



FOUNDATION FOR  
**INTERCULTURAL &  
INTERRELIGIOUS**  
DIALOGUE INITIATIVES



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# INTERNSHIP & VOLUNTEER PLACEMENT GUIDE

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**Burkina Faso | Canada | Sierra Leone**



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## INTERNSHIP AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

FIIDI offers internships and volunteer placement opportunities for both local and international candidates from various academic and professional backgrounds, to support our work in Burkina Faso, Canada (locals only), and Sierra Leone. This is a particularly good opportunity for those seeking a future career in human rights, peacebuilding, or development to gain on-the-ground experience working for a locally based nonprofit or NGO. The internship or volunteer placement can span from 2 weeks to 12 months, depending on the intern or volunteer's preference, and in negotiation with FIIDI.

### Intern or Volunteer Projects

Internships and volunteer placements are typically located at FIIDI offices in Burkina Faso, Canada, and Sierra Leone. We accept interns for our [Legal Advocacy](#), [Study & Research](#), [Information & Documentation](#), [Peacebuilding & Human Rights Training](#), [Lifelong Skills Training & Teaching](#), [Arts \(drawing, painting, and acting\)](#), [Fundraising and Administration](#) etc. However, interns and volunteers are expected to participate in one or all the areas as they deem fit.

### The Local Experience

As an intern or volunteer, you will experience traditional life in the host country and participate in activities, such as working with the local people, learning the local language(s), enjoying the local dishes, teaching adults and children as well as outreach programs.

### Placement Work

Prior to your placement, we encourage you to let us know what your interests are and your level of experience in that field. This will enable us to plan your placement and make any necessary arrangements for the work. Your placement work will begin after the orientation. The type of work you are involved with will be dependent on your interests, abilities, level of experience as well as your comfort levels. One of the advantages of the organization is that you are not limited to one job role and will have the opportunity to involve in other roles during your placement. To become involved in another project simply inform a member of staff who will happily make any necessary arrangements.

### Work Schedule

Working hours are normally 6-8 hours a day. Time away from work e.g., for traveling to other parts of the host country can be arranged through informing the management. The minimum for placement is two (2) weeks. Upon arrival, there is an orientation session for new interns and volunteers to become acquainted with the local culture, language, and the project work. Further training and supervision are provided to new interns or volunteers who are interested in tasks for which they lack adequate experience. More experienced interns and volunteers are given direction but work under minimal supervision.

### Accommodation

While working at FIIDI, interns and volunteers can choose to stay at any hotel or guest house near their duty station or office in the host country. Please note that interns and volunteers will have to pay for their own accommodation and will endeavor to keep their belongings safe.



## Food And Water

All meals are provided by the intern or volunteer. The main staples of the diet are rice, potatoes, cabbage, and bread etc. Fresh fruits and vegetables are readily available and are inexpensive to purchase. There are always restaurants available in the communities where our offices are located for meat-based or western-style meals (such as french fries/hot chips). The water used by our offices is mostly from a running/tap water. Bottled water is also available in local shops and supermarkets.

## Clothing

With regards to clothing, keep in mind that the local area in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone is sometimes dusty and is often hot and dry, even in rainy season. Interns and volunteers should anticipate that clothes and footwear will become dirty quickly so we suggest durable outdoors clothes that will last your placement. Of course, in your accommodation or community there should be facilities to wash clothes and shoes as regularly as you wish.

Some suggested hints for clothes are:

- ✚ As our offices are in conservative areas, all interns and volunteers should bring at least one pair of long pants or skirt as well as a shirt that covers your shoulders otherwise acceptable clothing includes singlet and knee-length skirts/shorts. Interns and volunteers should understand that very short skirts and skimpy clothing will attract attention and we particularly advise that female interns or volunteers limit the wear of bikini tops, halter necks, midriff tops, and short skirts. However, we also advice that male interns or volunteers wear a shirt (i.e., not topless) and wear knee length shorts.
- ✚ At least two pair of shoes, including one pair of comfortable covered shoes or trainers and one pair of sandals or flip-flops.
- ✚ Sunhat to prevent sunburn (particularly for interns and volunteers unused to strong sunlight).
- ✚ During rainy season, the nights and mornings can get cool. We suggest that interns and volunteers bring light jumpers or pullovers to layer clothing (rather than thick jumpers etc.).

In all the above, we expect interns and volunteers to always dress well (official) during working hours.

## Cost and Payment

Interns and volunteers are required to commit a small monthly fee that caters for expenses of daily office facilities, and support for our projects. This is payable before arrival in the host country, and you can wire the money directly to our bank account or through Western Union, Ria, and money gram.

Please inquire directly about the internship program costs. We usually ask that interns and volunteers pay for the total cost of their placement before arrival in the host country. For placements longer than three months, we can accept payment in installments (please ask for further details). The preferred methods of payment are western union/money gram, ria or bank transfer (payable before arrival).



## **VISA**

We recommend interns and volunteers to get tourist visas to come to Burkina Faso or Sierra Leone. This normally is a renewable VISA and can easily be purchased upon arrival (with cash) at the airport for between US\$15-50 or in advance from a Burkinabe or Sierra Leonean consulates in most countries.

## **Airport Transfers and Orientation**

Upon arrival at the host country's International Airport, you will proceed through immigration and customs officials. One of our staff will be waiting for you outside the arrival's hall. Look for a sign with your name on it. Beware of other people pursuing to sell you a ride. Our staff will accompany you to your accommodation the same day. We can assist with arranging accommodation.

If you are arriving via other transportation (such as land or sea) please contact us so we can make the necessary arrangements to meet with you.

Upon arrival at the office, we provide you with an orientation to enable you to become acquainted with the local culture, language, and the office. This orientation will include meeting staff at the office, a tour of the local area, discussion of the intern or volunteer role, recent changes in FIIDI and current plans or developments at the office, etc. On departure, intern or volunteer will be accompanied by FIIDI staff to the airport.

## **ACCESS TO FACILITIES**

### **Electricity, Banks and Supermarkets**

Our offices have electricity supply, so you can charge electrical items, such as laptops, phones, cameras etc. In the communities where our offices are located, you can purchase basic supplies. Around our offices, interns and volunteers will be able to access banks and money transfer outlets to receive and change money. Also, there are supermarkets where you can purchase most supplies, such as shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, various food items, and moisturizers.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone are GSM and there is excellent reception available in the local areas we operate. If you bring a mobile phone from your home country or an international phone, provided you are permitted by your service provider, GSM-enabled phones will work on any of the available networks. Also, it is possible to purchase sim cards for a GSM mobile phone when you arrive in Burkina Faso or Sierra Leone, or even purchase a mobile phone relatively easily.



## **Health, Insurance and Vaccination**

It is recommended you have travelers' health insurance when you leave your country. In case of illness or any emergency, there are hospitals located ten to twenty minutes' drive from our offices in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone. Medicines are readily available at pharmacies in the areas we operate, however it is advisable that interns and volunteers bring their own first aid kit, and any prescribed medication. Basic medications such as paracetamol and for upset stomachs are available, as are basic first aid kit such as band aids, cotton buds and wipes.

## **WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN EXPECT**

### **Prior to your Arrival**

Prior to departing your home country, staff of FIIDI will be available on email and via phone (if you prefer) to discuss your placement at the office. Once you have been approved for placement with FIIDI, you are sent an official acceptance letter, which gives you a go-ahead to book your flight that brings you to this part of Africa!

### **During your Stay**

There are staff members at the office to support and assist you. They assist with the administration and managing the day-to-day activities of the organization. They are available to answer questions, act as a local guide and ensure that you settle into the organization/office and way of life. Interns and volunteers can also expect a weekly visit from a staff of FIIDI. This staff will be able to provide information, support, and assistance if required and to resolve any issues that may arise. This staff will be available via phone and email at any time during your stay. We will provide you with work that is suitable for your level of ability, experience and meets your interests. Should you have any requests, queries or issues regarding your workload please let us know.

## **WHAT WE EXPECT OF VOLUNTEERS**

### **Your role as an Intern or Volunteer**

As an Intern or volunteer, we encourage you to actively participate in the daily activities of the organization such as project writing, program development, program implementation, teaching, fieldwork, etc. We also encourage you to utilize your skills to assist in improving the programs and staff. For instance, interns and volunteers who are good at project writing are encouraged to work with the staff at post on this.

### **Attitude**

It is important for interns and volunteers to understand that the culture in Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone may be quite different to what they may be accustomed to. Therefore, interns and volunteers should bring with them an easy-going, open-minded, and relaxed attitude. The



Burkinabe and Sierra Leonean people are very friendly and social. While we will endeavour to maintain a daily routine, interns and volunteers should understand that things move slowly in Africa. Relax and enjoy the slow pace. Remember that life here is not as organized and predictable as life in developed countries. Although work can be very busy and active, at other times work is determined by number of factors including weather, availability of resources, whether a relevant contact has turned up, cultural activities etc.

## Responsibilities

FIIDI expects the following of interns and volunteers:

- ✚ To be punctual at work.
- ✚ To keep your valuables safe – if required, we can provide a secure place for items such as passports.
- ✚ To tidy up your office/desk – staff can assist if required.
- ✚ To dress appropriately, even outside the office premises.
- ✚ To display appropriate behavior. Remember you are representing both your country and FIIDI.

## Other

Other items interns and volunteers may find useful during their time in Burkina Faso or Sierra Leone include:

- ✚ Burkina Faso or Sierra Leone travel book.
- ✚ Photos of your family, friends, pets, home, etc. to show your colleagues.
- ✚ Pictures/books of your home country.
- ✚ Favorite food recipes to share your culture with colleagues.
- ✚ Favorite movies and CDs.

## For the office

If possible, we would love for you to bring some supplies for the office! Anything that you can bring would be greatly appreciated but below is a guide! Many of these items are essential in our daily activities and would promote the work of the organization.

- ✚ **Laptops**
- ✚ **Flash drives**
- ✚ **Digital cameras**
- ✚ **Video cameras**
- ✚ **Printers & Photocopiers**
- ✚ **Cell phones**
- ✚ **Stationeries (pens, pencils, papers etc.)**



If you are interested in bringing some of the above items for our office use, please let us know. We are reliant on donations for many of these items that often have a short lifespan and would be grateful if you could assist.

We hope to hear from you soon.

For further information please contact us below.

[www.fiidi.org](http://www.fiidi.org) | [info@fiidi.org](mailto:info@fiidi.org) | [fiidi.canada@gmail.com](mailto:fiidi.canada@gmail.com)