

Call for Application

NRN-Canada Youth Internship Program 2011

NRN-Canada invites applications for an annual 'Youth Internship Program' starting June and ending no later than 25 July 2011. The internship program is designed to conduct a Nepal-based field research in the areas of environment, education, and health. Selected candidate will be awarded \$1500 for conducting the research. The award money will go towards defraying some parts of travel expense related to the internship program.

Youth internship program:

This year's internship program will be based in Kathmandu and Maintada VDC in Surkhet district, Nepal. NRN-Canada, in collaboration with Kathmandu-based Environment and Public Health Organization (ENPHO) and Environment Development Society, based in Surkhet, is currently developing a 'Model Village Development Initiative' geared towards working with the local community of Maintada for building sustainable education and health systems. The internship program will be an important research component of this initiative with the intent of providing relevant resources helpful for pushing the collaborative initiative forward. The selected candidate should spend a minimum of 2 weeks with Kathmandu-based ENPHO and supporting organizations and a minimum of 1 week in Mainitada VDC for field research. Upon completion of the project, the student should submit a 10 page (double space) report to NRN-Canada no later than 31 July, 2011. The student will be required to present his/her research findings at the national conference of NRN-Canada to be held in Ottawa on the 1st August 2011.

Award:

The size of the award is \$1500. The award money will go towards defraying some parts of the travel cost related to the internship program. Applicants should make arrangement to cover all other pertinent expenses.

How to apply:

Please submit a 500 words proposal along with an updated CV. In brief, the proposal should clearly outline research objective and methodology (e.g: survey) and how the research objective aligns with that of the Model Village Development Initiative and why the candidate is a best fit for the internship (e.g: academic background and prior work experience).

Please see below for background information on 'Model Village Development Initiative'.

Eligibility:

Students of Nepali heritage living in Canada and between the age of 18 and 30 can apply. We are following the government protocol, which recognizes individuals in this age group as youth.

Submission deadline:

20 June 2011. Submission should be made on-line to nrn.canada08@gmail.com

Subject of your email should be **NRN-Canada_YIP2011_LAST NAME_FIRST NAME**. Proposal must be submitted in MS-word or PDF format.

Background Information

Model Village Development Initiative and Youth Internship Program

Background and Rationale:

Having emerged out of a decade long bloody civil war, Nepal is a country at cross-roads- with number of dramatic changes in the most recent years and now facing the monumental task of writing a new Constitution as a federal republic that will vastly alter administrative and decision making structures and powers. While the country is said to be in transition at present, the long standing issues of widespread impoverishment, environmental degradation, impunity, and corruption; and need to fulfill basic rights of those on the margins remain as key challenges of this Himalayan state.

At the global scale, we have in recent years witnessed a number of crises- food crises; financial crises; ecological crises (global warming and climate change); and economic crises. Because of ever increasing interconnectedness and interdependences, such crises have affects at local levels and vice-versa. Analyses of such crises; and encouragement and enhancement of sustainable practices for the well-being of our planet and its dwellers, including the present and future generations of human beings; have become increasingly necessary. Because of its direct and indirect participation in the global system, both the possibilities of being vulnerable to the processes of global crises or realizing opportunities and benefits of sustainable global systems are real for Nepal.

Through sizable contribution of remittances to the Nepali economy; and solidarity support to the democratic and republican movements, an estimated 2.5 million strong Nepali Diaspora has increasingly become a significant contributor and partner in transforming Nepal's social, economic and political landscape. The Nepali Diaspora has been active in lobbying the politicians and policy-makers of Nepal for maintaining law and order, Nepali's overall socio-economic development, timely completion of the constitution writing process and arrangement for a dual citizenship policy that is win-win to both the Diaspora community and Nepal. The Diaspora community has also become active in Nepal through a number of investment and charity projects.

The people of Nepali heritage in Canada have been an important player in most of the abovementioned engagement with Nepal and will remain a key player in future as well. NRN-Canada, as the national council of individuals and community associations of Nepali descent in Canada, intends to build on these experiences, and is now ready to launch a new and unique initiative of model village development in Nepal.

This initiative will focus on bringing about positive changes at the grassroots level, mainly at village/community level- the smallest administrative unit in the country. The rationale is that in addition to engaging the highest level policy makers, lawmakers and bureaucrats and academia, the Diaspora community should not ignore engaging those who are considered to be at the lowest rung of the power, those who are marginalized in many respects, but ironically are key to the foundation of building Nepal and its future.

We have seen Diaspora charity projects that are focused on a single activity of supporting to build a school or a health post or a library or a bridge. These have been appreciated by the locals and the Nepal government alike. However, the model village development initiative intends to take this approach further, by encouraging an integrated and holistic community development through a deeper relationship between the local communities and the supporting (Diaspora community and friends of Nepal) communities overseas. The ultimate goal will be to help the local people develop sustainable local systems with viable social, economic and ecological foundations. For the Diaspora community in Canada, the initiative will serve as a bridge that will help connect our youth and children to their roots. The model is meant to have demonstrational positive effects to several other communities in the country and is expected to be replicable in the context of Nepal.

Strategies:

- Invite interested and passionate Nepali and non-Nepali individuals and organizations to become partners of this initiative, who may share financial and human resources, including life experiences with the partner communities in Nepal.

- Facilitate contacts with professionals and organizations in various parts of the world, including in Nepal, to become supporters of this initiative.
- In Nepal, a community/village that faces constraints and challenges due to marginalization in various aspects will become a target and partner community. An established and experienced local civil society group will become a facilitating partner that can offer logistical and professional support. Depending on needs and contexts, several other Nepali partner organizations, including relevant department/s of the government of Nepal and individuals will be important partners.
- The local community group will be in-charge of the process of defining their needs and related immediate and future decision-making in the context they live in.
- While efforts will be made for skills and experiences of the Diaspora community and friends of Nepal to be channeled to a community in coordinated and collaborative manner; they will be encouraged to learn from the challenges, coping strategies and wisdom of the communities in Nepal. Youth and children will be encouraged through volunteer opportunities and presentation of audio-visual media resources.
- We don't necessarily want to develop a blue-print of what the "model" will mean. Rather, the process will recognize that development is a complex process and things evolve as many internal and external variables within and outside the system interact over time. We also recognize the fact that the locals are the ones in-charge of their own destiny, while we as outsiders are expressing our solidarity to create and facilitate enabling environments as we walk through the journey of partnership.
- As point of entry, the initiative will explore level of awareness and access to health and education services, especially in the context of women and children. The process then evolves to further steps and activities.

Location:

Mainitada Village Development Committee in Surkhet district.

Partner Organizations in Nepal:

Environment and Public Health Organization (ENPHO), a Kathmandu-based internationally acclaimed non-governmental organization will provide technical expertise. Environment Development Society, a Surkhet-based civil society group, well-known in that district, will be the local partner. Regional Monitoring and Supervision Office of the Department of Drinking Water Supply and Sewerage, based in Surkhet, is willing to be a part of the initiative.

Internship:

The internship program, under the NRN-Canada Youth Initiative Project, will form a component of the model village project. The internship program is designed to meet the following three specific objectives: 1. preparation of a baseline survey documenting Mainitada's existing socio-economic and environmental conditions; 2. identification of possible areas needing suitable developmental interventions; and 3. recommendations succinctly outlining NRN-Canada's potential role in the intervention(s). At the end of the internship, the student is expected to produce a 10 page report that should address the aforementioned points as its findings providing rationale for suggested recommendations. The report should be submitted and presented at the next NRN Canada National Conference.

Applicant's eligibility:

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Award:

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