

Frequently Asked Questions - Venturers

The expeditions

How long are expeditions?

A full expedition lasts 10 weeks with community, environmental and adventure phases. You can choose to do just one project phase for 4 weeks or two phases for 7 weeks at certain times of the year. On 5 week expeditions you choose either a community or environmental project and take part in a team-based adventure challenge.

Can I extend my stay if I choose a shorter expedition?

As the 4 week and 7 week project form part of the 10 week expedition you can extend your stay. However if you choose the 5 week expedition you will not be able to extend your stay, as this is a stand-alone expedition. You can always choose to join another expedition later on in the year.

Where can I go?

Currently we offer expeditions to Borneo, Costa Rica & Nicaragua, India.

Do you plan to go to any other countries?

Not at the moment. We prefer to operate in a few countries and dedicate our time and resources to delivering much needed projects in partnership with the government, NGOs and local communities there.

What training will I get?

You will be invited to a challenge workshop which is a three day residential event where you'll be able to meet other venturers joining your expedition. You'll learn more about your projects, kit and medical requirements and do some group activity. When you arrive in country you'll also have an induction. This includes safety briefings, risk assessment, casualty evacuation; training in the correct and safe use of tools, camping equipment, and safety equipment including radios.

Why should I choose Raleigh?

We are unique. Firstly our projects are worthwhile and sustainable. We have a permanent presence in every country we work in with a field base and permanent staff. This means we are constantly forming relationships with the government, NGOs and local communities there to ensure the projects are genuinely needed and are planned and delivered with long-term partners. Secondly, our volunteers come from a wide variety of backgrounds and nationalities so you'll be making friends with people from all walks of life. Finally, since 1984 we've been running structured expeditions that are safe, challenging and life-changing. So we know what we're doing. Read 'Why Raleigh' on the website for more reasons you should choose us.



The projects

Can I choose the projects that I work on?

This depends on the length of your chosen expedition. On a 10 week expedition, you will take part in all three project phases: community, environmental and adventure. If you choose just one phase (4 weeks) or 2 phases (7 weeks) then you can choose your preferred project types. Our 5 week expedition allows you to choose either a community or environmental project and you'll undertake a team-based adventure challenge. However, we cannot guarantee your first choice so we recommend you sign up as early as possible. No volunteers are able to choose the specific project, as we need to ensure a diverse mix of people on each project. Take a look at the country pages of the website for the types of projects you might be working on.

Do I have to be really fit for the adventure challenge?

A basic level of fitness is necessary but venturers achieve this through both team support and sheer determination

Does the 5 week expedition in Borneo include diving?

The 5 week expedition does not include diving. However, if you wish to dive before or after the expedition then we can recommend a diving school that offers competitive rates once you've signed up to a Raleigh expedition.

Does the adventure challenge in Borneo include climbing Mount Kinabalu?

Currently expeditions to Borneo don't include climbing Mount Kinabalu. For more information on the adventure challenge, please [Explore Borneo](#) and check out our [expedition blogs](#).

Can I work with animals?

We don't run many projects with animals, but please contact head office for the latest information. You may get the opportunity to see wildlife whilst living in certain environments

Will I be doing work that takes away jobs from the locals?

Not at all. We work with [project partners](#) to provide materials and manpower to complete projects that wouldn't otherwise get done, either because of a lack of funds or direction. On our project sites we work alongside locals, often bringing communities together for the first time and inspiring them to achieve things they never thought possible.

The people

Who takes part in an expedition?

We encourage people from all walks of life, nationalities and age groups. Venturers are aged between 17 and 24 and are usually taking a gap year between school, university or work. We do also have disadvantaged young people from the UK and host country participants. Our volunteer managers aged 25 up to 75 are usually taking a sabbatical, a longer-term career break,



time out from their home life or simply enjoying their retirement.

Can I go with a friend?

Yes, although we can't guarantee you'll be allocated to the same project groups. In our experience venturers who break from the familiar and live and work alongside a diverse group of new people develop more self-confidence and gain a sense of pride from achieving the project goals.

Do I have to be a UK resident to join an expedition?

No. Our expeditions are open to all nationalities with a basic level of English. Before submitting your application, please check the relevant embassy for visa requirements.

Will I need a visa for the countries?

This depends on your nationality and chosen expedition country. Before submitting your application, please check the relevant embassy for visa requirements.

The cost

How much will it cost?

This will depend on your chosen expedition length. For a 10 week expedition we ask you to fundraise £2,995, for 7 weeks the amount is £2,250 and for 4 weeks the amount is £1,500. For a 5 week expedition, the target is £1,750.

Do I have to fundraise to join an expedition?

You can raise the funds to join the expedition in any way you like. This may include traditional fundraising activities such as sponsored events, or writing off to companies, asking friends and family for donations or using money you have saved through working. We prefer you to do some traditional fundraising as it's a great way to raise awareness of our charitable activities, help you develop more skills and get in the spirit of Raleigh!

Where does my money go?

76% goes towards running the expedition in terms of planning and delivery of projects, staff costs in country, running field base, food and accommodation, in-country travel, specialist equipment, training in the UK and in-country etc. 12% goes towards recruitment, marketing and PR, 11% towards head office overheads and 1% goes towards the governance of running a charity.

Will I have to arrange my own flight?

Yes. Read more about [recommended flights](#).

How much will my flight cost?

This varies depending on your expedition country, departure airport and how far in advance you book your tickets. However, departure prices from the UK usually range between £450 and £700.



Are there any other expenses?

Please read about other **costs** for things like kit and visas.

What happens if I do not achieve my minimum fundraising target?

Applicants can pay for their expedition in any way they like, not just by fundraising, for example by saving up or from donations from friends and family. We support you throughout by giving you ideas and reminders. However, if you still cannot manage the target then you can choose another expedition at a later stage

What is the deadline for applying for an expedition?

We run expeditions throughout the year and encourage venturers to apply between six and 18 months in advance to ensure you get the place you want and give you time to raise the money. We do accept applications up to a month in advance, however you will have missed out on the UK training weekend, you may not get the place you want and you will have to organise your fundraising and vaccinations very quickly.

Health and safety**When do I need to send the medical form back?**

The medical form must be sent in within four weeks of your application. If this form is not received it might affect your place on expedition.

Does my GP have to sign it?

Yes. There are two sections on the medical form, one for you to complete and another for your GP. This section must be completed in order to secure your place on expedition.

Do you provide my medical insurance?

Once the medical form has been completed and received by the medical coordinator your insurance is provided. All current and previous medical conditions must be on the form and all medications listed. If you suffer with a condition that you haven't put on your form this will void your insurance.

Are there any medical restrictions for expedition?

We try to be as inclusive as possible but obviously need to ensure the safety of every individual on expedition. If you suffer with a long standing medical condition please ensure that you discuss this with the medical coordinator at head office as soon as possible.

What happens if I get diagnosed with a condition before I go?

Please inform the medical coordinator as soon as possible. As long as the condition will not have an impact on your experience or the rest of the expedition we can usually work around it and ensure the insurance covers you.

What happens if I injure myself before I go?

Please inform the medical coordinator to discuss the options.

Do I need any vaccines for the expedition?

All expedition countries will require some vaccines to ensure you are protected against some common diseases. The list of essential and optional vaccines can be found in your welcome pack. The essential vaccines are required for travel with us and the completed vaccine form must be returned to the medical coordinator at least four weeks before departure. You will not be accepted on expedition unless you have had all of the essential vaccines.

Why do I need rabies vaccines for all destinations?

All of the countries we work in have a risk of rabies. Part of the appeal of Raleigh is that we work in remote environments, which are often a drive from the nearest suitable medical facilities. Without the vaccine, treatment of immunoglobulin is required within 24 hours, however there is a worldwide shortage of this treatment. We cannot guarantee we can get you to a centre that stocks the treatment within 24 hours of being bitten, licked or scratched by a potentially rabid animal. Current guidelines issued by the WHO, CDC and the NHS recommend that a rabies vaccine is required for travel to our expedition countries for a stay of more than four weeks.

Does a doctor need to sign my vaccine form?

Your GP doesn't need to sign your form but your practice nurse or travel clinic nurse can help you to fill it in correctly.

Will I need to take malaria tablets?

Borneo and Costa Rica & Nicaragua are malarial areas and will require you to take malaria tablets. Please see your practice nurse, GP or travel clinic at least 6 weeks prior to departure date to discuss your options. You must also ensure that you have enough tablets with you on expedition to cover the whole duration.

Which malaria tablets do I need to take?

There are a variety of different tablets available for malaria prevention. Your practice nurse, GP or travel clinic will be able to help you decide which one is most suitable for the area you are travelling to. There is a medical coordinator available at head office to answer these questions and run through the choices if needs be. If you travel on after your expedition the areas you visit may have different malaria tablet requirements.

When do I take them?

All of the malaria tablets are different so please check if the ones you are taking are daily or weekly. If you're on weekly tablets please make sure you take them on a Sunday for the duration of the expedition. All malaria tablets need to be taken before, during and after expedition for varying lengths of time, please make sure you're aware of these timescales.

Do we purify water that we drink?

Water that has any risk of causing illness will be purified. On static sites we will provide the purification systems to purify large volumes of water for the whole group to drink and cook with. Whilst on the trekking phase you will require your own water purification tablets as you may have to fill up your water bottles in rivers and from local supplies.

What should we purify the water with?

Over the years we have found that chlorine water purification tablets with filters are the most safe and effective way to purify water so it's safe to drink. Iodine tablets are also available for purchase.

What happens if I become ill during the expedition?

We have a team of medics on every expedition and each site has an extensive medical kit available. We have good relationships with the local doctors and hospitals too and will ensure you get any medical care you need. Your insurance covers your medical expenses as long as all conditions have been put on your medical form. The insurance also covers repatriation to the UK should this become necessary.

Further travel**What do I need to consider if I am going to travel on afterwards?**

Please check the vaccine and malaria recommendations for the areas. You will need your own medical insurance from the day expedition ends. Our insurers can provide this cover, please see the insurance pack for details.

Can I travel before or after my expedition?

Yes. If you travel afterwards there will probably be other venturers that you can travel with.

Can I hang out at field base after my expedition?

No, the country director and country staff will need to focus on planning the next expedition, so they will be very busy!