Summer Internship 2020
Application Handbook

Why become a summer intern?

Gain international experience.
Learn another language.
Improve your leadership abilities.
Learn about another culture and its customs.
Apply your passions, skills and knowledge.
Learn about yourself and others by living and working together.
Gain hands-on experience in community development.
Immerse yourself in another culture.
Surround yourself with interesting people.
Use your passion to impact a community.
Change your life...
Change someone else’s!
“The internship allowed me to grow personally and discover my passions and abilities. It helped me decide the type of work I aim to do in the future and opened my eyes to relationships in the community that MPI has formed and the trust and time that went into them.”

- Caroline, Nicaragua Summer Intern

“The work that [Manna Project is] doing here is truly meaningful to the communities that we are reaching out to, and its logical and sustainable nature works to comprise an operation that is not only beneficial to the communities, but rewarding for the volunteers as well.”

- Sofie, Ecuador Summer Intern

I. What is Manna Project?
Manna Project International (MPI) connects college students, recent graduates and young professionals with international opportunities where they can apply their passions, experience, and education. Our mission is to foster communities of talented young leaders to become the next generation of social change agents by engaging in collaborative, on-the-ground service with international communities in need. MPI's model is a collaborative community-based approach to development and is founded on three organizational pillars:

- **Holistic Approach:** MPI's holistic approach to development recognizes that the challenges faced by the communities we serve are multi-faceted and must therefore be
addressed through a variety of disciplines.

- **Community Focus:** By focusing on a specific community, we are able to effectively pursue holistic development through the vital foundation of building relationships and trust with community members.

- **Leadership Development:** Investing in the personal and professional development of MPI's Program Directors is a core element of our organizational structure. Program Directors on the ground are supported and trained while simultaneously receiving a large amount of responsibility and autonomy, providing them with the opportunity to learn through both firsthand experience and the mentorship of established development professionals.

MPI builds community to serve communities through a wide range of initiatives. We take a grassroots approach to development, assessing a community's needs through relationships, community feedback, and data collection before responding with targeted, specific actions designed to effectively meet established needs. By working hand-in-hand with locals and other international organizations, we are able to raise awareness of community needs and attract student and graduate volunteers seeking to pursue a specific call to service. Our volunteers receive first-hand exposure to the global issues that match their interests and further individual career paths.

The luxuries of growing up in a country of high standards of peace, justice, liberty, and prosperity inhibits some Americans from realizing the uniqueness of their lifestyle. Although many college students across the country are informed of the social realities of foreign countries, most have not had the opportunity to leave the confines of national borders to experience life in another culture. International opportunities bring students in
contact with global issues, allowing them to identify with foreign cultures and gain perspective into their own lives. MPI participants broaden their horizons through first-hand contact with a foreign culture and gain valuable work experience by leading community development programs in areas of their education and career interests.

II. A Brief History
Manna Project International was started by a group of four Vanderbilt University students who wanted to harness the creative energy of college students and recent graduates to work with populations in need. As interest grew, they established an on-campus service organization to bring the university campus into greater contact with the local immigrant community, and to provide international service opportunities for students.

MPI Nicaragua
After visiting Nicaragua several times and making connections with others on the ground, the four friends established Manna Project International as an IRS-recognized nonprofit organization, and began recruiting other college graduates to commit to working in Managua for one year. In September 2004, MPI's first group of eleven recent graduates arrived in Managua. The experiences and friendships from that first year of service forever changed their perspectives and outlooks on life. As the year drew to a close, students from the next class of graduating seniors arrived to transition into the community and the Program Director position was born. While the faces have changed, MPI's Nicaragua site now reaches more than 3,800 people through 12 programs and two health clinics, serving the communities of Cedro Galán, Chiquilistagua and Villa Guadalupe. *As of August 2019, due to violent civil unrest, our Nicaragua site is closed until it is safe to return.
MPI Ecuador
In September 2007, Manna Project’s second international site was launched in Ecuador, one hour outside the capital of Quito. MPI Ecuador started as an after-school program for over 30 children in the small, high-needs community of San Francisco, and was operated in partnership with another non-profit. The first Ecuador group worked closely with a local financial cooperative to better understand the circumstances and prevalent needs in the community and its surrounding areas. After a year of research and relationship building, MPI leadership made plans to open a community center and library in nearby Rumiloma. In March 2009, the center opened. Today it is a vibrant gathering place and serves more than 1,100 community members through 18 programs and partner initiatives.

III. Vision
MPI seeks college students and recent college graduates to design and implement development programs in our partner communities in Latin America. Domestically, MPI serves through college Campus Chapters, University Partners and Alumni. These stateside participants complement MPI’s international initiatives by raising awareness and support while working toward similar goals in their local communities. Internationally, MPI offers three types of opportunities.

- **Program Directors** serve for 3-13 months and are responsible for the long-term growth and sustainability of the organization and its programs.
- **Summer Interns** work under the guidance of Program Directors at each site for five or ten-week terms, helping run daily programs while developing new initiatives.
- **Spring Break Groups** of six to twelve students spend one week at one of MPI’s international sites, completing a project of their choice.
MPI directs its efforts towards communities in need: communities with inadequate access to basic educational, medical, and livelihood resources. MPI aims for a holistic approach to community development, working with people of all ages in various aspects of their lives. This broad approach enables our volunteers, who come to MPI with diverse career paths and skills, to work together and provide each target community with the resources to serve its specific needs. Not sure what it means to take a holistic approach? Here's an example. If a community's healthcare needs are not being met, a linear approach would be to build a health clinic. A holistic approach might involve:

- Community-wide preventative health education
- Nutrition classes and lessons in healthy cooking
- Access to medical check ups and procedures
- Recreational activities that increase physical and mental health

Ways To Partner with MPI

**International Involvement**

- Work with fellow members of the international team to design and implement community development programs
- Create opportunities for growth and education in our partner communities
- Broaden your understanding of current global issues
- Define your personal career goals
- Focus on your professional development through hands-on experience

**Domestic Involvement**

- Establish MPI chapters in U.S. universities and colleges
• Build bridges between universities and communities
• Engage with current students and faculty through local service opportunities
• Take part in short-term international development opportunities
• Encourage community programming events

Partner Organizations
• Network with international organizations on behalf of MPI
• Assist in supporting and sustaining the efforts of partner organizations also working with MPI’s partner communities

IV. The Role of an MPI Summer Intern

Developing Programs and Facilities
Interns serve an important role in MPI’s programs and make a lasting impact in the communities in which we operate. MPI works to match your interests with our programs on the ground, and we welcome you to submit specific ideas for work projects based on your passions and skills.

The Intern Experience
Working as a summer intern can be a life changing experience. MPI encourages interns to challenge themselves and to take the opportunity to step outside the box in order to gain a full and rewarding experience. On the ground, summer interns are hosted by a team of full-time Program Directors. The internship program provides college-age students a glimpse of what a full term of service looks like for those who are considering applying for Program Director positions after graduation. Since interns and Program Directors live,
work, and spend down time together, the MPI model brings together like-minded individuals to learn from one another both professionally and personally.

Raising Awareness
Spending time in the developing world is a privilege that few people have the opportunity to experience. MPI interns act as a window into this work for our friends and donors. Through presentations, blogging, and simple storytelling, interns raise awareness of MPI's mission and the global inequities it challenges.

V. 2020 Summer Intern Timeline
MPI's Summer Internship Program offers two, five-week sessions as well as an ten-week option for selected interns. Interns must arrive and depart on the specified dates for each session.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 15, 2019</td>
<td>Applications Due</td>
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<td>January 25, 2020</td>
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<td>March 25, 2020</td>
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<tr>
<td>Two weeks after deadline</td>
<td>Notification of Acceptance</td>
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<td>Two weeks after acceptance</td>
<td>Contract and $250 Deposit Due</td>
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<td>One week prior to arrival</td>
<td>Full Payment Due</td>
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<td>May 23, 2020</td>
<td>Session 1 Arrival Date</td>
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<td>June 27, 2020</td>
<td>Session 1 Departure Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 28, 2020</td>
<td>Session 2 Arrival Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2, 2020</td>
<td>Session 2 Departure Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 23, 2020</td>
<td>Ten-week Term Arrival Date</td>
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<tr>
<td>August 2, 2020</td>
<td>Ten-week Term Departure Date</td>
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VI. Current MPI Programs
At each of our sites, MPI runs both short- and long-term programs and projects. The diversity in our projects requires different degrees of proactivity, creativity, and flexibility, providing you the unique opportunity to expand and build upon your leadership skills. You will learn to research, design, and implement projects, and will undoubtedly experience both the challenges and rewards of community development. Working with MPI requires that you be flexible, patient, creative, and proactive in problem solving, as well as a self-starter. If these traits describe you, you are perfect for this job. A full list of programs and partnerships can be found on our website.

VII. Safety and the MPI House
The MPI House
Summer interns live in the MPI house with our Program Directors, which provides a comfortable place to coordinate projects and to discuss and reflect on experiences. In Ecuador, interns need only walk outside to pick lemons, coconuts and avocados from the yard. Interns have use a shared laptop computer and in-house wifi. In addition, several Internet cafés operate within walking distance of the house for checking email and to make inexpensive international phone calls. Summer interns attend weekly meetings to discuss current programs, gain insight into the operational structure of MPI, and learn about community development through a series of discussions including cultural context, development approaches, and the history of MPI. Interns take an active role in decision-making, and are expected to take initiative in planning and preparing for each program with the guidance of the Program Directors.
Safety and Security
Petty theft is a common occurrence. Security is a priority in MPI's houses and in our partner communities, and we take a great deal of precaution in order to avoid theft. We recommend that interns think carefully about which valuables they choose to bring. In Ecuador, we ask interns to refrain from bringing laptop computers for their one-month stay, as there is ample access to Internet in the house through the shared computer.

Background Checks
To protect the safety and security of our volunteers and the communities we serve, MPI requires all volunteers to complete a criminal background check (paid for by MPI) prior to serving with the organization. An arrest or criminal conviction will not automatically prohibit an individual from volunteering with MPI, but will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

VIII. Expectations and Responsibilities

Attitude and Personal Presentation
Every intern's actions and words reflect on our home country and on our organization. Interns are expected to be positive, open-minded, flexible, culturally sensitive, enthusiastic and open to new activities, foods, and experiences. Interns are encouraged to make every effort to be respectful of others' beliefs and values, whether community members or other MPI staff.

Lifestyle Habits
MPI participants must abide by all local laws. Additionally, volatile habits such as drug use and excessive drinking are prohibited while working for MPI. The organization has the authority to terminate an intern's contract, without refund, if he or she does not abide by or is suspected of not abiding by the zero drug or excessive drinking policy. Please note that due to the nature of MPI's structure, the lines between work life and personal life are
often blurred. For this reason, lifestyle habits such as drug use and excessive drinking not only impact home and work relationships, but they also harm the reputation that hundreds of MPI volunteers have worked to establish. We ask that you take these points into consideration before applying for an internship.

**Couples**

Couples are welcome to apply as summer interns, though they are expected to sleep in gender divided rooms.

**IX. Financial Obligations**

MPI's Summer Internship costs $2100 per five-week session per volunteer. This fee covers all necessary expenses including room, board, on-the-ground transportation, weekend retreats, cultural excursions, and international travel emergency insurance. It does not cover “luxury” or special food preferences, though it does cover specific foods for allergies or vegetarians. Flights are not included.

**Fundraising**

Many interns raise funds for both program expenses and travel by sending letters to friends and family or hosting fundraising events in their hometowns or universities. Although it can be difficult to ask for financial support, friends and family often find it a privilege to support the MPI experience. If personal contributions amount to more than the required amount for your stay, you may choose to designate them to a particular community program or to MPI's general fund. For a template fundraising letter and more information about how we process donations, please email summer@mannaproject.org.

Interns will be regularly updated on fundraising progress. All donations to your summer expenses should be addressed to Manna Project International and clearly marked with your name. All donations should be mailed directly by the donor to:
X. Apply

1) Complete MPI's Summer Internship Application, available on our website. Specify your site, program, and session preferences, and please be prepared to write a one page personal statement addressing your professional goals, commitment to service, community focus, holistic development, and interest in living and working abroad.

2) Submit one letter of recommendation, in PDF format, to summer@mannaproject.org.

3) Submit your resume, in PDF format, to summer@mannaproject.org.

We look forward to receiving your application.
From everyone at Manna Project International, thank you!