

KAT Centre Information for Technical Volunteers (Veterinarians, Vet Nurses/Assistants/Techs, & Vet Students)

Volunteer and become part of the KAT family!

KAT Centre is working towards the day when all animals will be able to enjoy a happy life, free from the threat of cruelty and unnecessary suffering. We recognise that our staff and volunteers play an important role in the future development of the charity and that without their commitment and dedication, our mission can never be achieved. For this reason, we sincerely thank you for your interest in working with us and we hope that you will find the experience enjoyable and beneficial.

As a technical volunteer at KAT, you will have the opportunity to learn different approaches to veterinary medicine and help to treat illnesses and injuries that are uncommon or unknown in developed countries. The hands on nature of KAT means that you will quickly start to learn new skills and to feel welcome and valued. The longer you stay, the more you will learn and the more involved you will become.

There are many different tasks you can get involved in at KAT. We will match your skills and expectations with the work available to give a rewarding experience to everyone. The longer you stay, the more you will learn and the more involved you will become.

Naturally, working as a volunteer entails a considerable amount of responsibility and for that reason we have prepared the following guidelines to tell you more about us and how you can participate in our work. These guidelines are to make sure that you do not feel uncomfortable or unprepared, and that our safety and welfare standards are always met.

This information is for volunteers with a veterinary background who plan to be at the KAT Centre for at least one week. If you plan to come to KAT for less than a week, please contact us at katinfo@katcentre.org.np or +977-1-4377729 to discuss how you can contribute.

Directions

Here are some simple directions to our new premises:

Coming from central Kathmandu, approach Budhanilkantha via **Golfutar Main Road** and continue heading North East until you pass **Park Village Resort Hotel** on your **left**. After this point leave the Main Road at the very next **right**. From this new side road, which is unnamed on the map, follow it along until you begin to see small signs with arrows guiding you along until you reach KAT Centre.

Other nearby landmarks are:

- Budhanilkantha Model Community Academy School
- Butterfly Home - Early Childhood Development Centre

Requirements:

- 1) Please consult with KAT's vets before giving any medication or treatments.
- 2) We welcome your ideas and suggestions; KAT's volunteers have great ideas for taking care of the animals and raising awareness. However, **KAT's vets and other staff make the final decisions** about what happens at the centre, particularly in relation to the care plans, diagnoses and prognoses of the animals. This is important to remember at times when a quick decision is needed to avert the unnecessary suffering of an animal admitted to our care.
- 3) All volunteers intending to have a hands on role with animals inside or outside of the centre should be up to date with tetanus and rabies vaccinations. If you aren't able to get the vaccinations before you come to Nepal, you can get them in Kathmandu but this is not advised unless absolutely unavoidable.

Travel and Accommodation Advice

Accommodation:

You should arrange accommodation at least provisionally before travelling to Nepal and have a rough idea of the costs involved. Depending on the duration of your stay and where you choose to be, the average cost can range from \$20 to around \$5 per night (equivalents given in USD). One guest house that we recommend is Laxmi's Bed and Breakfast, also in Budhanilkantha. Again, the costs depend on the duration of your stay.

We are currently working on coordinating a homestay program that will allow volunteers to stay with locals, but this is not currently available. When it is this document will be updated.

We also have a goal of eventually being able to house volunteers on site, but this is also not currently available after moving to our new permanent location in early 2018.

Food:

All volunteers are provided with basic vegetarian lunch (a plate typically consists of rice, pulses, potatoes and vegetables) cooked in the local Nepali style. This is free of charge.

You will also have access to clean drinking water, and the use of our refrigerator if you want to store drinks and snacks.

Laxmi's Bed and Breakfast provides breakfast free of charge, and optionally dinner for approximately \$1-2 per night.

Local shops sell snacks and drinks quite cheaply, and dinner and a drink at a local restaurant would typically cost in the region of \$2-4 (200-400 rupees).

Working Hours

KAT Centre is open every day of the week. We have an open doors policy in the interests of transparency, and we do not turn down visitors. In Nepal there is a six day working week with most workers having time off on Saturdays. This is the same for KAT's Nepali staff and for this reason, we advise that for first-time visits or days when you require support from our staff, you choose a day other than Saturday, so that we can be there to help you and welcome you properly. Our opening hours are generally 10AM to 6PM, with slight variations depending on the time that different staff arrive, or leave.

Health and Vaccinations

We recommend that you seek advice with your doctor about which vaccinations are recommended for travel to Nepal before travelling. A full pre-exposure primary course of rabies vaccination is strongly recommended before arrival if you intend to have full on contact with street dogs. Boosters can, if required, be obtained in Nepal.

Due to the low risk, it is up to you if you wish to take anti-malarials. In any case, it is wise to try to avoid bites by using repellent and by using long trousers/sleeves in the evenings. Quality medical care is available in Kathmandu should the need arise.

No health cover or insurance of any kind is provided by KAT Centre – volunteers and veterinary students undertake work at their own risk and should consider taking out their own travel insurance.

Visas

You will require a visa to enter Nepal. These can either be obtained directly at the airport on arrival, or by consulting with your embassy before travel. A basic tourist visa of 30 days can be purchased on arrival at Tribhuvan International Airport for \$40 USD. You should be prepared with cash for this purpose. A photo for your Visa will be required and can be taken for free using machines at Tribhuvan International Airport - if you plan to enter Nepal through another avenue you will need to bring a passport standard photo with you.

Leisure

In your extra time you will probably want to see the sights of Kathmandu. The city is rich in cultural heritage and there are many temples and monuments that are worth seeing.

Microbus (Number 5) can easily be caught from the main road and can take you straight into the city centre at a cost of just 20 Rupees. Our staff will be pleased to suggest places worth visiting and give advice on directions and appropriate taxi fares.

Miscellaneous

Laundry:

You can either purchase laundry detergent at a local shop, or optionally there is a laundryman nearby the centre. The service can take up to 3 days and is paid for at the time of collection. It is advisable to deal with delicate and personal items by oneself. We also have a washing machine at our premises which may be used.

Telephone and Internet:

There is wi-fi access at KAT Centre, and at most good guest houses. In order to make calls you will need to purchase a Nepali SIM card, these are cheaply available and the cost of calls and data is very low.

Climate:

Kathmandu has a varied climate, but the days are usually warm and sunny. From March onwards the temperature starts to climb and in May and June it peaks at between 30-35°C. When the monsoon season comes at the beginning of July the temperature begins to drop to around 25-30°C. It can be very wet during this time. During the winter months of October to February the temperature can be quite cold, especially at night when it can potentially drop down to around 2°C.

What to Bring:

- Clothing – This should be practical and chosen according to the time of year that you plan to visit. People in Nepal are fairly modest although shorts and leggings are perfectly acceptable for women. During the rainy season you will need shoes suitable for muddy conditions and an umbrella is useful both for the rain and to protect you from the sun. In the winter months you may want to bring extra pyjamas or blankets or even a hot water bottle to keep you warm at night.
- Mosquito Repellent – Although the Kathmandu Valley is not an area at risk of Malaria, the high number of rice paddies mean that mosquitoes are a fairly common annoyance at night.
- Universal travel adaptor for mains electricity.

- Sanitary towels and tampons. Toilet tissue is not always available so having some of this in your bag can also be useful.
- A torch and also back-up power banks for your devices can be helpful to mitigate the effects of electricity cuts.

Policy on Treatments and Surgery:

The KAT Centre treats street dogs and cats and occasionally wildlife for a wide range of illnesses and injuries.

All volunteers (technical and non-technical) can perform non-surgical veterinary treatments as long as they have the approval and confidence of our staff vets. Please consult with KAT's vets before giving any medication or treatment and do not attempt anything that you feel uncomfortable with or untrained to do.

Technical volunteers:

Veterinarians, vet nurses, assistants, technicians, and vet students can observe surgeries in the operating theatre after one week of full-time volunteering at KAT. You can potentially assist with surgeries (including pre-op and post-op care) after one week of full-time volunteering at the discretion of KAT's staff vets.

Veterinarians:

Can perform surgery unassisted if they:

- 1) Will volunteer full-time at KAT for more than two weeks,
- 2) Get approval from KAT's staff vets
- 3) Register with the Nepal Veterinary Council. Registering is a legal requirement. It costs US\$150, typically takes a couple days, and KAT's vets will be happy to help with the process. We will do our best to ensure you are registered, but there is a possibility that the government will not give approval. Please bring copies of evidence of your qualifications with you to Nepal. KAT typically performs flank spay surgeries; volunteers without any experience with these surgeries cannot perform them.

Other technical volunteers are not legally allowed to perform surgeries in Nepal, but may observe and assist.

Non technical volunteers (who do not have any veterinary training) can help with non-surgical medical treatment after one week of full-time volunteering at KAT. Observation of surgery is possible and non medical assistance can be given such as operating lights and clipping fur.

Orientation for all technical volunteers:

Day 1:

Be introduced to the KAT Centre and KAT's staff, learn about the roles you can fill at KAT, understand what KAT does, and read through some provided Powerpoint presentations on procedures at KAT.

Days 2 and 3:

Assist KAT's animal care staff and volunteers with duties such as treating sick and injured animals, giving patient exams, and de-ticking, grooming, and bathing animals.

Learning opportunities:

During your time at KAT, you will have opportunities to learn about the following:

- Differences in treatment and management between Nepal and other countries.
- Common types of skin diseases (eg mange – sarcoptic and demodectic).
- Wound management and associated treatment.
- Differences between flank and mid line spays and the reasons and benefits of each.
- Locally significant infectious diseases, and their causes and signs.
- General operational activities of an NGO working in Nepal.

Optional duties:

- Join the dog-catching team to observe KAT staff and their technique
- Attend any external rescue calls and where applicable, assist with their treatment.

Thank you for your interest in helping the KAT Centre's efforts to improve the welfare of the street dogs of Nepal. We look forward to working with you!

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