



BUCK-I-SERV

TRAVEL | LEARN | SERVE



2023–24 STEP Participants





Buck-I-SERV Overview

The mission of Buck-I-SERV is to provide students with a challenging and engaging opportunity to lead and learn through direct service experiences.

The Buck-I-SERV motto is: **Travel. Learn. Serve.**

Buck-I-SERV is Ohio State's alternative break program planned through the Office of Student Life's Leadership and Community Engagement team and supported in part by the Student Activity Fee. Buck-I-SERV began as a student initiative with one trip in 2003. Since then, Buck-I-SERV has grown to provide trips to over sixteen states and five countries. The Buck-I-SERV Student Board is a group of volunteer undergraduate students that plans the trips and maintains contact with all the community sites around the country.

Key features of Buck-I-SERV Alternative Breaks:

- Week-long, substance-free experiences held during university breaks
- Centered on social justice through direct service and community interaction
- Reflection to encourage experiential learning and active citizenship
- Usually 10-20 total people per trip, includes participants, trip leaders and staff advisors

BUCK-I-SERV AND YOUR STEP SIGNATURE PROJECT

- Choose "Service-Learning and Community Service" as your STEP project category.
- Identify a domestic experience or international experience and write your proposal around that trip's social justice topics.
- Complete the Buck-I-SERV application process.
- 2023-2024 STEP students have from May 1, 2024 to August 15, 2025 to complete their STEP Signature Projects. Students may NOT submit proposals for projects that begin before May 1, 2024.
- If you ultimately end up on a roster for a different trip than your original project proposal indicated, you can update and resubmit your STEP proposal throughout the funding period. See your STEP Handbook and STEP Dashboard for relevant instructions and deadlines.



IMPORTANT BUCK-I-SERV DATES AND APPLICATION TERMS

	Summer 2024	Winter 2024	Spring 2025	Summer 2025
Application Available	January 7	Mid-August	October	Early January
International Trip Application Due	January 28	Mid-September	Late October or Early November	Late January
Domestic Trip Application Due	February 18	Early October	November	February
Other Events	In addition to trip travel dates, please expect to attend kick-off and welcome back events. These event dates will be included in your trip offer notification. Pre-trip meetings are also scheduled by each trip's leadership team and those times/dates will vary for each group.			

TRIP COSTS

You will see a trip price listed next to each trip on the Buck-I-SERV application.

- Domestic trips include all travel-related expenses including transportation, lodging and program fees. Meals are not usually included.
- International trips include transportation (including flights), lodging, program fees, university required supplemental travel insurance and most meals.

BUCK-I-SERV PLACEMENT

You can write a STEP proposal to include any Buck-I-SERV trip. Trip rosters are filled in various ways, and no trip option is guaranteed.

- International trips are usually filled through an interview process.
- Domestic trips are usually filled through a random assignment process.
- A few trips are reserved for STEP students but may still require an interview process.
- Always refer to the application to be aware of due dates for each specific trip. Some trips will vary from the usual assignment process, the usual application deadline or the usual travel dates. Always refer to the application information available at go.osu.edu/buckiserv for each term and each trip's updated timeline.

PAYMENT INFORMATION

By accepting a Buck-I-SERV spot, you are responsible for the full trip price. If you do not follow through with your eligibility terms of use to receive your STEP funds, you are still responsible for making the full trip payments to Buck-I-SERV prior to travel.

STEP funds are released directly to you within a few days of your experience. You may need to make payments to Buck-I-SERV prior to receiving your STEP funds. If you are placed on a trip roster, your payment timeline will be included in your trip offer notification message.

Participants planning to use STEP funding as payment for a Buck-I-SERV experience should ensure this experience is approved through your STEP dashboard and that funding will be released prior to the trip. Please keep Buck-I-SERV informed of your



STEP proposal progress and approval throughout this semester.

PROPOSAL CONSIDERATIONS

Refer to your STEP Handbook for specific proposal instructions. **These tips can help you think about a proposal that includes Buck-I-SERV:**

You will at least start your proposal before knowing any Buck-I-SERV trip placement. That's OK! Refer to the current trips on our website as our usual trip offerings, and use that information to inform your plan. You can update your project proposal after you are confirmed on a trip roster.

Think about ways to enhance the Buck-I-SERV experience and include those items in your proposal:

- **Include DICE as part of your signature project:** Buck-I-SERV experiences now count for 3 points in the Diversity, Intercultural and Community Engagement (DICE) Certificate Program through the Student Life Center for Belonging and Social Change. DICE completion includes 12 total points and a reflection paper.
- **Consider a Leadership role:** Explore leadership programs and activities, apply for a Trip Leader role and tailor your proposal around your plans for leadership development.
- **Take the Leadership Education Needs Assessment (LENA):** Developed from the Center for the Study of Student Life, LENA measures leadership skills as they relate to four different areas: Purpose and Vision, Accomplishing Tasks, Building Relationships and Charisma. At the end of the survey, you receive lists of campus resources, tailored to your individual needs. These resources may help you clarify what you want to include in your proposal. cssl.osu.edu/research-projects/leadership-education-needs-assessment
- **You do not have to use exactly \$2,000!** Many domestic Buck-I-SERV experiences cost less than \$2,000. In those cases, look for creative ways to maximize the use of your funding. You may be able to extend your time at the service site, build an internship experience at the service site or find other unique ways to make the experience transformational for you. If you're interested in discussing these options as you finalize your proposals, please contact buck-i-serv@osu.edu.





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UNIVERSITY**

OFFICE OF STUDENT LIFE