



Individual Volunteers

Background

Fabretto Children's Foundation has a long history of working with [volunteers](#), and the [Service Group Program](#) brings hundreds of volunteers to Nicaragua each year. We also offer opportunities on a case-by-case basis to Individual Volunteers who would like to give of their time and talent to support underserved children in Nicaragua. To learn more about our work, we recommend you check out two sections of our website: [Our Programs](#) and [Education Centers](#).

Candidates selected to be Individual Volunteers will have the unique privilege of directly experiencing the realities of life in the communities in which we work. We seek to place volunteers in positions that are mutually beneficial for the organization and for the individual's personal and professional growth. Successful volunteers have had intrinsic motivation.

Fabretto's Volunteer Coordinator will provide an initial orientation, set up a work schedule and local supervisor for each volunteer and support volunteers in time of need. Volunteers are expected to be self-reliant, independent outside of work hours and comfortable living and traveling on their own in Nicaragua. This type of work is not for everyone, and prospective volunteers should be aware that life in a developing country can be challenging, especially in the communities in which Fabretto works.

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Volunteer Work

In general, volunteers will work directly with children and other beneficiaries that Fabretto serves. Fabretto's main programmatic focus is **education programs for children and youth**, although volunteers may support in other areas of the organization. Please note that we do not place individual medical volunteers.

Fabretto seeks individual volunteers with qualifications and relevant experience in:

- ❖ Administration/finance
- ❖ Agriculture (e.g. managing systems processes, organic crop production, gardens, etc.)
- ❖ Arts & crafts, theater, and/or music
- ❖ Engineering & construction
- ❖ Entrepreneurship, micro-enterprise, and/or small business management
- ❖ Food security & nutrition
- ❖ Fundraising
- ❖ Grant writing
- ❖ IT
- ❖ Preschool, elementary and/or secondary teaching
- ❖ Professional photography and/or videography
- ❖ Teaching English as a second language
- ❖ Volunteer management and coordination

Cost

Fabretto currently charges a fee of \$500 USD per volunteer to participate in the Individual Volunteer program. This contribution helps to support Fabretto's Education Centers where the volunteer will work and cover the costs of managing the volunteer program. Alternatively, volunteers may choose to commit to sponsoring a child in Fabretto programs; please refer to our [Child Sponsorship](#) page for more information about this program. Fabretto may waive the fee for donors or partners with a previously established, long-term relationship with Fabretto.

All volunteers are responsible for arranging and purchasing their own flights. Volunteers are also **responsible for all of their in-country expenses** including housing, food, transportation, travel, recreation, etc. Fabretto will help support your volunteer experience with logistical support and mentorship including important advice on adjusting to life in Nicaragua and managing culture shock.

Housing

Housing options vary depending upon location. Many of our volunteers rent a room in a home of a Nicaraguan family or in a rooming house. Living with locals will offer you the chance to form strong relationships and learn about Nicaraguan local culture and customs.

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In San Jose de Cusmapa, one of the most remote areas where we work and where there are few housing options, Fabretto maintains a house that is available for volunteers and staff who travel to the region. Volunteers pay a weekly or monthly fee to stay in the Fabretto house. Volunteers are also welcome to seek alternative renting or housing, based on their personal preferences.

The rental expense will not be covered by Fabretto, but the Volunteer Coordinator will communicate estimated costs before arrival.

Please note that housing conditions are simple and rustic; volunteers should be prepared to immerse themselves in the local environment, experiencing daily life in a developing country (e.g., water/power outages, insects, no hot water, etc.) and forgoing many typical Western amenities.

Duration of Volunteer Service

Fabretto strongly recommends that individual volunteers commit to a **minimum of 3 months of service**. We have found that volunteers who spend at least three months in country take better advantage of the full experience of living in Nicaraguan communities and make a greater difference with their service projects.

At first, three months may seem like a long time, but once you arrive in Nicaragua, you will realize that it takes that amount of time to feel comfortable in your new environment. At the beginning, everything is new: the city or village, the culture, your experiences. The style and pace of work is different and sometimes things happen slower than volunteers may expect. It takes time to adapt and pick up the language. Even if you already speak Spanish, you will find differences in the Nicaraguan version.

Fabretto's primary focus is education projects, and we recommend that volunteers **come while Nicaraguan schools are in session**. The recommended time periods for Individual Volunteer service are as follows: Feb 15-June 30, July 20-November 30. We do not accept volunteers during the last two weeks of December and first two weeks of January, as our staff is usually on vacation during this time.

Volunteer Qualifications

Each year, the Individual Volunteer program receives more applications than Fabretto is able to accommodate. Only a few qualified candidates will be selected to participate each year.

Essential Qualifications:

- Demonstrate at least **intermediate-level Spanish proficiency** (oral, written, & reading).
- Be **18 years or older**.
- Be **financially responsible** for all in-country expenses. Volunteers can live comfortably in Nicaragua on \$400-\$500 a month, depending on their location and lifestyle. Candidates should plan to save for their commitment prior to arriving in Nicaragua and be financially responsible while here.
- Demonstrate **flexibility**, a positive attitude, and an open mind.
- Feel comfortable **living and traveling independently** in small, developing communities.



- Have or be able to obtain private, international **medical insurance** valid for the duration of time spent in Nicaragua.
- Agree to abide by Fabretto Volunteer Code of Conduct.

Preferred Qualifications:

- Advanced level or fluency in Spanish.
- Prior experience living in developing countries.
- Possess relevant skills and/or experience in the areas listed above under “Volunteer Work.”

Application Process

Interested applicants who meet all of the qualifications listed above and can commit to a minimum of **3 months of service** in Nicaragua should apply by submitting a **resume/CV, proposed dates of arrival and departure, and cover letter** stating motivation for volunteering and relevant experience to the Visitor & Volunteer Coordinator at volunteer@fabretto.org or via the [online application form](#) on our website.

Fabretto will assess current program needs and contact applicants within 2-4 weeks with a decision. The Volunteer Coordinator will interview the applicant, evaluate Spanish proficiency, and explain more about the logistics of the program. If accepted, all volunteers will receive the Volunteer Handbook for a full description of the Individual Volunteer program.