



**WWF** *for a living planet*<sup>®</sup>

## WWF International Youth Volunteer Internship Programme

### Application Preamble

#### **OBJECTIVE**

Carefully chosen young people will take hands-on experience, expertise and knowledge into their future professional careers & spheres of influence, spreading a wider understanding of conservation issues and sustainable development, while inputting their skills and experience into WWF teams and projects.

#### **BACKGROUND**

WWF's Youth Volunteer Internship Programme aims to provide motivated and committed young people with an opportunity to engage in the conservation of the environment – regardless of their backgrounds – and work on WWF conservation projects internationally through a facilitated 3-6 month assignment, including hands-on engagement in WWF field projects and exposure to local conservation practitioners, scientists and communities. This unique experience enables them to raise awareness about nature conservation on their return home and helps develop the next generation of conservationists and future leaders in sustainable development. WWF seeks to attract young people from all walks of life, to provide them with a chance to engage now. Conservation and sustainable resource management require a huge range of skills, so whatever professional career they choose, this experience will be crucial for Alumni to become environmental champions for the rest of their lives.

Participants are drawn from a vast range of backgrounds and, while they have previously demonstrated commitment to the goals of WWF, they are not required to be pursuing a career in nature conservation. This programme aims to provide a global view of conservation for a select number of young people who are likely to “go places” in their lives and careers and who will contribute to WWF's mission in their different spheres of influence.

Since its launch in 2005, the Programme has evolved considerably and now offers a variety of placements with WWF's priority conservation programmes in Africa, Asia/Pacific, Latin America and at WWF International in areas such as communications, policy & advocacy, environmental education and project monitoring.

The aim of the programme is to create a win-win situation for both the volunteer/intern and WWF – committed young self-starters bring added value to a WWF team with their knowledge and background, and take ownership of their activities. In turn WWF provides these individuals with a powerful, direct experience of the challenges it faces in protecting the environment. They work closely with WWF experts and local communities, enabling them to gain a better grasp of the issues, transferring knowledge and providing them with leadership skills.

During their experience, participants may work on conservation initiatives called *Youth Flagship Projects* that are integrated into the field activities of WWF. An example of such a project is the establishment of a new protected area or species conservation campaign; participants are involved in a range of activities such as collection of field data, consultations with local communities, awareness campaigns and building of infrastructure. Participants will meet a range of conservation practitioners, scientists, and community leaders and will have the rewarding experience of being coached by these people. Volunteers/interns will gain knowledge, guidance and support from them and develop a greater understanding for local circumstances. Prior to



their departure, participants are provided with assistance and information to prepare for their assignment.

The Youth Volunteer Internship Programme is designed to have an impact far beyond the individuals who are directly involved. Participants will complete writing and digital photo assignments about their experience and in some instances will have the opportunity to create a short video. These creative expressions serve to profile WWF's field projects in the context of personal stories and are shared globally through their individual web pages on [www.panda.org/explore](http://www.panda.org/explore).

Participants undertake to cover their return airfare, visa and vaccination costs, as well as their food expenses during the assignment. These funds can be provided from personal sources or through fundraising efforts. Except for food, WWF will pay for all in-country support for participants as well as health insurance and repatriation assistance coverage.

On their return home, participants will share what they have learned through a minimum of 3 presentations to audiences of their choice, e.g. to WWF offices, other NGOs, local funders (for their airfare, etc), schools/universities, community organizations. They will then receive a certificate of successful completion of the experience.

#### **WWF IS LOOKING FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WITH FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:**

- Age 19-27; all nationalities
- Demonstrated leadership for conservation and sustainability
- Self-starters who have ability to adapt to changing situations
- Highly motivated team players
- Open mindedness and willingness to build bridges between cultures
- Ability to cope without modern comforts such as running water and electricity
- Proficiency in French for Madagascar & Cameroon placements
- Proficiency in Spanish for placements in Latin America (e.g. Bolivia, Paraguay)
- Background/experience in communications (journalism, social media, photography, video production, etc) for certain placements

#### **YOUTH VOLUNTEER/INTERN'S OBLIGATIONS INCLUDE:**

- Cover roundtrip airfare, visa, vaccinations, food and personal items. Depending on the country of assignment and duration, this could cost approximately Euros 2,500-3,000 and can be provided from personal sources or through fundraising. Participants will receive a Participant Guide that provides effective fundraising tips.
- Prepare for their experience by researching, reading up about the host country and liaising with WWF Alumni.
- Prepare for the experience by reading information provided and liaising with the WWF International Coordinator to ensure preparation is on-track.
- Complete to the best of their ability the tasks attributed to them during their assignment.
- Act in a way compatible with being an ambassador for WWF.



## **WWF OBLIGATIONS INCLUDE:**

- Costs of on-site transportation and local/regional travel related to the assignment (including transfer to and from airport), renting of self-catering accommodation, laptop and, where applicable, local language courses, digital photo cameras, video cameras and other relevant equipment (e.g. tents, bicycles);
- Provision of medical insurance & repatriation assistance coverage;
- Assistance with visa application where necessary;
- Mentoring and logistical support during assignment.

## **OUTLINE OF PROGRAMME & TIMELINE**

### **Pre-Departure Stages**

#### *Openings*

- All openings are posted on the WWF volunteer internship website outlining main tasks, required skills & competencies, and providing fact sheet or web link to the project or programme

#### *Application*

- WWF receives and reviews applications and draws up a shortlist of applicants for each assignment. In addition to the online application form, candidates will be asked to provide a CV, 2 references and a photo; a writing sample might also be requested where relevant.

#### *Interview*

- Candidates are interviewed in person, by telephone or by skype by the WWF Office.

#### *Selection*

- WWF selects participants based on merit, ensuring overall quality of applicants and fit with mission of the programme, as well as geographic, cultural and gender diversity.

#### *Confirmation*

- A contract is drawn up outlining the roles and responsibilities of both the Volunteer/Intern and WWF;
- WWF takes out medical insurance & repatriation assistance coverage (SOS International & Cigna) for each participant for the duration of their placement;
- Participants purchase their roundtrip air ticket and inform WWF International Coordinator of their flight details;
- Participants receive relevant information regarding their placement description or programme of activities.
- Participants are invited to join the WWF Volunteer, Intern & Scholar platform on Facebook.

### **Hands-on Experience (3-6 months)**

- On arrival in the country, participants are given an introduction to the country, including topics such as health, safety and security measures, acceptable norms of behaviour, as



well as an overview of WWF's projects and activities. They also begin local language lessons where applicable.

- In Madagascar, volunteers participate in a session on multi-media storytelling (including shooting and editing of video) in order to create a short video about their experience.

### **Post-Experience (over a period of 6 months)**

On their return home, participants

- Complete programme evaluation report.
- Finalize their stories to post on their individual web page that is created for them on WWF's website [www.panda.org/explore](http://www.panda.org/explore). Any videos that are created are posted on the WWF Volunteer page on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/wwfvolunteers>
- Give at least three presentations about their experience to audiences of their choice (if logistically possible, this should include a presentation to their nearest WWF office), and provide WWF with feedback on these presentations.

Once completed, participants will receive a WWF Certificate.

*WWF's commitment to engage with today's generation plays a crucial role in developing our leaders of tomorrow!*