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# Essential Eligibility Criteria

## Setting the Foundation for a Meaningful Experience

GapGuru programs are immersive, international experiences that take participants out of their comfort zone and into real communities, real workplaces, and unfamiliar environments. The depth of cultural immersion, the remoteness of some destinations, and the interpersonal dynamics of group living mean these programs are not suited to everyone. Our Essential Eligibility Criteria (EEC) exist to ensure every participant is genuinely ready, for their own benefit and for the communities they will be part of.

GapGuru is committed to making its programs as accessible as possible. We do not exclude anyone on the basis of who they are - including gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, sexuality, or disability - and we assess every applicant individually against these essential criteria. If you are unsure whether a program is right for you, please get in touch as we are always happy to talk it through.

### 1. Suitability

While we strive to accommodate as many participants as possible, GapGuru reserves the right to decline applicants or dismiss accepted participants if the program is not a suitable fit or if the following criteria are not met. These criteria apply with or without reasonable accommodation - see our Reasonable Accommodations section at the end of this document.

Programs are not suitable for individuals who:

- Are court-mandated to attend a program
- Are currently experiencing an acute mental health crisis or psychosis, or currently require intensive clinical intervention that cannot be provided in the program setting
- Have a primary substance addiction, are at risk of withdrawal, or are actively seeking drugs or alcohol
- Are unable to maintain adequate nutrition, hydration, and self-care in a field setting
- Require frequent access to specialised medical care that cannot be self-managed in the field
- Exhibit or have a recent history of bullying, aggression, high-risk behaviours, or legal issues, including threatening harm to self or others, running away, or deliberate risk-seeking behaviour
- Are unwilling to engage in group activities or participate in the program curriculum

## 2. Age

Participants must be aged between 17 and 24 at the time of the program start date. Participants outside this range may be considered on a case-by-case basis where their inclusion does not adversely affect the group.

Participants under the age of 18 will require parental or guardian consent to join a program.

## 3. Language & Communication

Participants must:

- Have at least a conversational level of English, as all programs are facilitated in English and participants engage daily with staff, peers, and host communities
- Communicate openly and honestly with GapGuru staff at all times
- Use respectful, considerate language with fellow participants, staff, and host community members

## 4. Medication

Participants who take prescription medication must be able to self-administer at the correct dosage and intervals. GapGuru staff will assist where possible with medication storage, however participants remain responsible for ensuring their medication is available and taken as prescribed. Participants are strongly advised to consult their prescribing physician or psychiatrist before departure and bring a full supply of any required medication.

## 5. Safety, Judgement & Personal Responsibility

Each participant must be willing and able to:

- Travel independently to and from the program start and end destination
- Recognise the risks associated with international travel and comply with all safety guidance provided by GapGuru staff
- Exercise sound personal judgement, particularly in situations without direct supervision, and alert others to potential hazards
- Respond appropriately to stress or emergencies, including severe weather and medical situations
- Maintain self-care throughout the program, including adequate hydration, nutrition, sleep, and appropriate clothing
- Abide by GapGuru's participant agreement, the guidance of in-country staff, and all local, national, and international laws

## 6. Physical, Mental & Emotional Wellbeing

Each participant must be willing and able to:

- Adapt to being away from their usual support networks, including family, friends, and healthcare providers, for the duration of the program
- Arrive with a personal wellbeing plan that includes strategies for maintaining physical and mental health whilst abroad
- Take full responsibility for their own health, including adhering to any medication routines or self-care strategies recommended prior to departure
- Communicate proactively and honestly with GapGuru staff about any physical or mental health challenges that arise before or during the program
- Acknowledge that programs are physically demanding and maintain a level of fitness appropriate for travel and activity-based experiences

Be aware that some program environments may present physical challenges, including uneven terrain, varying levels of infrastructure, and rural or remote settings. GapGuru will always endeavour to communicate destination-specific accessibility information in advance, and participants with specific needs are encouraged to contact us early to discuss what can be accommodated.

## 7. Commitment to Personal Growth

Participants must:

- Be willing to have their assumptions and patterns of thinking constructively challenged
- Be open to self-reflection, honest self-assessment, and personal development
- Be eager to expand their perspective, emotional intelligence, and cross-cultural understanding
- Commit to engaging meaningfully in both the program curriculum and the wider community experience

## 8. Adaptability

Each participant must be willing and able to:

- Tolerate significant levels of ambiguity and change that naturally arise when living and working abroad, including changes in diet, accommodation, routines, and homesickness
- Handle changes to schedules, placements, or locations at short notice with patience and maturity
- Approach circumstances that differ from home with curiosity rather than frustration

## 9. Engagement, Behaviour & Leadership

Each participant must be willing and able to:

- Actively participate in all program activities unless ill or injured, and contribute positively to the group environment
- Work effectively as part of a team, including under potentially challenging or stressful conditions
- Demonstrate awareness of how their behaviour affects others and take responsibility accordingly
- Limit personal phone and internet use to designated periods and engage fully with the experience
- Show genuine respect for fellow participants, GapGuru staff, host community members, and local cultural practices
- Care for the natural environment and the host communities in which they are living and working
- Keep track of their own belongings throughout the program

Misrepresentation of a participant's ability to meet these criteria may result in formal intervention, disciplinary action, or early dismissal from the program. All associated costs will be the responsibility of the participant.

### Reasonable Accommodations

GapGuru is committed to making our programs as accessible as possible. Where reasonable accommodations can be made for participants with a disability, medical need, or other requirement, we will always endeavour to do so. Accommodation requests should be made as early as possible - ideally several months before the program start date - to allow sufficient time for open discussion and planning.

To request an accommodation, please contact us at [info@gapguru.com](mailto:info@gapguru.com) with the subject line *Accommodation Request*. All requests are handled individually, sensitively, and on a case-by-case basis. Accommodations that would require a fundamental change to the program or place an unreasonable burden on GapGuru's operations cannot be guaranteed. Simply disclosing a condition does not constitute a formal accommodation request - specific needs must be explicitly stated. If unanticipated needs arise during the program, participants should raise these with GapGuru staff immediately and every reasonable effort will be made to respond appropriately.