

Personal Statement: Christianson Grant Application

I spent three incredible and transformational years working as an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor in central Vietnam—in international school, after-school, and virtual settings—from 2015 to 2018. My students ranged in ages, from as young as two-years-old, up through adulthood. However, the vast majority of my students were between the ages of seven and 16.

It was during my time in Vietnam that I was really able to hone my skills as an educator—cultivating my own methods of classroom management, developing reward systems, learning the importance of flexibility and adaptability, making learning fun, and ensuring that my students were given the tools and resources they needed to expand upon the knowledge they were gaining in class.

But my time in Asia also taught me a great deal about cultural sensitivity, understanding, and the ability to work alongside diverse groups of people. My success as a teacher in Vietnam was 100 percent a direct result of the amazing support I was given by my Vietnamese partners. I choose not to use the term “teaching assistants” here, because these women truly were my partners. I trusted and relied upon them not only for translating between myself and my students (as well as my students’ parents), but also for cluing me into how my students were feeling; what was relevant for them; which elements of my teaching methods were working, and which ones weren’t. I sought their advice and counsel on so many aspects, not only with regard to my teaching, but also with the whole process of adapting and adjusting to life in Vietnam. Were it not for them, I’m not sure if I would have left Southeast Asia with such a passion for education and international development.

My Vietnamese partners, along with the other foreign teachers I met in Vietnam, were my community. And I owe them for instilling these qualities—cultural sensitivity, understanding, and inclusion—in me. I believe these qualities, along with my skillset and experience as an ESL instructor, are going to be my most valuable contributions to HOOP, my Peruvian host organization.

It’s an undeniable fact that the experiences I’ve had in various pockets of the developing world have shaped me, changed me, and widened my lenses, ten-fold. Throughout my life, I’ve come to realize how important not just travel is to me, but also responsible tourism and sustainable community development, namely youth development.

Put simply, I firmly believe that education is the greatest equalizer the world has, regardless of race, gender, and socioeconomic background. But I am also starkly aware of the fact that barriers have been set up to prevent globally equitable access to education.

As a result, it has become a dream of mine to someday establish a nonprofit organization, in order to foster cultural exchange and service learning projects among youth in developing countries and here at home, in the U.S. But I have a great deal to learn about what it takes to build, manage, and grow a successful nonprofit organization. Hence, it became my intermediary goal to find and work with a successful organization that I could learn from—an organization whose values, mission, and vision align with my own. And the more I uncovered about HOOP, the more compelled I felt to make the journey to Arequipa.

Aligning with the [United Nations'](#) core belief that “education is the foundation to creating sustainable development; [i]n addition to improving quality of life, access to inclusive education can help equip locals with the tools required to develop innovative solutions to the world’s greatest problems,” my purpose, mission, and vision for facilitating a virtual exchange program between students in America and Arequipa’s Flora Tristán community is as follows: to foster an inclusive, multicultural learning environment, which supports the core values of empathy, equality, and collaboration.

I believe this exchange program will act as a vital seed project for the 501(c)(3) organization I aim to launch by 2021—Learn2Link: a global learning network for sustainable community development. Through Learn2Link (L2L), I plan to expand upon the project I will be facilitating in the Flora Tristán community, in order to create nine-month-long virtual exchange programs between students in the United States and various pockets of the developing world. I envision the future of L2L’s exchange programming to look a bit something like this:

The first three months of L2L’s exchange programming will equip students with the opportunity to break through social and geographic barriers, as they learn about each other’s cultures; hopes and dreams; fears and challenges. Through this experiential process, American students will have the chance to form individualized connections with students in developing countries, as they cultivate the values of empathy, equality, and understanding. Building upon the core values that were established in Phase 1, L2L students will use the second part of their exchange journeys to explore the problems being faced within their home communities. This collaborative phase will provide students with a platform to listen, synthesize, and link to build sustainable solutions to overcome these challenges. Lastly, during the final three months of their exchange journeys, L2L students will develop service-learning projects to be carried out in their home communities. The end goal is simple: L2L students will build upon the work and growth they have done as individuals and exchange partners, in order to help transform the places they call home.

Much the same, I hope to build upon the work and growth I will be doing as a volunteer in Peru, in order to help transform not only communities throughout the developing world, but also those we have right here at home.

Short-Answer Questions: Christianson Grant Application

Please describe all previous international travel. For each, please include: country, year of travel, duration of trip, and reason for travel.

Tanzania, 2012, 3 weeks: to partake in an undergraduate study abroad program, titled Land Conservation & Indigenous Peoples, which focused on the political ecology, culture, and development of one of the most biologically important regions of the world, while allowing students to live amongst indigenous groups such as the Maasai and Hadzabe people.

United Kingdom, 2013, 4 months: to partake in an undergraduate exchange program at the University of Sussex in Brighton, England. My primary course of study was global media. During this time, I took additional short-hop trips to Scotland and Ireland for personal travel.

France, 2013, 1 week: to embark upon a solo-backpacking trip, for personal travel and leisure, growth, and exploration

Vietnam, 2015, 3.5 years: to live and work abroad as an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor, in addition to personal growth and exploration

Cambodia, 2015, 2 weeks: for personal travel and leisure, exploration

Thailand, 2015 and 2018, 3.5 months total: for personal travel and leisure, exploration

Nepal, 2016 and 2018, 4.5 months total: trekking, exploration, personal growth, travel and leisure

Singapore, 2017 and 2018, 2 weeks total: for personal travel and leisure, exploration

China, 2017, 1 week: for personal travel and leisure, exploration

Describe in detail your self-arranged program or project (include organization names, locations, activities, and dates). *

I will be traveling to Arequipa, Peru to volunteer as an English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor with a Peruvian nonprofit organization, Helping Overcome Obstacles Peru (HOOP). During this time, I will simultaneously be working as a virtual volunteer for an American nonprofit organization, Reach the World. My self-

arranged project is as follows: to establish a virtual exchange program between ESL students in Arequipa's rural Flora Tristán community and K-12 students in the United States. HOOP and Reach the World are the two key partner organizations that will help me to carry out this exchange project.

Helping Overcome Obstacles Peru (HOOP) is a Peruvian nonprofit organization, which has been in operation for seven years. It serves students in the Flora Tristán community by utilizing native English speaking volunteers to enhance students' English language acquisition skills at its after-school center. In addition to its after-school programming, HOOP hosts several parents' workshops per week about health, women's empowerment, community development, and accessing employment. HOOP also offers free psychological counseling and social services to individuals in need of extra support and works with local and international health professionals to deliver free health services and check-ups.

Reach the World (RTW) is a well-established U.S. Department of State partner, which has been in operation for more than 20 years. Relying on its steady base of American volunteer travelers—many who are Fulbright and Benjamin A. Gilman Scholarship recipients—Reach the World connects K-12 classrooms across the U.S. with international travelers. Equipped with the organization's unique digital exchange platform, volunteer travelers and U.S.-based students get to explore the world together.

The primary activities for this project are as follows:

Based in Arequipa, I will present two 60-minute lessons to a group of Flora Tristán ESL students currently being served by HOOP. The first lesson, "Daily Life in the United States," will focus on the introduction of important elements of U.S. culture and the American core values of equality, democracy, competition, and multiculturalism. Guiding the students to vote on a series of "official class-elected responses," I will demonstrate the democratic principles of popular sovereignty, majority rule, and the rights of the minority, while promoting an amicable sense of competition amongst the students. The second lesson, "Kids' Lives in Peru," will incorporate the same principles, but will instead focus on giving Peruvian students the opportunity to share important elements of their own culture—reinforcing the values of equality and multiculturalism—with me. Following the second lesson, I will facilitate a 30-minute virtual Q&A session between the Flora Tristán ESL students being served by HOOP and the American K-12 students being served by Reach the World. This Q&A session will be conducted over Skype and will be structured in a way that provides each student, on both sides of the exchange, an equal opportunity to ask and answer questions.

The primary method for achieving the goals of this program will be the utilization of Reach the World's pipeline of American volunteers (who will be traveling to Arequipa in the future) and the organization's clientele group (American K-12 students), in partnership with HOOP and its clientele group (ESL students in the

Flora Tristán community), to facilitate and maintain a sustainable cultural exchange between Peruvian and American students.

To ensure the future sustainability of this cultural exchange, I, as the volunteer and temporary program director, will:

First, receive signed contracts from both partner organizations, demonstrating a willingness to continue the exchange partnership once I leave Peru. Second, I will develop a clear, easy-to-follow program continuation plan. This plan will explain the activities, goals, and methods of the exchange program in detail. A copy of this plan will be left with the director and volunteer coordinator of HOOP and shared with the director of the RTW Traveler Program. Third, I will ensure that HOOP officially registers and is accepted as a “host” for RTW’s future volunteers.

HOOP’s volunteer coordinator and the director of the RTW Traveler Program—positions that are and will continue to be independently funded by each partner organization—will share the responsibility of overseeing the volunteers’ activities. So long as RTW continues connecting its pipeline of American volunteers (who will be traveling Arequipa in the future) with HOOP, the exchange program will continue, serving new groups of students in the Flora Tristán community and in the U.S., each step of the way.

The anticipated timeline for these activities spans approximately three months (March, April, May). Beginning in June, a second exchange will be initiated between a new group of Flora Tristán ESL students (served by HOOP) and a new Reach the World classroom in the U.S. The second exchange will utilize the same activities-structure as the first exchange, however, the second exchange will serve as an opportunity for me to implement any recommended program improvements, before I leave the project site in early September.

A timeline of the major activities for this project follows:

- **March 2, 12:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the volunteer/temporary program director, arrive at the Peruvian host organization, (HOOP).
- **March 18, 4:00 p.m. EST, Flora Tristán Community, Arequipa, Peru:** I present the first 60-minute lesson to ESL students at HOOP. A co-volunteer, who will act as the program evaluator, attends and evaluates the lesson and submits an evaluation questionnaire to the HOOP volunteer coordinator.
- **March 23, 9:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director, and the co-volunteer/program evaluator meet with HOOP volunteer coordinator. Program evaluator presents findings from first-exchange, first-lesson evaluations. All attendees work together to ensure that the needs of the Flora Tristán students are being met. Recommended changes to the program operations are noted, while the program director continues to introduce the HOOP volunteer coordinator to RTW’s web-based exchange platform.

- **April 1, 4:00 p.m. EST, Flora Tristán Community, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director hold a second 60-minute lesson with ESL students at HOOP. The co-volunteer/program evaluator attends and evaluates the lesson and submits evaluation questionnaire to the HOOP volunteer coordinator.
- **April 5, 11:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director, use information collected during the second lesson to complete a blog assignment, titled “Kids’ Lives in Peru,” for RTW.
- **April 8, 9:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** The program director and program evaluator meet with HOOP volunteer coordinator. Program evaluator presents findings from first-exchange, second-lesson evaluations. All attendees work together to ensure that the needs of the Flora Tristán students are being met. Improvements to program operations are discussed and noted by program evaluator.
- **April 22, 3:30 p.m. EST, Flora Tristán Community, Arequipa, Peru:** Using Skype, I facilitate a virtual Q&A session between students in Flora Tristán and students in the U.S. The co-volunteer/program evaluator attends and evaluates the session and submits a formative evaluation questionnaire to both the HOOP volunteer coordinator and the director of the RTW Traveler Program.
- **April 30, 9:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Program staff meet with the HOOP volunteer coordinator. Program evaluator presents findings from the first-exchange, virtual Q&A evaluations. All attendees work together to evaluate the effectiveness of the Q&A session and the program as a whole. Improvements to program operations are noted by the program evaluator.
- **May 1-15, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director, work to decide on program improvements to implement for the second exchange. My final decisions are discussed with the HOOP volunteer coordinator and the co-volunteer/program evaluator.
- **May 15-31, Arequipa, Peru:** Any necessary changes are made to the program evaluations for the second exchange. Onboarding for Reach the World’s summer session is complete.
- **June 3, 4:00 p.m. EST, Flora Tristán Community, Arequipa, Peru:** I present the first 60-minute lesson to the group of ESL students at HOOP who have been selected for the second exchange program. A co-volunteer, who will act as the program evaluator, attends and evaluates the lesson and submits an evaluation questionnaire to the HOOP volunteer coordinator.
- **June 8, 9:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director, and the co-volunteer/program evaluator meet with HOOP volunteer coordinator. Program evaluator presents findings from second-exchange, first-lesson evaluations. All attendees work together to ensure that the needs of the Flora Tristán students are being met. Additional recommended changes to the program operations are noted.
- **June 17, 4:00 p.m. EST, Flora Tristán Community, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director hold a second 60-minute lesson with the second group of ESL students at HOOP. The co-volunteer/program evaluator attends and

- evaluates the lesson and submits evaluation questionnaire to the HOOP volunteer coordinator.
- **June 21, 11:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** I, the program director, use information collected during the second lesson to complete a second blog assignment, titled “Kids’ Lives in Peru,” for the new class of RTW students.
 - **June 22, 9:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** The program director and program evaluator meet with HOOP volunteer coordinator. Program evaluator presents findings from second-exchange, second-lesson evaluations. All attendees work together to ensure that the needs of the Flora Tristán students are being met. Additional improvements to program operations are discussed and noted by program evaluator.
 - **July 8, 3:30 p.m. EST, Flora Tristán Community, Arequipa, Peru:** Using Skype, I facilitate a second virtual Q&A session between students in Flora Tristán and students in the U.S. The co-volunteer/program evaluator attends and evaluates the session and submits a formative evaluation questionnaire to both the HOOP volunteer coordinator and the director of the RTW Traveler Program.
 - **July 15, 9:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Program staff meet with the HOOP volunteer coordinator. Program evaluator presents findings from the second-exchange, virtual Q&A session evaluations. All attendees work together to evaluate the effectiveness of the Q&A session and the program as a whole. Additional improvements to program operations are noted by the program evaluator.
 - **July 16-31, Arequipa, Peru:** Program director drafts a final program continuation plan based on the needs of both partner organizations.
 - **August 3-7, 5:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Program continuation plan is sent to RTW for approval and presented in a meeting with HOOP. Any necessary revisions are made. Contractual agreements to continue the exchange partnership are delivered to both partner organizations.
 - **August 14, 5:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Signed agreements are received from both partner organizations. Program director assists HOOP volunteer coordinator to submit official “host” application through RTW’s web-based platform.
 - **August 21, 5:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** U.S. partner officially accepts HOOP as a “host” for its volunteers. The program evaluator submits final surveys to both partner organizations.
 - **August 28, 11:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Program evaluator completes final report, which identifies the major findings of the final summative evaluation.
 - **August 29-September 4, 11:00 p.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Program evaluator and program director discuss each of the program evaluation reports. Program director completes the final program report, financial reports, and makes any necessary revisions. Program director leaves project site and returns to the U.S.

- **September 7, 10:00 a.m. EST, Arequipa, Peru:** Program director submits any necessary final reports to the appropriate agencies.
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Detail your project/program goals and impact. What specific goals do you plan to achieve? What benchmarks will you consider? How will achievement of these goals benefit the local community? *

The activities of this program are designed to achieve the following three goals. The specific benchmarks for each goal are sub-categorized as the “objectives.”

Goal 1: To advance English as a Second Language (ESL) education in the Flora Tristán community.

Objective 1.1: An American volunteer will lead two sets of two 60-minute lessons—the first lesson in the set on elements of U.S. culture, the second lesson in the set on elements of Peruvian culture—for Peruvian ESL students in the Flora Tristán community.

Objective 1.2: Via Skype, an American volunteer based in Peru will facilitate two 30-minute, student-to-student Q&A sessions, between ESL classes in Flora Tristán and K-12 classes in the United States.

Objective 1.3: Relying on English to communicate with the American volunteer during the lessons and with the American students during the virtual exchanges, Flora Tristán students will utilize their English language skills through real-world applications of knowledge.

Goal 2: To foster an inclusive learning environment, which supports the U.S.-Peruvian shared values of equality, democracy, competition, and multiculturalism.

Objective 2.1: American volunteers will structure the Q&A session so that each student, on both sides of the exchange, is given an equal opportunity to ask and answer questions.

Objective 2.2: American volunteers will structure their lessons to demonstrate principles of popular sovereignty, majority rule, and the rights of the minority.

Objective 2.3: American volunteers will structure their lessons to foster an amicable sense of competition between Peruvian students and American volunteers.

Objective 2.4: American volunteers will reinforce the importance of multiculturalism by giving students in Flora Tristán the opportunity to exchange ideas and share important elements of their own culture with American partners.

Goal 3: To establish a sustainable academic partnership and promote bilateral cooperation between civil society organizations in Peru and the United States.

Objective 3.1: Based in Arequipa, American volunteers will act as ambassadors for the U.S.-based partner organization, Reach the World (RTW).

Objective 3.2: American volunteers will regularly monitor and ensure that the needs of the clientele groups being served by both partner organizations are being met.

Objective 3.3: Before the program completion date, the program director will assist the Peruvian partner organization, Helping Overcome Obstacles Peru (HOOP) in registering as a permanent host for Reach the World's (RTW's) volunteers.

The establishment of this virtual exchange program will simultaneously establish a sustainable academic partnership between Peruvian and U.S. civil society organizations. Ultimately, this partnership has the potential to bring inclusive educational, social, and economic opportunities not only to U.S. citizens, but also to one of Peru's most vulnerable communities.

As written by HOOP:

"Flora Tristán is a community of people who took the bold step of migrating to Arequipa in search of a better life. While this has improved prospects for some, the community continues to suffer from a lack of basic services such as sewage systems, paved roads and safe drinking water.

Most of the mothers in the community did not progress beyond primary education, and more than half remain unemployed. 100% of families we serve are either poor or very poor according to the official Peruvian poverty ranking.

With Peru currently bottom in the OECD's country rankings for maths, reading and science, many children in the community don't have **access to adequate education**. To help empower parents and ensure their children at least receive secondary education, HOOP is committed to breaking the cycle of poverty through enhancing education of people from all ages in Flora Tristán." (HOOP, *Our Community*, accessed August 9, 2019, <http://www.hoopperu.org/our-community/>.)

Simply put, I, alongside the co-founders of HOOP, believe that "knowledge is power."

In Peru, there is a direct correlation between English education and increased economic opportunity. According to a 2015 survey conducted by the British Council, 71-75 percent of Peru's highest earning income groups were English learners. (ICEF Monitor, *Peru commits to bilingualism with a new focus on English*, January 29, 2016, <https://monitor.icef.com/2016/01/peru-commits-to-bilingualism-with-a-new-focus-on-english/>.) What's more, increased economic opportunities lead to better

basic human services—like safe drinking water, sewage systems, and paved roads. By equipping the Flora Tristán community with better English skills, we aim to empower them with this type of increased economic and social standing. Ultimately, we believe that English education will enable members of the Flora Tristán community to improve their quality of life.

According to the ICEF Monitor, “[t]he major barriers for Peruvians wishing to learn English are cost and time. Both relate to income level. A boom economy pushed disposable income levels higher and helped expand the middle class, but most of the population still languishes in the lowest economic brackets. These households rely mainly on the public education system, where funding for infrastructure, resources, and qualified teachers is sometimes inadequate.” (ICEF Monitor, Peru commits to bilingualism with a new focus on English, January 29, 2016, <https://monitor.icef.com/2016/01/peru-commits-to-bilingualism-with-a-new-focus-on-english/>)

The Flora Tristán community is part of the Peruvian population, which “still languishes in the lowest economic brackets.” By achieving each of the three program goals put forth in this proposal, we aim to ensure that members of Arequipa’s rural Flora Tristán community are no longer left behind.

How will your progress/goal achievement be tracked? *

I will have an American co-volunteer, alongside me in Arequipa, who will assume the role of the “program evaluator” for the duration of this project. The program evaluator will conduct periodic formative and summative evaluations and submit regular reports to me, which detail the findings of those evaluations.

The program evaluator will attend all four of the 60-minute lessons and both of the virtual student-to-student Q&A sessions. During these activities, the program evaluator will track Objectives 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.2, 2.3, and 2.4 with a summative evaluation form. Immediately after each of the 60-minute lessons, the program evaluator will also distribute a questionnaire to the HOOP volunteer coordinator, in order to conduct a formative evaluation. This questionnaire will collect qualitative data regarding each of the three program goals, as well as Objective 3.2. Qualitatively assessing Goals 2 and 3, as well as objective 3.2, questionnaires will again be submitted to the HOOP volunteer coordinator and the director of the Reach the World Traveler Program following the virtual Q&A sessions. Key team members will also be given a final, summative “yes/no” survey response form, to assess all program goals and Objectives 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3.

Throughout the duration of the project, the program evaluator will hold a minimum of six meetings with me, the program director, and HOOP staff, in order to share his periodic evaluation reports and to discuss necessary improvements to program

operations. (Please see the program activities timeline for a tentative schedule of these meetings.)

Why have you chosen this particular project/program abroad and why this location?

I am an educator not only because I believe in the fact that knowledge is power, but I also believe that the world's children are its future. Hence, I believe that every child—regardless of socioeconomic and geopolitical barriers—deserves the right to an inclusive and equitable quality education.

After being catapulted into the 21st century by the Technological Revolution, we—as teachers, students, parents, and global citizens—are currently living in a new Digital Era. This is an era in which technological advances are rapid; change is tenacious; and our world is steadfastly globalizing, as our societies and economies become more interconnected than ever before.

As Katherine A. Rowe, President of the College of William & Mary, so eloquently stated: “As we prepare our students to live as citizens and professionals in the 21st century, those lives will require them to be adaptable and resilient to change, to value different modes of being in community and at work.” (William & Mary, “Remarks from W&M's 28th president Katherine Rowe,” William & Mary, accessed June 12, 2019, <https://www.wm.edu/news/stories/2018/remarks-from-wms-28th-president-katherine-rowe.php>.)

For me, this exchange program embodies the intersection of communication, cross-cultural understanding, and technology—the three branches of education, which will be instrumental in preparing our children to become active, engaged, global citizens in the 21st century.

I have chosen this location, because I also believe that the country of Peru currently sits at a monumental crossroads. Despite Peru's remarkable growth and development within the last 15 years and its emergence as a stable Western Hemisphere partner for the United States, the country has struggled to implement social and economic reforms, in order to benefit broader portions of its diverse population—namely those who reside in regions outside of major cities. (U.S. Department of State, Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, *Integrated Country Strategy, Western Hemisphere Region, Peru*, April 2019.)

In 2010, under then-President Alan García Pérez, Peru published its 2021 Bicentenary Plans for regional and global leadership. President Ollanta Humala expanded upon these plans in 2014 by establishing a national policy to achieve statewide bilingualism—specifically prioritizing English—by 2021. Arequipa, Peru's second most populous city, was chosen as the flagship municipality for achieving bilingualism first. (CEPLAN, *Peru in 2021: Bicentenary Plan Executive Summary*,

November 2010, <https://www.ceplan.gob.pe/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/peru2021-bicentenaryplan.pdf>; ICEF Monitor, *Peru commits to bilingualism with a new focus on English*, January 29, 2016, <https://monitor.icef.com/2016/01/peru-commits-to-bilingualism-with-a-new-focus-on-english/>.)

The Flora Tristán community sits on the outskirts of Arequipa. Confined to one of Peru's lowest economic brackets, 100 percent of the Flora Tristán students currently being served by HOOP are "either poor or very poor," according to the official Peruvian poverty ranking. (HOOP, *Our Community*, accessed August 9 2019, <http://www.hoopperu.org/our-community/>.)

As reported by the ICEF Monitor, many Peruvian families living in extreme poverty—like those in Flora Tristán—“rely mainly on the public education system, where funding for infrastructure, resources, and qualified teachers is sometimes inadequate.” (ICEF Monitor, *Peru commits to bilingualism with a new focus on English*, January 29, 2016, <https://monitor.icef.com/2016/01/peru-commits-to-bilingualism-with-a-new-focus-on-english/>)

In short, these circumstances mean that the children living in the Flora Tristán community don't have access to adequate education. I have chosen the Flora Tristán community, because I am committed to seeing that these children are no longer left behind—namely not when it comes to the country's bicentenary plans for global leadership and bilingualism.

Outline how you intend to use the grant. *

I intend to use funds from the Christianson grant to cover my airfare to and from Arequipa. I will be traveling to Arequipa from within South America, so my arrival airfare expenses will be significantly less than my departure airfare expenses from the program site back to the United States. Additionally, I will use funds from the Christianson grant to cover the following expenses for the 26-week duration of my stay in Arequipa: daily transportation expenses from my accommodation in Arequipa to the program site in the Flora Tristán community, daily meal expenses, monthly accommodation expenses, the volunteer fee I will be paying to HOOP, and comprehensive travel insurance.

You MUST provide proof of ALL fees, including program fees, insurance, flight, housing/meals, local transportation, and legal documentation expenses. Please attach receipts and a copy of any program fees from your organization and the source of any estimated expenses (e.g., screenshot of flight searches if you haven't bought one yet) below: *

Please list your expenses (in U.S. dollars) for the following: (1) Program Fees; (2) Airfare; (3) Local Transportation; (4) Passport & Visa Fees; (5) Housing & Meals; (6) Travel Insurance. *

- (1) Program Fees: \$250
- (2) Airfare: \$930
- (3) Local Transportation: \$80
- (4) Passport & Visa Fees: \$0
- (5) Housing & Meals: \$4,290
- (6) Travel Insurance: \$225

Total Expenses (in U.S. dollars): * \$5,775

Explain why you are seeking financial assistance and whether you will receive other funding to participate in your program: *

At the time of writing, I have not received any other funding to participate in this volunteer program. I have, however, submitted a second application for funding through the U.S. Embassy in Peru's Public Diplomacy Grants Program. I expect to find out the results of my application for this grants program (and whether or not I will be awarded any additional funding) by early November 2019.

As a virtual ESL instructor and freelance writer, my AGI for 2018 was approximately \$11,000. My current salary has enabled me to keep up with my monthly living expenses here in the United States. However, it has not provided much in the way of savings for this program. What's more, since graduating from university in 2013, my AGI has not surpassed \$18,000.

Throughout the duration of my project in Peru, I will be responsible for keeping up with monthly bill payments here in the United States. These expenses total approximately \$500/month. In addition to volunteering for both Reach the World and HOOP for the duration of my project, I plan to continue to work as a virtual ESL instructor and freelance writer to cover the cost of these monthly payments, as well as any sort of independent touring or excursions I hope to do while in Peru. I'm afraid, however, that given the amount of time I will be devoting to this project—and as a volunteer for both partner organizations—I will not be able to devote enough additional hours as a freelance writer and virtual ESL instructor, in order to cover all of the remaining program costs (as outlined above). Hence, I am seeking financial assistance through the Christianson program to cover these costs.

Resume: Christianson Grant Application

Abigail J. Faires
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Education:

The University of Colorado at Boulder, 2013

- Bachelor of Science in Journalism, News-Editorial
- Concentrations in Technology, Arts & Media and International Media
- Outstanding Graduate CU School of Journalism, Class of 2013

International TEFL and TESOL Training, 2014

- 120-hour Teaching English as a Foreign Language certification
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Objective: As a potential recipient of the Christianson Grant, an educator, and a volunteer, my goal is to improve the access to and quality of education—our world’s most powerful equalizer—for Peruvian and American youth.

Work Experience:

ESL Teacher, VIP Kid, Remote/Beijing, China, 2017-present

- Deliver engaging, age-appropriate lessons for non-native English speaking students, based in China, ranging from ages 4-12

Freelance Writer, Independent Contractor, Remote, 2013-present

- Research and write grant proposals, books, news features, and web content for various media outlets including *The SU Independent*, *The Culture-ist*, and *Forbes Entrepreneurs*

ESL Teacher, Fisher’s Superkids, Danang, Vietnam, 2016-2017

- Created and delivered engaging, age-appropriate lessons for non-native English speaking students, ranging from ages 4-12

English Teacher, Phoenix Education, Hue, Vietnam, 2015-2016

- Full-time English teacher for international school, grades 1 and 2; pre-school; and ESL evening and weekend classes

Teaching Fellow, Blueprint Schools Network, Denver, Colorado, 2013-2014

- Provided small group mathematics instruction to fourth grade students, as part of a nationwide school reform effort to accelerate achievement in high needs schools
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Volunteer Experience:

Exchange Partner, Reach the World, Remote, 2012-2013, 2018-present

- Reach the World makes the benefits of travel accessible to classrooms, inspiring students to become curious, confident global citizens.

Tutor and Mentor, I Have a Dream Foundation of Boulder, 2009-2011

- The I Have A Dream Foundation works to ensure that all children have the opportunity to pursue higher education, fulfill their potential, and achieve their dreams.