

ACE IN INDIA

This program is organized by SIT Study Abroad.

Program Dates: July 21 – August 11, 2018

(Students will arrive on-site July 21 and depart August 11. Dates subject to change up until point of departure.)

Service Focus

Learning from local organizations and community groups in New Delhi concerning health outreach efforts, focusing on particular local or regional health issues.

Program Leaders

- Program Contact at SIT Study Abroad in the United States:
 - **Jessica Lindoerfer**, Custom Program Manager, 802-258-3288, Jessica.Lindoerfer@sit.edu. Jessica works with institutions across the United States to develop international study and immersion programs around the world.
- SIT Study Abroad staff in New Delhi includes:
 - **Abid Siraj, MA**, Program Director: Abid has a master's degree in social work, and serves as the India country coordinator for SIT Study Abroad's IHP (comparative) programs on Health and Social Innovation.
 - **Bhavna Singh**, Program Coordinator and Homestay Coordinator: Bhavna is an athlete and Kathak dancer, speaks five languages, teaches Hindi, and has a postgrad diploma in rural development with a specialization in public health in India.
 - **Azim Khan, PhD**, SIT Academic Director: Dr. Khan earned his PhD in health and human rights from Aligarh Muslim University and has been an academic director for SIT since 2008.

Note: At housing and at placements, an SIT staff member will be within one hour's travel time from students for the duration of the program.

Program Overview

During their three weeks in New Delhi, students will be placed in pairs or small groups with health institutions and community groups to observe health education projects. Depending on need, students might be given an opportunity to design promotional campaigns focused on various aspects of health: sanitation, immunizations, dental health, or specific diseases or health concerns. With the guidance of health experts, students will create materials and make a plan for dissemination; students will collaborate with community organizations who review and implement such plans. In addition, the entire ACE group will have a short-term practical experience focused on children and sports.

SIT Study Abroad has offered programs in New Delhi for students from U.S. institutions since 1979, and has offered a program focused on health and community in India since 2010. Over the years, SIT has created many partnerships across the city that make this an excellent location for ACE students.

Learning Opportunities

Potential partners may include:

- NAZ Foundation (India) Trust (www.nazindia.org): NAZ India is an NGO working on HIV/AIDS and sexual health issues since 1994. NAZ India offers many services, including home-based care, LGBT advocacy, and health trainings on issues related to HIV/AIDS and sexual health. NAZ India also runs the Goal program, which aims to empower girls through sports and life skills education.
- GOONJ (www.goonj.org): GOONJ is an NGO providing clothing and other materials to communities in need; it also promotes menstrual hygiene awareness and breaking down taboos related to menses, and distributes sanitary pads produced out of waste cloth.
- SNEHI (www.snehi.org): SNEHI promotes psychosocial well-being and the reduction of mental illness stigma through educational outreach about mental health and mental illness.

In pairs or small groups, ACE participants will spend time with a partner organization to study and then create, plan, or contribute to health education outreach efforts. Depending on the needs of the organization, students may be involved in creating promotional materials, designing outreach campaigns, planning and organizing outreach events, to enable the partner organization to deliver health education programs. Through these activities, and through orientation and enrichment activities offered by SIT Study Abroad, students will learn about some of the major public health issues at play in India and the various community groups and government programs addressing these issues. Practical aspects of this program may involve accompanying the team of the partner organization in their activities with groups of children or women, depending on the project.

In addition, the whole ACE India group will team up for on-the-ground experience focused on sports and education.

Study placement matching process: SIT Study Abroad learns about ACE participants in two primary ways – through the application and the interview. Information from these sources helps get a sense of what study placements might be a good fit for the skills of the selected students. Once selection takes place, SIT's staff in India will work with the local organizations to determine the projects needed in the summertime. At that time, SIT may gather further information from students – either with a phone/Skype call or by e-mail communication – to determine the best overall match of students and organizations. Students will likely be given their study placement information about two to four weeks prior to departure.

Program Requirements

Language & Other Prerequisites: There are no language requirements on this program. The program includes at least one lesson in basic Hindi language during orientation. No other special skills are required to participate.

Personal Competencies:

Ideal participants will be flexible, enthusiastic team players with the following competencies:

- **Ability to take initiative and think creatively** – enjoys brainstorming different possible ways

to tackle an assigned project and carry it through; seeks and is open to input from others but can also operate independently

- **Empathy and cultural sensitivity** – effectively and respectfully communicates and interacts with people of different ages, races, religions, and cultures; demonstrates curiosity about the lives of others without judgment; is able to adapt to living in an environment that is new and unfamiliar
- **Ability to maximize being part of a supervised team** – responds to feedback and critique from team members and supervisors with maturity and openness to improvement; listens actively and communicates courteously; responds with patience and perseverance to new or unanticipated situations and obstacles; accepts responsibility for their actions; balances their personal expectations of the ACE learning experience with the realities of practical aspects of short-term projects in cultural and workplace settings that are new to them

Program Details

Description of Community: The program is based in New Delhi, home to over 300 international and 1,000 local NGOs actively involved in health and development. New Delhi has an extensive public transportation system, many parks and green spaces such as Lodhi gardens, sports facilities, and dozens of historical monuments and cultural associations. The city sees itself as both cosmopolitan and distinctively representative of its ancient roots.

New Delhi in July and August is very hot and humid: average highs between 95 and 105 degrees. June to mid-September is the monsoon season, with frequent rain showers.

Housing and Accommodations: During this program, participants will live in apartments with other program participants. Students will share a bedroom with one other participant of the same gender, and may share an apartment with as many as five other participants of the same or mixed genders.

On the last weekend of the program, participants will experience a three-night homestay with a local family in New Delhi. Students will be placed in homestays in pairs with another participant. During that time, some group activities will be planned including host families, and students will also have free time with their hosts to experience daily life in New Delhi.

Meals: SIT will arrange a cook to prepare breakfasts, some lunches, and dinners while living in apartments. Meals may be prepared for students in the apartments or at the SIT program center, nearby. In addition, some meals may be taken as a group in other locations, either arranged by SIT or with a stipend and guidance from SIT. While in homestays, students will have meals with families except in cases of group meals arranged by SIT. Vegetarian diets are very easy to accommodate since many Indians are vegetarian. Vegan diets may be somewhat less varied as Indian cuisine often uses dairy products. SIT Study Abroad has experience working with students with many different kinds of dietary restrictions; these will be indicated on the SIT medical form. Students who regularly take vitamins or other supplements should bring a supply with them.

Communication: Students can access the internet at the SIT Study Abroad program center. Students will meet several times a week at the program center and are welcome there anytime during posted open hours. Students will have internet access in their apartments but should not expect to have internet access at their homestays, although some may. Otherwise, internet access is available in internet centers, and some local cafes have Wi-Fi.

Students do not need to bring a laptop.

SIT will provide simple local cell phones for each student for the duration of the program. Each student is responsible for keeping the phone on and with them at all times. The phone will come with a small amount of calling credit, and students may use the phone for personal calls and texts as they like but are responsible for maintaining enough credit on the phone for making/receiving emergency calls.

Transportation: Students will travel to their practical study venues via metro or a combination of metro and taxi, depending on the practical study venue location in pairs or small groups. SIT Study Abroad will help each student pair or small group decide the safest and most reasonable way for them to get around, and will provide a transportation card for the metro and/or a stipend for taxis and guidance for using reputable taxi companies. Practical study venues will be no further than one hour from the SIT program center. For enrichment activities, transportation will be in a private, air-conditioned van, or (if within Delhi) via metro or taxi.

Athletic Training Facilities: New Delhi is home to many gyms and sports complexes. Gyms are modeled on U.S.-style fitness centers but facilities may be less modern or not as comprehensive as the gyms students are accustomed to. Students will be provided with a one-month membership to a local sports complex which includes gym facilities as well as sports fields and other recreation spaces. Because of the oppressive heat and humidity in New Delhi in July and August, students will probably find that early morning or late afternoon/evening are the best times to work out. SIT Study Abroad will provide students with guidelines for appropriate dress at the gym and appropriate and safe work-out practices, e.g., jogging.

Additional Learning Opportunities

SIT Study Abroad staff will hold reflection sessions several times a week, usually at the SIT program center but at times at other locations. Reflection may be based around several aspects of the students' experience, such as cultural adaptation, group dynamics, and the practical study venue. Likely topics for reflection relate to the meaning of service in the Indian context; students' role as foreign visitors; surprises and shocks in the homestay experience; dealing with day-to-day communication challenges; how we can best serve our organizations; the difference between service and helping; accomplishments and setbacks in our projects, etc.

Orientation

Orientation includes a program overview, sessions on cultural adaptation, health and safety briefings, general overview of the Indian healthcare system and structures, orientation to the city of New Delhi, transportation overview, and basic Hindi language. Before the brief homestay experience, SIT staff will

also lead a homestay orientation to prepare students for this opportunity.

Other Opportunities

Enrichment activities will include the following, with details to be determined:

- Visit to the Taj Mahal
- Visits to local sites around New Delhi, including important cultural, historic, and religious sites
- Lectures or discussion about topics including healthcare delivery in India, or historic, cultural, religious, or political history and current issues
- Introduction to the game of cricket, including playing a game (with host families if possible) and attending a cricket match

Other possible activities include an introduction to Bollywood film and a dance lesson; a guided visit to historic or religious sites of interest, or other topics based on students' interests.

Suggested Resources

We encourage you to do as much as you can to learn about India, and, if selected, we encourage you to continue this study to prepare you for your experience in New Delhi. The following are a selection of resources which may be helpful:

Websites

- [The Hindu : Home Page News & Features](#)
- [BBC News South Asia coverage](#)
- [The Indian Express](#)
- [Outlook](#)
- [India Today](#)

Books

- ***In Spite of the Gods*** by Edward Luce: A journalist and bureau chief for the Financial Times, Luce spent several years traveling around India and conducting interviews with Indians from all walks of life, from peasant farmers to heads of state. This recent work presents a probing and critical examination of the country's transformations and enormous complexity. Both scholarly and entertaining, the book is accessible to both the serious student of India today and the casual traveler.
- ***Maximum City*** by Suketu Mehta: Nominated for the Pulitzer Prize for this work, Suketu Mehta presents a dramatic and gripping account of the realities of modern Bombay from a variety of perspectives.
- ***The Argumentative Indian*** by Amartya Sen: Nobel-Prize-winning economist, Amartya Sen, delivers yet another brilliant work, which is easy to read and astonishingly profound. Chapters cover topics as diverse as China and India, Rabindranath Tagore's India, India and the Bomb, and The Indian Identity. Sen's rigor, as a scholar and as a great humanist, makes this book a compelling historical yet modern snapshot of the Subcontinent.

Films

- Salaam Bombay!
- Mr. and Mrs. Iyer
- Passage to India
- Lagaan: Once Upon a Time in India
- Matrubhoomi
- Heat and Dust
- Gandhi
- Monsoon Wedding
- Dil Chata Hai