“Travelling across the world to work for two months with a group of people I hardly knew was daunting, but turned out to be one of the best decisions I've ever made. I experienced a beautiful culture and made friends for life, but I also feel like I gave something back. I think this must be one of the best ways to grow and learn, while seeing the world, having fun, and making a difference at the same time.”

Anna, volunteer 2019.
Project Overview

The Cambodia International Volunteering Project is a once in a lifetime opportunity that will contribute significantly to both your personal and professional development. Over the summer of 2020, as part of a team of ten student volunteers, you will undertake a challenging and rewarding project at a school in rural Cambodia. This project will allow you to make a positive difference to the lives of young people as well as experience the extraordinary culture of Cambodia and it was devised to provide an immersive cultural experience that will develop the skills of our students.

The project is run in partnership with Seametrey Children’s Village an NGO in Tonle Bati, approximately 30km from the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh Seametrey translates as; Freedom, Civilisation and Love which sums up perfectly this inspiring place that was set up by the organisation’s Director, Muoy You, a qualified teacher who has taught all over the world. For an insight into the school’s background, philosophy and the different activities that take place there please have a look at their website which is linked above.

2020 will be the eighth year that the University of Leeds has run the programme and this year we are looking to recruit two Project Leaders and eight volunteers. The University is committed to ensuring that projects such as this are accessible to all students and, thanks to funding from Santander Universities, Project Leaders will receive a grant of £1000 each and volunteers will receive £500 each towards the costs of taking part (e.g. flights and vaccinations).

The programme will last for two months over the university summer holidays and before applying you will need to ensure that you are available from late June until late August 2020. The duration of the project is based on the needs of the school and its pupils as well as ensuring volunteers are there long enough to have a lasting impact. The project is open to students of all levels and degree disciplines but if you’re a final year undergraduate please note that you will be in Cambodia during the summer graduation period but you will be able to defer your graduation until the winter ceremonies held in December.

“"The Cambodia Volunteering Project is the most unforgettable experience. It is unlike any other volunteering projects you may come across as it allows you to fully immerse yourself, gaining skills and making memories that shorter projects don't allow you to do."

**Role description - Project Leader**

We are looking for two Project Leaders who are able to demonstrate a wide range of skills that highlight they have what it takes to deal with an intense two month volunteering programme as well as support the team with fundraising activities throughout semester 2. You will need to have excellent cultural awareness, strong communication and leadership skills combined with the adaptability to manage a project that operates in an environment unlike any you may have experienced in the UK. Project Leaders have generally had experience of volunteering in the UK and undertaken previous international travel. You will:

- Support the team in a number of ways, both in the UK pre-departure and for the duration of the project in Cambodia
- Be the main point of contact between the team and Emma Davey at the University of Leeds and Muoy You, Director of Seametrey Children’s Village, both pre-departure and while in Cambodia
- Fundraise £900 to cover food, accommodation and contribute to the ongoing development of the school
- Support volunteers to fundraise £900 each
- Assist with any pre-departure training and team building activities
- Arrive in Cambodia four days before the volunteers to acclimatise and familiarise yourself with both Phnom Penh and Seametrey to ensure you are ready to support the team on their arrival.

**Role description – Volunteer**

The varied nature of the role and the length of the programme means that we are looking for volunteers who have what it takes to deal with an intense, overseas volunteering programme. No previous experience of international travel is required but we are looking for volunteers with the right skills and attitude to contribute to the overall success of the team. You will:

- Fundraise £900 to cover food, accommodation and contribute to the ongoing development of the school
- Be prepared to get involved with a wide range of activities at Seametrey including sports, arts and crafts, teaching basic English and the production of the annual film which in 2020 will be ‘The King and I’
- Contribute to blog posts and other social media before and during your time in Cambodia to promote the project to future volunteers at the University of Leeds.
Fundraising & Costs

Seametrey relies on donations to support its work and ongoing development and the University of Leeds charges no administration fee so all funds raised by students go directly to the school to contribute its long-term sustainability.

As previously mentioned, the fundraising target of £900 will cover your accommodation and food during the week. The cost of food and accommodation at weekends is the responsibility of volunteers and a budget of approximately £50-80 per week is advised.

The cost of return flights to Cambodia is not covered by your fundraising but you may use your grant towards this and the price of flights varies depending on when and where you book them but in past years have cost approximately £500-650. The cost of travel whilst in Cambodia will vary depending on what you choose to do and there are many tourist destinations you may wish to visit. Members of the 2019 team will be more than happy to provide information on what they did at weekends and how much they spent.

You must ensure that you are correctly vaccinated before arriving in Cambodia and the cost of this will depend on which vaccinations you require. The University of Leeds will provide comprehensive travel insurance free of charge for all students taking part in the Cambodia International Volunteering Project 2020.
Who pays what?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student:</th>
<th>University of Leeds:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Flights</td>
<td>- Travel insurance</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Vaccinations</td>
<td>- Visa</td>
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<tr>
<td>- Spending money</td>
<td>- Accommodation in Phnom Penh during acclimatisation period</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Accommodation and food at weekends</td>
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Acclimatisation Week

Project Leaders will be required to arrive in Cambodia four days before the rest of the team to ensure they are settled and able to welcome and support the others on their arrival by establishing the location of key places such as the health clinic, post office and British Embassy. Project Leaders will also meet with Muoy You and visit Seametrey to develop a plan for the summer camp so the team can begin work as soon as they arrive.

The team will stay together at a hostel in the capital city, Phnom Penh, until Sunday 5th July when they will travel to the school. This time is for you to adjust to the change in climate, the different food, local currency and to explore Phnom Penh. We actively encourage students to use this time as an opportunity to familiarise themselves with Cambodia’s history by visiting places such as the Royal Palace and the Killing Fields.

The Working Week

You will work at the school for approximately 35 - 40 hours per week over five days and your two days off will be arranged by mutual agreement with the school but will normally be Saturday and Sunday. The day typically starts at 7:30am and finishes at 4pm with a 90 minute lunch break in the middle. At the end of the day you will have full access to the school’s facilities so you can swim, play sport, or just relax!

Weekdays will be spent running a ‘summer camp’ with volunteers bringing their own interests and hobbies to run activities that engage the children. The age of the children at the school ranges from 3 to 14 years and volunteers will work with all age groups so will need to plan age appropriate activities and be able to adapt plans quickly if something doesn’t work. The idea behind the summer camp is that Leeds University volunteers turn Seametrey into an English speaking campus for the eight weeks they are there so the children hear and speak the language on a daily basis. The team will also work with the children to produce the annual school film and if you would like to watch the 2019 production of Aladdin you can find it here [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6roCWQXU40](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6roCWQXU40)

There is always plenty to do at Seametrey Children’s Village and the school wants every volunteer to leave feeling that they have made a tangible difference. In the past, volunteers have not only participated in the summer camp but designed a skate park (which has now been constructed and is used by the pupils, the local community and visitors to the school), designed a food and drinks bar, developed and implemented school policies, timetables and staff development programmes, undertaken landscaping projects, helped construct buildings and even assisted with environmental and ecological work on the lake through clean energy and eco-living initiatives. Volunteers will need to be flexible and adaptable to any changes that may happen at short notice and also understand and respect that the school system is very different to anything you will have experienced.

“I learnt more about myself and other people than I could have ever imagined. If you’ve never challenged or pushed yourself outside of your comfort zone, this is the best opportunity going! Humbling, refreshing and intense.”

Haddy, Project Leader 2019.
Weekends

All volunteers will have Saturday and Sunday (or two other designated days) free. During this time, you are free to travel as a group around Cambodia to visit other towns and cities. Weekend accommodation is not generally included, however, should volunteers wish to stay at the school on weekends or days off there will be no additional cost although you will be required to buy your own food. All Volunteers will receive an extended break in the middle of the two months (Saturday – Wednesday) so you can travel further afield and arrangements will be discussed with the school’s director nearer the time.

Accommodation

During the week volunteers will stay in the school’s designated volunteer accommodation block consisting of three floors. The ground floor has a large communal living area with a basic kitchen that is equipped with a sink, fridge freezer, toaster, kettle and drinking water tanks. The accommodation has fully functioning shower rooms and toilets on each floor. Bedrooms are communal, with separate rooms for males and females and you will be provided with bedding and mosquito nets. You will make your own breakfast and lunch and dinner will be served in the school’s canteen.
Visas

Visas are purchased at the airport on arrival in Cambodia and students will need to request the business visa which is $30. You will need to pay for this in cash and we will ensure you are reimbursed this money from the Project Leaders when you reach your accommodation.

How to apply?

You will need to complete an application form and attend an interview and Project Leaders will be expected to assist with interviewing potential volunteers. If you apply to be a Project Leader but are unsuccessful you can request to be considered for a volunteer role.

If you would like to discuss the project in more detail or, to request an application form please email Emma Davey at e.davey@leeds.ac.uk and specify if you are interested in the Project Leader or volunteer role.

Closing dates for applications are:

- Project Leader - 9am, Monday 24th February 2020
- Volunteer – 9am, Monday 2nd March 2020