



## English Teacher Volunteer Program

The Bahia Street volunteer program is designed to give participants a personal experience with a non-governmental organization working to promote education and social justice. Bahia Street is specifically looking for experienced volunteers to help them in their mission by implementing the school's English language curriculum. English is an important subject given the school's proximity to the city's tourist center and its importance in university entrance. **At this time Bahia Street is not looking for volunteers to provide general support to the staff of Bahia Center because of its belief that as much of the center's work as possible should be performed by those who live in the local community.**

If you are interested in becoming an English Language Instructor at the Bahia Street Center, please see if you are a good fit with the following requirements:

- **General Eligibility:** Volunteers must be at least 21 years old. They must be comfortable working independently and have activities in addition to those at the Bahia Street Center, such as university or cultural classes, so that they have things to do outside of their volunteer responsibilities.
- **Language Requirements:** Volunteers should have some knowledge of Portuguese since it is the only language spoken at the Bahia Street Center. Individuals interested in volunteering who do not speak any Portuguese are strongly encouraged to take 2-4 weeks of intensive Portuguese in Salvador prior to starting their volunteer position.
- **Preferred Experience:** Volunteers should have some previous experience working with children. Given the Center's student-centered approach to education, volunteers should have a warm approach to children and ability to be fun and engaged with students with diverse interests and abilities. Volunteers should be aware of cultural differences in teaching. Absolute silence and stillness should not be expected. Previous experience working or living in a developing country is also a necessity. English as a Second Language Certification is preferred but not required.
- **Length of stay:** Ideally, volunteers stay for 12 weeks. Start dates should be arranged through the Bahia Street office in Seattle, Washington (USA) since we can only take one volunteer at a time. The Bahia Street school year (like the Brazilian school year) runs from the start of March until the first week of December. Volunteer opportunities during January can be arranged by request. Please note that Carnival typically happens in February each year, and the Center is closed during Carnival.

- **Compatibility with Our Philosophy:** Volunteers must understand and support Bahia Street's educational philosophy. Bahia Street was created by and is currently run by individuals who came from the backgrounds in which the Bahia Street students presently live. Our directors and teachers came from Salvador's economically-disadvantaged, primarily African-Brazilian shantytowns or Bahia's rural interior and have made their way through university. These educators are the students' role models as well as their teachers. The English teacher is the only exception to this. It is critical that the volunteer English teacher understands his or her role within the Bahia Street educational program. He or she must be comfortable taking direction from local directors.

**English Instructor Responsibilities:** Volunteers will teach two classes. Two of these classes meet for approximately one hour each day and involve Bahia Street students organized by age into two groups. Possibly, a third class for community members may meet once or twice a week. Given this class schedule, it is expected that the volunteer be at the Center 12-14 hours per week.

**Costs:** The Bahia Street volunteer program charges a program fee of \$300. This covers the staffing costs associated with the volunteer program. This fee is due at the time that Bahia Street confirms a placement.

**Housing and Food Budget:** Volunteers are responsible for paying for their own housing and personal costs. To live comfortably in Salvador, volunteers can expect to allocate monthly:

- R\$400-800 for rent
- R\$250 for food
- R\$100 for transportation
- R\$100 for internet and other costs

Prices vary widely.

**Additional opportunities in and around Salvador:** There is a lot to do in Salvador. From Portuguese language classes to Samba dancing to the martial art form of capoeira—your days can be filled with activity. Salvador is considered one of the world's centers of the African Diaspora, making it an interesting place to learn about issues of race, class, and culture. It is our hope that volunteers get involved in educational opportunities of interest to them. Outside of Salvador, volunteers are strongly encouraged to take weekends and holidays to explore the beautiful Chapada Diamantina mountainous region of Bahia as well as the breathtaking beaches that run northward from Salvador.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- Prior to departure, all participants will be required to provide a Bahia Street program participation agreement and release of liability form.
- All applicants will be required to pay a \$300 program fee that supports the staffing involved in organizing volunteer programs and the materials used. This program fee will be returned to the applicant if a placement cannot be made.

**Deadlines:** Volunteers are encouraged to apply at least nine months in advance of desired start date. Please apply by:

- September 15 to start in March
- January 15 to start in June
- March 15 to start in September

After initial placements are made, a waiting list will be maintained. Volunteer placements can change. Volunteers need to be flexible as their volunteer duties, schedule and activities can change according to the program's needs or scheduling. In these situations, Bahia Street will do its best to balance the volunteer's preferences with the project's needs.

**Application Process:** If you would like to apply to Bahia Street, please fill out the volunteer application form and send it to us along with a letter of interest and resume, and we will respond as quickly as possible. Please email these documents to Nancy Bacon, Program Director at [nancy@bahiastreet.org](mailto:nancy@bahiastreet.org), fax it to (760) 466-4215, or send it to her at:

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**Please note:** Volunteers and trip participants are advised to contact the Brazilian Consulate to confirm current visa requirements and regulations before purchasing airline tickets to Brazil. Bahia Street is not responsible for providing visa information for trip planning purposes.

Bahia Street advises participants to purchase travel insurance that covers the loss of personal property and valuables, including airline tickets and passports.