

## LATEST NEWS ON RALEIGH GRADUATE BURSARY AWARD FOR VOLUNTEERING OVERSEAS

Recent graduates from low income families could now benefit from a unique bursary scheme, to be offered by youth and education charity Raleigh and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS). The bursary award will give recent graduates the opportunity to enhance their employability skills and put them on a level playing field with those graduates who could afford to fund themselves fully on a Raleigh expedition.

The scheme – the Raleigh Graduate Bursary Award for Volunteering Overseas - launched 30<sup>th</sup> July 2009 and will see 500 graduates offered places on a Raleigh expedition to Costa Rica & Nicaragua, Borneo or India over the next year. Each graduate will take part in a ten-week Raleigh expedition which combines community and environmental work in remote communities with a challenging adventure phase. It is a focused 10 week training and development programme which challenges participants physically and mentally, and teaches them to work alongside others from different countries and socio-economic backgrounds to learn the value of volunteering.

The bursary will be open to recent graduates aged 24 or under; who will need to prove that an overseas expedition would be beyond their financial means without assistance. BIS has awarded Raleigh £500,000 which covers £1000 each for the 500 graduates. Raleigh will be match funding this amount, subsidising each graduate place by £1000. Each graduate will need to then fundraise £1000 and pay for flights, vaccinations and kit.

Applicants will also need to demonstrate past experience of volunteering and an understanding of the Raleigh expedition as well as commitment to the aims and vision of Raleigh.

Applicants will be subject to a phone interview. Following the expedition participants will be expected to commit to local volunteering through Raleigh's fourth challenge.

David Lammy, Minister of State for Higher Education, said: "Volunteering can be a beneficial and life-affirming experience for people of any age, but for new graduates it can also help to develop the communication and leadership skills that are so highly valued in the workplace.

"We want to make sure this opportunity is available to all, regardless of their background, and so are providing £500,000 to Raleigh to support 500 graduates who could not otherwise afford to go. I hope this will encourage more people than ever to volunteer on worthwhile and sustainable projects, giving them useful experiences that they will remember forever."

Chief executive of Raleigh, Stacey Adams, added: "We are delighted that the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills is supporting the scheme, and that they share our belief that an overseas expedition will help boost the employability skills and global citizenship of young adults who otherwise could not afford it."

ENDS

Date released: 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2009

### **Notes to Editors**

Raleigh is a youth and education charity which runs adventure and challenge expeditions to enable young adults to explore new cultures, make a difference to poorer communities and develop their confidence and soft skills. Raleigh aims to awaken a sense of self-purpose and self-belief in young adults and create a network of global citizens passionate about the world they live in.

A recent survey by Raleigh found that almost 90% of graduate recruiters now rely on candidates' non academic achievements when deciding which applicants to put forward for highly-sought after graduate jobs.

The Raleigh Graduate Bursary Award for Volunteering Overseas will be based on eligibility criteria, namely:

- It is open to those 24 or under, and who graduated in 2008 or 2009
- Priority is given to those who received a full Higher Education Maintenance Grant, a full Higher Education Grant or a full Higher Education Tuition Fee Grant in their final year at university, funded by an English local authority or Student Finance England.
- The scheme is also open to those who are the first in their family to graduate, but are not necessarily in receipt of one of the above grants, and to those who have past experience of volunteering and a demonstrable understanding of a Raleigh expedition and commitment to the aims and vision of Raleigh.

The Department for Business, Innovation & Skills promotes open and competitive markets, proportionate regulation, an enterprise and innovation culture, skilled people, thriving universities, life-long learning and world-class science, technology and research.

For more information about Raleigh and the Raleigh Graduate Bursary Award for Volunteering Overseas, visit [www.raleighinternational.org](http://www.raleighinternational.org), call 020 7183 1270 or email [anne.consedine@raleigh.org.uk](mailto:anne.consedine@raleigh.org.uk) or [Rachel.collinson@raleigh.org.uk](mailto:Rachel.collinson@raleigh.org.uk).

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