

Peace Corps | Benefits of Service



Peace Corps is a life-defining leadership experience you will draw upon throughout your life.

The most significant accomplishment will be the contribution you make to improve the lives of others. There are also tangible benefits for you personally and professionally.

Dollars and Sense

- **Student Loans:** some are eligible for deferment and some for partial cancellation
- **Transition Funds:** receive \$7,425 (pre-tax after you complete your 27 months of service)
- **Free Travel:** expenses for travel to and from your country of service are paid for
- **Living Allowance:** a monthly stipend to cover living and housing expenses
- **Vacation:** earn two vacation days per month of service
- **Medical and Dental:** receive complete medical and dental care while serving
- **Health Insurance:** an affordable plan is available for up to 18 months following service
- **No Fee:** unlike other international volunteer programs, there is no fee to participate in the Peace Corps

Career Builder

Whether you are just out of college, mid-career, or retired, the skills you learn as a Volunteer can help you achieve your goals and enhance your marketability with prospective employers.

Peace Corps provides training in a foreign language, technical skills, and cross-cultural understanding. This, combined

with the experience of living, learning, and working with a community overseas for 27 months, augments any career path.

Services and Benefits for Returned Volunteers

- **Job Placement Support** – Peace Corps’ Returned Volunteer Services provides assistance in finding a job following service. The office publishes an online newsletter with job announcements, graduate school information, and career-related articles; sponsors career events throughout the year; and helps returned Volunteers translate their field experience for prospective employers and other professional contacts.
- **Advantages in Federal Employment** – Volunteers who complete two years of service receive one year of noncompetitive eligibility for employment in the federal government. This means that at the hiring agency’s discretion, if a Volunteer meets the minimum qualifications for a position, he or she can be hired without going through the standard competitive process. Federal employees can receive credit toward retirement for their years of Volunteer service.
- **Network with vibrant alumni** – Be part of the network of over 200,000 returned Volunteers worldwide, many of whom actively participate in local returned Peace Corps Volunteer (RPCV) groups.





Graduate School Advantages

Volunteers can earn academic credit for their Peace Corps service and are eligible for scholarships, reduced tuition, internships, and stipends through participating schools. The Peace Corps offers two unique programs through partnerships with over 140 colleges and universities across the United States.

Before and During Your Service

Master's International allows Volunteers to incorporate Peace Corps service as credit in a master's degree program in a variety of fields at more than 80 academic institutions nationwide.

Following Your Service

Fellows/USA offers returned Volunteers scholarships or reduced tuition, stipends, and internships at more than 60 participating campuses in a variety of subject areas, combining graduate study with substantive, degree-related internships that help meet the needs of underserved communities in the U.S.

A list of schools and fields of study can be found at peacecorps.gov/gradschool

“When I decided to serve with the Peace Corps, it was the biggest risk I’d ever taken in life. I was the first person to graduate from college in my family and their concern was that I take that tremendous achievement and settle down and have a normal career. My mother, however, thought Peace Corps was an excellent idea and she supported me. The Peace Corps is a marvelous way for a young person to develop leadership skills at a very early age that will hold you in good stead for the rest of your life.”

Aaron S. Williams
Director of the Peace Corps
Volunteer in Dominican Republic

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Be a Volunteer.**

peacecorps.gov | 800.424.8580



Grad School or Peace Corps ... Why Not Do Both?



Peace Corps Benefits

- Language, cross-cultural, and technical training
- Travel costs to and from the country of service
- Overseas living and housing expenses
- Medical and dental coverage
- Vacation time
- Transition funds of just over \$6,000 following service
- Career and transition assistance

Scholarships, assistantships, academic credit, and stipends are available from participating schools for **Master's International** and **Fellows/USA** students.

The Peace Corps partners with more than 100 colleges and universities as a benefit to its Volunteers. **Combine** the incredible experience of working abroad helping others as a Peace Corps Volunteer with furthering your education.

Two Programs



Master's International lets you start school first and apply your studies with international Peace Corps Volunteer field work.



Fellows/USA gives you a lifelong opportunity to advance your degree after satisfactorily completing Peace Corps service.

With hundreds of study programs available, there is likely to be one to match your interests; and with campuses in more than 35 states, there are multiple locations to choose from. The Peace Corps is continually adding new partner schools. Search for schools based on location, program area, or keyword on our website.

www.peacecorps.gov/gradschool

Talk to a Peace Corps recruiter to learn more about this incredible combination!

800.424.8580

Over for program details >

BEFORE you Volunteer

Master's International

Apply to a participating Master's International (MI) graduate school first, and when accepted, submit your application to the Peace Corps. You must be accepted by both. MI students generally spend one year completing coursework on campus. Afterward, they serve overseas in the Peace Corps for 27 months, for which they receive academic credit. Generally, students then return to the university to complete degree requirements.

Benefits

Master's International participants graduate with the combination of an advanced degree and two years of significant international professional experience.

All MI schools provide academic credit for Peace Corps service and some offer financial assistance.

See individual school programs for specific details:
www.peacecorps.gov/masters

Degree Programs

Currently more than 60 universities offer 100+ different graduate degrees, including

- Business
- Education, TESOL/TESL/TEFL
- Environment, forestry, agriculture
- Engineering
- International studies, public policy
- Public health, international health
- Youth development

...and many more!

"Master's International is a great gateway to working abroad and gave a focus to my degree. My advisor helped me pick classes so I was well prepared and we kept in touch during my Peace Corps service. My experience was colored in a positive way by the classes that I took and upon my return, provided content for my school project."

Adam Goodberg
Volunteer in Moldova
Master of Urban Planning
University of Wisconsin-Madison

AFTER you Volunteer

Fellows/USA

Apply to the Peace Corps and serve overseas for 27 months as a Volunteer. Anytime after satisfactorily completing service, you can apply to a participating Fellows/USA school.

Benefits

Fellows/USA schools are actively looking for returned Peace Corps Volunteers. All Fellows/USA schools provide financial assistance, often significant, and a substantial internship program in an underserved U.S. community.

See individual school programs for specific details:
www.peacecorps.gov/fellows

Degree Programs

Currently more than 50 universities with 140+ different graduate or doctorate degrees, including

- Business, economics, nonprofit management
- International affairs, peace studies
- Nursing, public health, social work
- Public policy, public administration, political science, urban planning
- Sciences, information technology, engineering
- Teacher education and certification

...and many more!

"The search for master's degree funding is challenging. I was grateful that my experience in Peace Corps put me in a special category at my school which provided tuition forgiveness and a paid internship."

Debbie Curley
Volunteer in Cameroon
Master of Public Health
University of Arizona

Peace Corps | Becoming a More Competitive Candidate



To be considered for Peace Corps service

You must meet the minimum education and experience qualifications for an assignment. Please keep in mind that the most competitive applicants continue to gain relevant experience as they move through the application process. This strengthens skills and demonstrates a continued commitment to Peace Corps. We recommend you submit your application as early possible so we can match your skills to openings as they become available. Plan ahead and apply one year in advance of your target departure date. To be eligible for Peace Corps service, you must be at least 18 years of age and a U.S. citizen.

If you do not have a specialized degree

You may qualify with a bachelor's degree in any discipline paired with the experience listed below:

Agriculture

3-6 months of full-time experience with a large-scale commercial or family-run business involving vegetable gardening, farming, nursery work, tree planting and care, urban forestry, livestock care or management, or fisheries work.

English Teaching

3-6 months of English or foreign language tutoring in a structured program that provides training. Your student(s) must be at least 12 years old, and you must complete at least 10 hours of tutoring each month. Many opportunities in this area do not require a foreign language. All education positions require a minimum GPA of 2.5.

Health Extension

3-6 months of volunteer work experience in health education, specifically educating youth, high-risk groups, peers, or the general public in healthy lifestyle promotion and/or disease prevention. The most in-demand experience is with HIV/AIDS, family planning, and nutrition. Public health departments and local community health organizations are the best resources for finding volunteer opportunities.

If you have these skills, you are very competitive for Peace Corps service

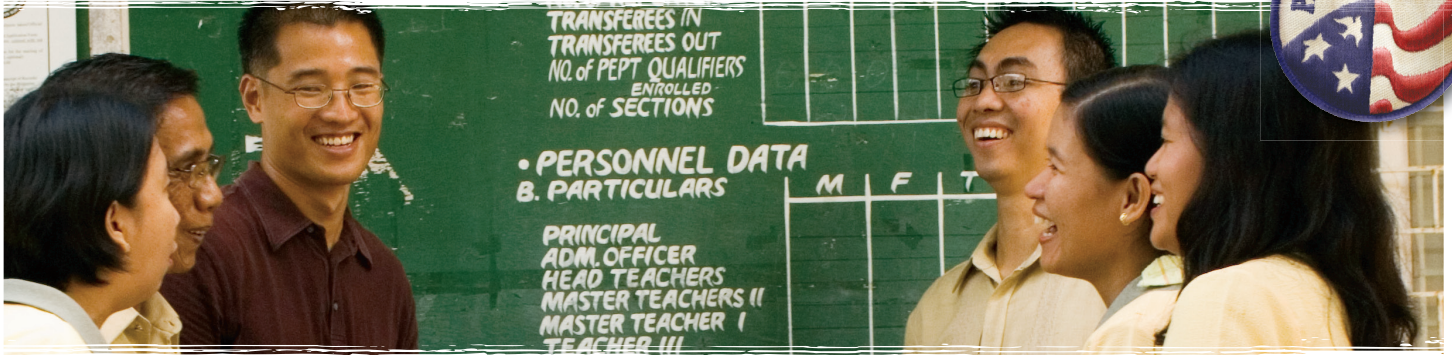
The following skill sets are highly sought by our host countries:

- Agriculture Economics with or without a foreign language
- Forestry with French
- Environment with Spanish
- Agriculture with Spanish or French
- TEFL/TESL with classroom teaching
- Teaching credential (BA/BS)

If you have one of the skill combinations above, or would like more information on requirements or ideas on how to be a more competitive candidate for Peace Corps service, call 800.424.8580, option 1 to talk with a recruiter.

See back for ways to become more competitive





Ways to Become More Competitive

Education

Highly competitive candidates have a college degree in agriculture, forestry, or environment, paired with Spanish or French language skills. Ninety percent of Volunteer positions require a bachelor's degree. Competitive non-degree candidates can qualify for agriculture and forestry extension with more than one year of full-time work experience in agriculture or environment. The Peace Corps also considers work, hobbies, and volunteer experiences that align with the skills it is seeking.

The Peace Corps is partnering with minority education institutions to increase access to higher education. Visit peacecorps.gov/higheredpartners for a list of higher education partners.

Language

There is no second language requirement to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer; however, some regions, including Central and South America and parts of Africa, require Volunteers to know Spanish or French prior to arrival. To minimally qualify, candidates should have at least two semesters of Spanish or French at the university level or have completed four years of a romance language in high school within the last eight years. If you have learned a language informally, the Peace Corps may consider the CLEP and ACTFL exam results for placement. Applicants are encouraged to build upon their existing foreign language skills through coursework or self-study.

Leadership and Community Service

The Peace Corps seeks applicants with leadership skills and community service. Leadership in your community, school, faith-based group, or service organization – particularly in planning activities, organizing, and motivating groups of people, and project supervision – will strengthen your application. Qualifying volunteer experiences are supervised, structured assignments that meet specific community needs with expected outcomes.

Your recruiter can advise you on the best type of volunteer work to complete according to your skills and interests. Visit peacecorps.gov/volunteerpartners for volunteering and service opportunities that can strengthen your Peace Corps application and prepare you to support community projects around the world.

Professional Skills and Experience

Demonstrating motivation and commitment, work skills and knowledge, social sensitivity, and emotional maturity will help any applicant. Establishing a good track record of employment and successfully achieving job competence may help demonstrate your productivity.

Flexibility

The more flexible you are in terms of your Peace Corps geographic location, your assignment area, and your desired departure date, the greater your chance of being nominated and possibly invited to serve as a Peace Corps Volunteer. Your flexibility allows placement staff to find the most appropriate matches for your skills and education.

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New Application Process FAQs

The Volunteer application process is changing to a more streamlined, secure, and electronic-based system. Below are answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about this new process.

How is the Peace Corps Volunteer application process changing?

- The Peace Corps application process is changing slightly, but the main steps will remain the same.
- The new process is more streamlined, with increased access to status information, and an improved medical review process. As always, applications will continue to be reviewed for legal, medical, and technical suitability.
- The number of paper forms has been reduced and many forms will now be completed electronically.
- The Peace Corps has replaced the "Health Status Review Form" with the "Health History Form," which asks about medical issues that are current, or have occurred within the last two years, or may require support in the field.
- A secure online Medical Applicant Portal will replace the paper-based medical kit. Applicants will be able to exchange information with the Peace Corps medical office; any outstanding medical requests and forms will be listed in the portal.

Is the application timeline changing?

- The application process will still take about nine to 12 months from start to finish for most candidates. However, the majority of applicants will now have more time to prepare for departure as invitations will be sent out with a longer lead time.

What will be new about the medical process? *(It will become a two-part process.)*

- The applicant's Health History Form will be reviewed by the Peace Corps and if additional medical information is required, the applicant will be contacted via the Medical Applicant Portal.
- Most applicants will only need to submit validating documents, but as necessary, some may be asked to follow up with a doctor. Once they have completed these tasks, the results will be reviewed to see if they can be successfully medically pre-qualified.
- **Only** those applicants who have accepted an invitation to a country of service will be required to complete a physical and dental examination prior to his or her departure date.

What happens if an applicant has already started an application prior to the new system going live?

- For those who have submitted a completed application by July 26, the Peace Corps will contact individual applicants concerning how to proceed based on how far along the applicant is in the process.
- If you start but have not submitted an application by July 26, you will need to start a new application in our new system which will be launching on August 15th.

I haven't started my online application yet. Should I wait?

You may find it beneficial to wait for the new application process, and it will not negatively impact your candidacy to wait until August 15 to start your application.

Why is the Peace Corps making these changes?

- The Peace Corps is reducing paperwork, providing a more streamlined, secure, and electronic-based application process. In addition, applicants will now be able to quickly see online where they stand in the process.
- By having a two-part medical process, the costs for a majority of out-of-pocket medical expenses will be incurred only by those applicants who have accepted an invitation or those who are in a medical pending status. This is a cost savings to applicants who are not accepted to serve at this time.
- The streamlined process enables the majority of applicants to have more time to prepare for departure since invitations will be sent out with a longer lead time.

When are these changes going to occur?

- The new application will be available on August 15 2012.
- Our application system will not be accessible from July 27th through August 14th. **Do these changes apply to the Peace Corps Response application?** No. Interested candidates may continue to apply to Peace Corps Response positions.