SHARE, DEVELOP, LEARN.

VOLUNTEER WITH MARY WARD INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA
ABOUT MARY WARD INTERNATIONAL AUSTRALIA

MWIA is a registered charity established by the Loreto sisters to address the needs of the most disadvantaged in Australia and developing countries around the world.

Our Mission is to support the development works associated with the Loreto sisters and their colleagues as they empower women in transforming structures and systems that keep them oppressed and marginalised. MWIA sponsors projects for justice and development in Australia and internationally, building partnerships with local communities to create sustainable projects.

Founded in 2002, MWIA’s projects focus on: poverty reduction, education, social justice, community development, health-care, advocacy, empowerment and protection against violence and trafficking.

Mary Ward International Australia is supported by the Loreto network Australia-wide who together fundraise, raise awareness and volunteer with MWIA’s projects in rural Australia and overseas.

ABOUT MWIA’S VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

MWIA’s volunteer program is an opportunity for our supporters to contribute a lasting change to communities around the world. Volunteering with MWIA is a chance for those interested in Loreto’s works for justice and development to become more involved and to share their skills, abilities, interests and passion to improve the lives of people in Australia and overseas.

Both long-term and short-term places are available to self-funded volunteers, with placements varying to match the needs of the projects, the interests of the volunteers and the requirements of MWIA. While many of our volunteers are connected with the Loreto network, this is certainly not a requirement.

We welcome all volunteers who are open to the mission and values of Mary Ward International Australia and Loreto, and who are interested in contributing their time and enthusiasm to social justice and development projects.
Volunteering is a unique way to connect with people in Australia and around the world. As an active participant, not just an observer, you travel with a purpose and experience a culture and world vastly different from your own. Volunteering is a way to contribute something tangible to social justice and development projects by sharing your skills and abilities with communities and receiving a wealth of knowledge and experience in return.

MWIA sees volunteering as a partnership; volunteers contribute their time, energy and enthusiasm to people and communities in a variety of ways. There are dozens of ways a volunteer can contribute, from helping to set up a wifi network in a project office, to teaching English to local children, to assisting in the development of strategic plans for income generation projects. In return, volunteers are welcomed into a different world. They learn about the people they visit, their culture, the lived reality in the developing world, and are exposed to new ideas and challenges.

The experience of volunteering enriches lives; it allows you to learn more about yourself, broaden your horizons and see the world up-close.

“I really loved that I was able to see both these sides of the communities where I lived, and use my research and writing skills to try to help their community on a practical level.”

Esther McMahon, MWIA Volunteer 2013
**WHY VOLUNTEER WITH MWIA?**

### WHAT WE OFFER

| **Placements**
| **catered to you** |
| MWIA tries to match your skills, interests and abilities with the needs of our projects around the world. No two MWIA volunteering placements are the same, just as no two volunteers are the same! |

| **Small organisation** |
| Volunteering with MWIA means volunteering with an organisation that knows you personally. We meet all of our volunteers, are in contact with them throughout their placements and keep in touch when they come home. |

| **Flexibility and independence** |
| Choose a volunteer placement that suits your life. Decide where you go and for how long, with placements in many countries around the world, ranging from 3 weeks to over a year! |

| **Make a tangible difference** |
| Because MWIA matches your skills with the needs of our projects, you are able to contribute to the communities you visit in a meaningful way, sharing your knowledge and experience. Develop your own abilities by utilising your skills in totally different environment. |

| **Safety and support** |
| MWIA only places volunteers with our project partners, most of whom are Loreto Sisters or part of the MWI network. We will only ever connect you with a community we know and trust. MWIA’s preparation and debriefing sessions provide our volunteers with emotional, spiritual and practical support. |

| **Cross-cultural experience** |
| Become immersed in a world different from your own. Be prepared to receive more than you give from the communities you visit, which have a rich history and culture to share with you. Work alongside people as partners for development. |
WHERE TO GO?

SOME PLACES YOU CAN CHOOSE TO VOLUNTEER

Peru
Visit one of Loreto’s many education projects based near Lima.

Albania
Assist with the WRAJFT (The Rights of Women in Albania for Freedom, Justice and to Speak her Truth) project, an anti-trafficking campaign in northern Albania which empowers local women.

India
There is a wide range of volunteering placements available in India for every skill and interest, from health to childcare, education, microfinance and business management training.

Nepal
Just over the border from Darjeeling, villages in Nepal host volunteers who assist with childcare, income generation projects and teaching English.

Vietnam
Spend some time in Ho Chi Minh City working with marginalised women and children in shelters and orphanages.

Zambia
Based in the poorest of Zambia’s 72 districts are two schools which host volunteers. Act as a teacher’s aide in one of these schools, or lend your strategic planning and business management skills to the Baby Milk Project which provides nutrition for orphaned infants.

Kenya
Passionate about women’s human rights? Join the Stop Female Genital Mutilation Campaign in Kenya which aims to prevent the harmful cultural practice of female genital mutilation by educating communities. Or, lend a hand at the Nyumbani Village project for orphans.

Timor-Leste
Work with our Australian sisters in one of many education programs in local villages.

Australia
Apply your teaching, team-building, organisational, strategic planning or early childcare skills to early intervention projects based in rural Australia for Indigenous children, families and communities.
In 2012 I travelled to India and Nepal for one month. Teaching English in a developing country was something I wanted to do for a long time but I wanted to wait until I felt ready. This is my first piece of advice. There will never be an ‘ideal’ time to volunteer; in fact, there is never an ideal time to do anything. It was apparent from the get go that I wanted to volunteer for Mary Ward International Australia (MWIA). The program is different from other volunteer placements as the organisation links in with project partners so volunteers are encouraged to use their skills and abilities throughout their placement. The preparation is real and practical. I was told I couldn’t always buy tampons and that it is inappropriate to wear singlets in some areas. We also received an induction from locals upon our arrival; the information was practical and usable.

The thing about travelling to a place like India is that you prepare yourself for hypothetical situations that never happen or are not the things that faze you. I could warn you about a whole range of things but the thing you might miss most is Cadbury chocolate! I gained more and learned more about myself (like washing yourself with a bucket is much more satisfying than a normal shower), than what I could possibly give – and there is nothing wrong with that.

Being open, flexible, having a sense of humour and acknowledging that everything could go horribly wrong will put you in a position where you will smell, taste, feel and see everything these incredible places have to offer.

Your placement may go for a month but your experience will last a lifetime!

— Rebecca Smart, 2013
HOW TO APPLY

WHAT WE LOOK FOR

• A keen sense of social justice
• 20+ years of age
• Open-mindedness to cross-cultural experience
• Independence and maturity
• Acceptance of the fact that you may receive more than you give
• An openness to the mission of Loreto and MWIA

STEPS TO APPLY

1. Check out the MWIA website to familiarise yourself with our projects and ethos.
2. Download our Volunteer Application form from the website or contact us for a copy. Submit your application by post, fax or email. You will need a current resume, two character references and a valid Working with Children Check. Once MWIA has received your application we will contact you for an interview.
3. Come in for an interview. You will be asked to specify where and when you would like to volunteer so have a think about this before your interview. Also, it is good to nominate more than one country!
4. After your interview you will be notified if you are eligible for the MWIA volunteer program. From there, we will begin to organise your placement with the project partner in your nominated country.
5. Attend volunteer preparation sessions which help to get you ready for the experience.
6. Allow enough time! Selection and preparation takes roughly three months. This allows time for sharing knowledge and experiences during volunteer preparation and for getting ready for your placement.
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