



Mission

The mission of La Asociación CREAR is to provide free, high-quality, supplementary educational opportunities for the youth of Playa Samara and El Torito while serving as a space for mutual cultural enrichment between its students and volunteers.

Vision

Our vision is a community of empowered, self-motivated, responsible, and employable individuals.

Values

Our fundamental, underlying belief is that access to a quality education is a basic human right. Our multicultural team contributes to the promotion of community development by exposing our local youth to opportunities for public service and civic engagement. Our initiatives are born from collaboration with our communities to provide educational and economic empowerment. Our work is honest, transparent, ethical, and committed to excellence. Our organization remains in constant reflection on how to best serve the needs of our people in order to create a stronger community.

Programs

After-School Art Program

CREAR offers art classes to children in Sámara and El Torito. Our classes teach students how to work with a wide range of artistic mediums and help to foster creative thinking. We offer our classes to a group of 1st through 3rd graders and also a group of 4th through 6th graders in two different communities.

After-School English Program

One of the building blocks of CREAR is our comprehensive English classes. CREAR offers classes to a group of 1st through 3rd graders and also a group of 4th through 6th graders in two different communities.

In-School Environment & Health Program*

CREAR offers free in-school educational programming about solid waste and water management, environmental health, ecological restoration of earth and water life, and environmental risk management to the students of El Torito and Playa Sámara. Through planned field trips, activities, and presentations we aim to encourage all of the students in our area to make environmentally conscious decisions and cultivate an awareness of their surroundings that they will carry with them throughout their daily lives.

Day Camp*

CREAR offers two series of day camps during Costa Rica's summer and rainy seasons. Each day 50-75 children participate in fun, educational activities.

In-School Assemblies/Community Presentations*

CREAR gives free in-school assemblies and community presentations, educating hundreds of residents of Playa Samara, El Torito, San Fernando, and Santo Domingo on critical environmental issues such as energy and recycling.

Girl's Empowerment Course*

When the little girls that participated in CREAR turned into young women, we saw the need for a new kind of CREAR: a course focused on self-esteem, motivation, and sexual health, coupled with strong support and the presentation of new opportunities. It is imperative that countries invest in their girls! The "Las Divinas" programming intends to help young girls avoid unplanned pregnancies and premature sexual relations; prepare them with skills that will build self-esteem and empower them to make healthy choices. The idea is that as educated girls become women, they can improve their communities and have children who are healthy and educated.

Adult English Classes*

CREAR is proud to offer free English classes to adults in an effort to continue improving the employability of Samara locals.

*These are programs we run at certain times of the year when CREAR has the available resources and qualified staff and volunteers.

Our Goals

- Combat educational inequality and social limitations through the expansion of our free art, language, and feminine empowerment courses
- Improve the employability of Sámara and El Torito locals through the implementation of a three-track program focused on learning English, building soft skills through social interaction, and stimulating creativity and innovation
- Enhance our existing gap-year and summer internship program for university aged students aiming to earn internship credit while experiencing authentic Costa Rican culture and refining their professional skills

Additional Class Information

In the Samara classes we can have anywhere from 5 to 15 kids in attendance, while the El Torito classes tend to be more inconsistent, with anywhere from 3 to 15 children. 4th through 6th graders are 9 to 12 years old, while 1st through 3rd graders are 5 to 8 years old. Attendance and age range is never consistent, as academic classes may be canceled and students bring siblings to the program, and it is difficult to predict exactly how the classes will go each day, but that is also part of the challenge and excitement!

If you are volunteering with children, your hours will be coordinated with the above class schedule. For volunteers working in other areas, times are more flexible and will need to be arranged with the program supervisor accordingly.

It is important that you directly communicate the number of hours you wish to volunteer and the kind of work you desire to do. Clear communication will eliminate confusion.

CREAR Internship Positions, 2023

There are various opportunities for volunteering and interning with CREAR, and depending on your strengths, interests, experiences, and skill set we will find a place for you. Below are some ways you can become involved with us. Depending on the position, interns are expected to commit 20 to 30 hours per week. If you are interested in participating in an extended program, such as our Semester, or Full Year programs, contact us for more information on those opportunities. CREAR allows flexibility for interns to select whichever session best suits their needs, encouraging them to participate in as many as two or three sessions.

We ask that all of our volunteers display a flexible attitude and embrace the “go with the flow–Pura Vida” atmosphere here in Costa Rica. Please be aware that while you may have applied for one specific position at the organization, your daily work may overlap with that of another position. Part of having a robust experience here at CREAR is willingly helping to meet the ever-changing needs of our organization on a given day. This could look like substituting during a class if a member of the team is absent, running an errand, working on community outreach projects, or simply extending a willing hand to our administrative staff.

We have high standards for our volunteers, and we are seeking dedicated, enthusiastic, flexible, and creative people who are looking to genuinely make a difference in the lives of Costa Rican students.

Below you will find a description of the four different roles interns can apply for. Please send an email to info@asociacioncrear.org for any additional information.

Couple your position with Omprakash EdGE, an accredited online volunteer education program! [Learn more here.](#)

Unsure of the requirements for entry into Costa Rica?

For the most up to date information regarding international travel to Costa Rica and requirements, please visit the [National Tourism Board’s official website.](#)

English Program Aide

The English program aide will work alongside our staffed English instructor in facilitating classroom activities and leading classes. Two elementary afterschool programs are held Monday through Thursday at respective times and locations. English program aides can expect to gain valuable experience as they closely observe how an English class is taught and the language is effectively communicated. A minimum of a two-month commitment is required.

Responsibilities

- Help the English teacher come up with activities and lesson plans to be used in class. This could include helping the teacher by planning the warm-up activity or game for that day’s class.
- Track attendance
- Record and analyze the behavior of the children in class
- Maintain strong communication with supervisors, volunteers, and parents.

Qualifications

- Fluency in English
- Intermediate to advanced Spanish
- Previous teaching and/or tutoring experience with children (preferred but not required)

- Experience working with school-age children (preferred but not required)
- A passion for education and a love for working with youth
- Organized, responsible, ability to work well with others, creative, flexible, friendly and outgoing
- Minimum two-month time commitment
- Raising \$500 for CREAR before arriving- This is not mandatory, but a financial contribution of any amount is greatly appreciated. However, we at CREAR are simply grateful for your time!

If interested, please fill out the volunteer application at

<https://airtable.com/shry8PExJiUuzyP8A>.

Art Program Aide

CREAR offers an after-school program with classes focusing on creativity, art, critical thinking and EFL instruction. Two Elementary afterschool programs are held Monday through Thursday at respective times and locations. CREAR is seeking a fun and energetic individual to work as a classroom aide alongside our art program instructor for a minimum of two months. As an art program aid you can expect to gain valuable experience through observing and shadowing our art teacher. You can also expect to collaborate with our art teacher. This could look like giving feedback on lesson plans, putting together models for the art projects, and creating warm up exercises and ice breaker games to be used during class.

Responsibilities

- Aid the art instructor by coming up with engaging games and icebreakers to be used in class
- Help construct the models of the art projects which will be made in class
- Help the art instructor gather and put away materials which will be used in class
- Help the children with their art projects as the needed
- Collaborate with the art teacher in brainstorming activities and lesson plans

Qualifications

- Fluency in English
- Conversational to intermediate Spanish preferred
- A passion for education and a love for working with youth is expected.
- Ability to work with limited resources.
- Creative and personally artistic
- Willingness to learn from the art instructor
- Record and analyze the behavior of the children in class
- Display a personal or educational interest in art
- Minimum two-month commitment working with CREAR
- Raising \$500 for CREAR before arriving- This is not mandatory, but a financial contribution of any amount is greatly appreciated. However, we at CREAR are simply grateful for your time!

If interested, please fill out the volunteer application at

<https://airtable.com/shry8PExJiUuzyP8A>.

Communications and Digital Arts

Want to learn the ins and outs of a small educational non-profit in Costa Rica? CREAR is always seeking qualified and caring individuals to volunteer in our programs. Live on the beach in beautiful Costa Rica while helping the children and the communities in and around Playa Samara. La Asociación CREAR in Playa Samara needs a motivated individual to work with our Executive Director, aiding in the invaluable “behind the scenes” communications and administrative work. CREAR is a small, yet sustainable non-profit. Interns are guaranteed to be involved with stimulating, interesting work. You can definitely make a difference here!

Responsibilities

- Create and write external documents, brochures, memos, and briefs
- Manage social media accounts, including crafting messages to appeal to strategic audiences (LinkedIn group that connects Board & past volunteers, interns, and groups, etc.)
- Update content and further develop website
- Create inspiring graphics and messaging to promote the mission and impact for both newsletters and reports/social media
- Develop quarterly newsletters
- Take videos and photos of offered programs for use by CREAR
- Create video campaign message of overall mission incorporating children, staff, and volunteers
- Recommend different social media themes to promote opportunities at CREAR •
Produce marketing videos to support communications and fundraising campaigns

Qualifications

- Experience with social media, graphics, and marketing
- Strong writing ability
- Able to collaborate with others and work in a team
- Ability to work with limited resources.
- Experience with digital media arts (photography, videography)
- Experience with graphics and marketing
- Strong written and oral communication skills
- Able to collaborate with others and work in a team
- Two-month minimum time commitment is preferred
- Raising \$500 for CREAR before arriving- This is not mandatory, but a financial contribution of any amount is greatly appreciated. However, we at CREAR are simply grateful for your time!

If interested, please fill out the volunteer application at <https://airtable.com/shry8PExJiUuzyP8A>.

Strategic Development and Operations Intern

Want to learn the ins and outs of a small educational non-profit in Costa Rica? CREAR is always seeking qualified and caring individuals to volunteer in our programs. Live on the beach in beautiful Costa Rica while helping the children and the communities in and around Playa Samara. La Asociación CREAR in Playa Samara needs a motivated individual to work with our Executive Director, aiding in the invaluable “behind the scenes” development and administrative work. CREAR is a small, yet sustainable non profit. Interns are guaranteed to be involved with stimulating, interesting work. You can definitely make a difference here!

Responsibilities

- Work closely with the Executive Director to support existing relationships with our individual donors, board members, foundations, and corporations to increase funding base
- Research current and potential new funding opportunities and strategize future fundraising efforts
- Support in drafting, editing, and reviewing grant applications and reports
- Create an Operations Manual for interns and for CREAR
- Brainstorm and aid in improving our Monitoring and Evaluation strategy
- Create a “CREAR by the numbers” report
- Develop quantitative measures for volunteer management
- Develop and fine tune our donor database
- Create content for the annual impact report
- Aid executive director and /or administrative coordinator with administrative and coordination tasks
- Determine dates for the internship program and CREAR classes program
- Aid administrative coordinator in execution of environmental health and protection program

Qualifications

- Research abilities
- Organized
- Strong writing ability
- Able to collaborate with others and work in a team
- Motivated
- Logical processing abilities
- Two-month minimum time commitment is preferred.
- Raising \$500 for CREAR before arriving- This is not mandatory, but a financial contribution of any amount is greatly appreciated. However, we at CREAR are simply grateful for your time!

If interested, please fill out the volunteer application at <https://airtable.com/shry8PExJiUuzyP8A>.

Volunteering for Professionals

Do you have professional expertise in a field that you believe would benefit our work here at CREAR? We are open to discussing special projects where professional volunteers can utilize their knowledge and skills, allowing them to make a measurable impact in their field of work. Professional volunteers must make a minimum commitment of two weeks. Examples of specialized work include photography, videography, fundraising, accounting, legal, business development, etc.

Fill out this form <https://airtable.com/shr6BPF4vWpFerm4C> with your information to share your project idea and expertise with us.

CREAR Volunteer Application Process

CREAR is committed to providing its interns with a successful and rewarding volunteer experience. To that end, volunteer candidates participate in an application and placement process. We are not able to consider applications until all requested information has been received:

- Resume and letter of interest
- Completion of CREAR Application including reference and criminal record disclosure, and Agreement for Volunteers
- Formal interview (via Zoom if in person interview is not possible) with designated program staff
- Verification of two personal or professional references

The Executive Director or department head will approve the selection and placement of all volunteers.

Volunteer Information

Housing & Fees

As a volunteer, you will have a homestay. Homestays allow you to live with the locals and have a truly authentic Costa Rican experience. Homestays include breakfast and dinner every day, as well as weekly laundry services. The cost of the homestay is \$210/week.

CREAR also charges a volunteer fee of \$50/week for interns. This helps us to keep our internship program sustainable and also to cover many of our overhead costs such as electricity, water, and insurance.

Your payment is final. La Asociación CREAR does not issue refunds for any reason. In the event that your internship is terminated or cut short you are not entitled to any compensation.

Cost Breakdown & 2023 Internship Session Options

Session 1: January 16, 2023 – March 3, 2023

Session 2: March 6, 2023 – May 31, 2023

Session 3: June 5, 2023 – August 31, 2023

Session 4: September 4, 2023 – December 7, 2023

Application deadline: 4 weeks before session start

Deposit deadline: 2 weeks before arrival in Sámara

We are also happy to help coordinate transportation to and from the airport in Liberia (LIR). The cost of the airport transfer varies depending on the season but is typically around \$130 each way.

The cost of your internship will vary depending on how many weeks you choose to work with us. The average weekly cost comes out to around \$260/week with a large portion of that amount going directly to your homestay family. Please keep in mind that the cost of living in Sámara is similar to the cost of living in The United States or Europe. For this reason, it is important to budget accordingly for the prices of lunch and any additional expenditures.

Volunteer Expectations

We have high standards for our interns, and we are seeking dedicated people who are looking to genuinely make a difference in the lives of Costa Rican students. Volunteers are highly encouraged to take initiative and make the most of their experiences by:

- Writing a blog post once every other week for the CREAR blog and the Omprakash story network. These can be the same post. Blogs can be about events, your experiences in Playa Sámara, new ideas you have for the organization, a day in class, or anything else! Feel free to include pictures with your text. We will supply a USB thumb/flash drive for your use.
- If you have a camera and it is feasible to take pictures, please place them on a USB thumb drive. We encourage one picture a week for us to post on social media. It could be a picture of the children in class doing a certain activity, a picture of Sámara, or anything else you find relevant.
- All interns are expected to aid with the day to day functioning of the CREAR space, such tasks include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Sweeping out the community center
 - Wiping down dusty surfaces
 - Reorganizing, shelving, and cleaning our library books
 - Taking out the trash and recycling
 - Organizing and cleaning the supply closet

Volunteers and Interns are encouraged to either choose a current CREAR project that they are passionate about or come up with an idea for a new project. Then, help this project grow through research, networking, new ideas and fundraising. Volunteers and Interns are also encouraged to try to raise \$500 for their chosen project using their network of contacts.

Some examples and ideas are:

- CREAR t-shirts
- An educational excursion
- Soccer or lacrosse tournament and intramural team
- Dance lessons
- Photography project
- Technology initiative

CREAR Intern Frequently Asked Questions

Are there restrictions in place for international travel and entry into Costa Rica? The information on this is constantly changing. Please visit the [National Tourism Board's official website](#) for the most up to date news and information. As of November 1st, 2020, Costa Rica's borders are open to all 50 states, as well as Europe and most of our international community.

Can CREAR accommodate a different start date for my internship?

We like to train a cohort of interns all in at once, and therefore our start dates are not flexible, but our end dates are. CREAR allows flexibility for interns to select whichever session best suits their semester or summer, encouraging them to participate in as many as two or three sessions.

What type of attire should I bring to work at CREAR? Are athletic clothes appropriate?

Athletic clothes are perfect! As long as you are modest, anything is acceptable. It is very hot here so make sure to bring whatever you will be most comfortable in during very hot weather/rain. Bring a good rain jacket/poncho, as well!

Should I bring a rain jacket or poncho?

Yes! Especially if you're coming during the rainy season (late April-October) be prepared for rain almost every day. Regardless of when you come, you should definitely have rain gear with you.

What shoes should I bring?

Any shoes you are most comfortable in! From Chacos to Birkenstocks to Vans, anything works. You should bring some sandals/slip-ons to wear around the house. For work, whatever you prefer! Hiking boots could be beneficial if you're a big hiker!

What type of toiletries should I bring?

Bug spray, sunscreen, face wash, shampoo, conditioner, and aloe are all a good idea to bring. It's

nice to start out with your favorite brands prior to adjusting to brands here. They sell basic brands like Pantene, Head & Shoulders, and Dove here in the New China Supermarket. If you use tampons, it would be beneficial to bring a full supply as there is only one brand sold in the market, in an expensive, small count!

*If you can't bring toiletries because your bag is too heavy- no worries! You will find products that you are used to.

Will I have Wi-Fi in my homestay?

Maybe. Some homestays have Wi-Fi that works quite well, but a few do not. Prepare for the worst and bring books. If you come during the rainy season, be prepared for the power and Wi-Fi to go out frequently.

Will my homestay have A/C?

No, probably not. There will be a fan in your room and since the bedding is usually very thin, it's not uncomfortably warm at night. Also, the cold showers feel great because of the heat (there's no hot water).

What should I expect of my homestay?

Your homestay will have a bed for you with light sheets, a light, a fan and a lock for your door. No A/C or hot water, and most accommodations are pretty basic compared to that of the U.S. or Europe. Don't be alarmed if there's a few bugs in your room, they won't hurt you! Breakfast and dinner are always delicious. Your homestay family will talk to you almost exclusively in Spanish, so be prepared.

Do I need a Visa?

You will obtain a tourist Visa at customs when you arrive which will allow you to remain in the country for 90 days. Be sure to have a printed copy of your itinerary showing your return flight/or proof that you are leaving the country. You'll also need an address you will be staying at, i.e. your homestay's address or CREAR.

What's one thing you wish you had brought with you?

More books and bug spray! Again, while there is internet in most of the local bars and the office, your homestay may not have Wi-Fi. There is plenty to do in Samara, but sometimes you'll need a little down time to relax. Additionally, the extra bug spray will prevent you from having to buy more of it, as it is a tool used multiple times a day here.

What's one thing you are really glad you brought?

A hammock! Hammocks are great for relaxing on the beach and there are plenty of trees on the north end of the beach to hang one up. Also, books. Great for reading on the beach and at night, and of course headphones for plenty of music and podcasts to listen to.

What will a typical day at work look like for an English Aide?

The experience as an English Aide is nothing short of rewarding. Within the first couple of days, you'll notice the impact this program has on the children. From their excitement when they arrive 15 minutes early, to hearing about how they scored higher grades than most kids in their public-school exams, the kids are eager to learn from you! Be prepared to speak to them in Spanish as you'll be teaching them basic materials such as numbers, days of the week, and how to read a clock.

What will a typical day at work look like for a Strategic Development and Operations intern?

Every day is different! Your day could include anything from updating websites to painting furniture. We are shifting towards an emphasis on our social media presence, and posting updated blogs are extremely beneficial. The role includes having the ability to adapt to whatever project needs attention.

What is there to do while you're there in Samara?

Surfing is huge here; all the locals surf in the afternoon when the waves are good. There's plenty of surf schools along the beach if you want to learn. There are trails for hiking all around and various bars and restaurants. You can also sign up for different classes with Intercultura - ranging from cooking and jewelry making to yoga classes!

What excursions should I look into?

Monteverde is known for hiking, waterfalls, and more! The waterfall in La Fortuna is super cool. Belén has a beautiful waterfall with plenty of jumping spots, about 15 min outside of Samara called *El Salto de Belén*. Buses are easy to travel by, and you can venture to Panamá or Nicaragua as well.

What has surprised you?

"I was worried that living in a small town would bring culture shock. However, due to the welcoming nature of the community, I got accustomed to Sámara without hesitation. From your homestay to going out to a restaurant, you will always have someone to talk with, which will make you feel well received." - Roman, previous intern

How much money should we plan to bring for food? Where can we eat or buy groceries?

Given that you will be living in a homestay, two meals a day will be provided to you. You should anticipate paying the same rates as you would in the United States or Europe. You can buy fresh foods at local stands, as well as regular grocery shopping in either the New China Supermarket or Pali (a Walmart equivalent).

For daily lunch options, there's a bakery right next to CREAR that has sandwiches for around 3000 colones (\$5-\$6 USD) and other treats which are reasonably priced. There's plenty of local food and small stands to order from for around 1500 colones (\$2.50-\$3 USD).

Is there an ATM to get dollars/colones out of in Samara?

Yes, there are two ATMs in town that are attached to the local banks (but they both have fees, be sure to check with your local bank regarding international ATM fees).

What do you typically eat at your homestay? Can they make accommodations for allergies/vegetarian/vegan diets?

Homestay meals vary widely. Lots include some kind of meat, rice, and beans and sometimes a salad. Every once in a while, there's soup. Breakfast can vary from eggs, cereal, and toast, gallo pinto (local dish with rice and beans), pancakes, etc. Accommodations for allergies and preferences will be taken care of.

What kind of supplies should I bring as donations for CREAR?

Anything that you think may be helpful. CREAR always needs resourceful materials such as glue, markers, scissors, and coloring books. The kids also love board games, flash cards, and anything they can have fun with. Anything from frisbees to play-doh is beneficial!