



# Communications and Event Planning Internship

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**Project Istwa** | New York, NY

**Industry:** Non-profit

**Focus Area:** Haiti

**Start Date:** September 2013

## *The Organization*

Founded in 2011, Project Istwa is a volunteer-run nonprofit organization that conducts a series of seven day photography workshops and youth development programs for youth throughout Haiti. While the global media coverage of Haiti is significant, particularly after the January 2010 earthquake, opportunities for Haitians to portray their views and direct perspectives of their country are limited. The purpose of Project Istwa is to allow participants to use photography to communicate what is important to them and how they see their world. The roots of Project Istwa lie in the original photovoice approach that uses photography and narrative as both a tool of self-expression and advocacy within marginalized communities. Through the world of photography they have the opportunity to tell their story, their way, through their own eyes. Project Istwa also incorporates youth and community development components.

## *The Workshops*

During each workshop, participants are given a digital camera so they can take pictures that show what a day in their life looks like from their perspective. Working with facilitators, participants learn about their cameras and photography and photograph their surroundings. The workshop week includes group work and individual work. Among other activities, after practicing a variety of shots participants go on a community walk with facilitators for further practice. Participants view and discuss each other's photographs. These sessions open up a dialogue within the group about what each individual is seeing and wanting to communicate through their photographs. In addition, all participants meet one-on-one with facilitators for a more in-depth conversation about the photographs they took and their significance. Each participant captions a particular group of his or her photographs through these individual sessions. At the end of the week they show their captioned photographs to family, friends and community members in a public exhibit in their neighborhood.

Throughout the week music, dance, icebreakers, drawing and writing exercises are employed as youth and community development tools. Every participant keeps their matted and captioned photographs put on display in the community exhibit as well as a photo album of photographs of them working throughout the week and photographs not included in the community exhibit. In addition to members of each community, local officials and leaders are also invited to each community exhibit so that the participants' perspectives can be communicated to political decision makers.

Project Istwa has completed nine workshops in Cité Soleil, Petion-Ville, Hinche, Port-Salut, Jacmel, Miragoâne, Jérémie, Fort-Liberté and Cap-Haïtien. In partnership with Konbit Pou Edikasyon (KPE), Salvation Army Haiti, Tek4Kids, Plan Haiti and many other organizations.

## *Future Workshops*

Project Istwa plans to conduct workshops in each of the ten departments of Haiti, as well as the bateys (impoverished areas where Haitian migrant workers reside) in the Dominican Republic, with the goal of giving Haitian youth all across the island an opportunity to express themselves in a new way.

## *Goals*

There are several goals Project Istwa seeks to accomplish. First and foremost, the hope is that the participants simply have fun and that they find the workshop fulfilling. While that is the main priority, Project Istwa is also designed both as a community building activity and as an empowering exercise that will hopefully leave the children with a feeling that their perspectives and ideas matter.

## Additional Programming

To ensure that the scope and purpose of Project Istwa extends beyond each workshop, initiatives are in progress to maintain a long-term relationship between Project Istwa and Project Istwa alumni. One of these initiatives will focus on connecting the youth who participate in Project Istwa so that they can see how others their age live and view their lives in Haiti. Project Istwa also seeks to maintain long-term relationships with alumni and their communities by facilitating participant driven community development projects. For as many groups as is feasible Project Istwa will meet with participants after their completion of the workshop to hear from them what they want and need in their communities. Project Istwa will then facilitate the necessary fundraising and partnerships to implement these projects.

### Responsibilities\*

- Assist staff in planning for a photography exhibit in NYC and 2014 workshops in Haiti
- Assist staff to develop, solicit and secure partnerships/sponsorships. May include cold-calling, lead follow-up, tracking contract management, recognition at and attendance at sponsored events
- Assist staff in writing communications pieces including letters, newsletters, web content, invitations, data tracking and reports
- Assist with volunteer recruitment and management, internal and external communications, event day logistics, post-event communication and evaluation, compiling event materials and other event related activities
- Monitor and maintain all Project Istwa social networks including Facebook, Twitter, etc.
- Research latest social media and web strategies and trends (blog linking, AdWords, etc.)
- Develop proposals for future social media and web campaigns
- Develop proposals for future fundraising campaigns

*\*Responsibilities may not be limited to the above tasks.*

### Requirements

- Current graduate student or recent graduate
- Experience managing or monitoring social network accounts
- Experience planning events
- Very creative and out-of-the-box thinker
- Self-starter able to take initiative on individual projects
- Background in the fields of international development, youth development and humanitarian assistance (preferred)
- Superb organization skills and strong attention to detail
- Passionate about the goals and mission of Project Istwa
- Ability to communicate clearly and follow-up on tasks
- Strong written and oral communications skills
- Proficient in Microsoft Office
- Proficient in graphic design software – Photoshop, InDesign, etc. (preferred)

**Commitment:** minimum of 8-10 hours per week, six month minimum (internship duration can be made to match semester length).

**Salary:** This is an unpaid internship; however, you may receive course credit.

**To apply:** Interested individuals should email a cover letter and resume/CV to [inquiries@projectistwa.org](mailto:inquiries@projectistwa.org)

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