

Sankara Eye Foundation Internship Program

Internship programs offered to residents of United States, Canada or England and those interested to serve the needy and willing adapt to the local culture and practices. Knowledge of the local language is beneficial but not necessary.

Why Sankara Internship:

1. Advantages of volunteering at Sankara Hospitals are many, including most modern treatment applications, observation of a wide variety of disease patterns, expedient experience – a medical student can gain a year's worth of experience within a few months of working at the high volume Sankara Hospitals.
2. Volunteers will experience a unique blend of a non-profit that has streamlined its operational environment on corporate principles without compromising on the dedication to service.
3. The area of activity and the nature of work will vary depending on the applicant's existing qualification and experience.
4. Accommodations for adults are available at some of the Sankara hospitals.

What types of opportunities does Sankara Eye Care Institutions offer? What are the time requirements?

Three different internship programs are offered at Sankara depending on the age and experience of the intern. The qualifications for each type of internship are outlined below.

Clinical Volunteering

Requirements:

- Open to anyone older than 15 years old
- No medical experience required

Duration of Volunteering:

- Minimum 2 weeks to a maximum of 2 months.

Volunteers can help out in various areas such as Marketing, Web Design, Housekeeping, and Quality Control as well as Public Relations / Patient Relations which will include broad examination of external and internal marketing predominantly through patient care, feedback surveys and anything new the volunteer can envisage.

High school students are welcome to volunteer and activities available to them are as below but not limited to:

1. Patient satisfaction surveys
2. Perform case studies
3. Review and report on the patient wait time through observation and attachment in OPD
4. Help organize and index the library
5. Teach local staff spoken English
6. Teach local staff basic computer skills

7. Study the process for inpatient and out-patient area
8. Observe and participate in eye camps

9. Conduct exit poll at camps
10. Chaperoning patients (be their guardian while they are with us)

Program Overview:

- Volunteers will get exposure to the local culture and experiences of doctors in India.
- People may get opportunities to attend eye camps, observe doctors and nurses attend to patients, and help in tasks that require no medical background.
- Essentially, you will be doing a lot of observing and learning while you are volunteering at Sankara Eye Hospital.
- **Eye Camps:** When attending eye camps, you will work with doctors, nurses and other volunteers in helping setup the eye camp, and getting people processed throughout the day. We have eye camps in surrounding rural areas every weekend. The goal of the eye camps is to identify the poorest of poorest people who need eye procedures so they can live a normal life. Typically, at the end of the day, we bring those needing surgeries back to the hospital where we provide them with room and board, food, medicine and conduct eye procedures so they can resume a normal life. This is all done FREE of charge.

You will get a chance to see how you are changing and affecting peoples lives throughout your time at the hospital.

Clinical Observership

Requirements:

This program is specifically for those involved in health care:

- Residents in Ophthalmology
- Medical Graduates (M.D. degree achieved)
 - Sub Specialty training in Ophthalmology
 - Undergoing Sub Specialty training in Ophthalmology
 - Geriatric medicine / general medicine sub-specialty
- Optometrists
- Optometry students
- Public health / hospital administrations students

Duration of Observership: 1 week to a maximum of 3 weeks.

Program Overview:

There is great flexibility for the participant to observe as many or few of our programs as desired. The constraints of Observership time and faculty availability ultimately dictate the experience one will receive.

We have a variety of departments ranging from routine Eye Outpatient Services, Outreach (camp) department, Eye Bank, Ophthalmic diagnostics, Clinical Laboratory, X-Ray dept (only at Coimbatore). Surgical theatres, IT dept, Optical shop and fitting lab and support services (cafeteria, house keeping etc).

Your time at Sankara Eye Hospital will enable you to interact and observe some of these departments. Your schedule will be based on your interests.

Hands-on experience with eye procedures may not be possible to those not qualified in Ophthalmology.

Ophthalmology Residents

- Can observe the functioning of the outpatient clinic and observe various eye surgeries.
- Partake in the academics at campus, use the library facilities and interact with our doctors.
- Attend our out-reach screening programs that will allow you to not only understand the functioning of a community eye care organization, but also assimilate the unique India that resides in our villages.

Optometrists

- Experience our outpatients procedures
- Teach classes to our students (depending on the experience).
- Participate as part of the pediatric screening team etc.

Administrators

- Observe the functional aspect of the Hospital as well as the whole institute handling multiple hospitals
- Discuss their own experiences with the Sankara Administrators and provide invaluable ideas
- Teach interactive sessions to our post graduates
- Get opportunities to attend eye camps, observe doctors and nurses attend to patients, and help in tasks that require no medical background.

Clinical Internship

(Available at Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore and Bangalore hospitals)

Requirements:

- Residents in Ophthalmology
- Optometrists
- Public health administrators

Duration of Internship:

- Fixed period of 3 weeks

Program Overview:

Residents will be exposed to various diagnostic and therapeutic modalities in eye care.

Observe surgeries in the operation theater and use the wet lab facilities, if available. Government of India does not allow foreign certified doctors to operate on patients but Clinical Interns will be allowed to scrub in and assist the operating surgeon. This will offer a great opportunity to observe and learn the nuances of intraocular surgery.

Optometrist will be allowed to use the various diagnostic devices in treating patients. Depending on experience, interns will be allowed to participate in screening programs and conduct instructions of our students.

Health administrators will be given specific projects, which they will be required to submit for their internship completion certificate. They will be required to send a detailed CV/resume and also indicate their areas of interest. In addition, they will observe the day-to-day functioning of the hospital.

Interns may get opportunities to attend eye camps, observe doctors and nurses and help in tasks that require no medical background.

Depending on the qualification and level of experience in ophthalmology and community health care, interns can get involved in the day-to-day medical activities and get more concrete value out of it.

For any professional of medicine to get a thorough orientation of the kind of work and also to get acclimatized to the weather conditions in India, it would take a week or so and subsequently they can switch over to four departments, one week per department and the final week they could compile the material in the log book and make a presentation prior to him/her returning back to U.S.A.

We have a variety of departments. They range from routine Eye Outpatient Services, Outreach (camp) department, Eye Bank, Ophthalmic diagnostics, Clinical Laboratory, X-Ray dept (only at Coimbatore). Surgical theatres, Optical shop and fitting lab and support services (IT dept, cafeteria, house keeping etc).

I am interested in participating in one of the programs offered. What background do you look for to participate in the programs?

People with varied backgrounds can participate in either of the programs offered. For example, Optometrists and Refractionists are skilled paramedical staff and are vital for any ophthalmic Institution. The training imparted to them in US is of a very advanced nature and their participation would be of immense value to our paramedical staff. Similarly, surgical theatre assistants and Bio-Medical Engineers who are trained in maintenance of equipments, Hospital Administrators, Computer

Technologists who are experienced in EMR (Electronic Medical Record) are the other kind of personnel who should participate. Similarly a student of computers, a student of management, a student of finance or a student in HR are also most welcome because their inputs would be of great value for an expanding institution like ours.

What are the typical number of people you can accommodate in the clinical volunteering programs in a given timeframe?

Sankara Eye Hospital, Coimbatore and Guntur are capable of handling up to 4 participants at a given time. As the Bangalore, Shimoga and Anand hospitals are in their infancy, the number of candidates that can be handled is small. This number will go up as we bring on more hospitals and as the existing hospitals mature.

When are these programs conducted at Sankara Eye Hospital?

These programs are conducted throughout the year. The one period discouraged is between November 15th and January 15th. From a climatic point of view, it is recommended to avoid the Guntur Hospital during April and May as this is the peak of the summer.

Where can I find out more about Sankara Eye Foundation?

You can find information on Sankara Eye Foundation (SEF) at <http://www.giftofvision.org/>.

At what hospitals are clinical programs granted?

- SEH Coimbatore - Clinical Internships, Clinical Volunteering and Clinical Observership
- SEH Shimoga – Clinical Observership
- SEH Guntur - Limited Clinical Observership and Clinical Volunteering;

- SEH Bangalore – Clinical Internships, Clinical Volunteering and Clinical Observership
- SEH Anand – Clinical Volunteering, Clinical Observership

At what hospitals are Room and Board available?

- SEH Coimbatore
- SEH Bangalore (twin share based on availability)
- SEH Guntur (twin share based on availability for short terms – 1 to 2 weeks)

Where are the hospitals located?

Addresses and contact information for each hospital can be found at <http://www.sankaraeye.com/contactus.html>.

Where can I find information about the hospitals?

You can find information on the Sankara Eye Hospitals at <http://www.sankaraeye.com/>.

Do I need to take any immunization shots before starting my internship?

Sankara Eye Foundation has a hospital licensing regulation which requires that anyone who has patient contact provide proof of immunity to measles, mumps, Hepatitis B and rubella. You will need to submit an immunization history, as well as documentation of personal health insurance prior to your start date.

Do you provide a salary or financial support for the clinical volunteering programs?

The programs offered by Sankara Eye Foundation have no salary support. Obtaining the correct visa, making travel arrangements are the participant's responsibility. Since we do not charge any tuition to Clinical Observership or Internship participants, we are unable to provide any type of financial assistance for travel, accommodations, or any other expenses related to relocation to the United States.

Do you provide accommodations and food?

Participants will be charged approximately \$5.00 per day for accommodations located on-campus facility that houses volunteers and doctors. The charge also includes incidental expenses such as laundry, electricity, etc... This amount needs to be paid at the institution.

High school students wishing to participate must have their own accommodations and transportation (regardless of availability).

Cafeterias are available at all the hospitals. If you are interested in eating on campus, volunteers will be charged for food by the cafeteria whenever they purchase food or drinks. This will be paid by the volunteer directly to the cafeteria.

The Sankara Eye Hospitals have a strict philosophy of adhering to vegetarianism and thus, non-vegetarian food is not permitted inside the campus. If a participant wants to have non-vegetarian food, he/she may have to go outside to restaurants.

Is there an Application fee?

Sankara Eye Foundation has been conducting a successful Internship program since 2007. We have been offering the program with the focus of increasing exposure on the work being done by SEF/SECI in the field of community eye care.

During this time, we have had scenarios where candidates cancel at the last moment and on some occasions the candidates are not serious during their internship. This causes a huge overhead on SEF/SECI team members. Due to this, we have instituted a nominal application fee. This is a donation and is tax deductible. You must submit the donation via <https://npo.networkforgood.org/Donate/Donate.aspx?npoSubscriptionId=3808>. Please state "Internship Application Processing Fee" in the Comments Section. The receipt must be provided with the application.

1. **For applications submitted by the deadline**, a nominal donation of \$30 is charged (non refundable) to be applied to "Open one eye (1 surgery)." the applicant.
2. **For applications submitted 1 day to 3 months past the deadline**, the donation is raised to \$90 (non refundable) to be applied to "Open three eyes (3 surgeries)".
3. **For applications submitted past 3 months past the deadline**, the donation is raised to \$360 (non refundable) to be applied to "Open an eye per month (12 surgeries)".

NOTE: The website accepts donations in the following currencies: US Dollar, Euro, and Dinar. Please make sure the conversion is equal to the US Dollar.

If you are donating in Indian Rupees, you must do the following. Please make sure the conversion is equal to the US Dollar.

1. Draw a demand draft in the name of "Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Medical Trust"
2. Add the following comment in the Memo section "Internship Application Processing Fee"
3. Mail the demand draft to

Sankara Eye Center
65 Sathy Road
Coimbatore 641 035
Tamil Nadu

4. Once you receive a receipt, send the receipt along with your application

General Questions regarding Accommodations

What is the cleanliness of the room?

- The rooms are perfectly maintained, as clean as one would expect. Ultimately, the approach of the occupant's also matters.

What is available in the living quarter?

- It is a two bed facility with attached toilets.

How clean and safe is the water inside the room? Is it drinkable?

- Water is safe and pure. Further, purified mineral water is available in the cafeteria at the hospital campus.

Does the room have Indian style or American style toilet?

- The toilets are Western style with closet.

Does the room have stand up showers or sit down?

- The room has stand up showers.

Does the room have air conditioning?

- The standard room does not have air conditioning. It has only ceiling fans. If someone is very particular, we have to air conditioning in one room. This can be requested. However, there will be a cost associated with this due to the use of the facility and electricity charges.

Does the room have a TV?

- There is no TV in the standard room. If someone is very particular, we can provide one at extra cost.

Five Do's and Don'ts at Sankara Eye Hospital

5 Do's

1. Stay at the Sankara Hospital overnight to be more familiar with the hospital and its staff
2. Go to camps in villages or at companies to become more exposed to different environments
3. Spend some time volunteering at registration because it will help you understand how the hospital functions
4. Try to learn simple Kannada, Telugu, or Tamil words in order to be able to communicate with others
5. Go to school screenings or help give tours for children when they visit the hospital

5 Don'ts

1. Only do one kind of work at the hospital
2. Be reclusive or keep to yourself (instead talk to others)
3. Volunteer for only 2-3 hours a day
4. Be afraid to explore all places in the hospital (including the ones with patients or the operation theater)
5. Be too shy to request doing something you enjoy

Will I be picked up at the Airport?

Yes, arrangements can be made to be picked up at the airports in both Guntur and Coimbatore.

What is the dress code?

Salwars and/or professional trousers (dress pants) are the preferred dress code.

What is the policy for alcohol and smoking?

All Sankara Eye Hospitals are NO SMOKING, NO ALCOHOL zones. If anyone is caught smoking and/or drinking/distributing alcohol, Sankara Eye Hospital at its discretion will terminate the internship (Clinical Volunteering, Clinical Internship, Clinical Observership).

Application Acceptance and Response Timeframe

Applications are accepted at different times based on when you are applying for our programs.

Internship Period	Applications Accepted
January through March	Month of September
April through May	Month of December
June through August	Month of February
September through November 15	Month of May

Please note:

- ◆ Application processing will start at end of application period. You should expect to hear back within 4 weeks after application deadline.
- ◆ We do not have volunteering, observership, or internship opportunities between November 15th through January 15th