

GVI Responsible Travel Policy

GVI is dedicated to responsible tourism. All of the projects that we support directly benefit the environment, the local community, or both. All projects are carefully chosen to offer our volunteers sustainable and responsible travel, with specific attention being paid to their involvement in the sustainability of all their practices and project goals.

All of our projects and expeditions issue the participants with clear guidelines on responsible tourism and ecotourism, all specific to the particular environment or region. These cover a number of issues, ranging from waste disposal in remote areas, to recycling materials and buying from local businesses, to not exploiting the area's wildlife or harming the environment.

Furthermore, all of our projects operate under the direction and at the invitation of local partner organisations and communities, to ensure they are focused upon the most critical local issues and produce the results required locally. All credit and results from our projects remain in-country and belong to our partners.

Below is a list of ways in which we ensure that we act responsibly at all times – financially, environmentally and socially:

Economic Responsibility

- Typically, 60-70% of volunteer contributions go directly to the project or expedition
- The GVI Charitable Trust is used as a fundraising vehicle for our partner projects to further boost funds. To date, we have raised almost £1,000,000 through this fundraising channel.

Environmental Responsibility

- We use local suppliers and businesses
- We use sustainable practices in project operations
- Research rights all stay in the host country
- Staff work from home in our UK, North American and Australian offices
- We recycle in our UK, North American and Australian offices
- We have implemented plastic use awareness and reduction programmes at some locations and aim to have this fully implemented through all operations by 2015
- We have implemented carbon awareness and offsetting programmes at some locations and aim to have this fully implemented by 2015

Social Responsibility

- We provide full pre-departure information and training for volunteers
- Volunteers have on-site training in local customs and cultural norms
- We employ host country staff
- Education and training of local communities
- Education and training of individual volunteers

We also run a National Scholarship Programme offering local host country nationals the opportunity to join our projects for free and receive awareness and skills training, with the aim of local capacity building. Many of our scholars have gone on to work for our partner organisations and continue to work upon the most critical needs locally.