



**Teen Travel Network**  
BY TERRA EDUCATION

# 2024 HONORS FELLOWSHIP

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*CURRICULUM PACKET*



# OVERVIEW

This Fellowship is about **using travel and cultural exploration as a catalyst** to dive more deeply into a topic, issue, or moral conundrum that invigorates you.



## FINAL PROJECT

A research-based essay that will challenge you to tackle new concepts in a meaningful and insightful way.

**Congratulations on your acceptance into the TTN Honors Fellowship!**

OPTIONAL

**Pre-Program Reading**

REQUIRED

**On-Program Research**

REQUIRED

**Post-Program Essay**



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# PRE-PROGRAM

While preparing for your upcoming program, you'll want to do some research into your area of interest to get a basis for your project thesis.

While the pre-program reading and viewing is 100% optional - your pre-program assignment won't be graded or any work turned in - the best final essays frequently draw from the material you learned prior to travel, in combination with reflections on programmatic content. You won't be tested on this material, but it will have an impact on the quality of your final project.

Depending on your interests, you can peruse suggested essay prompts and related pre-program reading/viewing options here.



**CULTURAL IDENTITY / ART & HISTORY**

While any topic can theoretically be applied to any TTN program, certain locations and program content may lend themselves more readily to a particular theme or topic—these have been noted below each category.



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT / PUBLIC HEALTH**



**ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY / WILDLIFE OR ANIMAL CONSERVATION**





# Cultural Identity / Art & History

**IDEAL FOR:** Programs in Italy; Programs in Greece; STEAM; Cities That Shaped Europe; Mediterranean Wanderlust, United Kingdom: The Backstage Theatre Experience

**QUESTIONS TO PONDER:** In what ways or places has traditional culture survived, and where has globalization taken over? How does art function as a recordkeeper of cultural history? What facets of ethical responsibility should be applied to the arts? Who is the “true” owner of a piece of art or historical relic? How are the arts a reflection of the time and place in which they are created?

## Suggested Essay Prompts

What are some examples of art (in any of its forms!) fostering community on your program?

What role do the arts play in this culture today?

What cultural traditions have stood the test of time, and why have they persevered while others have not?

Looking forward 200 years, what traditions in your own culture do you predict will survive, and why?

What responsibility do museums or governments have when it comes to returning artifacts or works of art?

What is the best way to address this conundrum?

Choose your own prompt!

If you do, please include your custom prompt at the top of your essay submission so the Fellowship Committee reviewing your final project knows what topic you're tackling.

## Recommended Readings/Viewings:

### Museums Make Bids for Their Communities

This NYT article outlines one way in which the arts can be a powerful tool for unification and the strengthening of community, especially in areas with diverse populations.

### When a Visit to the Museum Becomes an Ethical Dilemma

This NYT article explores the questions of ethics in patronizing museums when the works they display may not have come to them in a fair or just manner.

### Where is Home?

This TEDxYouth@Berlin presenter dissects the definition of “home”: Some great food for thought!





# Community Development / Public Health

**IDEAL FOR:** All trips

**QUESTIONS TO PONDER:** What are you learning about the communities that you spend time in? What do you admire about these communities and how can you bring these tenets back home? How is public health or medical care addressed in the communities you visit? What are the most immediate issues you see? How about longer term trends and challenges?

## Suggested Essay Prompts

Thinking of the communities you encounter, identify one challenge you would be passionate about helping to resolve.

Write a proposal for your idea to implement an initiative to fix the problem, and within your essay, weigh out both the pros and cons of your approach.

What makes a community “strong”?

What principles have you observed abroad that you can apply in your own community?

Choose a common health care outcome you find to be unjust, either local or global, and build a case for why it is overlooked, and why resources should be used to address this inequality.

Be sure to incorporate stories or observations from your trip!

Choose your own prompt!

If you do, please include your custom prompt at the top of your essay submission so the Fellowship Committee reviewing your final project knows what topic you’re tackling.

## Recommended Readings/Viewings:

[A Canadian Study Gave \\$7,500 to Homeless People. Here’s How They Spent It.](#)

This Vox feature explores the aftereffects of an initiative designed to give cash directly to homeless people in their local Vancouver communities. This article dives into a complex subject - income inequality and its relationship to direct community aid - and should generate a lot of critical thought on your end.

[The Schism Between Medicine and Public Health](#)

In this TEDx Talk, the inaugural associate dean for the School of Medicine and Public Health at the University of Wisconsin explains the differences between Public Health and Medicine, and provides unique insights into both that are foundational points of knowledge for anyone considering a career in either area.



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# Environmental Sustainability / Wildlife or Animal Conservation

**IDEAL FOR:** Costa Rica: The Ultimate Adventure; Peru: The Ultimate Adventure; Thailand: The Signature Experience; Southeast Asia Wanderlust

**QUESTIONS TO PONDER:** What did you observe during your time abroad as far as how animals, pets, or the environment are viewed and treated? What level of importance is the natural world granted there? What signs of habitat erosion, climate change, waste mismanagement or other symptoms of an unhealthy environment did you observe, and what changes would have the most impact?

## Suggested Essay Prompts

Choose any global habitat, larger ecosystem or particular species of plant or animal that you feel passionate about and propose an action plan to counter the harms affecting your chosen environment.

This can take the form of a government proposal, public information campaign, direct advocacy campaign.

What norms or guidelines are in place in regard to protecting the environment, and how do they compare to those in your home country or community?

Which one is “right” and in which ways can one learn from the other?

Choose your own prompt!

If you do, please include your custom prompt at the top of your essay submission so the Fellowship Committee reviewing your final project knows what topic you’re tackling.

## Recommended Readings/Viewings:

### Our Planet, Netflix

Watch Episode #2, Frozen Worlds, as well as an additional episode of your choosing. We highly recommend selecting an episode about the habitat zone most closely associated with your program. This David Attenborough nature documentary series confronts the impacts severe loss of habitat can have on the remaining wild places on Earth.

### My Octopus Teacher, Netflix

An Oscar-winning nature documentary that dives into the complexities of human-wildlife interactions, and asks critical questions about to what extent people should interfere in wild habitats.

### The Wild Frontier of Animal Welfare

A fascinating, long-form article on Vox detailing the unorthodox answers of philosophers and scientists on the question of whether humans should “try harder to protect even wild creatures from predators and disease?”

### How community-led conservation can save wildlife

A short TedxTalk by Zimbabwean conservationist Moreangels Mbizah about the power of community and its potential impact in local wildlife efforts.



# ON-PROGRAM



The creativity of your project is completely up to you, and while you should spend most of your time on-program focused on the experience, keep tabs on what you're learning. This will help you later to make your final essay your own and try to develop your personal style that conveys exactly what you want to say about your experience.

## Actions To Take On-Program



01

Speak with program staff and people you encounter to learn about their perspectives



02

Observe the communities you visit, the state of the natural world around you as you trek to new locations, and the dynamics you encounter.



03

Draw parallels (either as mental notes or in a journal) between your discoveries and larger concepts with global implications.



04

Collect information and impressions to use as first hand sources in your final research essay.



# POST-PROGRAM

Now that you've completed your Teen Travel Network program, it's time to pull insights and learnings from your experience and craft your essay.

Writing a well-formed essay is more than just going off of a format and writing what people expect. Be sure to stake out a position and defend it using evidence. You can use what you experienced on-program, add context from your pre-program reading and viewing, and build on that with new critical thinking or additional material you've consumed after your program. And don't be afraid to take some chances!

**The most important aspect of your essay is your thesis. What are you trying to convey? Your essay can take any form you think is most appropriate. You will find our assessment rubric at the end of this packet to see what components we're looking for in an essay.**



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# ESSAY PARAMETERS & REQUIREMENTS



## CLEAR THESIS

Regardless of the topic, the highest-rated essays have a clear thesis. Most importantly, they draw heavily from students' time with TTN, including their first-hand experiences and observations.

# 01



## WORKS CITED & TITLE PAGES

Includes a "Works Cited" page and title page.

# 02



## LENGTH & FORMAT

Your final essay should be 3-7 pages in length in a PDF or Google Doc format.

# 03



## DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

You must submit your final project by no later than **SEPTEMBER 15** to **[fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com](mailto:fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com)** including your full name with submission.

# 04



# FELLOWSHIP COMPLETION

## TO COMPLETE YOUR FELLOWSHIP YOU MUST HAVE:

- Participated in a full Teen Travel Network program
- Submitted your final project to the Fellowship Committee by the deadline
- Showed critical thinking and displayed a mastery of your subject matter

*Otherwise, the amount of time you put into the Fellowship, and any reading or viewing of learning materials, are completely up to you.*

## AWARDS & CERTIFICATIONS

Should the Fellowship Committee determine you met all the requirements satisfactorily, you'll be awarded:

- A Certificate of Achievement
- A Custom Metal Fellowship Pin
- A Recommendation Letter from our Executive Director (upon request)
- The title of *Honors Fellow* for your College Applications and Future Resume/CV

*At this time, you will be considered an **Alumni Fellow in good standing** with Teen Travel Network.*

*The Fellowship Committee will review final essays on a rolling basis. **We expect to have all Fellowship final project submissions reviewed by January 15.***



# 2024 HONORS FELLOWSHIP RUBRIC

CRITERIA	<u>Excellent</u> 3 Points	<u>Great</u> 2 Points	<u>Good</u> 1 Point	<u>Needs Revision</u> 0 Points
<b>A</b> Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduces key questions around topic</li> <li>Clear and consistent thesis</li> <li>Detailed conclusion with clear connection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduces questions related to the topic</li> <li>Clear thesis</li> <li>Conclusion supported by evidence presented</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction has little connection to thesis or evidence</li> <li>Thesis is unclear or contradictory</li> <li>Conclusion missing or unrelated to text</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Student does not introduce relevant questions and/or problems.</li> <li>Thesis not present or unclear</li> </ul>
<b>B</b> Information Gathered	Information is gathered from multiple sources and clearly supports the thesis; cited at the end of the essay	Information is gathered from two or three sources and most support the thesis or are relevant	Information is gathered from only student as a source, but supports the thesis	Very little relevant information is gathered to support the thesis
<b>C</b> Connection to TTN Experience	Information is backed up by personal connection to TTN trip, augmenting the impact of the data	Essay contains personal experiences that give context to the facts in the essay.	Essay contains personal experiences or information from TTN Experience	Essay contains no personal experiences or information from TTN experience
<b>D</b> Writing Quality	Text flows well, dynamic vocabulary and good balance of quoted material and analysis	Conclusion reached and sums up the essay clearly	Conclusion reached with connection to thesis, but extraneous sections left unexplained	Conclusion has little connection to the thesis and much is left unexplained
<b>E</b> Grammar & Presentation	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are flawless; essay contains a title and sources are cited appropriately inline with text	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are almost all correct, with a few errors	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are mostly correct	Punctuation, spelling, and grammar are flawed with many errors

Did the final project meet the length requirements of 3-7 pages? YES NO (1 Point)

A score **above a 6** is considered a passing grade for your final project  
 A score of **6 or below** will require the student to revise their submission

TOTAL EVALUATION SCORE: \_\_\_ /16

# CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations again on your outstanding efforts, and we look forward to reading your final essay after you complete your TTN program!

This packet has everything you need to complete your requirements as a Fellow. **If you do have any pressing questions that absolutely cannot be answered in this document, please email us at [fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com](mailto:fellowships@teentravelnetwork.com).**



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