

# SMILE RURAL INTERNSHIP 2010-11

## FAQ SHEET



Often when trying to decide whether we want to do something or not (especially something like the SMILE Rural Internship), we tend to have a lot of questions... We have tried to put together a few frequently asked questions along with their answers to help you along the way. Please ensure that you do read this FAQ sheet before applying. And if you need more info do get in touch with Sulab/ Astha at 011- 26213918. Happy reading!

### **What is Pravah?**

Pravah is a Delhi-based registered non-profit organization, building leadership for social change among youth, since 1993. We at Pravah are committed towards creating active citizens - a base of sensitive, well-informed, independent-minded young people who can contribute constructively to society and create a better world in diverse ways irrespective of their specific chosen fields.

Our Youth Intervention programme offers various opportunities to young people between the ages of 18 and 27 to embark on a journey of understanding the self, by co-creating spaces that enhance soft skills in leadership, team-building, decision-making, conflict resolution, and the like. We believe that the aspects of self, skills and society lead to a greater awareness of the self and the ego, besides enhancing leadership skills and value- and knowledge-based stances on social issues. By providing young people with the tools, training and trust, we support them to apply their creativity and energy to effect meaningful change in their own lives and the future of their neighbourhoods and communities.

Through SMILE (Students' Mobilisation Initiative for Learning through Exposure), we provide various internship and group exposure programmes for young people. For further details, please visit: <http://www.pravah.org> or <http://www.smilevolunteers.blogspot.com>

### **Why is Pravah doing this?**

This is what we do! Our vision is to work with young people like you and travel the journey from 'Me to We'. From our experience, internships and exposures are one of the best ways to do this. Hence the Rural Internship programme 2010-11!

### **What is the SMILE Rural Internship?**

Rural Internship is one of the processes available through Students' Mobilisation Initiative for Learning through Exposure (SMILE), which provides an opportunity to intern with grassroots level organizations or movements. We believe that this form of experiential learning is one of the best ways of learning and allows individuals to form their own opinion and differentiate facts from fiction. It facilitates the process of decision-making, based on stances and values that are important to you and you alone. It will also help you take responsibility, see, feel, participate, communicate and therefore learn about communities and related issues directly. While doing all this, you shall also kick-start the process of realising your own potential as change makers in society.

The whole Internship is divided into three parts:

**Orientation Camp (3 Days):** This is a residential camp, and will take place in the outskirts of Delhi. It forms an integral part of your preparation for the rural internship. In this space, efforts are made to ensure that you reflect and focus on the journey ahead and also prepare yourself emotionally, mentally and physically for it, by equipping you with the ability to handle various obstacles like adjustment and adaptation to different situations. Moreover, it will provide you with a chance to get to know each other. The camp will include interactive sessions on values and stances, the Panchayati Raj Institution (PRI), conflict resolution, besides interaction and shramdaan with a local community.

**Individual internship (3-4 weeks):** This is the bedrock of the entire experience, where you will go and spend time at different organizations/movements, and also interact with the community and volunteer in various processes in that space. Though there will be a mentor or staff/volunteers in the respective organisation or movement, the space is intended for you as an opportunity to explore and challenge your own notion about self and issues around you. It will also extend scope for you to hone your personality traits, as you will be the only one responsible for your learnings.

**Feedback camp (2 Days):** This will take place once you are back from your individual internships. The space will provide you with an opportunity to reflect back on your experience, share any changes/ shifts within you with your fellow-interns, and create a plan about how you would like to take the process further to apply your learnings. Here, we shall also figure out if you would like to be engaged in any further processes at Pravah, and if yes then how. The sky is the limit!

### **Where will I go?**

You will be placed with one of the SMILE Rural Internship partners. We have over 30 partner organizations working on a variety of issues spread across India. Some of the broad issues on which you could do your internship are:

- ① **People's Movements**
- ① **Displacement and Rehabilitation**
- ① **Health**
- ① **Education**
- ① **Environment**
- ① **Youth Development**
- ① **Livelihood**
- ① **Dalit and tribal rights**
- ① **Microfinance**
- ① **Local Governance and Right To Information**
- ① **Preserving Indigenous Art and Culture**
- ① **Community Media**
- ① **Gender Empowerment and Domestic Violence**
- ① **Holistic Community Development**
- ① **Right to food**



### **What is expected from me, during the process?**

We expect you to come with an open mind and a desire to commit 100% to the process. We would like for you to commit to the process of getting uncomfortable and make the most of it.

Do trust us and together we will create a beautiful and powerful journey. We would expect that you will take full ownership for the process and the experience and will work with the Pravah team. We would also expect that you will hand us a reflective write up on the experience within a week of the Internship.

Remember this will be your Internship... and you will be responsible for making or breaking it... the more you will give the more you will get ...And of course be ready to have fun along with all the learning! ☺

### **What will I get out of it? Why should I go?**

Well, we can assure you that every individual who has been on the Rural Internship has always taken away something. However, each one takes away only as much as they choose to, because at the end of the day we can only create a space for an experience and help you make the most of it. Ultimately what you make of it will be dependent on you.

The process will give you an opportunity to challenge yourself and push your comfort zone. It will help you understand various perspectives and learn how to take an informed decision based on a stance. It will also facilitate the process of interaction and communication with people who you would not have met otherwise, in the regular course of your life. Through all this, you shall see for yourself a reality which exists in some other parts of the country. Along with this, you will also be able to learn through experience skills like leadership, challenging one self and conflict resolution. This is of course just the tip of the ice berg, there is always a lot more!

We will be providing certificates to all those who are part of this Internship. NSS volunteers can also cover their requisite number of hours through this programme, after consulting the respective college authorities.

### **Have there been others who have gone to a rural internship before?**

Yes! The SMILE Rural Internship has been offered in the campus space since 1995, and is one of the oldest internships offered to the youth. On an average, approximately 20-30 young people from varied universities like Delhi University, IIT Delhi, Jamia Millia Islamia and Indraprastha University opt for this programme each year. Please access the newsletter for verbatim from the last batch of interns in May/ June 2009.

### **Do I have to pay something? Why?**

The estimated cost of the two camps and the 3-4 weeks internship would be more than Rs. 10,000/- per person. However, we ask you to contribute 40%, which is Rs. 4000/-, as a token of shared responsibility and ownership for learning. This money will also help us create opportunities for people who may not be able to afford to go for such experiences otherwise, as our funding is also limited.



### **What if I can't pay? What do I do then?**

As mentioned before, this is a very subsidized amount. However, if you feel that you would be unable to pay it, please mention it in the "Dialogue and Consent Form".

We will make exceptions and waive off part or if need be the full amount depending on the case. Please do not let your inability to pay be the criteria for not applying.

### **What if I don't know English or Hindi well?**

No worries! It's all part of our learning curve and we will just work together on that. The sessions in the orientation and feedback camp and communication in the rural areas may very well be a mix of Hindi and other local languages, so we will just innovate. The sessions in the orientation and feedback camp will be delivered in either or both the languages, as per the need.

### **How does the process work?**

You need to first fill the 'Interaction Form' for SMILE Rural Internship 2009-10, which is available on our site [www.pravah.org](http://www.pravah.org) (<http://www.pravah.org/content/SMILE-RI>). This will be followed by a face-to-face conversation at office, revolving around the programme details, your areas of interest for the internship, and any doubts/ fears you may have. Post the conversation, you will have to fill the final 'Dialogue and Consent Form' at office.

We shall then contact our SMILE Rural Internship partners, on the basis of the issue(s) you have expressed interest in. Once the organisation confirms (some of our partners might need your resume'), you shall be asked to touch base with them, to enquire about the kind of work, and the day-to-day engagement spaces. Post your confirmation, the onus of the internship, right from your travel schedule to the learning process, lies on you. We shall always be there, though, to help and support you, through YOUR journey.

### **I am still not sure... who can I talk to in order to find out more?**

You can talk to Astha at Pravah for all relevant questions. Contact details have been specified at the beginning of the form.

We hope that you will apply and that we will see you at the exposure soon!!

Best of luck  
The SMILE team  
Pravah