start of the programs.

The model of our youth program would have the participants work with the local community for improving the quality of education and care in daycare centers, special institutions and regular schools. IDEX, on its part, would offer support in the areas of placements, monitoring and logistical support. The well tested approach of many years works well for offering a combination of diverse experiences of working and learning that come with being in a multi-cultural environment.

## **Duration:**

The youth volunteers program in the year 2011 is available for participation with 4 and 8 week options with weekly extensions possible for our participants.

The program starts on fixed dates which are joined by participants from many countries. The starting dates of the 4 week and 8 week options are the same and the schedule includes the first one week as orientation in Jaipur, the "Pink City", IDEX's home base and a very popular destination for national and international visitors.

## **Location:**

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.

## **Volunteer activities:**

The activities done by volunteers in our projects primarily relate to three broad areas of education, care and empowerment 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 gainfully, for the local population.

While the needs of each regions differs due to varied, cultures, climate and social conditions there are some common activities that we offer in both the locations. Details of these activities include:

**Education related:**

Volunteers' teaching in rural areas has been one of the most successful interventions of IDEX and the most popular activity amongst volunteers. Volunteers participate in educational enhancement for students of local communities specifically in the areas of English, Math and enhancing creativity. In order to promote participation of more and more volunteers in this activity, we provide detailed workbooks and guidelines for teaching. This is done to ensure that those participants that have no formal education or practical experience in teaching can also carry out this activity comfortably with the help of aid provided by us.

**The volunteer activities in the field include:**

1. Regularly teaching children English and Mathematics in the schools.
2. Teaching children of migrant communities and child labors.
3. Conducting bridge courses for school drop-outs or slower learning children
4. Creating a playful environment and enhance the creativity of the children through painting, playing games, singing etc.
5. Working with local teachers in creating low cost teaching material and to train them in making education more fun for the children.
6. Ensuring regular health check ups of the children in each school through cooperating with the local doctors and hospital staff.
7. 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:

Drawing upon our experience we have taken up the responsibility of maintenance and care of local child care centers. Also called "Aanganwari", these centers 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 centers through awareness building in the community.
2. Personal attention and care to the children coming to the center 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 every day 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 colorful 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

## **Afternoon activities**

During our work with volunteers during the last few months we have come to realize that a significant number of volunteer often seek more working hours than have been offered by our projects so far. For this reason, our programs would offer a number of optional afternoon activities that would help the volunteers have a wider impact during their stay.

1. 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.

2. Maintenance of institutional facilities: During some afternoons, the volunteers can take up maintenance, renovation and decoration of their various work places like schools, daycare centers 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.

## **Women's empowerment:**

A variety of educational and confidence building activities are organized by Idex for the benefit of adolescent girls and women of the local community. These activities are geared towards expanding the horizon of this often neglected section of the community with the purpose of giving them a sense of self-worth and empowerment.

Volunteers contribute significantly in the areas of:

1. Computer training: In the fact developing world the knowledge of computer can give the students employability advantage and make it easier for them to access modern means to information and expression. Volunteers can make use of the well tested and developed modules of imparting basic computer skills to enthusiastic local girls and women.

2. English classes: In an increasingly unilingual world, knowledge of English can make a huge difference to the confidence, employability and social status of an individual. With English not being the first language in the rural areas, people from a vast majority of Indian population miss out on quality opportunities of gaining confidence in the sue of language. Volunteers, with their involvement in teaching English to local women can help the project achieve a multitude of objectives like empowerment and increasing employability.

## **Location specific activities:**

### **Himalaya Project:**

#### **a. School for Mentally challenged children:**

Since June 2005, IDEX Volunteers have been working at this special for the mentally challenged. As a result of our intervention, the number of students has grown and attendance of children has become much more regular.

Severely understaffed, the two teachers in the school are often struggling to give adequate attention to each of the approximately 20-odd students enrolled in the school.

Similar to the engagement in 2008, IDEX plans to support the school with material support and full time engagement of volunteers during the Himalaya program in 2009. The volunteer activity in this institution would include:

- Assisting teachers in completing assignments for the students.
- Organising education and fun activities for the children
- Visiting students' homes for sensitization of the family towards their children with special needs.

#### **b. The Saliyana Orphanage:**

The activity will now be offered as a regular offer for afternoon period in the Youth Program at Himachal. The orphanage is home to 29 children in various age groups. Ten (10) volunteer's can spend about 2 hours each day from 1530 to 1730 hrs during the school days and more activities can be organized during school holidays when the children have their mornings free. In brief the various activities that the volunteers can do during 2 hours in the afternoons are:

- Helping children with homework
- Conversational and written English teaching
- Computer training
- Helping slower learning children

## **"Full" and "Basic" versions:**

From year 2011, the Himalaya Youth Program is being offered in 2 different options. The first option (named as "Full" option) will start with the one week off cultural orientation while staying with host families. The 2nd option ( named as

“Basic” option) will start with arrival in the nearest, well connected airport and will bring participants by public transport to the project area, directly with the orientation being given at the project location itself. The nearest well connected airport will be Amritsar ( Airport Code : ATQ) for Himachal location.

For the sake of operational ease, the starting and ending dates of both the programs will be the same, even though the airport arrivals and departures will be at different locations.

While participants of the “Full” program will be able to experience a more rigorous orientation, participants of the “basic” program will be able to do longer time as volunteers and save money due to the program’s lower fee.

## **Program Price:**

### **“Full” service option:**

**EUR 1.131,- per person for the 4 week program.**

**EUR 1.679,- per person for 8 week program**

*(Please note that service tax of 4.94% is included in the above prices. Prices may slightly change due to the service tax component, which would be announced in April 2011.)*

### **Prices includes**

1. **Pickup at the New Delhi airport** and one night in Delhi hotel.
2. **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 journeys at the start and the end of the program.
3. **Home-stay with local English speaking families** in Jaipur during orientation.  
*(The home stay would be provided for a total of 4 nights, instead of 3 nights. During the last day, the volunteers will have additional possibility of having time to explore the city of Jaipur or to take an optional visit to the city of Agra for visiting the Taj Mahal.)*
  4. **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 circumstances like VIP visits, government restrictions etc. Alternative transfers to the Amber fort would be provided with jeeps, in such cases)*
  5. **Accommodation at the IDEX accommodation** facility on sites the basis of **minimum triple occupancy**.
  6. **Transport** during the working days for transportation between projects and accommodation.
  7. **All meals** during the working days, orientation days  
*(Please refer to the detailed meal plan mentioned along with the itinerary in the later sections of this offer document.)*
  8. **One-week workshop** for the participants during their stay at the IDEX base, on the following:
    - a. Yoga
    - b. Indian cooking ( for 8 week participants only)
  9. Dedicated on-site assistance of an **English-speaking translator** and helper for the first four weeks of the program (including the days of orientation 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.

10. The following, **fully-supported excursions** would be provided as a part of the program.
  - a. Trekking trip in the Himalayas for a total of 2 nights and 2 days (including travel time to destination) with overnight camping inclusive of all meals and necessary gear.
  - b. 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. ( This excursion is included for 8 week participants only).
11. All material required for various activities during the volunteer work like colour pens papers, sports equipment etc.
12. Assistance in **setting up local support** for the volunteers' activities in co-ordination with the local NGOs
13. **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 comfort and recreation of volunteers include:

- a. Amenities like refrigerator, DVD player, television etc.
- b. Video and books library; Board Games.
- c. Information and assistance for independent excursions during the weekends.

## **“Basic” service option:**

**EUR 855,- per person for the 4 week program.**

**EUR 1.355,- per person for 8 week program**

*(Please note that service tax of 4.94% is included in the above prices. Prices may slightly change due to the service tax component, which would be announced in April 2011.)*

### **Prices includes**

1. Airport Arrival pickup at Amritsar airport ( Airport code: ATQ) for Himachal Youth Program.
2. All transfers by public transport required by the program at the start and the end of the program.
3. Accommodation at the IDEX accommodation facility on site the basis of 4 persons per room.
4. Transportation during the working days between projects and accommodation.
5. All meals during the working days, orientation days (Please refer to the detailed meal plan mentioned along with the itinerary in the later sections of this offer document.)
6. One-week workshop for the participants during their stay at the Idex base, on the following:
  - c) Yoga
  - d) Indian cooking (for 8 weeks participants only)
7. Dedicated on-site assistance of an English speaking translator and helper for the first four weeks 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.

8. **All material required** for various activities during the volunteer work like color pens papers, sports equipment etc.
9. Assistance in **setting up local support** for the volunteers' activities in coordination with the local NGOs
10. **Extensive pre-departure information, port-arrival printed material, regular training and support by IDEX** for preparing the volunteers for their experience.

## Program Extension:

	1 week	2 weeks	3 weeks	4 weeks
<b>"Full" Version</b>	<b>EUR 221,-</b>	<b>EUR 354,-</b>	<b>EUR 486,-</b>	<b>EUR 529,-</b>
<b>"Basic" Version</b>	<b>EUR 219,-</b>	<b>EUR 293,-</b>	<b>EUR 418,-</b>	<b>EUR 500,-</b>

*(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 2011.)*

Volunteers can further extend their stay in multiples of 1-week blocks at the same location. These extensions can also be used for switching the program locations (between Rajasthan and Himachal,) if a participant wishes to do a month of volunteer work, different from the starting location chosen. A changed location however would call for an additional fee of EUR 219,- (inclusive of taxes) per person to cover expenses related to specially organized transfers. Interested participants may need to travel unescorted in overnight train journeys. Idex would make arrangements for all transfer and pickups and overnight journeys would be booked in safe and comfortable air-conditioned sleeper class compartments.

## Optional Taj Mahal Trip

**EUR 117,- per person.**

### **Services included:**

- Accommodation on triple sharing basis in Agra.
- Transportation to and from Agra
- Guided tour and entrance to Taj Mahal with English speaking guide.
- Breakfast and dinner during the trip.
- All luxury, state and transport taxes.
- Accompanying escort with the participants

*Please note that due to change in the schedule of the first week of the program, all participants will now be able to take the optional Agra extension irrespective of the duration of their stay and extension weeks taken.*

### **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.

## **Volunteer Program Dates**

<b>Himachal program 2011 to 2012 – Dates for "Full" and "Basic" Programs</b>	
<b>4 week Program</b>	<b>8 week Program</b>
<b>Starting Date – Departure Date</b>	<b>Starting Date – Departure Date</b>
January 17 – February 13, 2011	January 17 – March 13, 2011
February 14 – March 13, 2011	February 14 – April 10, 2011
March 14 – April 10, 2011	March 14 – May 8, 2011
April 11 – May 8, 2011	April 11 – June 5, 2011
May 9 – June 5, 2011	May 9 – July 3, 2011
June 6 – July 3, 2011	June 6 – July 31, 2011
July 4 – July 31, 2011	July 4 – August 28, 2011
August 1 – August 28, 2011	August 1 – September 25, 2011
August 29 – September 25, 2011	August 29 – October 23, 2011

September 26 – October 23, 2011	September 26 – November 20, 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

## Himalayan Volunteer 4 and 8 week Itinerary “Full” Program

Day		Location	Activity	Meal Plan
Mon	Day 1	Delhi	Arrival in Delhi and transfer to accommodation	No meals
Tue	Day 2	Jaipur	Morning transfer to Jaipur for orientation	B,L,D
Wed	Day 3	Jaipur	Morning sight seeing and orientation and evening shopping (Overnight at Host Family)	B,L,D
Thu	Day 4	Jaipur	Orientation and afternoon movie (Overnight at Host Family).	B,L,D
Fri	Day 5	Jaipur/Agra	Orientation in the morning. Afternoon optional Agra trip (for those who interested). Day free in Jaipur for others.	B,L,D
Sat	Day 6	Overnight train	Morning Taj Mahal Visit and later transfer to Jaipur. Same day arrival at Jaipur office and late evening transfer to Railway Station for overnight train to Camp.	B,D
Sun	Day 7	Camp	Arrival and transfer to camp. Welcome at camp.	B,L,D
Day 8 to Day 12		Camp	Work area visit and work start.	B,L,D
Day 13 to Day 14		Trekking	Morning transfer to MacLeod Ganj for trekking. Overnight at MacLeod Ganj.	B,L,D
Day 15 to Day 26		Camp	Work area with free weekend.	B,L,D
Sat	Day 27	Overnight train/Camp	Overnight train to Delhi for 4 week participants/ Weekend free for 8 week participants.	B,L,D
Sun	Day 28	Delhi/Camp	Arrival in Delhi and transfer for	No

			overnight at hotel or departure for 4 week participants/ Weekend free for 8 week participants.	meal/ B,L,D
Mon	Day 29	Delhi/Camp	Fly out 4 week participants/ Work continues for 8 week participants.	Breakfast only/ B,L,D
Day 30 to Day 47		Camp	Work area and weekend departure	B,L,D
Day 48 to Day 49		Amritsar	Morning transfer to Amritsar for Golden Temple and visit to "Wagah Border". Overnight at Amritsar.	B,D
Day 50 to Day 54		Camp	Work area and weekend departure	B,L,D
Sat	Day 55	Overnight Train	Afternoon transfer to Himachal railway station to board the overnight train to Delhi.	B,L,D
Sun	Day 56	Delhi	Arrival in Delhi and transfer for overnight at hotel or departure.	No meal
Mon	Day 57	Delhi	Fly out.	Breakfast Only

## Rajasthan Volunteer 4 and 8 week Itinerary "Basic" Program

Day		Location	Activity	Meal Plan
Mon	Day 1	Amritsar	Arrival in Amritsar and transfer to accommodation.	No meals
Tue	Day 2	Camp	Transfer to project location by public transport which may include day bus or overnight train.	B, packed dinner
Wed	Day 3	Camp	Arrival at camp & welcome meeting & orientation starts.	B,L,D
Day 4 to Day 14		Camp	Work starts and continues. Week-ends are free to do own activities or to stay at camp.	B,L,D
Day 15 to Day 19		Camp	Morning Yoga work-shop and work area.	B,L,D
Day 20 to Day 21		Camp	Weekend free (optional Trekking MacLeod Ganj on extra charges).	B,L,D
Day 22 to Day 26		Camp	Work continues.	B,L,D
Sat	Day 27	Amritsar/ Camp	4 Week participant depart for Amritsar. Weekend free for 8 week participants	B,L,D
Sun	Day 28	Amritsar	Arrival in Amritsar and transfer to hotel or airport for onwards journey only 4 week participants. Weekend free for 8 week participants.	Breakfast only /B,L,D
Day 29 to Day 54		Camp	Work area with free weekend.	B,L,D
Sat	Day 55	Overnight train	Participants depart for Amritsar.	B,L,D
Sun	Day 56	Amritsar	Arrival in Amritsar and transfer to hotel or airport for onwards journey only 4 week participants	No meal
Mon	Day 57	Amritsar	Transfer to Airport only until 10 AM on this day.	Breakfast Only

## **Arrival and Departure Policy- for all program versions:**

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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