

Geography Ambassadors

RSGS Pilot Scheme – Introduction for Ambassadors

The Geography Ambassadors scheme recruits, trains and supports undergraduate, postgraduate and graduate geographers from universities and businesses to act as ambassadors for Geography in schools and colleges. The RSGS is now running a one-year pilot scheme in Scotland, supporting geographers who want to share their passion for their subject with Edinburgh and Glasgow schools and colleges.

The scheme is a great way to introduce school pupils to the many benefits of studying Geography, broadening their perspective of the subject and encouraging them to choose Geography at National, Higher and Advanced Higher levels, as well as at university.

Ambassadors are trained to deliver informative, interactive and fun sessions, which highlight the broad range of topics that are covered at university and the array of transferable skills they have developed as geographers. Visits are arranged through the RSGS's volunteer project co-ordinators, Rachel Hay and Addy Pope, who will support Ambassadors and teachers to find suitable dates and times for visits, and decide on session content. All training costs and reasonable travel expenses will be covered by the RSGS.

Application

Prospective Ambassadors should complete the application form available on the RSGS website, and return it to ambassadors@rsgs.org by 5.00pm on Wednesday 30 September 2015. Short-listed applicants will be interviewed, and successful applicants will be invited to attend a training session in Edinburgh or Glasgow in October 2015.

Training

Selected applicants must attend a 4.5 hour training session in Edinburgh or Glasgow. The training session aims to provide Geography Ambassadors with everything they will need to feel confident in their new role. It is a lively and hands-on way of getting acquainted with the scheme and meeting other Geography Ambassadors.

Role Description

Geography Ambassadors must:

- be enthusiastic, positive role models for pupils;
- adhere to the scheme's Code of Conduct (please see separate document);
- communicate effectively with the project co-ordinators when organising sessions;
- plan and deliver sessions, activities and workshops for school visits and events (with ongoing support from the project co-ordinators);
- be proactive in engaging with schools in their local area that are not yet familiar with the scheme, encourage them to get involved, and promote the work of the RSGS;
- have the desire to become actively involved in a largely autonomous volunteer scheme, and be pro-active to make sessions as effective as possible;
- agree to share experience, ideas and resources with other Ambassadors and the project co-ordinators.

Key Skills & Qualities

Geography Ambassadors should demonstrate:

- passion and enthusiasm for Geography, and for promoting it to others;
- experience of working with young people and/or a willingness to work with them;
- strong communication skills, alongside a willingness to develop and improve them;
- the ability to use initiative, and to think quickly and imaginatively, during sessions;
- reliability and punctuality.

Sessions

We are extremely grateful for your commitment, enthusiasm and time, as we know you have study and/or work and family commitments to balance. However, we ask that you undertake at least three sessions during your first year as an Ambassador. The first of these must take place within the first six months of your training.

Sessions may include the following subjects, themes and ideas:

- why you love Geography, what you are studying, your specific interests and future aspirations;
- the breadth of the subject, with the aim of dispelling pupils' preconceptions and broadening their knowledge of what studying Geography can offer;
- specific areas of National, Higher and Advanced Higher courses;
- geographical methods and techniques;
- geographical careers;
- getting pupils to explore big questions and contemporary issues such as news events;
- university applications, university life and hints and tips for effective studying.

You may also be asked to:

- support fieldwork and fieldtrips – locally, nationally and internationally;
- help out at special events in schools, universities and other organisations, including careers evenings, Geography clubs and workshops;
- volunteer at RSGS events, for example *Inspiring People* public talks, Geography Day, *Scotland Rocks* Earth Science Conference.

Benefits

In return, you get:

- an opportunity to share your passion for your subject, and make a direct, positive impact on pupils' understanding about, and enthusiasm for, Geography;
- improved organisational, presentation, interpersonal and time-management skills;
- experience of developing your own resources, sessions and presentations, and sharing ideas with others;
- excellent work experience if you are considering working in education, for example becoming a teacher or youth worker;
- the chance to develop your geographical and professional networks with undergraduates, graduates, teachers and businesses;
- the opportunity to be part of a small community of enthusiastic volunteers attached to a well-respected educational charity.

If you are interested in becoming a Geography Ambassador, or would like more information, please contact ambassadors@rsgs.org or 01738 455050.