

Volunteer with Disabled Children and Adults



Highlights

- Providing support and attention to a group of people who are often forgotten about by Peruvian society.
- Getting involved in a variety of activities from teaching, to assisting with physical therapy.
- Living and volunteering in Cusco – gateway to Machu Picchu!

About The Project

We are working with two centers that provide assistance to children and adults with mental and physical disabilities. Unfortunately, in Peru, as in many other developing countries, people with such illnesses are often forgotten about as their families do not have the resources or knowledge to provide the care that is needed. The staff at these organizations work hard to allow these people to become integrated into society.

Volunteer Role

The first Monday at the Academia is an orientation day. All new students and volunteers go on a city tour of Cusco to get to know the city and learn how to get around and use the public transport system. In the afternoon there's an information session in which you will learn about the Academia, as well as about important issues such as security, do's and don'ts in Cusco, accommodation, volunteer work etc. Your volunteer placement commences on Tuesday of the first week.



One of the centers cares solely for children, and here, one of the most important activities taking place is education and vocational workshops. You will assist in these classes and by providing the children with new skills, it will improve their future prospects by enabling them to earn money through employment. Without the help of the project, this would be impossible for these children as there is very little alternative help available to them.

The second center cares for around 80 children and adults who are living with conditions such as Downs Syndrome, autism and multiple disabilities. The institution does not receive any government support and is sustained solely through the dedication of the staff, and from donations from the public and from volunteers. Help is needed with the following activities:

- Taking the patients for walks
- Assisting medical staff with therapy, exercise and rehabilitation
- Helping with feeding at meal times

- Cooking and cleaning
- Working in the vegetable garden

You will usually work either in the mornings or the afternoons, but any extra time you can dedicate to the projects will be appreciated. You will have weekends free to spend as you wish.

Location



One of the centers is a 30 minute bus ride from the Academia in Cusco, the other is a 20 minute walk.

The city of Cusco sits perched amidst the clouds and the lush Andean greenery at 3300 meters above sea level. Due to the high elevation, it is cool at night, and sunny but cool during the day all year-round - this can be a great excuse to seek out the many markets selling the beautiful wool sweaters and textiles for which the country is renowned!

It's undoubtedly the archaeological capital of the Americas, as the gateway to Machu Picchu, and as such, is an exciting place to spend an extended period of time. Not only is it surrounded by beautiful Incan ruins, but you will be living in the hustle and bustle of a tourist city that still manages to retain many of its traditional ways of life. The narrow cobblestoned streets are lined with imposing Inca-built walls, and the plazas are thronged with Quechua-speaking descendants of the Incas.

Since Cusco is such an important tourist destination, it's no surprise to hear that there is a huge wealth of cafes, restaurants, bars and nightclubs to keep you entertained - a fun and varied social life is guaranteed in Cusco! Shopping is also another favorite past time amongst volunteers and students in Cusco, with some of the best places to pick up jewellery, leather crafts, textiles, woollen sweaters, musical instruments and other artisan products.

Accommodation

You will stay either at the student residence or with a host family. Host family accommodation includes a private room, breakfast, dinner and laundry service. Singles, married couples and parents with children can all be accommodated. It is also possible to stay in a student residence – one is located within the school grounds, and there are two very nearby. Here you will self cater - there are shops and markets very nearby and a fully equipped kitchen.

Requirements

Volunteers must be able to commit to at least 4 weeks at the project in order to build up a trusting relationship with the children and staff.

All volunteers must hold a high intermediate level of spoken Spanish. If your Spanish is at a lower level, you must join our Spanish language school prior to commencing your volunteer work.

When choosing to volunteer in a developing country such as Peru, it is important to remain flexible as the needs of the project are constantly evolving. This is what makes volunteering so rewarding – the fact that you are on hand to lend your support when and where it is needed. By choosing Academia Latinoamericana de Español you will

have a comprehensive safety network behind you as we are here to help throughout the duration of your entire stay!

Feedback

"I had a fantastic experience at the project. I am a therapist at home, and began working with a little girl who was unable to walk. After three months of therapy I got her back up onto her feet again – it was such a happy time. I feel lucky to have gained further experience and know that I have made a real difference to her life."

Angelica Dorman, USA

Programme Fee Includes

- Accommodation
- 2 meals per day if staying with a host family
- Project Support
- A donation that goes directly to your project
- Orientation and city tour
- Pre-departure information
- Laundry service if staying with a host family
- 24 hour emergency support

Programme Fee Does Not Include

- International flights
- Meals if staying at the student residence
- Laundry service if staying at the student residence
- Visas
- Travel Insurance
- Inoculations
- Excursions over and above the itinerary

Travel Ideas

At our office we are fully equipped to help you with making weekend travel arrangements, and onwards travel arrangements following your time in Cusco. We work with the best tour companies to offer safe, reliable and competitively priced trips. Some of the most popular excursions include:

- In and Around Cusco – at the weekends there are plenty of sights for you to explore in and around Cusco. There's the beautiful Chinchero Plaza, possibly the original Incan marketplace. Ollantaytambo fortress, where the Inca fought their last battle with the Spanish invaders. Pisac Indian market – one of the most well-known markets in the country, selling everything from textiles and paintings to vegetables and animals!
- Machu Picchu – No visit to Cusco is complete without seeing the enchanting and dramatic Incan citadel of Machu Picchu. The most famous route is via the multi-day Inca Trail route, however, there are plenty of alternative routes that also culminate in Machu Picchu, including a scenic train journey!
- Nazca Lines – A great mystery of South America. Take a flight across the stony plains of Pampa de San Jose and see for yourself the incredible animal-shaped and geometric etchings.
- The Amazon – Swing in hammocks, swim with pink river dolphins, spot exotic wildlife and pretend to be Tarzan! The ultimate Peruvian adventure!
- Lake Titicaca – South America's largest Lake which borders Peru and Bolivia. Stay on one of the floating islands for a true insight into the lifestyle and culture of the local communities.

Apply Now

If you have some further questions about this project, please feel free to contact us at sandra@latinoschools.ec

If you would like to book this programme, please [click here](#) to complete the booking form. We will be in touch within one week of application to confirm your booking!