



Faculty Program Development Workshop— Nepal

4-9 January 2027

Program Handbook

A working workshop for faculty and program leaders ready to build a study abroad or experiential learning program in Nepal. Travel through our program sites across Nepal, meet community organizations and local partners, co-design your program and leave with a concrete plan to bring your students to Nepal.

Organized by:



Chakupat-22, POB 20029, Lalitpur, Nepal
(E-mail) info@onceinlife.org,
(Webpage) www.onceinlife.org,
(Twitter) @Nepal_Classroom

WELCOME AND THE TRIP OVERVIEW

The Faculty Program Development Workshop 2027 in Nepal is designed for educators and program leaders who are ready to build a study abroad or experiential learning program in Nepal. Over six days, you will travel through the communities, landscapes and learning environments where programs actually happen and work alongside our team to develop a program framework you can take back to your institution.

You will experience Nepali life firsthand, staying in community homestays, meeting local organizations and exploring Nepal's cultural, social, and natural landscapes. You will also work through the practical building blocks of program design: curriculum integration, logistics, risk management, budgeting and sustainable community partnerships.

The workshop takes you across four distinct regions of Nepal: Kathmandu Valley's UNESCO World Heritage Sites and development organizations, Aapshwara Dalit Homestay in Tanahun, a community-run homestay operated by members of Nepal's Dalit community, Chitwan National Park in the subtropical lowlands and Himalayan villages near Pokhara including Australian Camp and Machhapuchchhre Village. Throughout the workshop, you will exchange ideas and best practices with fellow educators from around the world, meet Nepali NGOs and community leaders and gain a clear understanding of how to design responsible, impactful, and sustainable educational programs in Nepal.

HIGHLIGHTS:

- ❖ Co-design your Nepal program framework with Hands-On Institute's team
- ❖ Meet local NGOs, social enterprises and community leaders across Nepal
- ❖ Explore UNESCO World Heritage Sites in Kathmandu Valley
- ❖ Stay at Aapshwara Dalit Homestay— a community-run homestay operated by Nepal's Dalit community
- ❖ Visit Machhapuchchhre Village near Pokhara, Balthali and Chitwan National Park
- ❖ Exchange ideas and best practices with fellow educators from around the world
- ❖ Leave with a concrete program plan, local contacts and a clear path forward

PARTICIPATION FEE: No fee involved- fully covered

NOT COVERED

Participants are responsible for:

- Their International Travel to and from Nepal
- Health and Travel Insurance during the program
- Any additional activities outside/after the trip
- Visa fee
- Additional drinks and food
-

COVERED

Hands-On Institute will cover all services mentioned below:

- Airport transfers at arrival & departure
- Accommodation and major meals (3 meals per day) during the program
- Permit and Entrance fee at the heritage sites
- All local transportation, excursions and field visit

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

| DAY | ACTIVITY |
|--------------|--|
| Day 0 | Arrival- Transfer to Hotel, Welcome dinner at UNESCO World Heritage Site |
| Day 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Introductory Meeting; About Hands-On Institute; - Cultural Orientation; Thematic Issue; NGO visits - Visit Balthali and Baluwapati Villages and interact with locals - Visit to one of the UNESCO Heritage Sites where students will go later during the trip |
| Day 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drive to Machhapuchhere village (6-8 hours) in Pokhara - Check-in the hotel in Machhapuchhere - Multi-stakeholder Meeting (meet Annapurna Conservation Area Project committee, women's group, school committee etc) - Tour of village |
| Day 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drive to Pokhara - Explore around Pokhara - Travel to Aapshawara Village. <i>(Six-hour bus ride followed by 1-hour hike)</i> - Welcome in village. - Discussion and meeting with local stakeholders (Women groups, Youth Clubs, Forest User groups, school management committee, political leaders, local government). The purpose of this discussion is to identify community needs and explore potential projects. |
| Day 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drive to Chitwan National Park - Explore Chitwan, Jungle safari in the evening - Cultural experience followed by dinner |
| Day 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Travel back to Kathmandu - Presentation by educators/representatives from educational institutions and share learning and possible future partnerships. - Good-bye Dinner and Closing |
| Day 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Drop off to airport |

ABOUT THE HOST COMMUNITIES

AAPSHAWARA DALIT COMMUNITY HOMESTAY:

The community, Aapshwara lies midway between Nepal's capital, Kathmandu, and Pokhara, another popular tourist destination in Nepal. There are about 20 Dalits households in the community. Dalits (untouchables) are the lowest strata of Hindu-based Nepali society. The dalits because of their 'untouchability status' in the society has been denied the right to earn a livelihood in the form of running business of their own interest i.e. tea-shop, dairy, small hotels, trading animal milk produced amongst others. Members of the Dalit community are considered 'untouchables' by the 'higher cast' people.



MANDAN DEUPUR VILLAGE (Baluwapati)



Mandan Deupur, located in the serene mid-hills of Kavrepalanchok District, just 35 km northeast of Kathmandu, is a vibrant rural municipality where tradition, nature, and community spirit come together. Though geographically close to urban centers, Mandan Deupur continues to face challenges common across rural Nepal, from environmental concerns to under-resourced and neglected public education systems. Hands-On Institute has been partnering with this village through community-driven projects in government schools and waste management.

BALTHALI VILLAGE:

Hands-On Institute has been working with the local school in Balthali Village for the past six years. In 2024, the village was heavily affected by landslides and torrential rains, causing severe damage to public infrastructure, schools and walking trails. The community is still recovering, and student groups can make a real difference. This service learning combines meaningful volunteering, community connection, and exploration — a chance to contribute hands-on while experiencing the richness of rural Nepal.



Machhapuchhere Village:

Machhapuchchhre Village Development Committee (VDC) is located in Kaski district, Northern-central Nepal. This VDC is about 20 km North from Pokhara, most popular tourist destination of Nepal and 220 km West from Kathmandu, the capital city. Mostly inhabited by Dalits, Magar and Gurung, this village has about 395 households with the total population of 1729. Most of the people are dependent on agriculture and foreign employment for livelihood. The famous peak, Machhapuchhere (also known as Fishtail Mountain) also lies in this VDC. This VDC falls within famous Annapurna Conservation Area Project (ACAP). Socio-cultural strengths of the VDC is manifested through dozens of community-based organizations like Monastery Management Committee, Youth clubs, Mothers' Group, Dalit organization, forest Management Committee and school Management Committee, etc. Community forest, a hot spring, and great views of the Himalayas are the natural assets of the village. We will have two options for accommodation in this village. There is a nice hotel in between the village which can host up to 35 people and also can do homestay (in people's house) which can also host similar number of people. This



village can be a good option for better accommodation and comfort.



PRACTICAL INFORMATION

WEATHER — January

January is Nepal's dry winter season and one of the best times to visit. Skies are clear, the Himalayan views are at their sharpest and the air is crisp and fresh. Days are sunny and pleasant, while nights and early mornings can be cold, especially at higher elevations.

Kathmandu (1,400 m) Days: 17°C–20°C · Nights: 2°C–5°C · Sunny days with cool, crisp mornings and cold nights, a jacket is essential

Tanahun / Aapshwara (600–1,000 m) Days: 20°C–24°C · Nights: 8°C–12°C · Pleasant daytime warmth with cool evenings, the landscape is dry.

Pokhara / Australian Camp (800–2,060 m) Days: 17°C–22°C · Nights: 5°C–8°C · The clearest mountain views of the year- Annapurna and Machhapuchchhre are stunning against blue skies · Cold at Australian Camp elevation, especially at sunrise

Chitwan (150 m, Terai Lowlands) Days: 22°C–25°C · Nights: 8°C–12°C · Mild and dry— excellent wildlife viewing as animals are easier to spot in thinner vegetation

What to expect: January offers the most reliable clear weather and spectacular mountain views. Mornings and evenings are cold, so layering is key. No rain gear needed, just warm layers and sun protection.

PACKING LIST:

- Lightweight modest clothing (shoulders and knees covered in village settings)
- Warm fleece or down jacket— essential for early mornings, evenings, and Australian Camp
- Thermal base layer for cold nights at higher elevations
- Hiking boots or walking shoes with good grip
- Sun protection: hat, sunscreen (SPF 30+), sunglasses — winter sun is strong and skies are clear
- Warm hat and gloves for Australian Camp overnight
- Closed shoes and long trousers for forest trails
- Reusable water bottle
- Lightweight day bag
- Headlamp or torch
- Flip-flops/sandals for homestay and hotels
- Personal medication and rehydration salts
- Power adapter: Type C, D or M (Nepal standard)

- Passport (valid 6+ months)
- Travel insurance documents

FITNESS

No technical fitness required. Moderate daily walking, light physical project work, and one 3-4-hour mountain hike. Pace is set collectively by the group. Any pre-existing medical conditions (including dental) should be fully appraised by your doctor and disclosed to us before departure.

TRANSPORTATION

Ground transport consists of a hired tourist-standard bus that meets all safety requirements. The bus transports the group between Kathmandu, Tanahun, Pokhara and Chitwan and for all local transfers.

HEALTH & SAFETY

- In case of emergency, hospitals are within 30–40 minutes from all programme locations.
- Ambulance, local jeep or car transport will be arranged immediately
- Drink only bottled or purified water.
- Avoid tap water, ice, street food and undercooked meat or fish
- Stay hydrated— participants will receive water purification tablets
- Be especially careful with food and water in Kathmandu, as most stomach bugs start here and worsen during travel
- Bring a personal first-aid kit with any prescribed medication, anti-diarrhoeal tablets, rehydration salts and high-SPF sunscreen Detailed risk assessment document available on request
- ISP-trained staff and HOI team on the ground throughout

INSURANCE

Participants should have comprehensive travel and health insurance covering Nepal. CIWEC Hospital in Kathmandu (ciwechospital.com) offers services to individuals with health insurance, and many international policies provide cashless treatment there. COVID-19 No vaccination certificate is currently required for entry. Full vaccination is recommended. Monitor entry requirements ahead of travel.

INTERNET

Wi-Fi is available in hotels in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Chitwan. In the Tanahun homestay and at Australian Camp, internet access will be limited, this is part of the experience. Local SIM cards with data can be purchased in Kathmandu for those who need connectivity.

ELECTRICITY

Available at all locations but can be intermittent in the village, occasional power cuts are normal. Hotels in Kathmandu, Pokhara and Chitwan have reliable power. Bring a power bank for charging phones during the homestay. Nepal uses Type C, D and M plugs — bring a universal adapter.

FOOD AND ACCOMMODATION

Participants stay in twin rooms in tourist-standard hotels, allocated by gender. During the Tanahun village project, accommodation is with local host families, an immersive and memorable part of the experience. At Australian Camp, overnight stay is in a mountain lodge. Trip leaders can be accommodated in single rooms. Western-style flush toilets are available in hotels. In the village homestay, squat toilets are common, bring toilet paper. Bathing in the village is with bucket water, embrace it as part of the experience.

All meals are provided throughout the programme, a thoughtful combination of local Nepali and familiar food, chosen to be both nourishing and culturally enriching. In the village, expect dal bhat (lentil stew with rice and vegetables), local millet or corn dishes and boiled potatoes with curry. Vegetarian and dietary requirements can be accommodated with advance notice.

MONEY

The local currency is the Nepalese Rupee (NPR). ATMs accepting Visa and Mastercard are available in Kathmandu and Pokhara. Withdraw enough cash before leaving Kathmandu, ATM access is not available in Tanahun or Chitwan villages. Carry small denomination bills as local shops cannot always give change. You mainly need cash for personal purchases and souvenirs, all programme costs are covered.

VISA

A visa is required for entry to Nepal. You may purchase one in advance through your local Nepalese consulate or upon arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport. Passports must be valid for at least six months after your departure date. Bring two passport-sized photos.

Visa fees (2026): 15-day — USD 30 · 30-day — USD 50 · 90-day — USD 125

Citizens of the following countries must apply in advance through a Nepalese embassy: Nigeria, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Eswatini, Cameroon, Somalia, Liberia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Syria. Visit immigration.gov.np for more information.

CULTURAL AWARENESS

Greeting:

The Nepali greeting is "Namaste", palms pressed together, fingers pointing upward, with a slight bow. It means "the spirit within me salutes the spirit within you." Always return the greeting the same way.

Dress:

Dress modestly, especially in villages and temples. Keep shoulders and knees covered. In temples, dress even more conservatively.

Hands:

Use your right hand to give, receive and shake hands. The left hand is considered unclean in Hindu culture. Temples: Remove shoes before entering. Photography inside is usually not permitted unless you ask. Leave a small donation when leaving.

Affection:

Public displays of affection between couples will embarrass most Nepalis, especially in rural areas, and should be avoided.

Feet:

Feet and shoes are considered ritually unclean. Avoid pointing your feet at people or stepping over someone sitting on the ground.

ARRIVAL

You should not arrive later than 3 January 2027. We will meet you at arrivals in the airport, but make sure we have the right flight number and arrival time well in advance so that we can plan this. Our staff will be holding Hands-On Institute sign. Do keep note of our phone numbers: 977-9851126795 or for emergency purpose.

We will then transport you to accommodation in Kathmandu. Some people choose to arrive a few days early in order to explore Kathmandu. If you would like to do this then do feel free to speak to us for help in arranging transfers and accommodation. If you do arrange all this independently then please do remember to speak to us well in advance so that we can arrange a place and time to meet you prior to the trip starting. Please note down the temporary address to be filled in the visa form.

Hands-On Institute,
Mahalaxmi-8, Lalitpur, Nepal
Phone : +977-9851126795
Email : info@onceinlife.org

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION



 Chakupat-22, Post Box No- 255, Lalitpur, Nepal

 + 977 9851126795
info@onceinlife.org,

 hamro.mato@gmail.com
onceinlife.org