



MITRATAA FOUNDATION

A friendship that will last forever



Volunteer Guidelines



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Thank you for your interest in working with Mitrataa!

- Volunteer experience can be wonderfully rewarding and mutually beneficial if organised carefully. However, many organisations use volunteers as a source of income and exploit the people they work with as a result.
- At Mitrataa, we tailor volunteer experiences to the individual and also to the particular needs of the Foundation in Nepal at the time to ensure that there is genuine benefit for everyone involved.



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What you will be doing

- You may have the opportunity of working in any of our projects or possibly even starting a new initiative. Your specific program will depend on many things including:
 - the length of time you can contribute to the program (NB: We have a minimum commitment of 2 weeks)
 - your professional skills and experience (if any)
 - the needs of the various projects at the time
 - and most importantly, your passions and areas of particular interest!



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What could you do?

Some examples of what our volunteers have done to give you some ideas:

- teaching a project at one of our partner schools or kindergartens
- conducting teacher training workshops focused on learner-centred methods of teaching
- helping us to increase the effectiveness of our admin systems
- conducting marketing training for our women's groups
- running debating competitions
- directing and producing our Sangita's Singing musical
- organising a Maths Olympics event for our students





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Some things to note - time



- Our minimum commitment for a volunteer program is generally 2 weeks. This is to ensure that the program is beneficial to all involved. We occasionally allow shorter periods for workshops where specific skills are being taught or targeted.

There is no maximum time, although there is a 5 month limit per calendar year for visas in Nepal.



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Some things to note - costs

- We do not charge for a volunteer program. However, we do request that volunteers conduct some fundraising with the aim of raising at least A\$500 prior to their volunteer program. In our experience, this really ensures the best possible preparation for the volunteer with the following benefits:
 - We put in a lot of time and effort to assess volunteers and prepare individualised programs to ensure that it is a rewarding experience for all involved. This amount reflects that effort;
 - We rely on donations and fundraising to support our projects and every bit helps us to reach more people in Nepal;
 - In order to fundraise, volunteers get to know more about Mitrataa, our values and our projects. This means that by the time you arrive in Nepal, a big part of your orientation is already complete, allowing for a much more engaging and rewarding experience for you; and
 - Fundraising with family and friends gets everyone engaged and excited about your trip. Having a supportive team behind you helps make the most of the experience and supports you if you face some difficulties.
- We are happy to work with you on fundraising ideas to help. Most of our volunteers raise a lot more than this!





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Some tips for while you are in Nepal

- The people and situations you will see are not exhibits, they are 'real life' so please treat them with the respect and dignity they deserve. In particular, take photos only when appropriate and when advised that it is ok and when the subject of your photo agreed.
- Because some of the things you will see and the stories you will hear are often tragic and heartbreaking, be kind to yourself and allow yourself time to absorb all that is around you. Please speak up if you feel uncomfortable in any situation or need any help at all in dealing with anything.
- Factors such as pollution, the heat, food quality and water quality combined with the emotional aspects of your visit mean that you will likely tire very easily. Be honest about this at all times and ask for a break, some water or anything else you might need.
- Don't 'struggle on' if you are not feeling well, it is not worth the risk.



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Some tips for while you are in Nepal

- You may be asked for your email address from various Nepali people during your visit. We strongly advise against you giving anyone in Nepal your email address or any other contact information. If people would like to get in touch with you they can do so through the Foundation. This rule has unfortunately been needed to be made to protect visitors to Nepal and our projects, and to also protect the people in Nepal. It is extremely important that you trust our intentions and respect our wishes in this regard.
- Consider the way you dress, particularly when visiting areas outside of Kathmandu. In particular, females should avoid exposing too much skin by wearing for example very low cut hipster jeans with tops that expose the mid-riff. If in doubt, some modesty is the best policy!
- Lastly and most importantly, remember that you are here to have a fantastic experience. So make the most of each day in order that you go home with lifelong and life changing memories. You will get as much out of the experience as you put into it!



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What next?



- Complete our Volunteer Interest Form and email it to bec@mitrataa.org.
- We will let you know if we have any appropriate placements.
- If we do, together we'll start planning an experience guaranteed to change your life!



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