

SHIKAOI EXCHANGE

Adult Long Stay
Volunteer
Application Package



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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Shikaoi Exchange Long Stay Volunteer Program was developed in 2015 as an adult program for Stony Plain residents. The program's goal focuses on sharing the knowledge, skills and experiences that each unique participant brings with them. Immersed in the community of Shikaoi for up to 80 days, the program is an excellent way to further deepen the sister town relationship that was established in 1985.

Participants are offered free accommodation at the S.S House, a housing facility located in the Town core that was built specifically for the Program. The Town of Shikaoi will also provide a travel grant that covers a portion of the participant's travel expenses.

Volunteer activities include (but are not limited to) kindergarten and nursery school visits, participation at the English Conversation Circle and the hosting of pot-luck parties at S.S House.

ABOUT SHIKAOI

Shikaoi is a town located in the eastern Tokaichi region of Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost prefecture. Nestled along the Daisetsu mountain range, it is a town that boasts both tourism and agricultural expertise. The similarities it shares with Stony Plain in industry and climate is what prompted the twinning between the communities. Since then, the emergence of numerous international programs have followed suit, the most successful of them being the Shikaoi High School Canada Exchange Program, (*known in Stony Plain as the Host Family Program*) where all Grade 11 students travel to Stony Plain on a two-week cultural exchange.

CANDIDATE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

To apply for the program, participants must be at least 18 years of age.

This program is ideal for those who:

- Are active, outgoing, personable and responsible;
- Are self-reliant;
- Are interested in working with children;
- Demonstrate an interest in the history and culture of Japan.

Preference may be given to residents of the Town of Stony Plain or those who have previously participated in the Shikaoi Exchange Program.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The applicant must:

- Complete the attached application form;
- Be available to travel to Shikaoi, Japan for a duration of 30 – 80 days;
- Have the ability to financially support themselves for the duration of their time in Shikaoi;
- Provide valid health coverage for overseas travel;
- Provide a clean criminal record check;
- Provide a valid passport or proof of application for new passport with attached receipt. (Please note; applications received without passport information or passport application receipt will not be accepted)
- Submit application form 90 days prior to desired travel date, and
- Participate in an interview.

Successful applicants are not required to apply for a work visa since their stay will not exceed 90 days.

Former Long Stay participants may be considered however, preference will be given to those who have not previously been selected for the program.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Travel Expense Grant

The Town of Shikaoi offers a Travel Expense Grant that provides reimbursement to participants for the costs associated with travel. The grant includes the following allotments:

- Reimbursement may be provided to participants for costs associated with airfare (in-bound travel only) to a maximum of ¥60,000. (Approximately \$700CAD). Flights terminating at both the Tokachi-Obihiro and New Chitose (Sapporo) Airports are eligible to receive this portion of the grant.
- Reimbursement may be provided to participants for costs associated with hotel fees if lodging is required due to flight schedules. A maximum of ¥10,000 (approximately \$120CAD) will be available to the participant. Only flights terminating at the New Chitose airport will be eligible for the hotel fees portion of the grant.
- Reimbursement may be provided to participants for costs associated with Train/Bus fees to a maximum of ¥5,000. (Approximately \$60CAD). Only flights terminating at the New Chitose Airport in Sapporo are eligible for the Train/Bus fees portion of the grant.
- The successful applicant will be required to produce proof of expense to receive the travel grant and will be reimbursed upon the completion of their term in Shikaoi.
- The grant will only be offered to repeat participants to a maximum of three (3) times.

Expenses

The successful applicant is responsible for all associated travel costs. This may include airfare, hotel accommodation (if required) and ground transportation. Travel grants (if applicable) are given to participants after arrival in Shikaoi.

Participants are responsible for all cost of living expenses while in Shikaoi. This includes:

- Food;
- Entertainment;
- Household supplies (cleaning, laundry products etc.);
- Drinks and pot-luck item for the weekly English Conversation Circle;
- Any travel while in Hokkaido (site seeing, etc.);
- The Town of Shikaoi will provide participants with the use of a cell phone for use while in Shikaoi. The SIM card cost is the responsibility of the participant.

Accommodation

The Town of Shikaoi provides a fully furnished, one bedroom Town House for participants for the duration of their stay in Shikaoi known as the S.S House. All amenities will be covered including the use of WiFi. In the warm season months, a bike with basket may also be provided for use.

Participant Requirements

- Participate in Town of Shikaoi programs and events;
- Host English pot-luck parties at the S.S House;
- Promote English education by volunteering primarily at the Shikaoi nursery and kindergarten.

Travel and Insurance

It is the responsibility of the successful applicant to secure their own travel to and from Shikaoi. This includes airfare, hotel accommodation (if required) and ground transportation. Copies of travel itinerary must be provided no later than 45 days prior to schedule arrival date in Shikaoi.

Applicants are required to have travel and medical insurance. The Towns of Shikaoi and Stony Plain will not be responsible for medical expenses incurred while in Shikaoi, lost baggage or trip cancellations. Copies of the travel and medical insurance documents must be provided to the Town of Stony Plain prior to departure for Shikaoi.

Transportation

Participants will need to be able to get themselves to schools, Town Office, stores and other destinations. If the location is within Shikaoi the participant will need to be able to walk, bike or bus to their destination. Town staff will be able to drive the participant around town under special circumstances. If the participant brings an international license to Japan they have the option to rent a vehicle from a rental company in Obihiro.

Packing

Participants will need to be mindful of the seasons and the weather before they arrive in Shikaoi. If travelling in the fall or winter, appropriate cold weather attire will be required. Rain clothes for the spring and summer as also strongly recommended.

As participants may be invited to attend formal dinners or events, appropriate formal attire is also required.

Blog

The Town of Stony Plain would like participants to submit a written, bi-monthly account of their experiences and activities while in Shikaoi. These reports must be sent to the Community Services Coordinator to be posted to the Town website.

Program Feedback Requirements

Participants will be required to fill out a feedback form upon completion of their time in Shikaoi. This form will be used to guide improvements and recommendations for the program.

INTERVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Individuals selected for an interview will be contacted once their application has been reviewed. The interview process is intended to help the Town identify suitable candidates who will act as ambassadors while in Shikaoi. Once candidates are chosen by the interview committee, the recommendations will be sent to the Town of Shikaoi for final approval.

Please note, only applicants that have been selected for an interview will be contacted.

LONG STAY VOLUNTEER APPLICATION FORM



PERSONAL INFORMATION

FULL LEGAL NAME: _____
(must be the legal names exactly as they appear on your passport, not the name you go by)

BIRTHDAY: _____
(yyyy/mm/dd)

GENDER: _____

CITIZENSHIP: _____

COUNTRY OF BIRTH: _____

PASSPORT #: _____

PASSPORT EXPIRY: _____
(yyyy/mm/dd)

ADDRESS: _____

CITY/TOWN: _____

POSTAL CODE: _____

PRIMARY PHONE #: _____

EMAIL: _____

OCCUPTION: _____

FAMILY INFORMATION

EMERGENCY CONTACT: _____
(if other please specify)

RELATION: _____

WORK #: _____

EMAIL: _____

CELL #: _____

TRAVEL DATES

Please list your preferred travel dates (date leaving Canada to return date):

DATE 1: _____

DATE 2: _____

DATE 3: _____

DATE 4: _____

HEALTH INFORMATION

Please list any allergies you may have.

(Please list all allergies)

Yes, please provide details and treatment No

Do you currently take any prescription medications?

Yes, which ones and why? No

Are there any medical, physical or psychological conditions (ie. heart condition, difficulty walking long distances etc.) that may restrict travelling overseas?

Yes, please provide details and treatment No

Do you have a special diet? (celiac, vegetarian, vegan etc.)

Yes, please provide details No

APPLICANT PROFILE

Excluding English, list any languages you know, the # of years you've studied them and rate your ability using Good, Fair or Poor.

In the past 5 years, which provinces and countries have you visited?
(Include the year visited and duration of stay)

Have you participated in an exchange before?

Yes, please explain

No

If selected, what interests or hobbies will you share during your stay in Shikaoi?

What do you hope to do during your stay in Shikaoi?

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you feel you would make a good ambassador for the Town of Stony Plain?
2. If selected, what would you have to offer to the Town of Shikaoi as part of this exchange?
3. What do you hope gain from this experience?
4. How did you become interested in Japanese culture? What cultural challenges do you think you may encounter during your stay and how will you overcome them?

Please forward your completed application form to:

**Kelly Dixon | Facility Programming Coordinator | kdixon@stonyplain.com
Town of Stony Plain | 4905 - 51 Avenue | Stony Plain, AB | T7Z 1Y1**