

AIESEC

YORK

GLOBAL VOLUNTEER



———— 2017 ————

INFORMATION PACKAGE

LETTER TO PARENTS

Dear Parent / Guardian,

At AIESEC York we understand that supporting a student's exchange is a decision that requires an informed understanding of our program and its impact. We have designed this booklet to answer any questions you may have and provide comfort in knowing that we work hard to ensure that each of our exchange participants are taken care of and given vast opportunities for personal development.

We truly believe that an AIESEC exchange not only gives students the opportunity to travel and nurture cultural tolerance, but allows students to develop leadership skills and uncover their potential to empower others and themselves. Every year AIESEC International sends over 45,000 students abroad for volunteer opportunities across the world, and it is due largely in part to the incredible support from exchange participants and their families. Thank you for taking the time to read through this booklet and we hope you will be joining us on our journey for a better tomorrow.

WHAT IS AIESEC?

AIESEC (Association Internationale des Etudiants en Sciences Economiques et Commerciales), is a non-political, and not-for-profit organization that cares about world issues, and offers a unique platform for young leaders to foster global cooperation and ultimately a better world. AIESEC aims at developing students' leadership, management, and independency through cross-cultural global exchanges. Since founded in 1948, AIESEC has engaged and developed over 1,000,000 young people who have been through AIESEC experience.

**PRESENT
IN
126+
DIFFERENT
COUNTRIES**

**OUR PARTICIPANTS
DEVELOP DIVERSE
SKILLS AND
PASSIONS THAT
ALLOW THEM
TO POSITIVELY
IMPACT BOTH THE
WORKPLACE AND
THE WORLD.**

**DEVELOPING
70k+
YOUTH
WORLDWIDE**

WHAT IS GLOBAL VOLUNTEER?

AIESEC's Global Volunteer program is a 6 - 8 week opportunity for students to travel abroad and partake in a social impact project around the world. In this cross-cultural experience, students benefit from our partnership with United Nations, giving them the opportunity to work with world renowned NGO's across the globe. All of the projects that we offer have been designed to empower students to develop leadership qualities while making a positive impact in an environment of your choosing.

OUR PARTNERS

Our Global Volunteer team works diligently to form strong partnerships with other AIESEC committees in Asia, Europe, South America, and Africa. Through dozens of extensive interviews we narrow down our partner list to ensure that all our volunteers are sent to opportunities that provide only the highest quality of service and care for our students.

Please see the list of partners we have below:

Hong Kong-PolyU | Korea-KU | India-Chennai | Philippines-DLSU | Taiwan-WZU | Taiwan-THU | China-UNNC | China-GDUFS | Indonesia-UNDIP | Vietnam-HCMC | Malaysia-Sunway | Greece-UoM | Greece-University of Patras | Hungary-KVIK | Italy-Napoli Parenthope | Italy-Venezia | Italy-Padova | Russia-Ekatingburg | Czech-Ostrava | Hungary-BME | Poland-Krakow | Germany-Meunster | Argentina-Buenos Aires USAL | Colombia-Uniatlantico | Mexico-Sinaloa | Peru-Pacifico | Chile-Valparaiso | Kenya-JKUAT

UNITED NATIONS: SDGS

The 2030 Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) are a set of seventeen aspirational “Global Goals” to be reached through the combined effort and participation of all United Nations members. Through **our partnership with the UN**, each of the opportunities offered are associated with one of these goals.

4 QUALITY EDUCATION



Ensure accessibility to quality primary and secondary education
Example Partner Opportunity: Hong Kong - Nakupenda
Teach English in a leadership camp to over 50 secondary students

8 GOOD JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



Encourage entrepreneurship and the growth of small-medium sized enterprises
Partner Opportunity: Indonesia - Entrepreneur
Assist the marketing of small/medium enterprises and spread awareness of entrepreneurship

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES



Ensure equal opportunity and eliminate discriminatory laws
Example Partner Opportunity: Colombia - Semillart
Conduct workshops for children in acting, drawing and painting

13 PROTECT THE PLANET



Promote climate change related mechanisms in local communities
Example Partner Opportunity: Philippines - Mother Earth
Raise public awareness on environmental issues

17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Enhance development of countries to support achievement
Example Partner Opportunity: Greece - Young Power
Create promotional materials for NGO's to address social issues

ACCOMMODATIONS

During exchange abroad, students are usually provided with free accommodation in the form of either a host family or a hostel depending on the project. The AIESEC chapter abroad goes through a strict quality control process to screen the host families/hostels in order to ensure the safety of volunteers and optimal facilities. Most host family locations will be convenient located near the participant's workplace to reduce travel time.

Host family: Students will be living with a host family, which is a great opportunity to learn about the local culture. The host family will likely provide some meals allowing participants to experience authentic cuisine.

Hostel: Students will be living with other AIESEC volunteers in an intern-house. It's a great chance to meet other volunteers from around the world to make lifelong friendships spanning the globe.

FOOD

Some of our AIESEC partners abroad provide one to three meals per day along with the accommodations. The local chapters will also organize social events to take volunteers out for authentic restaurants to try the local cuisine.

TESTIMONIAL: JAMES ZHAO

PERU

What was your exchange like and what did you do abroad?

I worked at an NGO called Women In Technology, which aimed to close the gap in gender inequality for women pursuing studies or careers in the S.T.E.M. fields by hosting workshops teaching everything from how to use a computer to coding. I was responsible for the marketing aspect of the NGO, managing the brand through social media and running workshops. I also spearheaded a documentary highlighting the founders' stories and established 2 sponsorships.

What was the biggest difficulty you encountered?

Self discovery and adapting to a new environment was something I struggled with. I always felt that I was different around different groups of people/friends and I doubted which parts of me were truly me. After going on exchange and being all alone in a foreign country, it's truly a journey of self-discovery like no other.

What culture shock did you experienced?

People were never on time and the traffic was unpredictable. I usually like to have things well planned.

What was the most memorable part of your exchange?

Bonding with my host family was definitely the most memorable, I stayed with a family consisting of a single mother and a daughter. It was simple things like eating dinner and just talking about our days, but it really did felt like a second family.

TESTIMONIAL: JAKE FONG

TAIWAN

What was your exchange like and what did you do abroad?

I went through outgoing global volunteer to New Taipei City. My program “Dream Beyond Language” was 6 weeks in an elementary school where I was responsible for enhancing cultural knowledge and improving English fluency of the students for 5 days per week working 9 to 4. Living in the school dorm, I had plenty of free time for having conversations with children during breaks, chatting with teachers and preparing classroom materials. I introduced Canada to all classes, from Grade 1 to Grade 6, on the first week, and designed games and activities that aim to increase their confidence when speaking English. The teachers and children are all welcoming and friendly and they shared a lot about Taiwanese culture to me as well! Every weekend I traveled to Taipei City to travel around, it is an energetic and interesting city with lots to eat, buy and play.

What was the biggest difficulty you encountered?

The hardest part was probably the first 2 weeks, when I was still trying to figure out how to develop relationships with the students due to the language barrier. Luckily, the English teachers in the school helped me a lot and provided advice on how to communicate with kids. At the end of my exchange term, I developed friendship with all the students there.

What culture shock did you experience?

I didn't experience a huge culture shock as I have been to Taiwan before. However, their politeness and respect to older people was out of my expectation. The kids actually respect me as I am older than them and they are mostly disciplined which led me to have some self-reflection as well. Local Taiwanese are really proud of their identity and one of the teachers even invited me to have dinner together with her family during dragon-boat festival.

What was the most memorable part of your exchange?

My most memorable part was during the closing ceremony of my volunteer term. I was really touched by the teachers and students' kind words. Time really flies during that six weeks and I wished to stay longer there. I had a performance with two kids in the ceremony and their courage to speak a second language in front of the whole school was an inspiration to me. The school and students gave me a lot of presents and I still kept them in my drawer.

PARTNER SCHOOL TESTIMONIALS

Project: GENERATION 2030.

Committee: Ekatingburg (Yekaterinburg), Russia

“A lifetime experience. I had a lot of expectations before I came here, in this city, Ekaterinburg and I got more than what I thought of. Interns from countries like China, Brazil, Hong Kong, Ecuador, India etc. I made some great friends. I was a part of Health Care group under the project GEN 2030. Under the guidance of Miss Albina Garipova, and a dedicated team, we conducted programs where we interacted with cancer patients, orphan children. We also were part of other health activities like yoga, marathon, football and basketball. Our project began with Global Village, a great platform to showcase our culture in front of the world. And after the series of activities and events, and the Youth Speak the project ended with the Ural Music Festival and a closing ceremony. All the fun and activities are something which I can never forget. I feel proud being a part of one of the greatest project in Russia, “GEN2030”. And this year it is also conducting a winter exchange program. Get yourself registered to be part of something big.”

-Akshat Jindal from India, 2016

Project: REFORM

Committee: UNDIP, Indonesia

“The project wants to educate the young people of Semarang about environmental issues. Most of all about waste management. We did Roadshows, where we went to different schools and taught the kids about why we should take care of our environment, how we do it in our home countries, and how they can have a good impact on their city. I learned much about the Indonesian schooling system and culture. It was very interesting to meet so many new kids with different English-levels in various schools. I didn't know much about AIESEC before I became a global citizen and started my volunteering project. The volunteers and the staff of AIESEC UNDIP introduced me to many activities AIESEC is part of. I learned about the work and the partner-organisations. AIESEC does very interesting and important work in Semarang. Everyone is very busy but makes free time to join the many events of this project. The hardest obstacles for me were the heat and the different food. It took me longer than a week to adapt to eating rice at least once a day, and to the changes between air-conditioned rooms and the constant heat outside. Adapting to a culture, that is so different from the one I grew up in took a lot of work. But in the end, I feel like I learned so much through adapting to the Indonesian culture.”

-Franziska Klemme from Switzerland, 2016

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who can go on AIESEC York's exchange program?

Any person who is enrolled as a student of York University and is between the ages of 18 and 29 is eligible to participate in the program.

Why should students go on an exchange with AIESEC?

Self Development: School education prepares you with all of the hard, work skills that a person may need for a job but AIESEC prepares you with the soft skills that you need for a career. It is one thing to read off a textbook and another to go to a foreign land and directly contribute to improving lives - including your own.

Leadership: Through an AIESEC exchange, you are presented with an international backbone on which you can build and explore your own leadership capabilities; in turn giving you the expertise, experience and self belief to allow you to make a real impact on the world.

Once in a life time opportunity: AIESEC is uniquely "by young people, for young people". Our program has been built off of the mandate that anyone, including youth, have the power to change the world. The experience our volunteers encounter throughout an AIESEC exchange are invaluable considering its rarity, and the skills that one can obtain from it.

How long is exchange?

Our volunteer opportunities typically last 6 to 8 weeks and take place any-time throughout the year. However, most of our opportunities are during the months of April to August. Certain projects have a fixed start and end date, while others can be more flexible.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What support systems does AIESEC provide?

Any person interested in an AIESEC exchange can rest easy knowing that they have the full consideration and support from our team at AIESEC York and the team abroad. Every individual interested in going abroad is assigned an Exchange Participant Manager (EPM) and an AIESEC Buddy. The EPM is responsible for ensuring that the exchange participant has everything that they need to be successful abroad. This includes aid in choosing what opportunity to apply to, VISA application services, tips for buying the cheapest airline ticket, knowledge on what vaccinations and health checks to get, and more. This is done by through bi-weekly checkpoints to ensure the exchange participants needs and concerns are met regularly.

The EPM also works closely with the AIESEC committee abroad to ensure that all of the accommodations will be ready upon arrival. This partnership also allows us to understand the various complexities and challenges for anyone arriving in that country allowing the EPM to best prepare the participant before they leave for exchange.

Once abroad, the EPM continues to communicate regularly with the exchange participant to ensure that everything is running as smoothly as possible. As venturing out into a new country can be daunting, each exchange participant is assigned an AIESEC Buddy. This person is supposed to be your best friend. They go with you to work on your first day, help introduce you to the culture and makes sure that you are enjoying your experience every step of the way. Like the EPM, they too get in touch with you at least once every two weeks, although most do so at least once a week if not more.

Once you get back, you are also given support to be re-integrated into Canada. This is done in-part by a party at the end of each summer to commemorate all of the exchange participants who went abroad that year. We also conduct “coffee chats” with each participant after their exchange has ended to grasp their experience while abroad and get tips on what we could do to help them as they conclude their AIESEC experience.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What types of organizations will exchange participants volunteer at?

Exchange Participants of AIESEC York's Global Volunteer Program work with a variety of different organizations across the world. Primarily, volunteers work with primary and secondary schools for opportunities pursuing the Quality Education SDG, while opportunities of other SDG's are commonly linked with local non-governmental organizations (NGO's).

How are exchange participants prepared and trained?

AIESEC York requires all of our exchange participants to attend the annual Outgoing Preparation Seminar (OPS). The OPS outlines any information the participant must know prior to departure, while also addressing any questions or concerns the participant may have. Incoming Preparation Seminars are also often offered by abroad AIESEC Committee to assist the integration of the exchange participant into the foreign culture.

How do you ensure exchange participants are safe while abroad?

Safety and exchange participant well-being are two priorities of AIESEC York when we manage Global Volunteer Programs. Primarily, AIESEC York does not form partnerships with abroad committees when we deem that the committee lacks evidence of ensuring safety and well-being. This may include the lack of a crisis response system, proper exchange participant management, or any other factor that may potentially jeopardize our exchange participants. Also, AIESEC York will be contacting all exchange participants on a bi-weekly basis via Skype to ensure the safety and well-being of the volunteer.

The abroad AIESEC Committee will also contribute towards the participant's safety by encouraging participants to get a SIM card and maintaining an established contact system in the event of an emergency. In the rare event that an issue arises, the issue will be immediately reported to the Committee Vice President, and will be escalated to AIESEC Canada's National Member Committee and Entity Control Board respectively if further action is required.