



## Student Handbook

Explore our commitment to academic excellence, ethical research, and responsible global engagement. This document outlines the guidelines that shape your transformative journey with Projects Abroad.



Dear Global Citizen,

Welcome to Projects Abroad!

As the CEO of Projects Abroad, I am thrilled to extend a warm welcome to you, our newest member of a global community dedicated to fostering cross-cultural exchange, personal growth, and impactful research. At the heart of our mission lies a commitment to facilitating immersive experiences that not only contribute to your academic and professional development but also make a meaningful difference in the communities we serve.

Your journey with us is set to be transformative, and it begins with a foundational understanding of the core principles and expectations that shape our collective experience. Enrollment in any of our programs is a significant step that hinges on your comprehensive grasp and acceptance of our guidelines and policies. These are meticulously outlined in the document you have before you, as well as the detailed Academic Handbook provided to you.

By signing the Projects Abroad Enrollment Agreement, you are affirming your readiness to engage with our vibrant educational platform, one that is built on stringent academic standards and a culture of respect and safety. This agreement is more than just a formality; it symbolizes your pledge to uphold the integrity of our community and the ethos of responsible global citizenship.

It is our belief that thorough preparation equips you with the tools to navigate the exciting challenges and rewards of the journey ahead. With this understanding, you will not only embrace the responsibilities that come with being a Projects Abroad student but also maximize the opportunities to contribute and learn.

I personally invite you to approach this adventure with an open mind and a resilient spirit. Embrace the diversity of thought and experience you will encounter and let the insights you gain inspire your path forward. We are here to support you every step of the way, ensuring that your time with Projects Abroad is as enriching as it is enlightening.

Once again, welcome to the family. Here's to the start of an extraordinary journey that I trust will leave a lasting imprint on your life and the lives of those you will touch.

Sincerely,



Greg Thomson CEO,  
Projects Abroad



## Expectations for Behaviour:

Every member within the Projects Abroad community is assured fundamental rights. Among these are the assurance of a harassment-free environment, irrespective of one's race, age, religion, gender, identity, capabilities, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and economic or national background.

## Participant Responsibilities:

As a member of the Projects Abroad community, your role extends beyond personal growth to fostering a positive environment. This includes adhering to safety guidelines, respecting cultural norms, maintaining a proactive attitude towards your health and well-being, and actively participating in all program activities. Your engagement and conduct are key to the success of both your experience and the collective journey of your peers.

## Objectives for Operational Conduct:

Participants in Projects Abroad programs play an integral role in the residential campus ecosystem, interacting with peers, staff, and the broader local community. A foundation of mutual respect is essential throughout the entirety of the program and is encapsulated within this guide.

## Objectives of Projects Abroad.

These Operational Objectives are practical guidelines aimed at fostering a safe and successful environment for both the students and the centers.

### They include:

- Safeguarding the health, safety, and security of all students and staff
- Delivering superior academic programs
- Building and sustaining positive relationships within the local community
- Upholding both local and international standards essential for the efficient operation of all centers and the Projects Abroad Headquarters

Students are encouraged to internalize these objectives to avoid any situations that might hinder their program completion, affect others' experiences, or undermine Projects Abroad's operational capabilities. This encompasses avoiding preventable injuries, illnesses, irresponsible behavior, and actions detrimental to community relations.

### Projects Abroad provides guidance through various resources and orientations to help students:

- Assume responsibility for their actions.
- Recognize and mitigate potential health, safety, and security risks.
- Be vigilant and aware of their surroundings.
- Conduct themselves maturely and respect local cultural norms.
- Understand and abide by the laws specific to the country or region.
- Foster positive relationships with the local and broader communities they interact with

## Expectations and Commitment to the Community:

As integral parts of the Projects Abroad community, students are anticipated to foster an environment of mutual respect in both living and working spaces. It's imperative that the Projects Abroad campus remains a sanctuary for all, devoid of any form of harassment and discrimination, ensuring everyone's comfort and safety.

Engagement with the communal living model is crucial. This involves active participation in campus gatherings, team-building activities, assistance with maintaining the center, and adherence to communal agreements. Interacting within the local community, students will undoubtedly come across a spectrum of beliefs and values. It's crucial, however, to respect these differences rather than impose personal beliefs or attempt to resolve local issues unilaterally. Respect for local culture is paramount, which includes understanding and abiding by local laws, dressing appropriately, being mindful of communication nuances, and honoring local traditions and holidays.

### **Preparation for Field Work:**

The inherent nature of field work is demanding both physically and mentally. With long days, uncomfortable travel, and the absence of usual comforts, resilience and good health are key for all students participating.

To be adequately prepared, students must actively manage any existing or potential medical or mental health conditions by:

- 1) ensuring a complete supply of any necessary prescription medications before arrival,
- 2) establishing necessary medical or mental health support systems, and
- 3) engaging with healthcare providers and the Projects Abroad Safety and Student Life Department to discuss and plan for any potential health risks and the necessary accommodations or support required.

Given the program's often remote settings, access to healthcare services can be limited, making prior preparation essential.

### **Guidelines for Program Policies:**

Projects Abroad's programs adhere to a comprehensive set of policies aimed at pre-emptively addressing and reducing any foreseeable risks and hazards, considering the local community, culture, and the environment.

These policies are crafted to ensure the safety and well-being of students, fostering an environment conducive to a fulfilling international experience, and effectively managing the demanding nature of the programs. These include intensive schedules with early starts, lengthy field days, and strenuous activities. A key aspect of these policies also involves respecting and integrating into the local communities where the programs operate, striving to provide a safe, healthy, and enriching experience for students, staff, faculty, and local residents alike.

Understanding and respecting the rationale and structure behind these policies is crucial for participants. Non-compliance not only jeopardizes one's own safety but also increases the likelihood of injuries, conflicts, strained community relations, and potentially hinders the participation of others. Insubordination or failure to align with the program's structure can negatively impact everyone involved and may even threaten the program's viability. As such, any breach of these policies can lead to disciplinary measures, including possible expulsion. It's important to note that these policies remain in effect throughout the entirety of the program, including during field trips, leisure time, and rest periods.

### **Alcohol Consumption Guidelines:**

The legal age for alcohol consumption is determined by the laws of the host country where the center is situated, and additional restrictions may apply at individual centers. It is common across numerous Projects Abroad centers to prohibit alcohol on campus premises.

### **Substance Use Policy:**

The possession or use of any illegal drugs, chemicals, or unauthorized medications is strictly forbidden, as they conflict with the Operational Objectives of Projects Abroad programs. The definition of illegal substances is guided by both United States and host-country legislations and includes any prescription medication not officially prescribed to the individual.

Projects Abroad retains the authority to conduct investigations, interviews, and searches to enforce this policy and may confiscate any prohibited items found. A stringent zero-tolerance stance is adopted regarding illegal drugs; any breach of this policy leads to immediate expulsion and is applicable throughout the entire duration of the program, including during non-program periods.

### **Guidelines for Off-Campus Conduct:**

The nature of Projects Abroad programs is fundamentally place-based, with a focus on cohort living that differs significantly from typical campus arrangements. These programs are notably more rigorous than standard university schedules, featuring early mornings, extensive fieldwork, and limited leisure time. Beyond just residing in the community where the program is based, students often engage deeply with local inhabitants, learning about everything from environmental perceptions to cultural traditions and participating in local events.

Given that students typically find themselves in unfamiliar territories, both their on-campus and off-campus behaviors critically impact their program experience. Consequently, Projects Abroad has established specific off-campus guidelines uncommon in most home campus settings. These policies aim to reduce risk and encourage safe practices in new environments, help students adapt to the demanding schedules and physical activities of the programs, honor local cultural norms, and cultivate positive relationships with neighbours and the broader community.

Details of these policies, which may differ from one campus to another, will be thoroughly provided and discussed during the initial orientation week of the program.

### ***Policy for Signing in and Out:***

To ensure rapid location in emergencies, students are required to sign in and out whenever they enter or leave the center.

### ***Buddy System Protocol:***

Depending on the specific risks and environmental conditions of the location, Projects Abroad centers may enforce a buddy system. This system requires students to pair up when leaving the premises for any activities, including hiking, exercising, or visiting the town, ensuring safety and accountability.

### ***Curfew Guidelines:***

Curfew is defined as the designated time by which all students must be back and signed in at the campus. This measure isn't about dictating bedtime; it's about maintaining the academic focus, fostering positive local community relationships, and minimizing the risks associated with late-night activities. Failure to adhere to curfew times, which will be detailed during the orientation, may lead to disciplinary actions.



### **Policy on Program Participation:**

As Projects Abroad offers a comprehensive residential study abroad experience, the awarding of academic credits is contingent on complete program participation, not merely individual course attendance. This encompasses active involvement from the program's outset to its conclusion.

More than just being present, earning credits at Projects Abroad signifies a deep engagement with learning, active participation in both academic and additional activities, and the fulfillment of all academic tasks and assignments, whether in the field or classroom. Both the sending institutions and the School of Record for Projects Abroad anticipate that the credits earned reflect a student's total commitment and the successful navigation of the program's intensive field-based academic requirements.

Thus, students are expected to fully immerse themselves in all aspects of the center's activities, both educational and extracurricular. Consistent, voluntary non-participation (such as skipping classes or not engaging in required activities) or frequent inability to participate (due to health or other issues) may lead to the student's removal from the program."

### **Visitor Regulations:**

With the exception of professional visitors and guest lecturers, Projects Abroad maintains a strict no-visitor policy during the program duration. This is to prevent disruptions to the group dynamics and the structured schedule. Prior approval from the center director is mandatory for any local visitor to ensure heightened security and privacy for both students and staff.

### **Health Disclosure and Approval Process:**

Projects Abroad has instituted a thorough Medical Approval Process to gather detailed information about students' physical and mental health. This process is essential for accommodating and supporting any specific medical or dietary requirements during the program.

This Medical Approval Process is meant to be informative and inclusive rather than exclusionary. However, should any concerns arise, Projects Abroad will engage in discussions with the student and their healthcare provider to assess the student's suitability for program participation. Any inquiries or worries regarding this procedure should be directed to the Projects Abroad Safety and Student Life Department.

Entry into the field is contingent upon receiving final medical approval from Projects Abroad. This entails a complete review of the Projects Abroad Vital Health Record, Physical Exam, and Authorization Form, along with any additional documents from medical specialists. It's imperative that all medical information provided is accurate and comprehensive; failure to do so may result in revocation of admission, program recall, or restrictions on certain activities. Moreover, students are obligated to notify Projects Abroad of any health status changes post submission of their medical documentation.

### **Mental Health Support:**

Your mental well-being is just as important as your physical health. We understand that adjusting to an unfamiliar environment can be challenging. If you are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or just need someone to talk to, we offer a range of support services. Confidential counselling and resources are available to help you navigate through any difficulties you may face.

### **Policy on Medical Withdrawals:**

Certain medical emergencies or conditions might necessitate a withdrawal from the program, particularly if they significantly hinder a student's ability to participate fully in the activities. The ultimate decision regarding a participant's continued involvement due to medical reasons rests with Projects Abroad.

For specifics on financial responsibilities associated with medical care while on the program, please consult the Billing and Financial Policies section of this document.



### **Motor Vehicle and Boating Guidelines:**

Students of Projects Abroad are strictly prohibited from operating any motor vehicles or motorboats belonging to the organization. Usage of Projects Abroad motor vehicles or motorboats is only allowed with an approved operator from the organization. Moreover, students are forbidden from operating or riding in any motor vehicles or motorboats not affiliated with Projects Abroad without explicit prior approval from the center director.

This prohibition extends to motorcycles, mopeds, ATVs, and any motorized recreational watercraft for the entirety of the program, including times outside of official program activities. Where available, seatbelts must be used in all motor vehicles. Additionally, Projects Abroad centers using motorboats will adhere to specific protocols regarding maximum occupancy, seating arrangements, personal flotation devices, and communication equipment, all in line with local safety regulations.

### **Guidelines for Swimming Activities:**

Engaging in swimming activities is solely at the participant's own risk. Projects Abroad may provide swimming pools or facilitate recreational swimming during the program, and specific protocols and guidelines will be communicated to students accordingly. Participation in recreational swimming is entirely optional and might be restricted in certain programs or areas due to local dangers or cultural norms. For programs offering swimming options, students will need to pass a swim assessment conducted by trained staff and attend an orientation on waterfront safety before they can engage in further swimming activities.

### **Compliance with Laws and Regulations:**

Projects Abroad adheres strictly to all local, host country, and U.S. laws, and students are equally expected to follow these laws as well as the rules set by their home institutions. An orientation on relevant legal expectations will be provided to all students. Any infractions may lead to disciplinary actions from Projects Abroad and, depending on the nature of the violation, might also subject participants to local legal consequences such as fines, arrest, or deportation. This policy is active throughout the entire duration of the program.

Serious violations include but are not limited to:

- Any form of criminal activity under the laws of the U.S., host country, or locally
- Possessing or using weapons or hazardous materials, or even threatening their use
- Conduct that puts oneself or others in danger or threatens the operational integrity of Projects Abroad
- Any form of harassment or assault
- Damaging, stealing, or unauthorized utilization of property belonging to Projects Abroad, its community, or the host community.
- Publicly making defamatory statements about the host country or its residents
- Breaching any Projects Abroad-wide or specific campus regulations
- Disrupting classes or any other program-related activities

### **Policy on Sexual Harassment and Assault:**

Projects Abroad is committed to maintaining an environment where all students can work, live, and study without the fear of sexual harassment. It's the personal responsibility of each student to ensure their actions don't constitute sexual harassment, whether through physical acts or verbal communication.

During orientation, information on how to report incidents of sexual harassment or assault will be provided, ensuring students know how to reach out to staff members or representatives at Projects Abroad Headquarters. Any reported cases will be thoroughly investigated, and in instances of assault, every effort will be made to support the affected student, including medical assistance, the option to involve local law enforcement, and access to additional support and resources.

### **Policy Against Violence:**

Violence, whether verbal or physical, has no place within Projects Abroad. This includes any form of threats, intimidation, bullying, or any other behavior intended to cause fear or harm. Projects Abroad maintains a strict stance against violence, and any such behavior will not be tolerated and may result in immediate removal from the program. This policy is active throughout the entire program duration, including times outside the official schedule.

### **Conflict Resolution:**

We understand that misunderstandings can occur. Should you find yourself in a disagreement or facing an issue with another individual, we encourage open communication and mediation. Our staff is trained to assist in resolving conflicts through a respectful and constructive approach. For more serious concerns, a formal grievance process is outlined to ensure every voice is heard and addressed appropriately.

### **Guidelines for Non-Program Time:**

Certain Projects Abroad programs incorporate designated non-program periods, such as weekends away or mid-semester breaks, all of which are pre-defined by the staff. During these intervals, students might explore further afield, visiting other parts of the host country or adjacent nations. Although the complete set of Projects Abroad policies might not apply, students are still expected to adhere to the overarching Operational Objectives throughout these times.

While specific activity recommendations are not provided for these periods, Projects Abroad informs students of the potential risks associated with independent travel and certain activities. It's crucial to note that students bear full responsibility for their decisions, safety, and overall well-being during these times.

Students planning to travel must submit detailed itineraries, including emergency contacts, transportation plans, and accommodation details. For some, particularly those involving higher risks, a Risk Management Plan may be required to outline the activity, potential risks, preventive strategies, and emergency protocols. Based on the current travel advisories and Projects Abroad's policies, travel to certain countries or regions might be restricted.

Projects Abroad retains the right to prohibit travel to areas deemed unsafe due to political instability, terrorism threats, extreme weather conditions, disease outbreaks, or other significant risks.

The specific dates for non-program periods are set by Projects Abroad, and all travel must align with these times. Individual deviations, such as leaving early or returning late, are not allowed.

### **Procedures for Disciplinary Actions:**

It's imperative that all staff and students not only understand but also actively uphold the behavioral standards outlined in the Projects Abroad Policies and Procedures, the Field Guide, the Academic Handbook, the Enrollment Contract, and any additional directives provided during on-site orientations. Non-adherence to these guidelines may lead to disciplinary actions, which, depending on the situation and at the discretion of the Projects Abroad center director and other relevant authorities, may include:

- 1) A verbal warning
- 2) A written warning
- 3) Probation
- 4) Immediate expulsion

Minor behavioral issues, often resulting from misunderstandings or minor infractions, will typically be addressed through educational interventions and intermediate disciplinary responses like warnings or probation. Students at this level of disciplinary action are expected to acknowledge and rectify their behavior to avoid more severe consequences. The escalation of disciplinary measures will be based on the infraction's seriousness and doesn't necessarily follow a progressive path. Any actions posing a danger to oneself or others, significantly hindering Projects Abroad's operations, or constituting severe violations of organizational policies or applicable laws may result in immediate expulsion from the program.

### **Requirement for Disclosing Previous Disciplinary Actions:**

All participants are required to openly disclose any previous disciplinary actions they've faced. Providing inaccurate or incomplete histories could lead to a student being withdrawn from the program or limited in their activities. It's the student's responsibility to update Projects Abroad on any changes in their disciplinary status before the program begins.

Understanding an individual's past behavior is crucial for anticipating potential issues and discussing the serious implications that could arise from repeating such behavior in a Projects Abroad context. Previous disciplinary actions, whether academic warnings, citations, or criminal charges, may intensify any disciplinary measures imposed for policy breaches during the program. For instance, what might typically warrant a verbal warning could escalate to a written warning and notification to the student's home university.

## Procedures for Disciplinary Actions:

Projects Abroad is committed to maintaining a respectful, safe, and productive environment for all participants. To ensure this, a clear set of disciplinary procedures is established, which is to be followed when any staff or student fails to adhere to the behavioral standards as outlined in our governing documents. The following steps outline our approach to managing such situations:

### Step 1: Initial Assessment

- **Identification of Incident:** Any reported or observed infraction is documented and brought to the attention of the program's administrative staff.
- **Preliminary Review:** The relevant authorities conduct an initial review to determine the nature and seriousness of the infraction.

### Step 2: Informal Resolution Attempt (If Applicable)

- **Verbal Warning:** For minor infractions, a verbal warning may be issued. This serves as a formal yet informal first step to alert the individual of their misconduct and the need for corrective action.
  - **Documentation:** Even though it's a verbal warning, the incident and warning are documented for internal records.
  - **Communication:** The individual is informed of the specific policies or standards violated and the expected behavior henceforth.

### Step 3: Formal Written Warning

- **Issuance of Written Warning:** If the behavior persists or the initial infraction is of a more serious nature, a written warning is issued.
  - **Details of Infraction:** The written warning clearly outlines the violation, references the specific policies or guidelines breached, and provides evidence or examples of the misconduct.
  - **Implications:** The document will also explain the consequences of further infractions, including the potential for probation or expulsion.

### Step 4: Probation

- **Implementation of Probation:** Should there be another violation after the written warning, or in cases of more severe infractions, probation may be imposed.
  - **Terms and Conditions:** Specific terms of the probation are outlined, which may include restrictions on participation in certain activities, regular check-ins with a program advisor, or other relevant measures.
  - **Duration:** The probation period is defined, during which the individual's behavior is closely monitored.
  - **Review Process:** Conditions for lifting the probation are stated, along with the criteria for further disciplinary action should the individual fail to comply with the probation terms.

### Step 5: Expulsion Consideration

- **Review for Expulsion:** In the event of a severe violation or failure to adhere to probation terms, the case is reviewed for possible expulsion.
  - **Gathering Evidence:** All relevant information, including prior warnings, reports, and any mitigating circumstances, is collected and examined.
  - **Hearing:** A disciplinary hearing may be convened, where the individual has the opportunity to present their case before a disciplinary committee.
  - **Decision:** Based on the evidence and the hearing, a decision is made regarding expulsion.
  - **Notification:** If expulsion is determined to be the appropriate course of action, the individual is notified in writing, with details provided regarding the reasons for expulsion, the effective date, and the process for appeal, if applicable.

## Step 6: Appeal Process

- **Right to Appeal:** Individuals who have been expelled may have the right to appeal the decision, depending on the grounds of the expulsion and the policies of Projects Abroad.
  - **Submission of Appeal:** Details on how to submit an appeal, the deadline for doing so, and the format it must take are provided.
  - **Review of Appeal:** The appeal is reviewed by a representative of the School of Record awarding the credits for the program of study.
  - **Final Decision:** The outcome of the appeal is communicated to the individual, and this decision is final.

## Step 7: Record Keeping and Confidentiality

- **Documentation:** All steps taken during the disciplinary process are documented and stored securely.
- **Confidentiality:** Throughout the process, the confidentiality of all parties involved is maintained to the greatest extent possible, in accordance with Projects Abroad policies and applicable laws.

## Guidelines for Program Withdrawal or Dismissal:

Choosing to withdraw or being dismissed from a Projects Abroad program before its completion has significant consequences, including the forfeiture of academic credits and all payments made to Projects Abroad. Additionally, any remaining financial obligations must still be settled. Should a student depart the program early, Projects Abroad will notify their home institution of the withdrawal.

## Policies on Communications, Equipment, and Information Systems:

General Rules for Equipment Use:

- Responsibility for borrowed equipment, both on and off-premises, lies with the borrower until it's returned.
- Students must take care to preserve the condition of any Projects Abroad equipment in their use.
- Projects Abroad is not liable for safeguarding students' personal electronic devices either on-site or during field activities.
- In cases where personal computers are damaged, Projects Abroad isn't obligated to provide replacements, although efforts will be made to assist on an individual basis.
- No insurance is provided by Projects Abroad for the personal property of students, staff, or visitors.

## System Abuse Prevention:

System abuse refers to any intentional act that endangers the stability, functionality, or security of Projects Abroad's or any related systems.

Prohibited activities on the Projects Abroad network or devices include:

- Downloading large files for personal use such as music, videos, or extensive image collections.
- Streaming audio or video content.
- Unauthorized downloading of software applications.
- Installing or operating any software or files not supplied by Projects Abroad.
- Unauthorized modification, disablement, or removal of Projects Abroad equipment or software.
- Activities compromising network security such as spamming, hacking, distributing viruses, or unauthorized system access.
- Engaging in activities that violate local or U.S. laws.
- Illegal reproduction or distribution of copyrighted material.
- Viewing or distributing pornographic material or content that is vulgar, sexist, racist, threatening, violent, or defamatory.
- Altering digital documents without proper authorization or distributing proprietary Projects Abroad information without consent.

In response to any policy violations, Projects Abroad retains the right to suspend or terminate internet access, and these guidelines are subject to revisions at any time.

## Password Security Policies and Practices:

Adhering to the following guidelines is crucial for maintaining the security of Projects Abroad resources and private student data:

- Never share your passwords with anyone unless explicitly authorized by Projects Abroad.
- Avoid emailing passwords or recording them in easily accessible locations.
- Always ensure to log out from computers after use to protect your information.

### **Management of Student Records and Information:**

The School for Field Studies securely holds confidential records for all Projects Abroad participants, encompassing admissions data, financial aid documents, contractual agreements, medical histories, and academic results.

### **Release of Directory Information:**

Projects Abroad may disclose certain details, termed as "directory information," which includes your name, contact details, date of birth, major study area, participation in recognized activities, attendance dates, and received honors. Should you prefer to keep this information confidential, a written request must be submitted to the Projects Abroad Director of Admissions.

### **Access by Third Parties:**

Educational privacy laws restrict parents and guardians from accessing post-secondary students' records. Access is limited to educational staff with a legitimate interest, and no information is released to other parties without your explicit written consent. However, in emergencies where your health and safety are concerned, information may be disclosed to individuals capable of intervening.

### **Reviewing Your Records:**

Should you wish to review or obtain copies of specific parts of your file; a formal written request must be directed to the Projects Abroad admissions department.

### **Emergency Contact Protocol:**

At enrollment, students provide emergency contact details. In any urgent situation deemed as such by Projects Abroad, efforts will be made to inform these contacts. This may include situations where the student is unable to communicate due to incapacitation. Emergency contacts might also receive communications regarding the student's enrollment status, arrival confirmation, or other pertinent updates from the Projects Abroad alumni and development office.

### **Use of Photographic, Video, and Written Materials:**

Projects Abroad retains the right to utilize any photographs or videos captured during the program that might include student images, as well as any written materials like blog posts provided by the student. However, this does not extend to written assignments or communications designed for assessment or evaluation purposes.



## Financial and Billing Guidelines:

### Initial Program Deposit:

To secure a spot in a Projects Abroad program, an initial Program Deposit of \$295 is required. This amount contributes towards the total tuition and isn't an additional charge. Enrollment is considered incomplete, and financial aid processing won't commence until this deposit is received within 10 business days of receiving the Enrollment Contract.

### Tuition and Other Charges:

Approximately 30 days before the billing deadline for their respective session, students will see their tuition and room and board charges appear on their Projects Abroad portal. Those applying post the billing deadline must be prepared to pay tuition upon these charges being posted. For detailed deadlines, students should consult the Projects Abroad website.

### Management of Outstanding Financial Balances:

Students with unpaid tuition or room and board balances are generally prohibited from participating in Projects Abroad programs unless they receive special authorization from the finance department.

### Deferred Payment Arrangements:

Students expecting funds from their home institution or federal financial assistance that won't be available before the program's start may be allowed to proceed by completing a Deferred Payment Form. This form is an agreement where the student acknowledges their responsibility for all outstanding tuition and commits to settling the balance within 5 business days of receiving their funds.

### Conditions for Transcript Release:

Projects Abroad will not issue official transcripts to students who have unsettled financial obligations.

### Responsibility for Medical-Related Expenses:

Students are financially responsible for all costs associated with obtaining advanced medical care, including but not limited to transportation and accommodation for both the student and any accompanying staff, during the program. This covers all medical services, medications, hospital treatments, and certain travel costs. Students must reimburse Projects Abroad for any incurred medical and related expenses within 10 days after the program concludes. Official transcripts will be withheld until all outstanding financial obligations, including medical expenses, are cleared.

### Overview of General Refund Policies:

Projects Abroad provides refunds under specific circumstances and only for program deposits, tuition, or room and board fees. No refunds are available for other associated costs, such as travel, visa fees, immunizations, or any other related expenses. Additionally, no refunds are offered in cases of dismissal from the program.

In the case of unforeseen and uncontrollable events, known as force majeure, including natural disasters, wars, government actions, epidemics, or terrorism, Projects Abroad reserves the right to alter or suspend its duties and obligations temporarily. During such events, the continuation of the program may be delayed or adjusted, and Projects Abroad holds the discretion to decide whether to provide refunds for tuition, fees, or other charges. The decision to offer refunds under these circumstances will be made on a case-by-case basis.

### Refund Policies for Student Withdrawal

Under certain circumstances, Projects Abroad offers refunds for tuition or room and board. Projects Abroad does not offer refunds for costs associated with the program including: flights, visas, immunizations or program gear.

These refund schedules apply to students withdrawing from Projects Abroad's programs:

- A full refund is available for withdrawals 91 days or more before the program start date, excluding the deposit or the amount can be reallocated to another program subject to capacity and approval, with possible adjustments in costs.
- A 50% refund is available for withdrawals within 90 to 61 days prior to the program start date, excluding the deposit.
- A 25% refund is available for withdrawals within 60 days prior to the program start and 14 days after program start date, excluding the deposit.
- No refunds are provided for withdrawals after 14 days from the program start date, whether voluntary, mandated by a home institution, or due to dismissal from the program.



***Refund Policy for Program Cancellations by Projects Abroad:***

In instances where Projects Abroad cancels or suspends a program for reasons beyond force majeure:

- A full refund of the deposit, tuition, and room and board will be provided if the cancellation occurs before the program begins. Alternatively, students may opt to transfer these funds to another Projects Abroad program, subject to availability and home institution approval, with any differences in program costs addressed accordingly.
- For cancellations after the program has started, a pro-rated refund will be calculated based on the timing of cancellation and Projects Abroad's ability to secure refunds from vendors. The specifics of this refund are determined solely by Projects Abroad.

## **Insurance Coverage and Unexpected Events:**

### **Emergency Coverage Provided:**

Projects Abroad supplies all participants with Emergency Evacuation and Repatriation Insurance throughout the program. However, this does not cover personal travel outside the program duration. Participants must secure their own comprehensive health insurance valid in the host country (or countries) for the entire duration of their stay with Projects Abroad. Ensuring that the coverage is adequate and comprehensive is the student's responsibility.

### **Personal Property and Travel Insurance:**

Projects Abroad does not offer insurance for personal belongings; thus, any loss, theft, or damage to personal items remains the student's responsibility. Similarly, Projects Abroad does not provide travel insurance to cover airfare or potential trip cancellations, and students are encouraged to arrange this independently if desired.

### **Adjustments to Schedule:**

Projects Abroad reserves the right to alter, postpone, or cancel any programs if necessary due to changes in health, safety conditions, or if it's in the best interest of the program. This includes modifications to itineraries, accommodations, or other listed services.

### **Responsibility for Travel Disruptions:**

Projects Abroad will not provide reimbursements for travel costs affected by program cancellations, rescheduling, or evacuations resulting from war, civil unrest, strikes, adverse weather conditions, health emergencies, government actions, or failures of infrastructure.

### **Policy on Force Majeure:**

The obligations and responsibilities of Projects Abroad may be immediately altered or put on hold in the event of unforeseen and uncontrollable circumstances, known as force majeure, such as natural disasters, conflicts, governmental interventions, or health crises. Under such conditions, Projects Abroad will adjust its duties as deemed safe and appropriate.

## **Intellectual Property, Data Usage, and Acknowledgements:**

As an institution committed to sharing knowledge and discoveries with local communities and the broader research community, Projects Abroad promotes the creation of scholarly works. This involves clear rules regarding the ownership and usage of data and materials produced during the program.

## **Ownership of Educational Materials:**

Projects Abroad retains ownership of all academic outputs and research data generated by students during the program or using its resources. Students are authorized to use these data exclusively for scholarly purposes, which can range from coursework and directed research reports to conference presentations and possibly publications or theses. Unauthorized personal or commercial use of these data is strictly prohibited.

## **Utilizing Research for Scholarly Pursuits and Theses**

Research undertaken at our center is intricately tied to our overarching Strategic Research Plan, with the agenda and priorities set by our faculty. Consequently, the advising faculty member of Projects Abroad is deemed the primary investigator for these projects. Students, as research team contributors, are granted access to the data they've helped collect during their stint with the program. However, the utilization of this data for scholarly endeavors such as a thesis is conditional upon the endorsement of the primary investigator overseeing the project. Should the primary investigator depart from Projects Abroad, the center director or dean may provide the necessary authorization. It's important to note that not all collected data may be appropriate for use in a thesis.

The directed research initiatives are intended to supplement a broader, ongoing research dialogue as established by Projects Abroad staff, and as such, cannot be tailored to individual academic pursuits or the curricular demands of a student's home institution. Given that these projects form an integral part of the coursework at Projects Abroad, originality is paramount, and therefore, reliance on data collected externally, at a student's home institution, is typically not feasible.

Students who wish to extend their directed research from Projects Abroad into a thesis at their home university bear the responsibility for procuring clear guidelines on research prerequisites from both Projects Abroad and their home institution. It's essential for students to engage in dialogue with the center director and their directed research advisor to gain the requisite approvals during their program.

Moreover, students should proactively discuss these intentions with their faculty advisors back at their home institutions both prior to, during, and following their time with Projects Abroad. It's crucial to recognize that independent research or investigation into topics not aligned with the directed research may not be feasible, especially since data collection is typically a collaborative endeavor. Past students have found that their contributions, when part of a collective effort, may not meet the independent research thresholds required by their home institutions. Evaluation of the directed research content and quality rests solely with the Projects Abroad faculty advisor, whereas subsequent analysis and thesis work will be assessed by the student's thesis advisor at their home institution. In certain cases, inviting a Projects Abroad advisor to join a thesis committee may be beneficial.

Projects Abroad mandates the following protocol for the development of scholarly works, including theses, conference presentations, or publications:

1. Initiate discussions regarding intended projects with Projects Abroad faculty and the center director while still engaged with the program.
2. Secure formal consent to use Projects Abroad's data for scholarly purposes that extend beyond the program.
3. Collaborate with both Projects Abroad faculty and home institution advisors to formulate authorship and work plans, particularly for theses.
4. All contributing authors must actively partake in the preparation of the scholarly piece.
5. Acknowledgments and details regarding institutional affiliations must be deliberated upon with both Projects Abroad and the student's home institution.

### **Policy on Acknowledgment:**

All scholarly publications derived from Projects Abroad data must properly credit the organization, the specific center, and all associated personnel who have contributed to the project. Additionally, Projects Abroad staff members who use student-collected data in their publications or presentations are required to acknowledge the contribution of the classes and the substantial input of individual students where significant. The decision to include students as co-authors is based on the merit and relevance of their contributions.

The standard acknowledgment format for Projects Abroad should read:

*"The Author extends sincere gratitude for the significant [financial/field/logistical/other] support provided by Projects Abroad at the [specific center name and location]."*

It is essential to always position " Projects Abroad " before the center's name in both the author's address and acknowledgments.

### **Ethical Standards for Research:**

The research activities conducted by our faculty and students adhere to the ethical standards and guidelines of the host country. Appropriate permissions are sought for any research involving human or animal subjects, or the collection of biological samples. The Projects Abroad office of academic affairs further ensures compliance with ethical practices and the safeguarding of subjects involved.

### **Guidelines for Photography in the Field:**

Students are encouraged to document their field experiences through photography. However, the permission to capture images or video may vary depending on the location, cultural context, or preferences of individuals involved in the activities. Given that U.S. laws do not apply internationally, certain restrictions on photography in public spaces may be enforced, especially for non-citizens, and equipment may be subject to surrender upon official request. Students must consult with local staff for guidance on photographic practices in the field and refrain from bringing any remotely operated photographic equipment, such as drones or camera traps, which can be misconstrued as surveillance devices and are often illegal. Authorized use of such equipment for research purposes is reserved for Projects Abroad faculty with the appropriate permits and will be conducted using approved apparatus only.