
About the Organization

☐ Does your intended host organization promise huge change with little time commitment?
☐ Can host organization outcomes be measured? Do they sound reasonable or over-inflated?
☐ Is the project sustainable?
☐ Are you taking the place of a local person?
☐ Are they letting you do something that you are unqualified to do in the US?
☐ Are training or language skills needed?
☐ Will you be supervised by local subject matter experts?
☐ How are your qualifications assessed and background checked?
☐ Do the photos on web page reflect “white savior” dynamic?
☐ Are you working with orphans or vulnerable populations?
☐ Do travel or tourism elements detract from other stated goals?
☐ Can you access the organization's annual report?
☐ Is there transparency about how your participation fee relates to the overall project budget?
☐ Does your host organization provide enough information to the public for you to answer these questions on your own and with relative ease?

About You

☐ Are you prepared to perform assigned tasks and interact with the local people with humility?
☐ Do you and your host organization recognize your limitations to help?
☐ Do you and your host organization agree that your primarily role is that of a learner? Can you name the local experts you will learn from?
☐ Have you taken the time to inventory what you don’t know about your intended host organization and the issues it addresses? (Hint: this process is a great way to formulate questions to jumpstart your learning.)
☐ Have you checked reliable sources for known health, safety and security risks associated with your participation? Are you prepared to manage those risks?

About Your Role within the Organization

☐ Do you have sought-after skills, experience or education that will contribute to the project and truly assist those you are hoping to help?
☐ Will you receive training and education to complete the project?
☐ Will you be engaging with locals, exchanging ideas, and collaborating?
☐ Would your impact be greater if you just sent the money instead of paying to go to the host organization?

Useful Links

Forum on Education Abroad Standards of Good Practice: https://forumea.org/resources/standards-of-good-practice/
U.S. Department of State Country Specific Information: https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/country.html
University of Iowa International Travel Policy for Students: https://international.uiowa.edu/study-abroad/first-steps/ui-international-travel-policy-students

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