



Smithsonian
Instituto de Investigaciones Tropicales

VISITOR SERVICES OFFICE POLICY OF THE STRI VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

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1. OBJECTIVE

The main objective of the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) Volunteer Program is to support and strengthen scientific research and conservation efforts by engaging volunteers in both hands-on research activities and essential administrative tasks. Through a dedicated platform, volunteers contribute meaningfully to the understanding and preservation of tropical biodiversity while also ensuring the efficient operation of research projects. This integrated approach fosters a collaborative environment where scientific advancement and operational support work together to drive impactful tropical research and conservation activities.

2. ELEGIBILITY

The Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) Volunteer Program is open to individuals of all nationalities with an interest in scientific research, conservation and administrative support. Volunteers must be assigned to and supervised by a designated permanent staff member or a specific department.

Minors may apply as volunteers starting at age 14, as long as they have parental or legal guardian consent. This consent is required to ensure that parents or guardians are aware of and agree to the minor's participation in any activity or process that requires their authorization. It is important to note that minors are strictly prohibited from accessing STRI laboratories for safety reasons.

3. SCOPE OF ACTIVITIES

Volunteering at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI) encompasses both scientific and administrative support roles, allowing individuals to contribute their time, skills, and expertise to advance research and conservation initiatives. Volunteers may engage in a wide range of activities, including logistical coordination, technical assistance, data collection, entry, management, and analysis. Additional tasks may involve educational outreach, document preparation and archiving, procurement and inventory tracking of equipment and supplies, and communication support. These contributions play a vital role in ensuring the efficiency and success of STRI's scientific operations and institutional goals.

4. HOURS

Smithsonian volunteers typically have flexible hours, depending on the specific role. Volunteers are expected to commit to the agreed-upon schedule and tasks.

5. MONETARY RECOGNITION

During the volunteer period at STRI, no salary or payment for professional services will be provided for the approved period to carry out these activities

6. SUPERVISION

Volunteers at STRI will be under the supervision of a designated staff scientist or specific department to ensure proper guidance and alignment with institutional objectives.

7. BENEFITS

The STRI Scientific Volunteers Program provides a unique opportunity to work with experienced scientists across diverse fields, gain hands-on experience, learn new skills, and contribute to important scientific research and conservation efforts.

8. APPLICATION PROCESS

Steps to follow to apply as a volunteer in the scientific field:

- Visit <https://stri.si.edu/staff-scientists> to explore your area of interest and identify the scientists you would like to volunteer with.
- Contact the scientist of your choice, expressing your interest in volunteering. Be sure to send him your CV and inform your availability.
- If the scientist is interested, please complete and submit the [volunteer application form](#).
- The Visitor Services Office will contact you to confirm receipt of your application.
- Once you receive a second confirmation message approving your volunteer application, please proceed to submit your visit request at <https://visitors.stri.si.edu/en/>.
- After your visit is approved, please stop by the Visitor Services Office on the 3rd floor of the Tupper Building to sign your volunteer application form and register your check-in at STRI to begin your volunteer work.

Steps to follow to apply as a volunteer in the administrative field:

- Complete the [volunteer application form](#).
- Your application will be shared with potential interested parties.

- The Visitor Services Office will contact you once an interested party confirms acceptance.
- You may then proceed to submit your visit request at <https://visitors.stri.si.edu/en/>
- After your visit request is approved, please stop by the Visitor Services Office on the 3rd floor of the Tupper Building to sign your volunteer application form and register your check-in at STRI to begin your volunteer work.

9. CODE OF CONDUCT

Volunteers are expected to adhere to the following policies, maintaining professionalism and respect at all times. These policies will be provided once the registration process is completed.

- [SD 103 Code of Conduct](#)
- [SD 931 Policy on the Use of Networks and Telecommunications](#)
- [SD 225 Anti-Harassment Policy](#)
- [SD 217 Workplace Violence Prevention Policy](#)
- [STRI Expectations of Conduct](#)

10. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

Products or work created by volunteers within the scope of their volunteer work and under the supervision of the assigned staff scientist (e.g., text, photographs, illustrations, audio, video, research, graphics, recordings, databases, etc.) are included within the copyrights and other intellectual property rights over such information that belong to the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute (STRI).

The use of such work products by volunteers for purposes not related to STRI requires prior written permission from STRI, which may be granted on a case-by-case basis to the volunteer for educational and non-profit purposes only.

Any changes or exceptions to this policy and/or procedures must be previously approved by the Visitors Services Office.
