

# CONSCIENCE INTERNATIONAL (CI)

## INTERN AND VOLUNTEER GUIDE

### Internship Opportunities

Conscience International (CI) offers an internship programme for young professionals and those studying at, or recently graduated from University. The aims of the internships are to develop the next cohort of policy researchers and activists, and to equip them with the research and professional skills necessary to develop their careers. The internship can span from 2 weeks to 12 months, depending on the intern's preference, and in negotiation with CI.

### Intern projects

Internship placements are typically located at CI offices in The Gambia and Sierra Leone. We accept interns for our **Legal Advocacy, Study & Research, Information & Documentation, Peace Building & Human Rights Trainings, Fundraising and Administration** etc. However, interns are expected to participate in one or all of the areas as they deem fit.

### The Local Experience

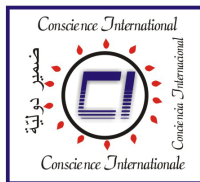
As an intern, you will experience traditional Gambian or Sierra Leonean life and participate in activities, such as working with the local people, learning the local language(s), enjoying the local dishes, teaching adults as well as outreach programs.

### 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 7-9 hours a day. Time away from work e.g. for traveling to other parts of The Gambia or Sierra Leone 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 to become acquainted with



the local culture, language and the project work. Further training and supervision is provided to new interns who are interested in tasks for which they lack adequate experience. More experienced interns are given direction, but work under minimal supervision.

## **Accommodation**

While working at CI, interns can choose to stay at any hotel or guest house in the Kombo Area of The Gambia or The Western Area (Freetown) of Sierra Leone. Please note that interns 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. 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 Kombo Area of The Gambia and Freetown of Sierra Leone for meat-based or western-style meals (such as French fries/hot chips). The water used by our offices in The Gambia and Sierra Leone is 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 is sometimes dusty and is often hot and dry, even in rainy season. Interns 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 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 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 should understand that very short skirts and skimpy clothing will attract attention and we particularly advise that women interns limit the wear of bikini tops, halter necks, midriff tops and short skirts. However we also advice that male interns 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 unused to strong sunlight).



- During rainy season, the nights and mornings can get cool. We suggest that interns bring light jumpers or pullovers to layer clothing (rather than thick jumpers etc).

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

## **Cost and Payment**

Interns are required to commit a small fee that caters for expenses of daily office facilities, and support for our projects. This is payable before arrival in The Gambia or Sierra Leone and you can wire the money directly to our bank account or through Western Union and or money gram. Kindly inquire directly about the Internship program costs.

Please inquire directly about the internship program costs. We usually ask that interns pay for the total cost of their placement before arrival in The Gambia or Sierra Leone. For placement longer than three months, we are able to accept payment in installments (please ask for further details). The preferred methods of payment are Western Union/money gram or bank transfer (payable before arrival).

## **VISA**

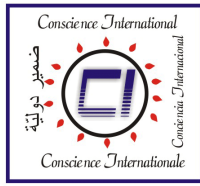
We recommend interns to get tourist visas to come to The Gambia or Sierra Leone. This normally is a renewable VISA, and can easily be purchased upon arrival (with cash) at the airport for between US\$ 15 - 50 or in advance from Gambian or Sierra Leonean consulates in most countries.

## **Airport Transfers and Orientation**

Upon arrival at the Banjul International Airport in Banjul – The Gambia or Lungi International Airport in Freetown – Sierra Leone, you will proceed through immigration and customs officials. One of our staff will be waiting for you outside the arrivals 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 are able to 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 role, recent changes in CI and current plans/developments at the office, etc. On departure, intern will be accompanied by CI staff to the airport.



## **ACCESS TO FACILITIES**

### **Electricity**

Our offices have electricity supply, so you are able to charge electrical items, such as laptops, phones, cameras, rechargeable batteries, etc. In Kombo Area or Freetown, you are able to purchase basic supplies. In Kombo Area or Freetown, interns will be able to access the post office, banks and ATMs, and Western Union to receive and change money. Also, there are large supermarkets where you can purchase most supplies, such as shampoo, toothpaste, toilet paper, various food items, and moisturizers.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones in The Gambia and Sierra Leone are GSM and there is excellent reception available in the local area. 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 The Gambia 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 five to fifteen minutes drive from our offices in The Gambia and Sierra Leone. Medicines are readily available at pharmacies in the Kombo Area and Freetown, however it is advisable that interns 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.

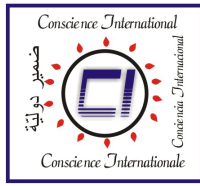
## **WHAT VOLUNTEERS CAN EXPECT**

### **Prior to your Arrival**

Prior to departing your home country, staff of CI 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 in CI, 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 can also expect a weekly visit from a staff of CI. This staff will be able to provide information, support and assistance if you require and also 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**

As an Intern, 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 the skills you have to assist in improving the programs and staff. For instance, interns who are good at project writing are encouraged to work with the staff at post on this.

### **Attitude**

It is important for interns to understand that the culture in The Gambia or Sierra Leone may be quite different to what they may be accustomed to. Interns should bring with them an easy-going, open-minded and relaxed attitude. The Gambian and Sierra Leonean people are very friendly and social. While we will endeavour to maintain a daily routine, interns 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**

CI expects the following of volunteers:

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



## After Your Stay

CI likes to remain in contact with all past interns and we expect you to spread news about us to your community. We often send updates from the organization and the progress of our work to past interns. Often, we receive interns recommended by our former interns with some even making return visits. At the end of the placement, we would give you a reference for any future employment. We will also be able to respond to reference requests after you have left us.

## What To Bring

Below is a list of recommended supplies to have with you during your experience with CI, as suggested by past interns. Of course, this is not a comprehensive list but rather should give you an idea of some of the essentials as well as items that will make your stay more comfortable. Also note that most of these items can be purchased with ease in the local town as required.

## For Yourself

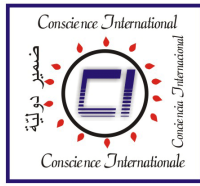
- First aid kit
- Sunscreen
- Camera batteries (rechargeable)
- Laptop (computer & flash drive)
- International adaptor
- Umbrella /poncho / raincoat (depending on when you are visiting)
- Durable Water Bottle (such as a Nalgene bottle)

With regards to mosquito nets, most interns do not require the use of one as there are very few or no mosquitoes in hotel and guest house areas. For interns intending to travel to other parts of The Gambia or Sierra Leone, we advise them to bring their own net.

## Other

Other items that volunteers may find useful during their time in The Gambia or Sierra Leone include:

- A Gambia or Sierra Leone travel book.
- photo's of your family, friends, pets, home, etc to show your colleagues
- pictures/books of your home country
- favorite food recipes to share your culture
- favorite movies and tapes



## 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 the office to 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.

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