



Volunteer Abroad Programmes



Improve your English while volunteering in Cape Town

Use your English to make an impact: Volunteer in South Africa

Looking for meaningful ways to improve your English? Volunteering is a great way to experience a new culture while making a difference. Working with trusted partner organizations throughout South Africa, we offer a range of service opportunities—from working with elephants and large cats to tracking marine life to helping disadvantaged children. No matter which option you choose, volunteering in this diverse culture amid stunning natural beauty will be lifechanging. Anyone with an intermediate English level can sign up for our volunteer abroad programme, although we recommend a two-week English course at EC Cape Town, first.

What you can expect from your volunteer abroad programme

Improved English skills

On your volunteer programme with EC Cape Town, you'll be surrounded by English speakers in everyday situations, so you can count on improved language skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing. Since our programmes require a B1 or B2 English proficiency level, we recommend combining your volunteer experience with a short English language course at EC Cape Town before volunteering.

The right match

Select from a wide range of animal-based and community-based volunteer opportunities to find the perfect fit for you. Perform a range of tasks in bird sanctuaries, big game preserves or marine environments. Help at an animal rescue. Or work with disadvantaged and vulnerable children in South African townships.

Broader cultural awareness

Volunteer abroad programmes allow you to immerse yourself in a new culture and community and gain a deeper understanding of the history, culture and traditions of those you serve. In the process, you'll develop a global perspective you didn't have before, along with a greater appreciation for diversity.

Reasons to choose our volunteer abroad programme in Cape Town

- You are age 18+, have intermediate English skills and want to volunteer in South Africa while improving your English
- You want to volunteer with animals or in disadvantaged communities
- You have enrolled in an EC Cape Town English course (2 weeks+) prior to volunteering
- You can spend at least two weeks, full-time, on a volunteer project
- You have the agility and energy to engage in physical, hands-on work
- You enjoy working as part of a team



Valuable new skills

Volunteering to support animals or children helps you build important skills that are transferrable across a wide range of careers. In addition to the specific work skills, you'll gain experience with teamwork, time management and organization—all skills that will help your CV stand out to employers.

Meaningful relationships

Volunteering connects you with others in meaningful ways—as a care giver, as a community member and as a teammate. With English as your common language, you'll gain extraordinary, shared experience with others from all over the world, resulting in treasured memories and lifelong friendships.

Positive impact

In addition to improving your English, exploring the world and having unforgettable experiences, you'll be giving your time and energy to children or animals who desperately need your help. You'll become part of a global network of people committed to making a real difference.

Choose how you want to make a difference

At EC Cape Town, we offer animal-based and community-based volunteer opportunities. In each case, we work directly with trusted partner organisations based in Cape Town or elsewhere in South Africa.

Animal-focused projects

Help with the rehabilitation and care of wild or domestic animals—from big game to birds, marine creatures to cat rescues. Click on the links to learn more.

[African Elephant Encounter](#)

Get up close and personal with the largest land animals on the planet. Live and work onsite with other volunteers on a preserve located about 6 hours outside of Cape Town.

[African Marine Encounter](#)

Assist with data capture for studies aboard a shark cage diving vessel or whale-watching vessel. Learn how eco-tourism can benefit conservation on a project located just over 2 hours from Cape town.

[African Wildlife Encounter](#)

Help out at a sanctuary for injured or orphaned animals and birds, located close to one of the top surfing areas of the world, Jeffrey's Bay.

[Coastal Birds Encounter](#)

Work to reverse the decline of seabird populations on this conservation project, helping a non-profit organisation with rescue, rehabilitation and release efforts.

[Wildlife research & conservation](#)

Get involved in conservation, research and wildlife management on a free-roaming wildlife preserve based in Hartenbos, Western Cape.

[Domestic animal shelter](#)

Assist in a shelter for rescued domestic animals in Hout Bay, Western Cape. Help in a cat sanctuary, cat garden, and outdoor and indoor kennel areas.

[Marine Dynamics Academy](#)

Help out at the Marine Dynamics Academy is based in Gansbaai, South Africa. Work to protect the Dyer Island ecosystem and the marine world off the Cape coast.

Conservation and Community projects

Work at a school or creche helping children from disadvantaged communities with their education or work on projects that promote their well-being. Click on the links to learn more.

[Hout Bay Kids](#)

Work with children at a day care facility in Imizamo Yethu township, helping with daily activities and schoolwork.

[Surfing project](#)

Mentor children from disadvantaged communities around Cape Town through surfing, education and nutrition.

[Conservation and Community 2025](#)

Tackle administrative tasks, conservation efforts and ecology projects on a Game Reserve on the Eastern Cape. Plus, help with community support projects like teaching and mentoring.

[Hout Bay Football](#)

Help bring communities together by through football. Tasks vary from coaching to teaching to administrative duties, and volunteers are given a great deal of responsibility.

