

Team Rwanda - Frequently Asked Questions

Skills and experience

Do I need specific skills for this project?

We are looking for students that meet the [Team Member Skills and Attributes](#) (see yellow box). Many of these skills are transferable so can be from a mix of experiences including studying, volunteering, sports, roles with responsibility, hobbies etc.

Does it matter if I have never been overseas before?

For Team Members the answer is no. We are looking for students that meet the required skills and attributes (see links above). Your skills, knowledge and experience do not have to come from volunteering overseas, there may be other examples you can use to demonstrate how you meet these criteria. You may have developed these skills through project work on your course, volunteering or other extra-curricular activity, or simply from life experience!

Team Rwanda volunteers

Will we volunteer alongside Rwandan student volunteers?

Yes! The team will be made up of up to 14 Team Members from The University of Manchester and up to eight student volunteers from Rwanda. Volunteers will work in small sub-teams on their project, with a mix of UK and Rwandan volunteers in each team.

Key dates and time commitment

What are the dates and are they compulsory?

Please see [here](#) for a list of the key dates. All the dates are **compulsory** including all training dates. All student volunteers must be available for the whole trip and will travel to and from Rwanda on pre-booked flights.

What is the time commitment?

Before the trip you will be asked to attend all the compulsory training sessions and undertake some pre-departure preparation in your own time including for example arranging your vaccinations and fundraising, which will take on average a couple of hours per week.

Volunteers will also be asked to undertake some project preparation, for example project planning or sourcing resources.

What if I might have exam re-sits in the summer?

The return flights are scheduled to land in Manchester on the Sunday before the University re-sit period begins. If you think that you might have to re-sit exams, please speak to us.

What if I am in full-time employment at the time of the trip?

Volunteers must not be on the payroll of an employer at the time of the trip and therefore cannot take part in the project whilst on annual leave from an employer. If you think this may affect you, please let us know.

Eligibility

Am I eligible?

Please check your eligibility for Team Member positions against the criteria listed [here](#).

What can I do if I am not eligible?

We are also advertising opportunities with our [Trusted Partners](#), and have information on [‘finding your own’](#) overseas volunteering opportunity.

What if I am taking a sandwich or gap year?

All Team Rwanda Team Member volunteers must be registered students at the time of the trip. If you are unsure, please check with your Academic School.

Volunteer support

What support is in place?

Prior to the trip, you will be supported by the Volunteering Team. We will provide compulsory training on the work of Azizi Life, volunteering in Rwanda, cultural awareness, staying safe and well whilst abroad, and project preparation. We book the flights and organise volunteers' visas. We also provide support with pre-departure tasks such as organising your vaccinations and fundraising. You will also receive support with pre-departure preparation and fundraising.

Once in Rwanda you will have an in-country orientation where you will learn more about the local culture and customs, meet your Rwandan counterpart volunteers, and prepare to put your projects into action. Azizi Life will provide project logistical and day-to-day support and a staff member from the University of Manchester will provide practical and pastoral support. You will have people to turn to with your questions and if you have any support needs whilst in Rwanda. We will also have staff in the UK who are on call during the trip.

What if I have a health condition or other support needs?

Please contact us on volunteers@manchester.ac.uk to discuss your support needs in confidence. We will assess whether any reasonable adjustments can be made during the

project to accommodate your needs. We will always do everything we can to ensure this is possible, in line with Equal Opportunities legislation. Due to the nature of the opportunity, there may be some limits to the adjustments that can be made and if this is the case, we will discuss this with you individually and confidentially.

Travel arrangements

Do I need to book a flight / organise a visa?

The Volunteering Team will book groups flights and support you in applying for a visa (if needed). Your passport must be valid 6 months after the date of entry. Volunteers must check they are eligible for a visa for Rwanda (most UK and EU nationals will be).

What if I don't have a passport?

If you are selected for the project and don't have a passport you should let us know and apply for one straight away.

Will I need vaccinations?

Yes. You will need up to date vaccinations for certain vaccinations recommended for the trip. What you need will depend on health advice at the time (for example Diphtheria, Tetanus and Polio, Hepatitis A, Typhoid, and Meningitis ACWY). We will organise appointments for all volunteers with the University's Occupational Health and the costs will be covered.

Is travel insurance in place?

Yes. All volunteers will be covered under the University's travel Insurance policy for project related travel and activity. All volunteers will be fully briefed on the policy prior to the trip, including which leisure activities are covered.

Can I stay after the trip or make my own way to / from Rwanda?

All student volunteers must travel to and from Rwanda on the pre-booked flights as a group. The flights are to and from Heathrow Airport.

What if I am out of the country on the day before departure?

We ask that you are in the UK at least 48 hours before departure and able to travel to the airport with plenty of time. We will have a pre-departure meeting the day before (in Manchester for those students in Manchester, online for those who are not), and you will be required to undertake any last-minute preparations. If you have other travel plans close to the departure or return date, please speak to us.

Costs

How much will it cost?

The project is fully funded by the University. A breakdown of costs covered on the project can be found [here](#). You will need some spending money for the duration of the trip, including money for the meals that are not included (some are) and leisure time activities. It is possible to spend very little in Rwanda as costs for food, travel and internet are relatively low. How much money you need will depend on what you do in your spare time. For example, whilst eating out is relatively cheap compared to in the UK, it can be even cheaper to cook at the guest house or eat local food. If you plan to do some activities in your leisure time, then you will need more spending money.

Will I have to fundraise and if so, how much and what will it be spent on?

All Team Members will be asked to fundraise a target of £400 prior to the trip. The funds will contribute towards the development of Azizi Life's projects, how this is spent will be decided each year based on the charity's needs. Training and support will be provided.

How is the project funded?

The project is kindly funded by alumni and friends of the University of Manchester as well as some Turing Funding. We work hard with our partner organisation to keep the costs down and ensure that the money spent goes directly on project costs including flights, vaccinations, accommodation, food, staff support in Rwanda, and project activity costs (for example the resources required to complete the projects). We also consider the impact that the project will have and the value for money in terms of investing this money into the volunteering project and the long-term impact for Azizi Life.

Health and Safety

What about health and safety?

The University takes the health and safety of students travelling overseas on university projects very seriously. This project has been planned with careful consideration of the health and safety of student volunteers and the safety and security situation is closely monitored. At the time of writing the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office considers it safe to travel to Rwanda. Thorough project risk assessments are made and are kept under regular review, travel advice is monitored, and should any situation occur, that might impact on safety during the project this will be seriously considered, and any necessary changes made.

Selected student volunteers are responsible for their health and safety whilst on the project. All volunteers will undertake their own personal risk assessment and manage the risks posed when travelling generally and in Rwanda. The University has emergency procedures in place should an emergency occur whilst the volunteer team are travelling to / from Rwanda or in-country.

In Rwanda

What is the country and culture like?

Rwanda is one of the smallest countries in Africa with sprawling savanna in the east and mountainous jungle in the west. It is a country known for its breathtaking scenery, often referred to as 'the land of a thousand hills' and for being home to endangered mountain gorillas in the bamboo forests of the mountains. The capital city Kigali is bustling and cosmopolitan, whilst in the rural areas you will find large swathes of land occupied by communities, agriculture and terraced farming. It is a beautiful, vibrant, peaceful country, and very safe and welcoming.

What can volunteers do in their leisure time?

Volunteers will have some time off in the evenings and two days off each week to relax, recuperate and enjoy Rwanda. The project is in a small town a few hours' drive from the capital Kigali. Volunteers will be able to explore and shop in the local markets, eat in local cafés / restaurants, cook in the guesthouse and play games. Travelling a little further afield you can visit other cities and various cultural attractions including the Genocide memorial in Kigali.

Application process

How do I apply?

Please see '[how to apply](#)'.

How competitive is it to get a place on the project?

We expect to get a good number of applications, but don't let this put you off applying! Each year almost every applicant has a very good chance of getting a place, and for those who don't we can offer support in finding alternative opportunities. If you are eligible and you think you have got what it takes, we will welcome an application from you!

How are the volunteers selected?

For Team Members we take applications and then shortlist straight to the selection day. The selection day will involve interactive activities and short interviews. This will help us to establish who best meets the skills and attributes that we are looking for.

Any other questions?

If you have any more queries, please contact us on volunteers@manchester.ac.uk

We hope this was useful and if you apply good luck!