

INDIA & NEPAL



VOLUNTEERING



PROGRAM GUIDE

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experience
discover the difference

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Volunteering in India & Nepal



1. Why Volunteer?

Perhaps the first step to pursuing a volunteer opportunity in Nepal or India is to sit and ask yourself 'why?' Why do you want to volunteer? There are no right or wrong answers, but your responses can provide great insight into your expectations and intent.

- Why do you want to volunteer at this point in your life?
- What do you hope to gain? New skills? A new perspective or attitude?
- How does volunteering fit in with your future plans in life?
- How will this experience enable you to do what you would like to do five years from now?

Ask yourself, is your desire to volunteer in Nepal or India related to a desire:

- To help others who are less advantaged than yourself?
- To develop a lifelong relationship with a country and population that has always intrigued or inspired you?
- To explore another culture in an unconventional manner?
- To further your career by gaining hands-on work experience?
- To contribute to positive social change?

Is Volunteering Right for You?

There are many ways to contribute to another country as well as to your own personal growth. Volunteering is one unique opportunity to do so but it is not the only way. Before you make a commitment to volunteering in another country, such as Nepal or India, be sure that it is the right choice for you. You will be away from your family and friends. You will be living in a foreign culture without the comforts and familiarity of home. You will have to contend with different foods, different sources of illness, different smells and sounds. You may have to live with others in close quarters. You will need a passport and have to be vaccinated against various diseases.

Although these prospects only serve to further excite some, others would prefer to contribute in some other way that does not require them to leave their home country and their families and friends. This course of action is just as realistic a possibility and is potentially as rewarding as travelling to Nepal or India to work as a volunteer. To take a course such as this enquire with Ekno Experience as to what you can do to help – maybe you can sponsor a child in one of our programs, donate resources or fundraise in your home country.

To have a satisfying and rewarding experience as a volunteer in Nepal or India, you must possess certain attributes. You must be willing to set aside the many expectations that you may have going into the experience, you must be resourceful, and you must be able to create opportunities where at first they don't seem to exist.

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People have walked away from volunteer positions because they were not as organised as the volunteers expected, because members of the organisation preferred to chat and have tea rather than get straight to work, because the supplies they were waiting for never arrived, because they weren't able to introduce a training package they had designed, or because they were pressured to teach English to the director's son for an hour three times a week as part of their volunteer position. Ask yourself, can you deal with these unexpected circumstances? If you can, how will you deal with the circumstances? Sometimes your desire to help may not be welcome, or at least not welcome in the way you see fit.

To succeed as a volunteer in Nepal or India, you must:

- be flexible;
- be able to demonstrate respect for another culture;
- be sensitive to local cultural values;
- be willing to observe prevailing workplace hierarchies and protocol;
- be able to tolerate ambiguity;
- be able to work independently;
- be willing to serve others in the way they want to be served;
- be able to demonstrate initiative and have a sense of humour;
- be open to other possibilities, differing opinions, and values that may contradict your own;
- be able to function as a member of a team;
- possess tenacity, a willingness to hang in there or 'go with the flow', patience, and resourcefulness.

What Can You Do?

Of course, to be of help you need something that organisations value, whether it is specific skills, qualifications, insight, or just a different perspective. If you do not have a resume or CV that outlines your experience and background, make an inventory of your skills and qualifications. This list will not only help you select the right organisation, but will also help you better present yourself as an applicant.

Ask yourself: what can I do? What can I offer? Am I certified in any particular area? Maybe you can teach your native tongue, the English language. Maybe you can speak Nepali or Hindi, or maybe you know how to install solar panels or computer software. Make a list of all your skills, achievements and qualifications. Then ask yourself how these skills might be helpful in a developing country given their needs, resources, and the local sociocultural environment.

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Ekno Experience has a variety of placements that offers you many interesting and exciting ways in which to contribute. From community schools and children's homes to health clinics, HIV support groups and organisations that advocate environmental and women's issues, we have something to suit you.

Definition and Terms of a Volunteer

The definition and terms of a volunteer vary from one organisation to another. They may include any combination of the following:

- working without pay;
- working in exchange for a small living stipend;
- paying your own airfare;
- paying for a visa and the cost of all related expenses;
- paying for standard health insurance and/or additional medical evacuation insurance;
- paying for accommodation on site;
- paying for meals.

Definition and History of NGOs in Nepal and India

In countries such as United States, the UK, European countries, Australia and New Zealand we are familiar with the term non profit. Indeed, non profit organisations have contributed significantly to the health and well being of our citizens. They are not only business savvy, but also influential in the political arena, and are capable of long-term, high quality programs. Although this situation pertains in the case of developed nations, it is not this way in many other countries such as Nepal and India.

In Nepal, for example, the term or transition for non profit is not well known. Up until the early 1990s, His Majesty's Government ran nearly all public social service programs. If the government did not run a program, it controlled all of the money that came from donor countries that was meant to go to and encourage small grassroots movements and local nonprofit agencies. Hence, there were few incentives for individual Nepalis to establish organisations and services that could meet the social needs for their communities. In additions, the bureaucratic process to obtain funds was daunting and often did not lead anywhere.

After the people's movement in 1990, however, the government announced that local non-government organisations (NGO's) could now directly contact international non-government organisations (INGO's) and donor governments for "technical, material and financial assistance" to meet their international goals. As a result, individual, well-intentioned groups of Nepalis could now directly and much more

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easily access the funds and expertise they needed to help their communities prosper, and lead more stable, healthy lives. They no longer had to go through His Majesty's Government to seek permission to operate and acquire the necessary funds,

Since the early nineties the number of NGOs in Nepal has grown exponentially. There are NGOs now for nearly every conceivable need. Despite these changes, over the past few years many of the people's hopes and expectations for the NGO movement have been unfulfilled. Progress is not being made at the rate hoped for. Critics point to NGOs that exist only in name. Some also believe that NGOs are merely small business opportunities, where staff members have access to substantial foreign funds and use these funds to further their own careers or fill their pockets.

Unfortunately, these impressions have tainted the good work that many NGOs in Nepal are carrying out. Yes, many NGOs lack the financial, managerial, and technical skills they need to be effective. But rather than write them off as unproductive or hopeless, perhaps these organisations need assistance in these areas before they can effectively carry out their organisational mission.

In Nepal and India you will hear a great deal of talk about NGOs, their potential, and their shortcomings. Nearly all the volunteer opportunities are associated with NGOs. It has become a well-known term in developing countries, where individuals have acted on their own to address the needs of their people. A great deal is written about this phenomenon, not only in Nepal and India, but in the developing world as a whole. NGOs, governments, and donor agencies alike are continually learning more about how to make more effective use of NGOs, and how to better provide them with the tools and insights they need to reach their goals.

1. Volunteer Opportunities

The opportunities for volunteer work in Nepal and India also vary greatly. Some organisations offer opportunities to work for three or four hours a day, while others offer opportunities to work full time for six months to two years. A position could entail teaching English, providing health care as well as office work (eg writing grant proposals).

As you go through the list of possibilities, remind yourself again of the reasons you want to volunteer as well as how long you can or want to stay. Do you want to work full time or just part time? How much money do you have to support yourself? Picture yourself engaged in the type of organisation with the responsibilities listed and ask if this is what you had in mind. If not, is it likely to nonetheless fulfill your needs and expectations?

If you have not done so already, try to envisage your daily life as a volunteer. How much free time do you expect to have? How much manual labour are you willing to carry out? Do you picture yourself

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living in a rural setting or an urban setting? Are you interested in policy level issues or do you want to work with local people, at the grassroots implementing a project? Do you need your own office space to be productive? Some of these questions can only be addressed after you establish communication with an organisation but others can be answered by the local NGO.

3. Getting Started

Start Early

Get started early. At least six months in advance of your scheduled departure date you should begin working out the details of your volunteer experience. Look at the placements offered and choose a few that you are interested in. You may also choose to establish communication with the in country organisation before you arrive. This may help to give you a broader picture of your responsibilities as a volunteer at your chosen organisation. As part of the package offered by Ekno Experience we will be happy to initiate contact between you and your placement organisation. However you do need to bear in mind that it may be complicated to communicate with your placement organisation before your arrival.

Ask Questions

When you do establish communication with a local based NGO there are some important questions you may wish to ask, such as:

- Ask the person to whom you are speaking if he or she can list the specific qualifications that the organisation is looking for in a volunteer and what the responsibilities of any such person might be.
- Ask the person about any benefits provided.
- Ask about how you will be supervised and to what degree.
- Ask what happens if for some reason you cannot complete the terms of service. Let the person know how committed you are.
- Ask them to send any printed information that they have about their organisation (e.g. brochures, newsletters or annual reports).

Depending on who you speak with and whether or not the organisation has accepted any volunteers in the past, you may or may not receive answers to the above questions. It is unlikely you will receive answers in your first conversation or correspondence because the person you contact will most likely have to discuss many of the questions listed above with his or her colleagues first. Nonetheless, these can serve as a list of questions to which you would like answers, if possible, before you leave for Nepal or India.

Tell the organisation about yourself; your age, education, interests, travel experience. List your skills and background for them. Send them a picture of yourself to help them better make a connection. Let them know if you have any disabilities that might limit you or make you better suited for a particular type of work. Give them an email, a fax or phone

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number to reply to. Read the organisation's literature and try to get a sense of the organisation's structure, philosophy, vision etc. Try to assess whether or not this is something you are willing to commit to.

Planning the Dates of Your Trip

As you begin to plan your trip, take note of the time of year you are planning to go. Does it coincide with one of the two tourist seasons (October to early December and early March to late April)? If so, how might this impact your trip and experience? It may be harder for you to confirm your flight reservations for one thing. Prices may also be more expensive. However, during the tourist season you will have greater opportunities to meet other travelers or volunteers with similar interests to you. The two tourist seasons also represent the best times to trek in Nepal and India with spectacular views of the great Himalaya mountain range.

Your planned trip may also coincide with the monsoon season, which usually occurs between July and September. During this time it is much more difficult to get around and trekking may be hazardous and some roads are impassable. You rarely have an opportunity to view the snow-capped mountains from the Kathmandu Valley. Yet, the pace of life is much more relaxed. The rains are calming for many and there are few tourists walking the streets and the trails on the hillsides.

It is important to keep in mind the dates of national and local festivals as well. In both India and Nepal the main festival season falls between October and November. Most organisations are not open during national holidays, and sometimes they are not open between two different holidays if the holidays fall close to each other. For example, many offices in Nepal are not open or hold irregular hours during and between the festivals of Dasain and Tihar. You should be aware also that festival dates change from year to year. Both Nepal and India rely on lunar calendars to determine the exact date of festivals each year. Given your needs and interests, you may want to avoid highly festive seasons, or you may want to intentionally travel during these times so you can partake in the fun. You can always leave the cities and towns during long festivals, as many expatriates do, and take advantage of the slow work days to go on a short trek into the mountainside.

We are happy to answer any questions that you may have pertaining to the best dates to travel to Nepal and India as well as which dates suit particular volunteering placements.

Be Prepared

Before you leave, spend time learning as much as you can about the country, its people, and the type of work you will be doing.

Read whatever you can get your hands on. There are endless books available that are written for tourists that highlight places of cultural significance, spiritual practices and popular trekking routes. For your needs, those books that provide more in depth knowledge about the cultural values and attributes that characterise Nepali and Indian

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culture will be most helpful. Check for websites which can also provide endless amounts of information. Before you leave, develop a firm understanding of the historical, spiritual, and social factors that drive Nepali or Indian culture.

Make sure you also read about:

- The local area that you will be living in,
- The organisation for which you will be working (also read about other organisations),
- Volunteering in general,
- Accounts from other volunteers,
- International development and its long term impact on developing nations.

Talk to people who have been to Nepal or India. Often your organisation will have email addresses for people who have been previous volunteers and you can contact them. Talk to family members, colleagues, Australian organisations or friends that might have traveled or worked in developing countries. The team at Ekno Experience have volunteered, lived and worked in these countries for years and are very happy to answer any questions that you may have. There are also many Nepali's and Indians who study and work abroad. Ask them for their impressions of their country, its needs, and the desires and aspirations of the local people. Share your ideas with them. Ask if you can take any letters or small gifts back for their family and friends in Nepal.

Learn the cultural cues and clues, so you will be sure not to offend anyone on your arrival and be more readily accepted and integrated into the local culture. Remember, however, that no one expects you to tiptoe around the local culture. Making blunders in part of the experience. Learn to laugh at yourself when you do, and learn to laugh with others when they are laughing at you.

Your volunteer experience is really more of an exchange between yourself and the local people. You are both learning from one another, enriching one another, and that can only be done if you interact naturally, while respectfully, asking questions when you are confused, offering advice or assistance when asked, and pointing out cultural differences as a way to engender insight rather than create divisions between 'you' and 'them'. In short, be humble, be patient, observe, ask questions gently, and remember you are the one who chose to go to a foreign country to live with others in their country. But at the same time have fun, be inquisitive, laugh, and be sure to share your thoughts and impressions with your hosts.

Try to learn at least some Nepali (for Nepal) or Hindi (for India) before you go. Language books and tapes can be ordered through any large bookstore in your country. Even if you can only utter a few phrases upon your arrival, they will be greatly appreciated. This will

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demonstrate your interest in learning the local language and more about the country and culture. It is also a must if you plan to work in a rural area or with disadvantaged groups of people.

If you do not speak any Nepali or Hindi, your conversations may well be limited to only well educated, urban people who speak English or those who work exclusively in the tourism industry. They represent only a small slice of the population and you will be cutting yourself off from the general population if you are not able to converse in Nepali or Hindi. Fortunately, they are not difficult languages to learn, in part because for many people, Nepali or Hindi are not their first languages. They are rather the languages that unite the counties. Thus, even though the vast majority of the country speaks Nepali or Hindi, they (with the exception of the well educated) speak a less sophisticated version with fewer conjunctions and less formality.

Finally, be well prepared for and informed about the health conditions in your placement country. Consult with a doctor familiar with this region of the world or call a 'travel doctor' in your capital city about vaccinations, health facilities, emergency care, evacuation policies and other types of medical insurance. Ask for recommendations of books or other references that you can read to better prepare and take care of yourself while you are living in Nepal or India.

Finances

Living costs in Nepal and India compared with those in your home country are very inexpensive. Your greatest expenses will be your air fares, travel insurance, visa's and taxes. When planning your budget you need to take into account how long you will stay in the country and what you will do aside from volunteering. If you plan to visit other places in the country or go trekking you will incur extra costs. We can also provide quotes for additional sightseeing trips for you. When looking at our cost for a placement you will also notice that it is more economical to stay for a longer amount of time.

Plane Reservations and Fare

When you are ready to purchase your airline ticket, buy a return ticket as a return ticket is typically much cheaper than two one way tickets and you may be required to show your return portion should you want to extend your visa. Be sure the return date of your ticket can be changed with little or no penalty in case your travel plans change or you have to travel for medical care. Avoid dirt cheap tickets with lots of restrictions. Finally, buy your ticket from a reputable agency and from an airline that has an office or at least a representative in Kathmandu or Delhi. Therefore, if you have any questions or need to make any changes, you will know who to call, and there is some guarantee that you will reach a helpful person.

Understanding the local Workplace and Work Environment

The work environment in both Nepal and India differs greatly from the one we are used to in our home countries. People work for different

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reasons and expect different things from their employers. For example, in many organisations there is a strict hierarchy of positions. It is clear who is at the top and where the rest fall below. As a volunteer, if you follow the protocol that supports this hierarchy, you will more likely be accepted into the organisation and will receive more support from your supervisor. This may be hard to do given your own workplace values and a desire to see a more egalitarian democratic workplace. But if you attempt to get things done in the most efficient way regardless of whom you may overstep in the chain of command, you may ruffle people's feathers and be accused of meddling.

Office hours

The office day or school day officially begins at 10.00am and ends at 4.00 or 5.00pm. However in most government offices and in many NGOs you will only find people in the building or at their desk from 11.00am to 3.00pm. As most of the schools that we work with are community run you will also find that their hours will vary slightly depending on the seasons and needs of the local community. Employees of NGOs that provide 24 hour care or services can be found around the clock and often need volunteers to work odd hours.

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Volunteer Code of Conduct

The code of conduct has been designed by Ekno Experience to clearly set the standards of behaviour expected of our volunteers. These standards are to be upheld at all times during your volunteer placement, especially in relation to your placement organisation and its staff, in-country coordinators, home stay family or providers of accommodation and most importantly the community you are working to assist.

Ekno Experience is dedicated to providing sustainable volunteer projects and responsible travel ventures. Our code of conduct has been developed to assist you in fulfilling your placement in a safe and responsible manner. The code of conduct also ensures that due cultural consideration and respect is given to our partnership organisations.

When registering to volunteer with Ekno Experience you must acknowledge the code of conduct and agree to abide by the rules that it sets out. Any violation of the code of conduct will be treated as serious breach and may result in your placement being immediately terminated.

The code of conduct is divided into four sections:

1. Ekno Experience Standards
2. Cultural Considerations
3. Working with your Placement Organisation
4. Living Arrangements

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1. Ekno Experience Standards

These are general rules that are to be followed at all times whilst on an Ekno Experience volunteer placement.

- As a volunteer you must act appropriately at all times as a representative of both Ekno Experience and your country of origin.
- Treat people with compassion and respect.
- When working with children and other vulnerable members of society you are expected to uphold the standards of your home country. This includes the immediate mandatory reporting of child abuse and neglect to your Ekno Experience coordinator. If you are found to have breached this rule your volunteer placement will be terminated and your case will be handed over to a higher authority.
- Respect that Ekno Experience has a zero tolerance policy towards the possession and consumption of illegal substances. Non compliance will result in the termination of your volunteering placement.
- Do not consume alcohol during your work hours and show respect for your host family and local community when drinking alcohol.
- Do not participate in any illegal activities. If you are found to have done so, Ekno Experience will immediately cancel your volunteer placement and will not be held responsible for any further repercussions.
- Do not conduct dangerous behaviours whilst on a volunteer placement.
- Do not involve yourself in any political demonstrations or other volatile situations.
- Recognise that to change your volunteer placement and accommodation once you have arrived at your destination can only be done with the prior approval of both Ekno Experience Australian office and your in-country coordinator.
- Follow the instructions and recommendations given to you by your Ekno Experience in-country coordinator.
- Consult your Ekno Experience coordinator if you are unable to complete the placement to which you have committed or if you wish to take time out from your placement.
- Inform your Ekno Experience coordinator of any plans concerning external trips and weekend activities.
- Only consult your Ekno Experience coordinator outside of the agreed working hours in the case of an emergency.
- Any complaints that you may have preceding, during and after your placement are to be directed to either your in-country coordinator or the Ekno Experience Australian office (contacted through info@eknoexperience.com)

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Cultural Considerations

You will be expected to culturally considerate to the specific community in which you are living and working. What follows is a guide of appropriate behaviours.

- At all times you are expected to respect the culture of the country in which you are placed. As part of your orientation program you will receive a basic overview of the cultural beliefs and practices of which you are expected to consider.
- Exercise tolerance and respect towards the religious beliefs and practices of the community in which you are living and working. As both Nepal and India are deeply religious societies with a proliferation of beliefs you will be invited to engage in ceremonies, festivals and theological debates; simply remember to value the beliefs of others at all times.
- Respect and endeavor to understand the diverse cultures of the people you are working with.
- Be open and tolerant to the different approaches of the people you are working with and be flexible in your attitudes towards work.
- Dress appropriately at all times with regard to the local customs and culture.
- When visiting peoples homes act politely and considerately. If you are not sure of how to act follow what others are doing or simply ask.
- Always remember that it is you who has chosen to live and work in another culture, not the other way around.

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Working with your Placement Organisation

Whilst you are working with your placement organisation there are specific guidelines for you to follow. These guidelines are intended to assist both the volunteer and the placement organisation in their working relationship.

- Treat your volunteer work seriously. Remember that you are considered as a dedicated member of a project team with duties to fulfill. Work diligently to accomplish not only your own goals but also to meet the needs of the organisation and people that you are working for.
- Follow the rules, policies and procedures of the host organisation for which you are working.
- Listen to and follow the advice and instructions of your supervisor at your placement organisation.
- Consult with and inform your placement supervisor if you are at any time unable to perform the duties to which you have agreed.
- If you wish to take time off from your placement you must first discuss the matter with your supervisor at the organisation. As a volunteer you will be expected to be present during your assigned working hours. Notify the organisation in advance if you are unable to attend.
- Notify your placement supervisor if you plan to take external trips on your designated time off.
- Do not call your placement supervisor outside normal working hours unless it is necessary or has been previously agreed to.
- Treat equipment, resources and the organisational premises with care and respect during your placement.
- Do not accept payment of any kind for the work that you are doing.
- If you obtain information of a sensitive nature regarding in the organisation that you are working for or individuals within it; treat it in a confidential matter. Information may be passed on to your Ekno Experience coordinator if you feel it is necessary or if it is of a serious nature.
- Be aware that in the role of a volunteer you may offer suggestions, however you are not permitted to make modifications to organisational policies unless allowed to do so by your placement organisation.

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Living Arrangements

The following rules apply to any form of accommodation that you have been placed by Ekno Experience; including home stays, guest houses and volunteer homes.

- At all times you are expected to be respectful of the customs and beliefs of the place in which you are staying.
- Follow the rules of the accommodation in which you have been placed. Rules are obtainable once you reach your accommodation.
- Treat the accommodation premises and equipment with care and remember that you are expected pay for any damage you may cause.
- Be responsible for your belongings at all times and take care to secure your room.
- Consult your home stay family or accommodation provider before inviting anybody to your room for any period of time.
- Do not smoke or drink alcohol in your room unless the family or provider has given you permission.
- Make sure that you are aware of what is included in your living arrangements; meals may or may not be included depending on your placement and accommodation type.
- Pay for any extra costs immediately and before leaving your accommodation.
- You must stay in the accommodation assigned to you by Ekno Experience. If an issue arises concerning the accommodation provided you must contact Ekno Experience as soon as possible either by email or phone.
- Be aware that if you choose to take external trips or leave your accommodation early that you will not be reimbursed.

Nepal



Volunteer Induction Program – Nepal

Ready To Go? Once you have registered and been accepted to volunteer in Nepal with Ekno Experience you will begin the volunteer induction program. The program is divided into three phases which focus on different aspects:

- Pre-Departure Volunteer Kit,
- Volunteer Training and Orientation,
- Placement Facilitation

The duration of the overall induction and training program can be tailored to suit the length of time that you plan to spend at your volunteer placement.

Pre-Departure Volunteer Kit

Pre-departure information will be presented to you once you have been accepted into the volunteer program. This information is designed to give you an overview of your placement organisation, destination country as well as the Ekno Experience Volunteer Program. Ideally this kit will be taken with you to your destination. It includes the following:

- A copy of the Ekno Experience Code of Conduct and Policies and Procedures Document;
- A copy of the Ekno Experience Volunteer Handbook;
- Details of your placement organisation and the responsibilities that you will have there;
- An itinerary of your volunteer placement;
- Resources (if applicable to your placement);
- Overview of your destination (Kathmandu Valley).

Nepal



Volunteer Training and Orientation

Your volunteer training will commence once you have arrived at your destination. This phase of the induction program aims to further your understanding of both your volunteer placement and the local culture. Your training and orientation program will be conducted by an Ekno Experience representative. It will include:

- Formal introduction to the Ekno Experience Volunteer Nepal program;
- Overview of the Ekno Experience Code of Conduct, Policies and Procedures, program rules and volunteer responsibilities.
- Orientation trip around Kathmandu (includes places of interest as well as tips on transport and finding essentials);
- Basic Nepali language tuition;
- An introduction to the local culture (includes attending cultural programs and classes);
- Tips on personal health and safety;
- Morning tea and lunch;
- Personalised volunteer card (to identify yourself as a volunteer in the local community).



Placement Facilitation

After this initial training program one of our coordinators will facilitate the phase of volunteer training which involves the volunteer meeting with their placement organisation. This phase includes:

- An introduction meeting with your placement organisation. This meeting will include meeting the your supervisor and the staff of the organisation, negotiating your schedule of volunteering, a tour of the organisational premises, as well as a copy of the organisation volunteering handbook;
- Formal welcome lunch/dinner with your placement organisation;
- Preparation work at the organisation before your placement, may include further meetings to discuss your project as well as getting to know the staff and community before your placement officially commences;
- Further resources that you may require as a volunteer;
- An orientation trip the local area where you will be volunteering, this may include tips on catching local transport and finding essentials;
- Continuation of your Nepali language classes;
- If you are going to be staying with a local family during your placement you will be introduced to them at this stage and will move to their home before you begin your placement.

At the completion of all phases of your training program you will begin your official volunteer placement. Throughout your placement your Ekno Experience coordinator will be able to answer your questions, guide and support you. During your time in Nepal you are encouraged to take advantage of the many things the local area has to offer, including its natural beauty and rich cultural and spiritual heritage. Ekno Experience can organise sightseeing and trekking trips as well as courses exploring everything from shopping to yoga. If you would like to take time away from your placement at any time simply arrange this with your Ekno Experience coordinator and placement organisation.

Nepal



Volunteer Induction Itinerary Nepal

3 Days – 2 Nights

Your Ekno Experience Volunteer Nepal placement commences with the following induction and training program. This program will typically take 3 days to complete and will be based in Kathmandu, however the program is flexible and be altered to suit your needs.

Day 1: Arrival in Kathmandu. Met at the International Airport by an Ekno Experience representative and transferred to your hotel in Kathmandu. Attend a welcome dinner. **Overnight Kathmandu.**

Day 2: Sightseeing in the morning and visit Pashupatinath temple, the center of Hindu cremation and sadhus in Nepal. Your tour continues on to the Bodhnath Stupa, a holy place of Buddhism; as well as to the Swayambhunath Temple, known locally as the monkey temple. Visit Kathmandu Durbar Square and see the Kasta Mandap, Kumari (Virgin Goddess) House, Hanuman Dhoka and the colourful local markets. In the afternoon you will have your first Nepali language lesson. **Overnight Kathmandu.**

Day 3: Attend a volunteer training session to which is aimed at familiarisation of Ekno Experience's Code of Conduct and general tip of living and working in a Nepali environment. Transfer to your placement organization and given an orientation tour, meet the staff and have a meeting with your supervisor, timetable etc. Meet the children. Orientation of the local area. Nepali language lesson in afternoon and dinner with local family. **Overnight with homestay family in Thimi.**

Day 4: Today is your first day at school. Arrive at school by 9.30am in time to meet teachers and students and attend school parade for welcome. Continuation in the afternoon of Nepali lessons.

NEPAL	AUD
1 week	850
2 weeks	900
3 weeks	950
1 month	1100
6 weeks	1200
2 months	1400
10 weeks	1500
3 months	1700
14 weeks	1850
4 months	1975
18 weeks	2000
5 months	2500



Volunteer Induction Itinerary India

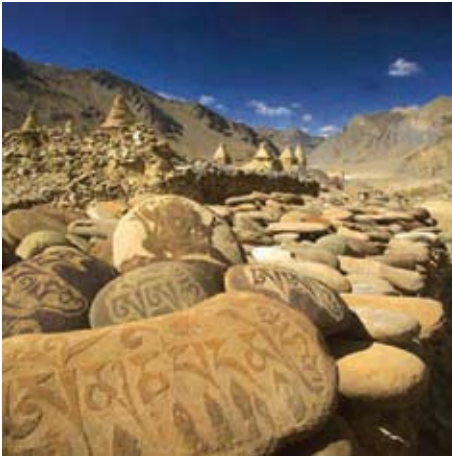
3 Days – 2 Nights

Your Ekno Experience Volunteer India placement commences with the following induction and training program. This program will typically take 3 days to complete and will be based in Dharamsala, however the program is flexible and be altered to suit your needs.

- Day 1: Arrival in Dharamsala.** Met by an Ekno Experience representative and transferred to your hotel in McLeod Ganj. Attend a welcome dinner. **Overnight McLeod Ganj.**
- Day 2:** Sightseeing in the morning and visit Delhi Lama Temple, Tibetan Museum, Bagshu and local sites in and around McLeod Ganj. In the afternoon you will have your first Hindi or Tibetan language lesson. **Overnight McLeod Ganj.**
- Day 3:** Attend a volunteer training session to which is aimed at familiarisation of Ekno Experience's Code of Conduct and general tip of living and working in a Volunteer environment. Transfer to your placement organization and given an orientation tour, meet the staff and have a meeting with your supervisor, timetable etc. Hindi or Tibetan language lesson in afternoon. **Overnight McLeod Ganj.**
- Day 4: Today is your first day.** Arrive at your placement at the allocated time to be shown your work duties. Continuation of Hindi or Tibetan lessons in the afternoon.

INDIA	AUD
1 week	950
2 weeks	1100
3 weeks	1150
1 month	1300
6 weeks	1500
2 months	1700
10 weeks	2000
3 months	2200
14 weeks	2350
4 months	2550
18 weeks	2800
5 months	3000

Volunteer Application Form



Please take your time to fill out this application form. To be filled out in conjunction with terms and conditions.

Compulsory fields are marked with *.

YOUR GENERAL DETAILS

Family Name*: _____ Title: _____

Given Names*: _____

Date of Birth*: _____

Gender: Male Female

Nationality*: _____

YOUR CONTACT DETAILS

Address* (Postal): _____

Suburb: _____ Postcode: _____

Country*: _____

Telephone (Home): _____

Telephone (Business): _____

Email Address: _____

Alternate Email Address: _____

EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE – please also attach a current CV

Highest qualification*

If you have obtained or are pursuing a degree, please indicate your area(s) of study.

Other relevant qualifications and skills

Work experience (Please be specific.)

Volunteer Application Form (cont.)



Travel experience (Please be specific.)

Please state any health condition that you have, including allergies or disabilities (it is important for us to be aware of any condition so we can be prepared when placing you)*

Have you previously volunteered in organization in Nepal/India? If so, please state the location and dates in which you volunteered.

VOLUNTEERING

How long would you like to volunteer for?*

When would you like to go to Nepal/India?*

Which volunteer project are you interested in?*

What is your interest in the program?

Do you require any further information? Please state.

How did you locate our website?*

Specifically:

I have read and agree to your legal terms of service* I agree /I don't agree

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Application Process



Application Process

All applicants will be notified by email as to whether their application has been successful.

- 1. Complete the Application Form:** Fill out the application form below. Upon receipt of the form we will assess your suitability for the program within two working days.
- 2. Contact You:** If you are successful we will then email you a letter of acceptance.
- 3. Decision Point:** Once you have read through the letter of acceptance and we have answered any questions or concerns that you might have, it is time to pay your AUD350 application fee to secure your place on the program. Please note that we will refund your application fee if you decide not to go (refer to our Terms of Service for details on the refund policy).
- 4. Confirmation:** Once the application fee is paid, we will advise our volunteer partner. We will also send you the link to our program guide which covers topics such as country information, travel links, visa application process, fundraising ideas and much more!
- 5. Communication and Support:** Throughout the application process, we are committed to working with you to answer any of your questions or concerns. During your placement we are also available as a form of support to you as a volunteer and will email you while in country to discuss how the program is going.

Terms and Conditions

Please read this legal information carefully before sending us your application form.

By receiving this document, you signify you have read and accepted these terms of use. If you do not agree to these terms of use, do not fill in the application form. The materials in the website www.eknoexperience.com are provided "as is" and without warranties of any kind either expressed or implied. To the fullest extent permissible and subject and pursuant to applicable law, Ekno Experience disclaims all warranties, express or implied, including, but not limited to, implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular purpose.

Ekno Experience does not warrant or make any representations regarding the correctness, accuracy, reliability, or otherwise of the materials in this site or the results of their use.

International travel is inherently risky. By becoming a volunteer, you acknowledge and accept these risks and those associated with living and working in developing countries. As a volunteer you must appreciate and understand that some of these activities may be outside of your personal insurance cover. Ekno Experience is not liable (to the maximum extent of the law) for any loss or harm you may suffer, including but not limited to loss caused by:

delay;
bodily injury or death;
emotional upset;
damage to or loss of property; war or terrorism.

Ekno Experience reserves the right to use feedback from volunteers for website material.

Ekno Experience is not liable for any errors or mistakes made by partner organizations. All disputes are governed by the law of Australia.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION

Emails from Ekno Experience staff contain information intended solely for the addressee, which is confidential or private in nature. If you are not the intended recipient, you may not peruse, use, disseminate, distribute or copy this message or any file attached to this message. Any such unauthorised use, is prohibited and may be unlawful. If you have received an email from Ekno Experience in error, please notify the sender immediately by e-mail and thereafter delete the original message from your machine. Furthermore, the information contained in the email, and any attachments thereto, is for information purposes only and may contain the personal views and opinions of the author, which are not necessarily the views and opinions of Ekno Experience and therefore does not accept liability for any claims, loss or damages of whatsoever nature, arising as a result of the reliance on such information by anyone. Whilst all reasonable steps are taken to ensure the accuracy and integrity of information transmitted electronically and to preserve the confidentiality thereof, Ekno Experience accepts no liability or responsibility whatsoever if information or data is, for whatsoever reason, incorrect, corrupted or does not reach its intended destination.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

Ekno Experience requires certain information from volunteers throughout the process leading up to program arrival. This may include details about the volunteer's skills and experience, a police clearance, legal waiver, etc. If this information is not submitted or reveals a volunteer's lack of suitability for the program, Ekno Experience reserves the right to halt the placement process until satisfactory changes are made. If the necessary changes cannot be made, this may result in loss of placement.

REFUND POLICY

Application Fee/Deposit

The application fee/deposit is refundable until two calendar months before the 1st of the month you are due to arrive in Nepal/India.

This is because Ekno Experience needs to make financial commitments on your behalf prior to the program start date.

The two calendar months notification is taken from the month you stated on your original application form. If you postpone your trip the refund is only valid until two calendar months prior to the 1st of the month you originally intended to volunteer. For example a volunteer with 15 July 2008 as their original start date would need to submit their refund form by the last day of April 2008 to be eligible for a refund.

Unfortunately for this reason we can make no exceptions. All refunds will be made less the costs incurred in processing the refund such as bank charges.

All requests for application fee/deposit refunds must be faxed, posted, or scanned as an e-mail attachment to the Ekno Experience with your signature at the bottom. Phone calls and e-mails are not acceptable. You will be notified of Ekno Experience receiving your application for a refund of the application fee/deposit fee within two working days. Should you not be emailed in regards to your request, the assumption should be made that the request form was not received. Ekno Experience is not responsible for fax or mail that is not received. Once your refund has been processed you will receive confirmation of the refund being issued.

Ekno Experience reserves the right to revise the application fee. All application fee revisions will be announced at least seven days in advance via the website. Please note that the application fee may not be the same as when you applied.

PROGRAM FEES

Program fees paid to our partners or paid to Ekno Experience directly are not refundable. Program fees paid through Ekno Experience by means of bank or wire transfer will need to have the transaction costs covered by the payee. We reserve the right to revise the program fee. All program fee revisions will be announced at least seven days in advance via the website. Program fees are due 60 days prior to the arrival date of volunteers. Failure to make payment by this time may result in loss of placement.

INSURANCE

It is compulsory for all volunteers to have travel insurance and a copy of the insurance is required prior to departure.

PRIVACY POLICY

If you wish to subscribe to our newsletter(s), we will use your name and email address to send the newsletter to you. If you do not wish to receive the newsletter, please let us know by email.

Information on Ekno Experience's application forms and extra details forms online is collected solely for internal use within Ekno Experience and its partner organizations. Your e-mail and other details will be passed onto other volunteers who are in the same group as you, so that you can make contact before you meet; if you would prefer that this did not happen, please let us know.

We gather certain statistical information about visitors to our website, including IP addresses, browser type, ISP, referring/exit pages, operating system, date/time stamp, and clickstream data. We use this information, which does not identify individual users, to analyze trends, to administer the site, to track users' movements around the site and to gather demographic information about our user base as a whole. This data is collected solely for internal use within Ekno Experience.

Online payments are processed through a secure third party site, and Ekno Experience does not receive sensitive information such as credit card information.

COMMUNICATION FROM VOLUNTEERS

You warrant to us that all information provided, in electronic, written or oral communication to Ekno Experience, is true and correct. Ekno Experience will not be liable or responsible from any consequences that result if false information is provided.