



2009 Volunteer in Austin, Texas USA

Locations	Austin, Texas USA
Start Dates	1 st Saturday of every month. Minimum duration – 1 week
Program Fees	1 week - US\$975; 2 weeks – US\$1525; 3 weeks - US\$2035; 4 weeks - US\$2490 Discounts provided for 4+ weeks stays
What's Included	Volunteer placement & arrival orientation Housing Meals Airport pick-up and transfer Activities & Excursions Full-time pre-departure and local support
What's not Included	International transportation Visa fees (if applicable) Insurance Personal expenses
Projects Available	Teaching/Tutoring Building/Construction Social Welfare Health/Nutrition Environment/Ecology Homeless shelters/food bank Animal Welfare Elder/Nursing home care
Accommodations	Dorm rooms (2-4 people per room) with shared bathrooms. Family style meals or cafeteria meal plan (depending on vacancy) with vegetarian fare available upon request

LonelyPlanet.com describes Austin as, “An eclectic pick-and-mix of retro funk and new-age entrepreneurial spirit, Austin’s best side is a mystic soup of social consciousness and capitalist development, tattoo-covered artists and internet millionaires. Quality of life reigns supreme. Here even the buttoned-down businessmen are likely to take a day off to go swimming in spring-fed pools, jogging along Town Lake or kayaking on the river. Almost any night here you can listen to live indie rock, jazz-funk, alt country, punk ska, acoustic rhythms, Latin sambas, Tejano trumpets, world beat...shall I go on?”

Now is your chance to experience the capital of Texas, a city renowned for its music, food, academia, arts, culture, and ‘weirdness!’ Come spend some time getting to know one of United State’s most livable city, and help at-need communities, enjoy the many social and recreational activities, as well as optional English or Spanish language lessons and academic preparation courses (i.e. SAT, ACT, LSAT, GMAT, TOEFL and more). **Cultural Embrace** partners with local community organizations to help children, families, and the community. By contributing your time, energy and passion to others, you will gain a memorable and meaningful experience to “Keep Austin Weird”.

Projects Available

Teach/Tutor

Assist the local schools, community centers, libraries, churches, and NGOs that assist at-need students and community members. Tutor children with their school work, or help immigrants learn and improve their English language level. If you are knowledgeable with specific skills (ie: foreign language, computers, environment, health/medical, etc), we can tailor a more subject- and field-related placement for you. Opt to serve as a role model for struggling teenagers and adults through informal education classes, community events and administrative support to local non-profits. Most of these students have dropped out of school or immigrants to the Austin area, and trying to find alternate opportunities to continue and improve their education.

Social Welfare Development

Provide assistance to community centers that support at-risk and at-need communities in Austin. Work at homeless shelters, women and children agencies, animal rescue, pet shelters, food banks, nursing homes and community centers. Be a friend and lend a hand and a smile to help others learn values, manners, and life skills to become self-sufficient and obtain an appreciation of education. Past projects range from tutoring, cleaning, carpentry, program development, cooking, childcare, business skills training, administrative, data entry and more.

Health/Medical Clinics

Work alongside community health and medical clinics. Be a friend to patients, assist medical staff, and organize health/nutrition classes. Knowledge of nutrition, health and medical field are preferred for these projects.

Environment/Ecology Conservation

Learn and practice how to be a positive example of nature conservation. Work at community parks to help preserve Austin's 'green' city! Duties include restoring and improving the grounds, plantations and facilities. Interact with the local communities and expand your knowledge with reasons, benefits, and ways to be more environmentally friendly.

Building/Construction Maintenance

Lend a hand with a variety of laborious and maintenance jobs. Assistance for building, painting, gardening, cleaning and wiring are needed for a variety of projects. Experience and knowledge helpful, but not required.

Activities & Excursions

Cultural Embrace partners with several local language and tutoring academies to offer optional courses while you volunteer in Austin. This is a wonderful way to maximize your time in this fabulous city by providing service to the community, making friends and enjoying the vibrant city, and taking classes to improve your skills that will enhance your academic and professional endeavors.

Optional English and/or Spanish Language:

Small group classes or private tutoring is available for students who want to improve their pronunciation and conversational English or Spanish. Course goals are to improve fluency and speaking competence by learning the vocabulary, expressions, and grammatical forms needed for everyday social communication. Pronunciation will be improved by focusing on vowel and consonant sounds and rhythm, stress, and intonation. Classes are determined by language level, offered from 1-5 hours per day. Fees start as low as \$10/hour, depending on class size, dates, and duration.

Optional Academic Test Preparation & College Application/Resume Writing Tutoring:

Small group classes or private tutoring is available to help with test-taking skills for: SAT, ACT, PSAT, AP, TOEFL, GRE, LSAT, GMAT, MCAT, CLEP Prep, and more. Or, get personal attention and guidance with college or graduate school applications, or resume writing skills. Fees start as low as \$45/hour, depending on class size, dates, and program duration.

Activities and excursions without any additional fees, that may be available during your program:

- Austin city tour(s) including city bus pass for duration of your stay.
- Dinner at a local popular Austin restaurant
- Evening(s) with live Austin music
- Dance lessons – two stepping/country, tango, salsa, meringue
- Excursions to San Antonio, amusement parks, and other nearby attractions (depending on season and program duration)

Program Details & Highlights

Volunteer in Austin, Texas USA Offers:

- A first-hand experience to see and improve the communities in Austin.
- A broader perspective on world views.
- Opportunity to learn Austin's lifestyles and community initiatives as well as other cultural activities (ie: music, language, crafts, dance, etc)
- Memorable experiences while traveling and experiencing one of the most 'livable' cities in USA
- Lifelong friends from all around the globe
- International work and cultural experiences that strengthens your resume
- Support and development of self-confidence and personal skills

Cultural Embrace Offers:

- **Guaranteed volunteer placement**

Customized volunteer placement(s) will be organized prior to your departure.

- **Accommodations**

Basic, clean & comfortable housing is included in your program. Most housing will be in a shared dorm room (2-4 people).

- **Meals**

At least two meals a day, six days per week are included with your program. Meal plans will depend per project and destination, usually a family style or cafeteria meal plan. Dietary and allergy restrictions will be met with advanced notice.

- **Optional English or Spanish Language Lessons or Academic Test Preparation Course**
Private and small group lessons to improve your English or Spanish language, or to improve your test-taking skills (i.e. SAT, ACT, GRE, GMAT, LSAT, TOEFL, etc.) may be offered upon request before, during or after volunteer placement for nominal fees.
- **Arrival Assistance**
Airport or bus station pickup and transfer to your housing are included with your program every first Saturday of the month. If you arrive on a different date, we will provide you with detailed instructions of your housing details.
- **Orientation & Training**
You will receive training of your responsibilities and tasks, as well as local orientation of the area from our local coordinators on the first Sunday of every month.
- **Cultural Embrace Cultural Kit**
You will receive useful information prior to your departure to prepare you for your adventure abroad
- **Full-time pre-departure and local support**
- **Visa assistance** (if applicable)
-*Cultural Embrace* will assist you with the process to obtain the proper visa, but we have no control or guarantees of government issuances and visa availability.

Program Requirements

- Volunteers must be at least the age of 18 (or with parent consent.)
- Basic English skills. We offer optional English and Spanish language lessons for a nominal fee before, during, or after your volunteer project.
- Enjoy working and serving at-need or at-risk communities.
- Open to foreign cultures and living abroad.
- Dependable and dedicated to full-term of commitment
- Responsible and conscientious with volunteer projects and accommodations

2009 Program Fees

Duration	Fee (in US\$)
1 week	\$975
2 weeks	\$1525
3 weeks	\$2035
4 weeks	\$2490
4+ weeks	Contact us for discounted rates

-All Volunteer Projects include: room & board (as specified), traveler's insurance, airport/bus station pick-up & transfer (as specified), full-time pre-departure and local support
-Prices listed in US Dollars, and AUD\$, CAN\$, £,€ accepted

How to Apply

- 1) Read the instructions carefully and complete all forms.
- 2) Submit your completed application packet to:

CULTURAL EMBRACE
7201 Bill Hughes Road
Austin, TX 78745 USA

Completed packet should include

- Volunteer Application
- Signed Volunteer Program & Agreement
- Copy of your passport - information page only
- Copies of diploma or certificates related to field of interest (if applicable)
- Resume/CV
- Cover Letter explaining what you want to do and why you want to provide a service in Austin, TX.
- Two references: preferably professional references and/or character reference
- Doctor's certificate verifying that you are in excellent mental and physical health
- Police background security check
- Two 1½" x 2" official passport style photos printed on each photo
- One full-length picture of yourself
- US\$200 non-refundable deposit (credited towards your program fee)

Upon receipt of your application, a **Cultural Embrace** coordinator will contact you for a 20-30 minutes phone interview. Once we accept you in to our program, you will receive an invoice for the remainder of your program fee. In order for us to contact our local partners to start your placement process, we require at least 50% of your program.

We recommend submitting your application and program fee at least 12-16 weeks prior to your desired start date in order for us to organize and arrange your volunteer placement.

***Cultural Embrace** requires an expedited application fee for those applying 12 weeks or less before the desired date of departure. Applications received 8-12 weeks prior to desired departure date will be charged \$150. Applications received less than 8 weeks before the desired departure date will be charged \$250.

Frequently Asked Questions

1) *Why should I pay **Cultural Embrace** to volunteer?*

Cultural Embrace and our local partners specialize in arranging a guaranteed volunteer placement, housing and insurance prior to your departure. This will alleviate the troubles and stress of getting everything organized in a new environment, so you will have more time and energy to spend on your volunteer project. Your time in Austin will still be an independent and memorable one, but we are here to guide you to a safe, healthy and comfortable experience before, during, and after your adventure.

Fees vary according to project, destination, and length of stay. Most of the costs go toward operational project and field expenses, (ie: housing, food, transportation, supplies, etc) plus the administrative fees to cover office and local support (ie: legal, accounting, insurance, advertising, etc), but some of the fees will also go toward sustaining the volunteer project. **Cultural Embrace** does not add on any profits on their volunteer programs

2) *Austin is a pretty affluent city, why should I volunteer there:*

True, Austin is an economically developed and continually growing city, but there are still children, families, and community projects that need your support and assistance. Plus, Austin is one of the most 'livable' cities in the States, with it's renowned live music scene, all multi-cultural influence, it is a destination that is appealing for all types of people.

3) *Where will I stay?*

Depending on the time of the year, you will either stay in a campus dormitory or a youth hostel. Rooms will be shared between 2-4 people, with shared bathroom. Most meals will be included during your stay. You will either be on a cafeteria meal plan, or have the food provided for family style meals cooked together with other volunteers on your program. Vegetarian and dietary restrictions will be met with advanced notice.

4) *What type of visa assistance does **Cultural Embrace** provide?*

For non-USA passport holders, you will have to check with the USA embassy or consulate to determine what your visa requirements are. We will try to assist you with an invitation letter, but please note that any visa fees are the responsibility of the applicant. **Cultural Embrace** will assist you during the process, however, it is ultimately your responsibility to ensure that you have obtained the appropriate visa for your volunteer experience. **Cultural Embrace** has no control over the visa process and cannot guarantee that your visa application will be accepted.

5) *How long will it take to make my placement?*

We ask applicants to apply at least 12-16 weeks in advance of your desired start date. The placement may take less time than this, but we want to ensure that we have enough time to find a great placement for you! There are additional administrative fees if you apply less than 12 weeks in advanced, and we do not contact our local partners until we receive at least 50% of the program fee payment.

6) *What should I wear or bring to volunteer?*

Depending on the time of year and location of your placement, you will need to dress accordingly. Close-toed shoes are very important for construction/renovations and environmental projects, as well as comfortable clothes. **Cultural Embrace** will provide you with more details in your **Cultural Embrace** pre-departure kit.

7) *Can I volunteer and/or live with a friend or partner?*

Yes, you can enroll in this program with other people, and we encourage it since it will enhance your experience and memories. Additionally, you will receive a discount for referring friends and family to join you on the same or other CE programs. Although you may state your preferences for shared housing, you will need to be flexible and respectful of local customs.

8) *When should I buy my plane ticket and does **Cultural Embrace** provide any resources to help with plane tickets?*

Plane tickets should not be purchased until after your placement has been confirmed. **Cultural Embrace** works with consolidators and discount travel agencies that can help find cheaper tickets than those that are available to the general public.

9) *What do I do if I have a problem or complaint within my volunteer placement?*

You will have a local coordinator from **Cultural Embrace** that will be available to assist you at any time.

10) *Why should I pay to volunteer abroad, and where does my money go to with Cultural Embrace?*

Cultural Embrace specializes in arranging a guaranteed volunteer placement, housing, meals, and activities prior to your departure. Austin is a popular city with regular special events and activities that keep our city busy. This will alleviate the troubles and stress of getting everything organized in a new environment.

Your program fee includes your customized volunteer placement, comfortable and clean housing, most meals, excursions and special events, and all of the administrative and logistical costs to set up your placement in Austin. **Cultural Embrace** also pro-rates the expenses for marketing, advertising, and communication among all of our programs within our fees.

For any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at info@culturalembrace.com or you can call us at 1-512-469-9089 or 1-888-214-8570 (US toll-free)

*Discover the Similarities. . .
Share the Differences. . .*

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