



## **Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation Guidelines and Policies for Volunteers**

Thank you for your interest in working as a volunteer for the Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation (Ceiba). This document details the guidelines and policies that apply to your work with us. The quality work of our volunteers greatly contributes to the success of Ceiba projects. Like ourselves, our volunteers are committed to conservation and helping others, and recognize that each one of us must do our part to protect the environment. This document details the general guidelines and policies for volunteers participating in Ceiba projects abroad. We appreciate you taking the time to familiarize yourself with these general policies as well as with your specific Volunteer Position Description and site-specific policies before starting to work with us.

### **Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation Mission and Goals**

The Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting tropical ecosystems and biodiversity via private-lands conservation, environmental education and community development. Ceiba's specific objectives are:

- 1) Protect natural habitat on private lands in tropical South America
- 2) Implement resource management practices that maintain ecosystem integrity and biodiversity
- 3) Teach applied ecology and sustainable resource management via field courses, teacher training, and community capacity building.
- 4) Monitor the impacts of human land uses on ecosystems, habitats and species diversity
- 5) Facilitate communication between conservation organizations, scientists, landowners, community leaders and youth.

In the pursuit of our objectives, Ceiba recently has concentrated on habitat conservation efforts (the El Pahuma Orchid Reserve and tropical dry forests of Ecuador) and public education programs (tropical ecology field courses, environmental education in Ecuador). Through these projects, we strive to apply the intellectual, material and economic strengths of developed nations to support conservation of habitat and biodiversity in the tropics, on which we all depend.

We have found that exciting, productive interchanges can occur when students experience natural areas, when scientists talk to farmers, when volunteers work in communities, when tourists learn from landowners, and so on. Out of these interchanges often arise some of the strongest and most workable strategies to problems faced in conservation, research or

education. Ceiba is dedicated to promoting and supporting such discourse in all our projects, and we strongly encourage all those who work with us to participate in the process of sharing ideas, concerns and knowledge.

### **How to Apply to be a Ceiba Volunteer**

Persons interested in volunteering for Ceiba must submit the following:

1. Completed [Volunteer Application Form](#)
2. CV or resume and color-scan of passport photo page

Please send your CV or resume and a color scan of your passport to [volunteer@ceiba.org](mailto:volunteer@ceiba.org).

Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation  
Volunteer Program  
301 S. Bedford St., Ste 7A  
Madison, WI 53703

Application materials should be received one month prior to your requested start date indicated on your application form. We will send you a response within 2 weeks. Payment for lodging is required before arrival at the site. It is preferred that you pay by sending a check to the Ceiba office or by using the online payment system. If you are already in Ecuador, you must pay in cash. We do not accept checks, as these must first be mailed back to the United States to process.

### **Volunteer Responsibilities**

#### ***General Responsibilities***

Volunteers are required to conduct themselves at all times in a professional manner as a representative of the Ceiba Foundation for Tropical Conservation, and to adhere to the rules specific to the site in which work. Normally, volunteers work from 6-8 hours a day, 5 days per week, with weekends off. Your exact schedule on-site will depend upon the project you are involved in, and will be discussed with you upon arrival.

Volunteers are expected to provide Ceiba with copies of any data, notes, maps, photos, recordings or other information or materials collected or generated while working as a volunteer. Volunteers are expected to work responsibly to complete the tasks assigned to the best of their abilities. Volunteers are requested to cite Ceiba and any Ceiba project locations (e.g., reserves, etc.) in any publications relating to work conducted as a volunteer. In addition, volunteers are requested to send us a one-page final written report on work done during their volunteership within a month of leaving the field station. This information is extremely useful for project continuity and for subsequent volunteers.

Volunteers are expected and encouraged to pass on their knowledge, and the information they have collected, to local people whenever possible, and to listen carefully to and incorporate the ideas and knowledge of local people. If appropriate, you may organize workshops, seminars and other presentations, and should at all times strive to involve those with whom you routinely interact (landowners, local students, field assistants, et al.).

Finally, volunteers are encouraged to be prepared to be flexible, when unexpected circumstances arise that require adapting the initial description of your expected duties.

### ***Specific Responsibilities***

You will learn more about the specific tasks you will be involved in upon orientation on-site. In some volunteer placements, you may also receive a Volunteer Position Description that will provide detailed information on the specific responsibilities associated with your position. The Volunteer Position Description will include the following information:

- 1) Title of the volunteer position
- 2) Dates of the volunteership (term)
- 3) Location of the volunteership
- 4) Description of job duties and other responsibilities
- 5) Details of compensation offered, if any
- 6) Details of Ceiba's participation and responsibilities
- 7) Expected endpoints and documentation to be produced

### ***Costs to Volunteer***

Volunteers must pay the costs of food and lodging at their field station. The current costs of food and lodging at the Lalo Loor Dry Forest Reserve is \$32 per day for stays of one week, \$30 per day for stays of more than one week, or \$570 per month. We ask that your stay be paid for in full in advance of your arrival at the field station.

### **Compensation**

Volunteerships are unpaid. Volunteers and interns are responsible for their travel to and from their work site.

### **Equipment**

Ceiba will supply necessary equipment for your volunteer work. In special cases, volunteers may be asked to provide necessary equipment; this may occur when volunteers are selected on the basis of a particular skill that relates to specific equipment, such as photographic equipment. Volunteers are responsible for supplying all unrelated and personal equipment (boots, field clothes, personal camera, etc.).

### **Liability and Insurance**

For positions requiring international travel or field work, volunteers are required to sign a liability release form before their term begins. This can be done upon arrival in your site country. Volunteers are strongly recommended to carry insurance valid in the site country; for some positions you may be *required* by Ceiba to carry valid insurance. Check with your insurance agent or company to ensure that your coverage is valid outside your home country. Some of our volunteer positions involve field work that requires you to be in good physical condition. Consult your Position Description to assess the physical demands of your specific position. Volunteers should consult their local physician or travel health agency to obtain necessary or recommended vaccinations for travel and work abroad.

## **Termination Policy**

Your position will automatically terminate on the ending date specified on your application form. If you want to extend your stay, simply notify Ceiba in writing ([volunteer@ceiba.org](mailto:volunteer@ceiba.org)). The additional cost of your added stay must be paid on or before the original ending date.

Ceiba reserves the right to dismiss any volunteer for any reason deemed sufficient by Ceiba. Volunteers subject to dismissal will be notified in writing by their supervisor at the field-site or the Ceiba volunteer coordinator. Expulsion of volunteers may result from cases such as:

- 1) Abuse of position as a Ceiba volunteer
- 2) Misuse of facilities
- 3) Improper professional or personal conduct
- 4) Gross misrepresentation of Ceiba and our goals
- 5) Violation of Ceiba policies, on-site rules, or the laws of the country.

To date, we have never had cause to dismiss a volunteer. We are confident in the qualifications and professionalism of all our volunteers and provide these guidelines so that volunteers are aware of our policy.

## **A Message to Volunteers**

Volunteering on an international conservation project can be an experience you will never forget. While it is the opportunity to contribute to a worthwhile cause or to get to know a foreign country in greater depth that initially attracts potential volunteers, the challenges and rewards gained from working with local people to find creative solutions to complex problems are remembered most by volunteers after completing their assignments. The experience of working in a foreign country, and making a meaningful contribution to issues important to you, can invigorate your confidence in your own abilities; likewise, participating in an ongoing conservation program can renew your faith in the capacity of people to work together to make a difference in their lives and their environment.

Ceiba deeply appreciates the work contributed by our volunteers. Many of our most important discoveries and project advancements have been made by our volunteers and/or interns. We hope that your volunteer work will challenge and stimulate you. It is our sincere wish that your participation with Ceiba will have a meaningful and lasting effect not only on the project on which you'll work, but also on yourself and the choices you will make in your future.

**THANK YOU!**

*(Updated July 2020)*