

Important Guidance for New Master's International Students

Welcome Current Master's International Students!

Congratulations on your admission to the Master's International (MI) program and welcome to the Peace Corps!

The most important way to ensure the smooth progression of your Master's International degree is to stay connected, and this starts from the moment you are accepted into your graduate program. When you arrive on campus, be sure to check in with your MI coordinator and provide him or her with your updated contact information. Your coordinator will keep you informed about any upcoming MI events and help you get in touch with other MI students and returned Peace Corps Volunteers in the area. You should remain in contact with your MI coordinator throughout your time as an MI student and keep this key person updated on any changes or developments.

You should apply to the Peace Corps within one year before you are ready to depart. While you are taking classes toward your degree, you are also responsible for answering any requests that the Peace Corps placement officer may have to move your Peace Corps application forward. It is also important to be meticulously timely with your medical clearance. Responding to these requests quickly will help facilitate receiving an invitation for a Peace Corps assignment.

If you have yet to be nominated to the Peace Corps, be sure to send any outstanding materials that your recruiter has requested. If you are not sure whether or not you have been nominated, contact your recruiter immediately.

If for some reason you have not yet spoken to a Peace Corps recruiter at all, then you need to do so by calling your Peace Corps regional recruitment office. Information for the regional recruitment offices can be found on the Peace Corps [website](#). The application process includes submission of your Peace Corps application materials together with the acceptance letter to your graduate program. Once your application materials have been received and processed, you will be invited to an interview. Be prepared to share your aspirations for how you plan to apply your graduate studies to Peace Corps service.

The entire Peace Corps application process must be completed before receiving an invitation to serve in a particular country, and this process can take from nine to twelve months. As you proceed with your coursework, you should send in quarterly updates to be added to your Peace Corps file: For example, a copy of semester or quarterly transcripts, information on any newly acquired skills or internship experiences, and other updates can be helpful. You can submit this information to MIplacement@peacecorps.gov.

Please be sure to keep the placement office and your MI coordinator informed of any changes in your contact information and expected availability date for Peace Corps service. Your fastidiousness is necessary for timely approval and placement. Good luck with your academics, and remember to stay in touch!

Going Overseas

Finally, you have received your invitation and are planning to go overseas. At this point, you will be asked to work towards obtaining your final medical clearance. All guidance for how to obtain the clearance will be communicated with you through the Medical Applicant Portal (MAP).

You should also begin discussing communication strategies with your MI coordinator and faculty advisor prior to leaving campus. Remember to keep in mind that communication systems are not always reliable or accessible in many countries where Peace Corps Volunteers serve. The most difficult times to communicate will be when you first arrive in your host country and, again, when you first arrive at your site. You will be acclimating yourself and making connections. It is important that you have established various strategies for how to stay in touch with your university before you leave your campus, and you should remain determined and flexible while in country.

Overseas, you will be a Peace Corps Volunteer first. You will not be able to predetermine your master's project prior to traveling overseas. Your Peace Corps assignment and the needs of your community will shape your MI project. Broad timeframes and guidelines can be revised based upon the resources available at your site, and changes in your originally planned approach should be discussed with your MI coordinator. Keep in mind that you are usually able to arrange secondary projects that can contribute to your degree with the approval of your community and the Peace Corps.

If you have any questions about the country you are going to, your assignment, the communication systems and resources available in-country, or other country-specific questions, please contact the country desk unit (CDU). Contact information for your CDU should be listed at the end of your Volunteer Assignment Description, which will accompany your Peace Corps invitation.

You will begin the overseas part of your Peace Corps experience with a pre-departure orientation, or staging. You will learn the details of the staging approximately 30 days prior to your departure date. If you have received your staging materials and still have questions, please contact the staging office at 1.855.855.1961, option #1, extension 1865. If you have reviewed the staging materials and have questions about your visa, passport, or travel arrangements, please contact Sato Travel at 1.800.855.1961, option #1, extension 1170.

The Master's International team wishes you the utmost success during your Peace Corps journey!