

Reflections on Rwanda (ROR) – Application Form

Thank you for your interest in the Reflections on Rwanda (ROR) program. The following document will provide you with important information about the program and will also outline the application process.

Do not hesitate to contact us at reflectionsonrwanda@gmail.com if, after reading the document, you have any questions. Please submit your completed application by **January 4th, 2011.**

Information en français est disponible si vous le désirez.

You can also visit www.shoutcanada.ca for more information.

Program Requirements:

- Hold a current passport
- Between the ages of 18 to 30 years
- Enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program, or have completed a post-secondary degree in the past 24 months. Please note, relevant work experience will be considered if educational requirement is not met.

PART I: Introduction to the Program

In May 2011, Reflections on Rwanda (ROR) will send between 10-15 Canadian students to visit the Republic of Rwanda with the purpose of becoming witnesses to the country's history and to gain exposure to the factors that made the occurrence of a genocide possible. The program, which will last a total of 12-14 days, will focus not only on the study of the country's troubled past, but it will also deal with the country's current state and prospects for the future.

Though other devastating genocides occurred throughout the 20th century, and continue to occur today, the small African Republic of Rwanda is a unique case. The 1994 genocide in Rwanda was the most "efficient" of the 20th century. In the span of 100 days, an estimated 800,000 Tutsi and moderate Hutu were murdered (according to the UN).

The reasons for travelling to Rwanda are numerous. Participating students will become witnesses to Rwanda's history as they travel across the country visiting sites and hearing the stories of survivors and rescuers alike. Students will become ambassadors for Rwanda and its people, and in so doing will return to Canada with not only the courage, but also the first-hand knowledge to affect change.

During travels throughout Rwanda, participants will be exposed to many facets of the country. Meetings will take place with high ranking Rwandan officials, non-governmental and civil society groups, local families, various student groups, and

importantly, participants will be exposed to daily life in the beautiful country of Rwanda, endearingly known as the country of a thousand hills.

Participants must be flexible. Although Rwanda is a safe and well-functioning country, participants should not expect Canadian standards. Toilets are not always clean, there is not always running water and schedules are not always met. In short, while the ROR team will do everything possible to ensure that the program flows smoothly, participants need to be flexible at all times. Thus, we seek individuals who have a taste for adventure.

Part II: What is SHOUT Canada?

SHOUT Canada is a grassroots, national, non-profit organization administered by four founding members, all of whom share a common experience—the participation in the *March of Remembrance and Hope* (MRH), a program that takes students to the sites of the Holocaust in Germany and Poland. ROR is SHOUT Canada's flagship program, in the context of its primary organizational mandate, which is to help foster a generation of students with the power, voice and determination to affect change.

The ROR program was conceptualized and created in 2008 by the organization's founding members. The year was spent putting together a pilot project, which was carried out in the summer of 2009. The group spent the better part of that summer in Rwanda visiting historical sites, solidifying relationships with individuals, as well as governmental and non-governmental groups. The pilot project was implemented to lay the grounding for the 2010 ROR program.

Indeed, on May 17th 2010, the first ROR cohort, comprised of 11 young Canadians from all corners of the country, met at London's Heathrow Airport to be briefed about their imminent arrival in Kigali. For the next 12 days the group toured the country creating memories.

In this context, SHOUT Canada is pleased to be offering the ROR program again in 2011.

Part III: Who we are looking for:

This program is not for everyone. It is physically and emotionally demanding. Participants will view sites and hear stories that are immensely disturbing. Thus, though we encourage a diverse set of applicants, we desire young people who have an emotional maturity and can work well with others during difficult periods of the trip. It is also worth remembering/recognizing that since we will be travelling in a group setting, honesty, patience and graciousness are important to maintain a level group dynamic and structure.

Though it is not essential, we encourage applicants who have at least an introductory knowledge, or interest in learning about the genocide committed in Rwanda as well as an awareness of the country's current social and political situation. Such knowledge will

ultimately result in a more engaging and learned environment for all participants. With that said, we do not want to discourage any interested party from applying.

The sessions will be conducted in English, French and Kinyarwanda. Translation will be provided whenever possible. Knowledge of both French and English are therefore an asset, but not required.

Part IV: Questions and Answers

1. Why is it important to visit Rwanda?

In 1994, Rwanda saw more than 800,000 of its citizens (according to the UN) killed in less than 100 days in one of the clearest cases of genocide during the 20th Century. Sixteen years after the genocide, Rwandans are trying desperately to rebuild; not only their lives, but also the sense of morality that was lost as a genocidal ideology spread across the entire country. While much progress has been made in this small African Republic, the effects of the genocide persist for many throughout the country. Whether they have contracted HIV as a consequence of rape, or have been permanently scarred, either mentally or physically, for many Rwandans therefore, the 1994 genocide is still very much ongoing.

Thus, we believe that going to Rwanda is an invaluable experience for Canadian students; they can witness not only the history of the genocide, but also what is being done to rebuild the country. Indeed, there is much to be learned from this land and its resilient people. SHOUT Canada is founded on the belief that as responsible citizens, it is our task to become witnesses to history; so that the stories of survivors become our stories, and so that we can learn from our collective mistakes of the past.

Maya Angelou once wrote that “perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends.” The importance of this program is simple. It is our belief that a program such as this can, and will, inspire the type of citizenship and leadership that Canada needs in the 21st Century. In a time when historical revisionism and genocidal ideology still exists, even in Canada, and people continue to deny well documented genocides, the need for Canadians to become first hand witnesses to past genocides remains imperative.

2. What is the purpose of the Reflections on Rwanda (ROR) program?

The purposes and goals of the ROR program are both lofty and realizable. As a proactive and practical educational program, it is designed to educate Canadians by providing them with both the tools and motivation to affect change. This would take place in their communities and campuses, both in Canada and in the global sphere. In short, therefore, ROR is more of a movement than a program, with the purpose of inspiring students to take action; to speak out and stand up.

This does not mean, however, that ROR has a specific ideology or message. We strive to foster and moderate open and far-reaching discussions. Beyond exposing Canadians to Rwanda, its past, present and prospects for the future, which we believe provide participants with both tangible and non-tangible benefits, we do not have a specific political agenda.

3. How do Rwandans feel about this program?

Rwandans have been very supportive. We have met with a cross-section of individuals from many areas of the country and were given the same positive responses. We specifically asked many survivors how they felt about this program, and were told repeatedly that we were very welcome. When we asked one survivor how she felt about Canadians going to Rwanda to visit relevant sites and learn about the country's troubled past, she responded: "If you could bring every Canadian student, they would all be welcome."

4. How much will the program cost me?

Whilst SHOUT Canada will be working to secure funding and support for you, the organization cannot guarantee any funding for this program. Based on the 2010 program, participants should, therefore, expect to pay up to a maximum of **\$3500 - \$4000** (depending on city of departure) which would include all flights, accommodation, food, and ground travel for the length of the program.

Based on 2010 figures

1. Flight Canada to London: \$1000
2. Vaccinations: \$300
3. Flight London to Kigali (via Addis Ababa): \$850
4. Ground Portion (Food, Accommodation, Transportation, Incidentals): \$1250

Because the program is grassroots in nature, we do everything we can to keep the costs as low as they can be.

5. If SHOUT doesn't secure fundraising, how should I go about fundraising?

Firstly, because ROR is an educational program, there is a possibility that your university may have some funding to help you. Educational institutions often have a budget for overseas internships or educational field trips. Contact your department, Student Union or Financial Aid office to enquire.

Secondly, once you put your cause out there, many people will be willing to support you. Think about a pub night at your local pub, a garage sale, a bake sale, a donation jar, a dinner party for your friends and family, get creative.

Thirdly, look into non-governmental organizations, particularly those involved in genocide education. Though they may not be able to dish over money, they may have some suggestions on where to look for funding.

6. Is it safe?

If you visit the government of Canada's travel website you will see that in the lead up to the August 2010 Presidential elections, there were a number of grenade attacks in the capital, Kigali, some resulting in fatalities. Moreover, if you followed the election in the Western media, you most certainly would have seen allegations of anti-democratic practices carried out by the present government.

We note this not to scare you but so you are aware of the situation on the ground. We work closely with our local Rwandan staff throughout the year and continuously monitor the security situation.

Regardless of the destination, any travel comes with certain risks. Moreover, Rwanda has had a tumultuous past, and is situated in a region where its bordering countries have had recent violence (DRC, Burundi). With that said, however, Rwandans are quick to tell you that their country is one of the safest for travel, and from our experience, we concur. Indeed, the streets are secure, the government is stable, and crime is nearly non-existent. Most anyone who has visited the country will say something similar – Rwanda is safe.

Ultimately, the choice to travel there has to be yours.

7. What kinds of vaccinations will I require?

Rest assured that we will send out specific instructions for vaccinations and necessary health precautions upon your acceptance to the program. Nonetheless, it is required that you have a yellow fever vaccine to enter Rwanda. Malaria pills and other vaccines (such as diphtheria, hepatitis and meningitis) are recommended but not required. You should be expecting to pay around \$300 to \$400 for vaccines and malaria medication depending on your coverage. Some school health plans include these types of vaccinations so make sure to check into it.

8. How can I stay involved upon my return from Rwanda?

To begin with, because ROR is a grassroots initiative, students will be involved from the outset. Upon completing the program, participants will not only be asked to provide feedback, but also to help plan the program for the following year. Beyond these possibilities, participants will be encouraged to come up with innovative ways to disseminate the information they received while in Rwanda. For example, they could write op-eds in local newspapers, work on incorporating genocide education into school curriculums, and giving class and community talks. Participants will not be forced to do follow up work; however, we will do everything possible to make innovative opportunities available should they be desired by participants.

9. What do you mean this trip isn't for everyone? I mean I've backpacked in Europe and been to Latin America, but I'm not sure what to expect in sub-Saharan Africa.

This is a perfectly fair question. Here are a few examples.

If we are driving between Kigali to the Gisenyi, and the mini bus breaks down, or gets a flat, CAA isn't going to be there in 45 minutes, and there won't be a 7-11 around the corner to buy a snack whilst you wait. We might be stuck on the side of the road, very exposed to the elements, for several hours. If we are in a remote area, our broken down mini bus may become a tourist attraction for the locals. Children may touch you, inspect your straight hair and adults might talk about you. This could either be fun, or terrifying, depending on how you approach the situation.

We will make sure that our accommodation is adequate, but do not be surprised if you have a few cold, bucket showers¹, and spend a few evenings without electricity. Internet access is still sporadic and roughly equivalent to dial-up speed (although this might improve by the time we arrive). However, your guides will be equipped with cell phones at all times, in the event that any one needs to reach you or we need to reach anyone.

Once we get out of the cities, the roads get worse – as they say in the region, everyone's entitled to a free African massage – and less “comfort” services become available.

In terms of food, most Westerners enjoy the tastes, but traveler's diarrhea is not entirely uncommon.

None of this is meant to scare you. We believe that anyone, no matter how much (or how little) they have travelled, is capable of participating, so long as they remain flexible and are prepared to place some of their “kitty-comforts” on hold for two weeks. We will be there, along with local staff, to guide you along the way and to facilitate the experience.

10. Can I extend my visit in Rwanda?

It is not only possible to stay on at the end of the program, but we also encourage it. We can even help you to secure an internship with one of our partner organizations in Rwanda in various fields of work.

Of the 2010 cohort, three participants stayed on for internships. One worked at the country's Supreme Court and the other two worked at an organization that provides support to widows of the genocide, AVEGA.

11. Do I need a visa?

¹ This involves being given a bucket with water in it – how you turn this into a shower is up to you.

Canadian citizens do not require visas for stays shorter than 90 days.

12. When will I be notified if I am accepted?

We will have made our selections by January 31st, 2010.

***Part IV: Sample Itinerary** (Please note that this is very much a model itinerary. We reserve the right to modify it up until a reasonable amount of time before departure. However, it is based on the itinerary we followed last year).*

OVERVIEW: The program is designed in an historical and chronological order with roughly four components. The first component is chiefly historical and involves lectures and discussions in Kigali about Rwanda's pre-colonial and colonial history leading up to 1994. The second component could be styled "the genocide." During these days, the participants learn about the genocide from a hands-on perspective, tracing the planning and perpetration of the genocide from the capital into the countryside and mountain tops. Once we arrive in Gisenyi, which is a strategic city bordering the Congo, we study the aftermath of the genocide and the "spillover" into bordering countries. For the final section, we make our way back to the capital and consider Rwanda's prospects for the future.

Day 1: Participants meet at London's Heathrow. Make sure your flight arrives in London providing you with an ample amount of time to transit. Small discussion about expectations and a question and answer session before boarding overnight flight to Kigali.

Overnight in the sky.

Day 2: Mid-afternoon arrival in Kigali, where you will be met by local staff and educators. After a short drive from the airport, we will check into our guest house. Free time to freshen up before an early, welcome, dinner.

Overnight in Kigali.

Day 3: In the morning participants will take part in an interactive lecture about Rwanda's history by a Rwandan Professor from the National University in Butare. While everyone will have already studied about Rwanda and its history, for the purpose of the program, we want everyone to be on the same page. After lunch, we will head to the Gisozi Memorial, the genocide museum in Kigali, which models itself on the Yad Vashem Holocaust Museum and Memorial in Jerusalem. After a traditional Rwandan dinner of fufou, we will have our first debrief session - a "safe" space and a confidential forum to discuss what we have been seeing.

Overnight in Kigali.

Day 4: We leave Kigali in the early morning to visit the Nyarabuye Genocide Memorial (be ready for a boxed lunch). We will be traveling along the Tanzanian border and will have time to interact with local children. The drive takes approximately 4 hours each way. In the evening we will go to Camp Kigali. Finally, we will visit Hotel Mille Collines (Hotel Rwanda) before going for dinner. After dinner, debrief.

Overnight in Kigali.

Day 5: This morning, the group visits Nyamata and Ntamara Genocide sites, where they will hear from local survivors. In the afternoon, the group will hear the story of a rescuer, Silas. In the late afternoon, we make our way to Butare. 2 ½ hours barring any unpredictable delays. Debrief in Butare.

Overnight at Butare guest house.

Day 6: In the morning, we visit the National Museum of Rwanda in Butare. We not only tour the campus and talk about the genocide on campus (ie. Visited the memorial on campus) but we also continued talking about the history of the conflict including the “autonomous” thinking zone of Butare and the possibility of resistance by a willing governor. After the University, we visit the National Museum of Butare. After lunch, we will go to Murambi, one of the most graphically disturbing sites. Back to Butare hotel. Debrief.

Overnight at Butare guest house.

Day 7: An early morning start and long drive towards Kibuye. Approximately 4 hours of driving to Kibuye, but it is a beautiful drive through the hills. In the late afternoon, the group will visit Bisesero memorial, known as the ‘hill of resistance’. This is a transition day because there are fewer activities. Dinner at Bethany guest house. Debrief.

Overnight in Kibuye.

Day 8: From Kibuye, we make our way to Gisenyi. Whilst taking a little time to rest on the shores of lake Kivu, one of Africa’s great lakes, we make a transition in the program and begin talking about post-1994, spill over into Zaire/DRC. We visit the DRC (Goma)/Gisenyi border crossing. Evening lesson in traditional dancing.

Overnight in Gisenyi.

Day 9: After sleeping in, and having a free morning we make our way back to Kigali. After a few short stops, we make it back to Kigali for Dinner at the hotel and in order to continue talking about the DRC/Rwanda “enjeu”. Debrief.

Overnight in Kigali

Day 10: In the morning we take local transportation to the downtown core and have a little free time in Kigali. We then revisited Mille Collines to hear from ZOZO, to tell the Hotel's story. Following this, we have dinner and a lecture at the hotel where we will be joined by Mohammed Ayat, esteemed International law expert and council for the ICTR re: international justice in the context of classical and traditional justice in Rwanda. We then debrief.

Overnight in Kigali

Day 11: In the morning we walk to the Rwandan national stadium, which is open to the public. We will then go to a local family for lunch. After lunch, we hear from the National Peace and Unity Commission. Participants will then have some free time before a themed dinner.

Overnight in Kigali

Day 12: In the early morning, we visit the National Commission in the Fight Against Genocide (CNLG- Commission National de Lutte contre le Genocide), a governmental commission created to address genocide-related issues not only in Rwanda, but also in the global sphere. We then visit their library. After this, we will head to National defence for a briefing about the RDF's military peacekeeping role in the international community (re: Darfur). After lunch we will take time for last minute plans before our goodbye dinner.

Overnight in Kigali

Day 13: After breakfast we head to the Airport to return home. Make sure you have allowed for sufficient time (ie. 4-6 hours) for your transit in Heathrow for your return flight to Canada.

Part VI: ROR Application – Due January 4th, 2011

Email to reflectionsonrwanda@gmail.com

(Veuillez noter que vous pouvez rédiger vos réponses en français si vous préférez)

Name as it appears on your passport:

Date of Birth:

Current Address:

Current Phone Number:

E-mail Address:

Educational Background:

Did anyone recommend you for this program?

Do you have any medical conditions?

Is there anything else that you feel we should know?

Please answer the following questions in no more than 250 words.

1. What are your current extracurricular activities/Interests:
2. What are your past travel experiences:
3. Why do you want to participate in this trip:
4. What do you plan on doing with the knowledge you gain from this trip:

Please answer one (1) of the following questions in no more than 500 words.

1. If you were sitting next to a genocidaire, that is, a perpetrator of the genocide, what would you ask him/her?
2. In respect to Rwanda's future success as a leader in the East African community, what should be prioritized: democracy, security and stability or both?

Along with this application, please attach your CV and provide two character references (e-mail addresses and phone numbers suffice no letters of recommendation are required but your references should be aware that we may contact them)

Please note that those who participate will be required to sign a waiver releasing SHOUT Canada from liability for any damage to themselves or their property sustained while preparing for or participating in this program, both pre and post event, and will be required to obtain and submit proof of personal insurance coverage to the project leader.