Raleigh Volunteer Manager Expedition Guide

Become a Volunteer Manager, supporting young people and local communities on sustainable development projects.

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About Raleigh International

Find out more

At Raleigh International we empower young people from across the world to develop their skills, build confidence and take action on the issues they care about.

We do this through Raleigh Expeditions - challenging and fun international volunteering experiences.

With over 55,000 volunteers from more than 100 countries we are dedicated to working with young people and communities to create meaningful and long-lasting impact.

Our projects contribute to achieving the Global Goals for Sustainable Development (SDGs) and are developed alongside local communities to ensure our work is ethical, responsible, and relevant to the needs of these communities.

> “Raleigh friends for life! From all walks of life, coming together to overcome challenges and to accomplish their shared goals together. Absolutely life changing.”
>
> **Alison, Raleigh Volunteer**

Raleigh is a global community of over **55,000 alumni** and has supporters from over **100 countries.**

Volunteers have contributed to over **100 million** volunteering hours on 600+ Expeditions.

We have worked alongside **198 rural** communities reaching **100,000 people.**

About Raleigh Expedition

Find out more

Raleigh Expedition is an immersive, adventurous, one-of-a-kind volunteer abroad experience.

Volunteers can take part in up to three project phases:

- Community
- Environment
- Adventure Leadership

Whether you are looking for a career break or have just retired you can equip yourself with new skills, work with communities to create lasting change and take urgent action on the world's most important issues.

Our volunteers often describe Raleigh Expedition as "absolutely life-changing" - it's a journey you will never forget.

> "It was the most amazing experience of my life."
>
> **Amy, Raleigh Expedition alumni, Costa Rica**

Why Raleigh?

Raleigh Expedition is a unique opportunity to work alongside and support young people as our leaders of tomorrow, whilst working in partnership with local communities to create lasting change.

- **Over 40 years experiences running expeditions**
- **Real adventure in a safe environment**
- **Develop your leadership and confidence**
- **Contribute to different projects**
- **Global, diverse and inclusive**
- **Community-led projects = long-term sustainable impact**

What does a Volunteer Manager do?

Find out more

We have several Volunteer Manager roles, however, as the driving force behind Expedition, all VMs will:

Planning the trek

- Work alongside and support our full-time staff on the ground in delivering the Expedition and our projects.
- Facilitate groups of volunteers and guide young people through this incredible journey
- Motivate and inspire young volunteers to deliver impactive and effective projects

> I took three months out of my communications career in the UK National Health Service, to nurture my love of communications in a challenging new environment. Jaded with the impact I was making in my job back home, my biggest motivation was that, I wanted to feel that I was spending my days really making a difference.
>
> **Ursula, Content volunteer Manager**

Volunteer Manager Roles

Find out more

Project Manager (Project based)

You and at least one other Project Manager will be managing a group of 12-14 international young people aged 17-24 in a cross-cultural environment out on the project sites. You will be supporting the team to deliver Raleigh International's project aims as well as monitoring and coaching them to help with their personal development.

Find out more

Logistics Coordinator (Office based)

As the Logistics Officer, you will be essential to the smooth running of the programme. Work alongside full-time staff in ensuring all food, equipment and materials are coordinated and supplied for volunteer teams at their project sites. You will be key to supporting the day to day running of projects, and will get the chance to visit project sites for any additional support required.

Find out more

Health & Wellbeing Coordinator (Part office based, part project based)

Support young people with their mental and physical health through Expedition ensuring they feel safe and secure in an environment outside of their comfort zone as the Health and Wellbeing Coordinator.

Find out more

Content Creator (Office based)

Behind every project, every volunteer and every community member Raleigh supports, there is a story to be told. As the Content Creator, you will find these stories and work side-by-side with young people to generate exciting, engaging and high-quality content for Raleigh's communications channels.

Find out more

Photographer (Office based)

Your primary role will be to identify and document powerful stories through photography and film whilst visiting the various project sites around the country. You will work alongside the volunteer content creator officer to gather visual content for our communications channels.

Find out more

Deputy Operations Coordinator (Office based)

The Deputy Operations Coordinator (DOC) role provides the Operations team with support. For example, developing and delivering induction training to volunteers, and supporting volunteering during their time on programme. DOCs are an integral part of the duty manager system and support in daily operational requirements. This role is for Raleigh International alumni.

Find out more

How does Expedition Work?

Find out more

Our Expeditions bring together people from all over the world, of all ages, backgrounds and nationalities. They are adventurous, impactful, exciting and challenging.

In every Expedition, volunteers have the chance to take part in three different phases, or projects. These are Community, Environment and Adventure Leadership.

Step one: Choose how long you go away for

13 Week (office based roles)
All office based role (Logistics Managers, Photographers, Content Creators, DOCs and Health and Wellbeing coordinators) will arrive early for the specific officed based role induction. **Prices from £2,724**

12 Weeks (Project based)
As a project manager you will join Expedition 2 weeks before the volunteers arrive for specific induction training with the VM team. **Prices from £2,641**

9 Weeks Summer Expedition
This shorter Expedition supports the short 6 week volunteer Expedition. Running only between June and September. Here volunteers take part in all three phases in a shorter time frame. **Prices from £2,500**

Step two: Choose when you go

We run three cycles every year during the following times.

Cycle 1 - February – April

Cycle 2 - June – August

Cycle 3 - October – December

Timeline

Expedition group

Training and induction

On arrival you will be greeted by the in-country team, and transfered to Fieldbase which will be your home for the next few months.

After some time to settle in and a chance to get to know each other and the staff team, you will be thrown straight into a series of sessions about your country, basic hygiene practices and Raleigh. It will be a busy couple of weeks with lots to learn, but you will also get the opportunity to relax, get to know fellow volunteer managers and the local area.

You will then head out to some of the project sites on a project planning visit (PPV) for 2-3 days to build relationships with the community leaders, gain a better understanding of where you'll be working, and ensure it is a safe, fun and rewarding project site for the volunteers. You will also likely get the opportunity to try out some of the trek routes on a practice trek!

Sample timeline

Volunteer Manager Induction
2+ Weeks of Induction, Training and Project Planning.

Volunteer (17-24) Induction
2-3 days - Young volunteers prepare for their first project supported by their Project managers.

Project Phase X3
19-21 days – Project Managers take their teams to their Project sites. Fieldbase staff support project teams and maintain Fieldbase.

Changeover
2-3 days – After each phase all Project teams return to Fieldbase for debrief and to mixed up into their next project groups.

Debrief at Fieldbase
3-6 Days – Young Volunteers prepare to leave the expedition, say their final goodbye. Volunteer Managers complete Project reports; tidy up Fieldbase, deliver Expedition presentations and celebrate everything that has been achieved.

Fieldbase Life

> “It’s given me a lot more confidence about what to do next, just because you’re retired doesn’t mean you haven’t got those skills and experience. Something I do notice where I’ve perhaps helped younger people is it’s all new to them whereas I’ve seen it all before. That experience does count for quite a bit, so that has been validating.”
>
> **Kathy, Logistics Coordinator**

Costa Rica

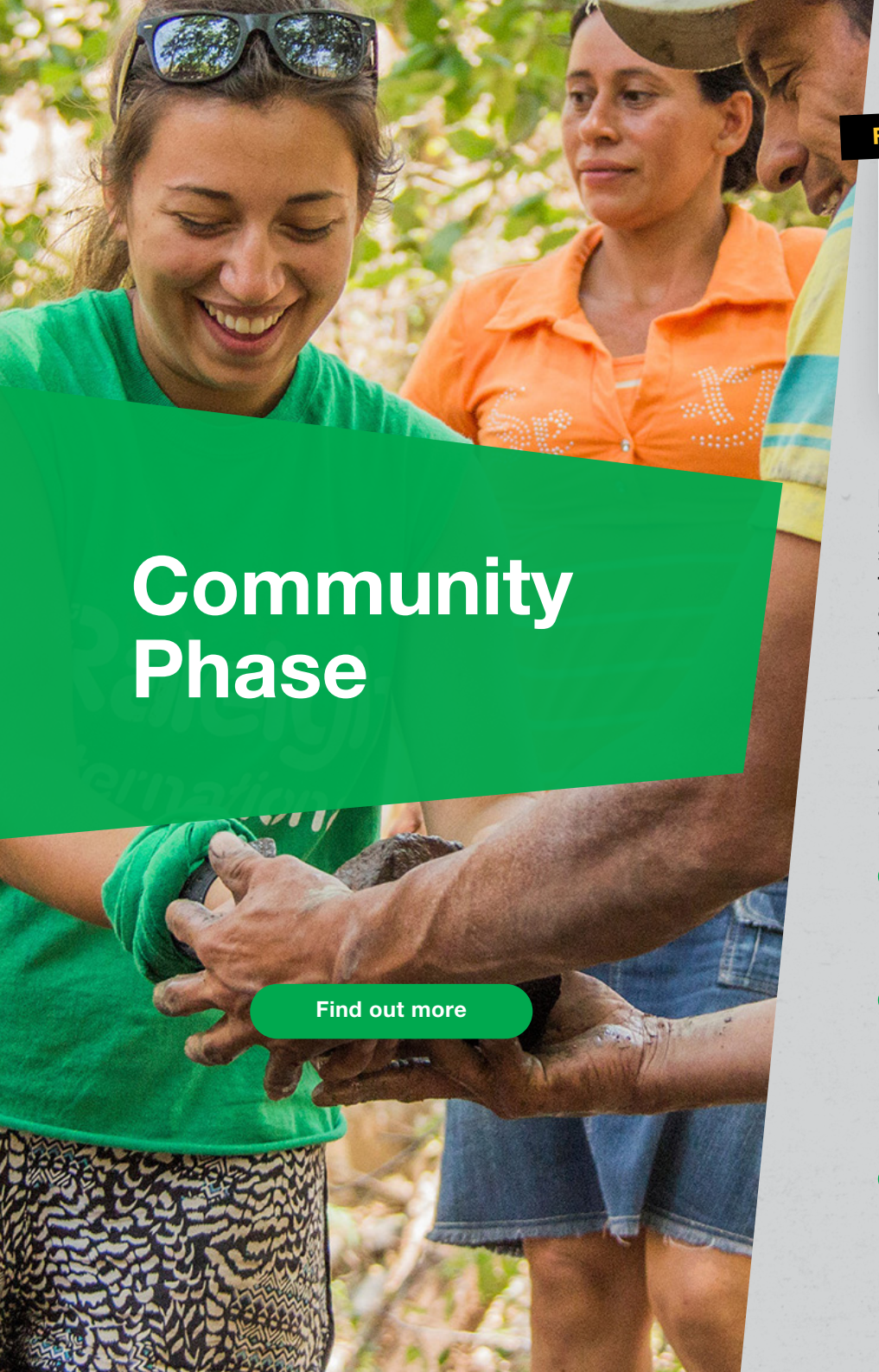
- Turrialba 2hrs drive from the airport
- Located inside a university/farm (research and post-grad uni) very well recognised as one of the most important research unis – agriculture, /environment etc/
- Raleigh rents office and house that serves as accommodation for VMs when on field base
- Weather is humid and hot – vols need to be prepared (rainy afternoons)
- VM induction – live in the Casa Blanca on field base. Shared bedrooms and open spaces. Bunk beds.
- ROOMS reserved for office based team
- PMS – share a big living room and sleep on bunk beds
- Working toilets and showers – no hot water (not usually a problem because it’s hot)
- Water is drinkable from the tap

South Africa

- Located 20 minutes’ drive on dirt and tarmac roads from Phalabowra in the Greater Kruger area.
- Local guides are based there to ensure your safety due to the wildlife
- Located outside of the Kruger National Park with open fences to enable wildlife to roam.
- Very basic with accommodation consisting of tents camping in the bush
- Limited WIFI may be available
- Opportunity to go into town during training and between phases
- Can be cold at night and early morning

Volunteer Induction

This is where you will meet the volunteers and run induction! After two weeks of preparation, it is time for the exciting part – the volunteers arrival! You will pick them up at the airport and spend the next 3 days running the induction training for them. This involves lots of icebreakers, team bonding and training.



Community Phase

Find out more

FLORIBETH'S STORY

"With the hard work of Raleighs volunteers, we can build the school up and provide the necessary tools for children of all ages to attend and learn. We have an 18-year old very keen to become a lawyer, and someone who wants to train as a chef. I want to help them achieve those ambitions. This is for the longer-term benefit of the community – we must invest in education for our children." **Floribeth, school teacher and leadership member, Nimaritawa indigenous community**

Imagine a world where everyone has access to clean water, sanitation, and basic hygiene services. Where everyone, even the most marginalised have access to education. You can play your part in making this a reality.

Through a series of grassroots, community-led initiatives we aim to establish what works for the communities we work in. All projects are needed, impactful and ultimately make a long-term sustainable impact.

- Work on sustainable solutions to issues such as poverty, low levels of education, food insecurity, and unemployment.
- Building projects, such as community schools, are based on a community-specific needs assessment and relationship building between Raleigh, the local community and local authorities.
- Live and work alongside local people, getting a real taste of their culture and food.

Help improve access to education

Learn practical skills such as building and farming

Environmental Phase

Find out more

SHOEHEI'S STORY

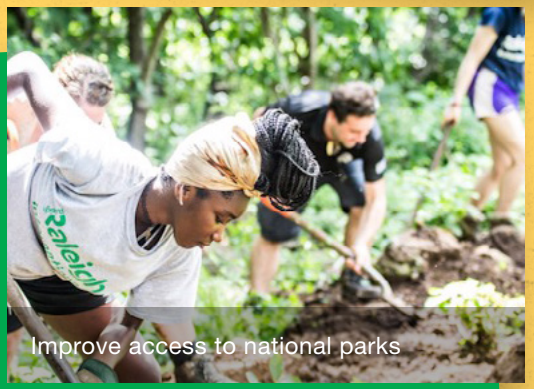
"In Lulanda people depend on the forest as a source of income and for their livelihoods. We worked with the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group to increase awareness of deforestation and built a tree nursery containing 30,000 tree saplings, creating a forest line to prevent forest fires spreading. The tree nurseries will provide a sustainable way for the community to harvest wood and increase biodiversity of the area." **Shoehei volunteered in Tanzania**

We don't need to tell you that our world is facing unprecedented environmental challenges. Our projects make small steps toward long-term impact.

You will take an active role in protecting natural resources and vulnerable environments.

- Take an active role in protecting natural resources and vulnerable environments: alien plant removal, indigenous tree planting, snare sweeps, road clearing
- Help communities adapt to climate change and sustain rural resources.
- Support conservation in national parks or on reforestation projects.

Protect biodiversity



Improve access to national parks

Adventure Leadership Phase

Find out more

> “My role was about supporting a team of volunteers - trying to motivate a team of people to trek across the country when I wasn’t sure I could get there myself was definitely challenging but totally rewarding. I was probably the least likely person to lead a trek but am proof that anyone can do it.”
>
> **Sarah, Raleigh Costa Rica VM Alumni**

Our Adventure Leadership phase take teams on challenging treks on a variety of stunning routes that tourists don’t get access to.

You’ll travel through rainforest and up volcanos in Costa Rica or rocky grassland with easy river crossings in South Africa. This will be an experience that brings you together with other volunteers, and one you’ll never forget.

- Support young people to push themselves out of their comfort zone and develop their leadership skills.
- Build core skills, resilience and determination to drive change.
- Wild camp and sleep under the stars or set up camp in community buildings and schools.
- Support your team to learn survival, camp craft and map reading skills; and navigate through incredible landscapes.
- Go back to basics and become self-sufficient.

Start and finish the trek together

Experience stunning landscapes

Changeover and Debrief

Changeover

Changeover is a busy three-day period where all the Project teams return to field base where everyone is debriefed, kit and equipment is exchanged with the logistics staff and any necessary admin or medical needs are completed in preparation for the next phase. It is also I time to rest and recuperate, have a shower, where fresh clothes and catch up with the rest of the team.

Debrief

At the end of the final phase everyone returns to Field Base to complete the Final Review or Endex. This will involve returning all kit, equipment and left-over food to the logistics team, complete Project reports that will aid future project managers, and finally a period of celebration where everyone gets together to enjoy one final party before it is time to go home.

Where Can You Go?

Visit our website

Volunteer in Costa Rica

Despite making up only 0.03% of the world's landmass, Costa Rica is home to nearly 5% of the planet's biodiversity.

It is naturally rich in ecosystems and species; however, many environmental NGOs consider the country's natural environment fragile and vulnerable.

Volunteer in South Africa

The Greater Kruger area lies between Mozambique, Eswatini and the world-famous Kruger National Park. This area encapsulates Africa at its heart. It is a wildlife haven with natural beauty unlike anywhere else.

South Africa

Volunteer in a country that is as diverse and colourful as it is exciting and adventurous! South Africa is a country that welcomes, and needs, volunteer support.

Download South Africa Guide

> “Raleigh isn’t just ‘building a school on a gap year’. It’s so much deeper than that.”
>
> **James, Raleigh Volunteer**

Spot incredible wildlife

Work together, make friends for life

What will I be doing?

- Work on grassroots, community projects to build sustainable food gardens.
- Help restore a healthy habitat on land bordering the world famous Krugar National Park.
- Explore a true wilderness, with no marked trails on the adventure leadership trek.
- Learn to cook traditional food and understand local traditions.

Did you know?

- You could learn some of the Xitsonga language - one of the 11 official languages of South Africa!
- The Greater Kruger area is a wildlife haven with natural beauty unlike anywhere else.

Costa Rica

Volunteer in one of the most biodiverse countries in the world, home to national parks, volcanoes and stunning landscapes.

Download Costa Rica Guide

> "33 years on from Expedition I still feel the positive impact."
>
> **Terry, Raleigh Volunteer**

Learn navigation and map reading skills!

Work together on construction projects

What will I be doing?

- Work alongside local people to improve their access to education on the indigenous Community project.
- Work with rangers to help conserve Costa Rica's biodiversity and improve access to national parks on the Environmental project.
- Trek through rainforest and up volcanoes on a variety of stunning routes that tourists don't get access to.
- Work with Costa Rican youth to help create a more inclusive society.

Did you know?

- Costa Rica is leading the international fight against climate change.
- Despite making up only 0.03% of the world's landmass, Costa Rica is home to nearly 5% of the planet's biodiversity.

Safety

FAQ's

Safety is at the heart of everything.

This starts with selecting the appropriate places to volunteer, all the way to providing comprehensive safety training to all volunteers. Our Safety Management Systems are robust, practical, and effective.

- Every programme has qualified medical staff supporting the volunteers.
- Every team is accompanied by an experienced tour leader who is with the group 24/7.
- In the event of emergency, professional and skilled operators such as medical air rescue services and medical practitioners are available as part of our support network.

Experienced in-country staff on every Expedition

Our full-time staff in each country are highly experienced, committed and resourceful individuals selected and trained to ensure they uphold our high safety standards.

> "Leading a team of young international volunteers on a summer-long expedition to one of the most vibrant and awe-inspiring places on earth is without doubt the most worthwhile experience of my life to date. Without putting too fine a point in it, it was probably my only experience of living outside of the bubble we call home and now not a day goes by without me feeling immensely grateful for my place in the world and energised to actively participate in it's improvement."
>
> **Ross, Raleigh Costa Rica VM Alumni**

Life on Expedition

> “You think not having things like WiFi or TV will bug you, but it makes you really appreciate what you have and the people you care about.”
>
> **Sophie, Raleigh Expedition Alumni, 2022**

Raleigh Expedition is culturally immersive volunteer experience. You will be living and working alongside local people so you can learn about their lives.

Conditions will be more basic than you are used to, but it will soon become normal. Don’t expect tourist hotspots, five-star hotels and 24/7 WIFI, expect a memory-making adventure full of fun and rewarding experiences.

Volunteer setting up a tent on-site

Food

- Volunteers cook their own meals, eat what the locals eat, try new foods and expand your sense of taste.
- In Costa Rica expect to eat rice and beans a lot. If you are lucky, some of the community members may cook some local delicacies for you. On the environmental projects and trek, you will be cooking Raleigh Rations on gas stoves.
- During VM induction, you will have access to the Raleigh ‘White House’ kitchen to cook some family style meals for your VM team.
- In South Africa meals might involve maize meal (Miele Meal) and Chakalaka supplemented by rice or pasta.
- You will also be given a food budget for your team, to buy some extra fruits or veggies to spruce up your Raleigh rations. Be prepared to experiment and use your food budget to create a variety of new recipes.

Accomodation

- In Costa Rica at Field Base, Volunteer Managers can expect to share a room sleeping in bunkbeds. Once on project accommodation will be either be a shared tent with another Volunteer Manager or a classroom where the entire group sleeps. Showers and toilets are likely to be a welcome addition.
- In South Africa, the accommodation will consist of sleeping in tents for the duration, both as Fieldbase and on project sites.

Camp life

- Expect to sit around the fire, tell stories, play cards and gaze at the stars.
- Everyone will have responsibilities around camp, which might include collecting water for any available showers, keeping fires going to heat water and to cook, collecting firewood and clearing the area to discourage wildlife.

Feeling Inspired?

Apply now

Step 1 – Apply online
To confirm your place on Expedition.

Step 2 – Invite to Online Assessment
Our team will review your application and invite you to attend an online assessment.

Step 3 – Offered place on Expedition
Your assessment and application will be reviewed by our team, and if successful you will be offered a place on Expedition and asked to pay your deposit.

Step 4 – Pre-Departure Preparation
Get ready for Expedition – book flights, vaccinations and so on. We are here to support you!

Find out more

Book a consultation call
Schedule a one-to-one call to discuss your options and which Expedition is right for you.

Book a call

Email us with an enquiry

Enquire

> “Whatever your background or motivation, if you’re looking for inspiration, challenge, camaraderie, and unique experiences with lifelong friends then this is for you.”
>
> **Raleigh VM Alumni**

Raleigh International

Apply online here

If you still have questions, there are lots of ways you can find out more

info@raleighinternational.org

Join an information event at raleighinternational.org/information-events