

Year Round Flex Social Innovator Program

Program Overview

In response to the continuous support and expansion needs of our sister organization Community Enterprise Solutions' and in response to growing interest by recent graduates and young professionals in volunteering outside of our traditional summer programs, Social Entrepreneur Corps has designed its Flex Social Innovator Program program. We invite you to join us in Guatemala, Ecuador or Nicaragua as a part of our grassroots development team. Take advantage of all of the key components of our Social Entrepreneur Corps solution while you learn how to train, support and expand the successful economic development and education ventures we have started. Join us and work side-by-side with a team that is truly making a difference in our world and gain invaluable skills and knowledge.

Through participation in innovative rural development work within a challenging cultural, language learning and grassroots environment, Social Entrepreneur Corps ensures that participants will:

- Gain insights into the opportunities, inherent risks and limitations involved in third world development
- Have ample opportunities to significantly increase language proficiency
- Observe, learn and live in a diversity of cultural settings
- Experience homestay living with local families
- Have the opportunity to visit an array of development and relief organizations
- Be offered the opportunity to make a significant contribution in a highly structure manner working side by side with field based social entrepreneurs

It is the mission of Social Entrepreneur Corps that the selected volunteers participating in this exclusive program leave the program 100% satisfied in their time and financial investment having gained the desired knowledge and experience in a secure, enjoyable and truly enlightening manner. Through classes, case studies, discussions, analysis, living with the local population, as well as through visits and active participation with local NGOs and social entrepreneurs, volunteers will make a profound community impact while gaining an in-depth knowledge of rural economic development. The desired outcomes for the program are that volunteers:

Social Entrepreneurship

- Will have gained an understanding of the key differences, advantages and disadvantages of varied international relief and economic development models
- Will feel knowledgeable with regards to the challenges and opportunities inherent in the creation of successful social entrepreneurship models, implementation strategies and tactics.
- Will have learned and practiced effective strategies for training, mentoring and supporting local social entrepreneurs
- Will have contributed to the identification and design of new social entrepreneurship opportunities for local constituents

Culture

- Will have gained an understanding of the challenges confronting the rural population specifically
- Will feel comfortable interacting with the local population on a general, family and individual level
- Will have gained an understanding of the cultural and professional "do's" and "don'ts" of living and working in a rural development environment
- Will understand how the rural population lives, works and what they aspire to achieve

Language

- Will have significantly improved their conversational Spanish capabilities
- Will have gained an understanding of the nuance of language in developing country environments



Structural Summary

Pre-arrival, volunteers will be provided with initial itineraries, orientation, safety and project specific information. Upon arrival in country, all participants will spend the first segment (two weeks) of their time in the headquarters site (Antigua, Guatemala, Cuenca, Ecuador, or Granada, Nicaragua respectively) participating in orientation sessions, living with homestay families, studying Spanish intensively, participating in development discussions, participating in trainings, accompanying staff/entrepreneurs and visiting nearby development and relief organizations. In many regards this is the initial "apprentice" segment of the program. The focus on this first foundation building segment is to provide volunteers with the necessary knowledge and skills for the field work that they will begin in the third week.

This "ramp up" segment is essential to ensure that volunteers can work as effectively as possible with our development professionals and constituents in the field.

Beginning in week three, volunteers will leave the headquarters site and be placed in one of our satellite sites to begin working as a part of the team. Volunteers will be given clear goals and objectives and be provided with continuous support. As well, volunteers will be given materials and resources to help them work on projects that may be of their own specific interest. The Flex Social Innovator program is a truly unique option for individuals seeking an opportunity to work as development professionals within a supportive environment and with the tools necessary to succeed. We are confident you will not find another opportunity like this in the world!

