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ECUADOR

February 13 to February 21, 2027
ISL Leader: Monica Schuegraf (BIOLOGY)

Fee: **\$3800** *(funding available)

Ecuador has a population of approximately 14 million people. The population is a mix of indigenous natives whose forebears were the Quechua speaking Inca, and Mestizo people with Spanish roots.

The main exports of this country are oil, bananas, shrimp, and other agricultural products.

There are three distinct regions consisting of the coastal lowlands, the tropical rainforest, and the highlands. Quito, the capital, is situated in the highlands at an elevation of 2850 meters. It is a city rich in history with well-preserved colonial architecture alongside newer modern developments. This region is also home to a chain of snowcapped volcanoes of varying seismic activity and size.

This Immersion Service Learning experience introduces participants to ecotourism, grassroots environmental conservation and community development projects in a cloud forest community, including environmental restoration and habitat conservation efforts. Students will also explore the Intillacta cloud forest ecological reserve, learn about chocolate production at a cacao farm, and visit the Mindo waterfall sanctuary.

Transportation

Group members fly into Quito and will use various ground transportation methods during their stay.

Housing & Meals

Accommodation may include hostels or modest hotels, with private bathroom facilities. Students will share double or triple rooms. Meals are provided on location. Vegetarian diets may be accommodated with prior notice. Some meals are not prearranged/group will purchase. Provided meal menus are limited, based on locally available foods. Students will generally not have a choice of foods where meals are provided. **Please note:** *host cannot guarantee an allergen free trip, including gluten, and peanut products.*

Service Placements and Group Sessions

Service participation may include organic farm work, tree nursery maintenance and reforestation, helping in an artisan craft shop, and trail development. According to the current needs of the community.

Saturday 13	Halifax to Quito flights.
Sunday 14	Visit Quito Old Town. Walking history and culture tour. Travel to Otavalo.
Monday 15	Explore local plant diversity and ecosystem with a visit to the Cuicocho crater lake ecosystem. Traditional lunch and learning with community in Cotacachi
Tuesday 16	Waterfall hike. Visit traditional musicians and local wool artisans and then explore the largest craft market in South America. Travel to Intillacta .
Wednesday 17	Community learning and service on active nature conservation initiatives.
Thursday 18	Zip line through the canopy and discover the biodiversity of the forest. Mindo Waterfall Sanctuary. Learn about cocoa and chocolate production.
Friday 19	Visit a Butterfly Farm. Transfer to Quito. Farewell dinner
Saturday 20	Departure flight
Sunday 21	Arrival Halifax.

*** ISL bursaries, and ISL endowment funds are available.**



Please note this schedule is a guideline for typical activities and is subject to change based on a number of factors. Flight delays, available space and staff at facilities, to name a few factors, all play a role in the scheduling process. Students should be prepared to be flexible.