

Custom Program FAQs

What is a custom Program?

A custom program is designed by you with the help of the IPSL Team. We can help you determine your goals and find the best fit for you with the program elements we can offer. A custom program allows for maximum flexibility and is suited for everyone but particularly works for those who:

- Are not currently students
- Have work and family obligations that dictate when and how long they can go
- Have a very specific goal such as intensive language learning, full time volunteering, research, preceptorship or field work requirements
- Wants to take courses but does not need a transcript
- Has AmeriCorp awards to use but needs a cost effective program without academics

What can I do?

Aside from experiencing another culture and part of the world you can:

- Volunteer in local, grassroots organizations
- Expand your knowledge from NGO leaders and make professional connections
- Study a foreign language as intensely as you wish
- Take one (or more!) IPSL academic courses for credit or for fun
- Get college credit and a transcript (or not)
- Travel to a neighboring country or region to explore
- Have fun with cultural activities and outdoor adventure trips
- Try out living in another country

When and how long can I go?

In most of our locations* you can design a program to go anytime of year and for any length of time (minimum 7 days)

*some locations do not accept participants during specific holiday seasons

Where do I live?

Custom program participants can choose to live in a variety of accommodations and the choices vary between locations. You can live with a host family; student accommodations at the language schools; group houses off campus run by the school; or independent apartments

Can I bring my partner and/or child?

Yes, with special arrangements most locations welcome family members. Additional costs may be added.

How does my program get designed?

- Step One: Get excited!
- Contact us through any means – even by giving us a phone call!

- Set up a time to video chat with the Director of Programs or another IPSL team member to discuss your goals and options
- A draft proposal with comprehensive program fee will be created and shared with you
- Schedule a time to discuss and make any changes you wish to make
- Once you are happy with the program, we will guide you through the application, enrollment and preparation process.

How will I know what my program fee is?

Your program proposal will state the exact fee typically minus international airfare, some meals, personal spending money and extra excursions or independent travel.

Can you work within my budget?

Absolutely! And for AmeriCorps alums, we can include your airfare so your Segal Education award includes this expense to minimize out of pocket costs.

How do I apply?

Complete and submit this simple online [Custom Application](#) and we will contact you about next steps.

Is there an application fee?

Yes. It is a non-refundable \$75 fee that can be paid via a link. If you are an AmeriCorps alum, a Peace Corps returnee or a veteran, this fee is waived.

Is there a deadline for applying?

No, but in order to have time to prepare for your specific program we request that you commit 30 days in advance.

What is the enrollment process like?

We lead you through the process with a series of detailed emails and links to upload necessary information.

How am I prepared to go?

You have access to an extensive online orientation, handbook and in some cases an online Toolkit (for research resources). You will virtually meet the program director before departure to ask any last - minute questions and you are given the in-country contact information (typically a local cell phone number or Whataspp number. You will be met at the airport by one of the in-country IPSL team members or the IPSL designated driver.

How am I supported while on my program?

There is a local in-country team led by the IPSL program Director that is available 24/7 for assistance, questions or emergencies. Your homestay family and professors also serve as a support team and the IPSL Portland office is available 24/7 for any student health and safety emergencies that cannot be handled by the in-country team. You will be provided with the emergency phone number before departure. You will be met at the

airport and given an in-country orientation (covering, safety, logistics, banking, public transportation, etc.) within a day or two of arriving.

What happens after my program is over?

If you elected to take a course(s) for academic credit you will either receive an official grade report from IPSL or an official transcript from the National University of Natural Medicine (IPSL's home institution). We may ask you for an evaluation, an online review or to speak to future participants about your experience if you wish. You will remain as an alumni forever!

Are there special “perks” for being an IPSL Alum?

Yes, for every participant that you directly recommend that goes on a program, you can receive a referral fee of \$250! And, if you wish to go on another IPSL program, you will receive a \$500 discount off your program fee