

Alternative Break (AB) Program Trip Proposal Guide

About the AB Program. The McKeen Center's Alternative Break (AB) trips provide a unique opportunity for students to enhancing their knowledge of significant social issues, live and work in unfamiliar communities, and participate in a program of intensive public service. Through extended preparation, community immersion, and reflection, each AB participant develops their identity as an active citizen capable of committing to a lifetime of engagement for social change.

AB trips take place at the local, national, and international levels during both the winter and spring:

- Alternative Winter Break (AWB) takes place during the last week of winter break (Sun 1/13 - Sat 1/19, 2019)
- Alternative Spring Break (ASB) takes place during the first week of spring break (Sat 3/9 - Sat 3/16, 2019)

Trip Proposal Process. This document details the qualifications for, and responsibilities of, leading a trip; the format of a proposal and steps for assembling one; the criteria used by our committee when evaluating proposals; and a sample proposal for your consideration.

Applicants are **strongly advised** to meet with Andrew Lardie (alardie@bowdoin.edu), Associate Director of the McKeen Center, AND also attend the information session on **Monday, April 9 at 5pm** in the McKeen Center, prior to submitting your trip proposal.

The [application forms are online here](#), and are due by **Wednesday, April 25 at 5:00 PM**. McKeen Center staff and past trip leaders are available by appointment for in-person Q&A and support in developing proposals.

Trip Leader Responsibilities. Alternative Break leaders must be committed to the following:

- **Leader seminar - Mondays, 8-9:30 p.m., Fall Semester**
The AB Leader Seminar is **mandatory** for all ASB leaders. It prepares leaders to 1) organize and lead their trips, and, 2) help student participants examine the political, social, cultural, and economic aspects of their service and the communities in which they will be living. Through this training, leaders develop their own seminar, which they lead for their trip participants throughout the spring semester. **The leader seminar will be held Mondays from 8-9:30 p.m. throughout the fall semester. Trip leaders cannot have any other commitments at this time, including classes, employment, or club meetings.**
- **Leader Retreat - 4PM Friday 10/12 thru 4PM Saturday, 10/13**
As part of the Leader Seminar, all AB leaders will participate in a retreat that will include direct service as a model of an alternative break trip, as well as training components related to AB leadership. Leaders will leave after classes on Friday and return in the afternoon of Saturday.
- **Trip Planning**
Leaders are responsible for planning all aspects of the Alternative Break trip, including recruiting participants, making lodging arrangements, coordinating with the host site, and leading the actual trip. After setting a budget and associated trip fee, leaders are responsible for maintaining that budget throughout the planning process.
- **Pre-Service Seminar**
Leaders will plan and facilitate a weekly seminar for their trip participants prior to their trip. Alternative Winter Break leaders will hold 4-5 seminars during the fall semester; Alternative Spring Break leaders will lead 7-8 seminars during the spring semester. Through these meetings, leaders will educate their groups about the issues they will be addressing and the area in which they will be working in order to prepare the group for the week of service. Co-leaders will be responsible for developing a syllabus, and facilitating all discussions and activities. In planning their seminar, co-leaders will consult a faculty advisor who can offer personal expertise on the social issue or community the trip will serve.
- **Post-Trip Activities**
Leaders will attend and help ensure participant attendance at *Perspectives*, a community reflection event which takes place in early February for AWB trips and early April for ASB trips. In addition, trip leaders will plan at least one reunion, reflection, or service activity for their participants after the return of their trip and before the

end of the spring semester.

- **Trip Expenses and Travel Expectations**

Leaders receive a discount off of their trip fees (\$100 for ASB, \$50 for AWB), and are eligible for the same need-based grants as other participants (up to 80% of trip fee). At the conclusion of AB trips leaders are required to remain with their group at least until the group has arrived at their departure gate for the final leg of travel, and preferably through the end of the final leg of travel (back to Boston or Portland).

Leader Qualifications

- Are rising sophomores, juniors, or seniors with significant community service experience
- Demonstrate commitment to the social issue they plan to address
- Demonstrate that they will work well together as a co-leader pair and divide responsibilities equally
- Are highly organized, meticulous, and comfortable leading others, sometimes in stressful situations
- Do not have other significant, time-consuming responsibilities next year that will conflict with leading a trip

Developing a Trip Proposal. Proposal components are typically assembled in this sequence:

1. Identify a co-leader

- Each AB trip is led by two students, so please apply in pairs.
- Reflect on your leadership style. Are you assertive, active, and decisive? Do you prioritize the relationships and needs of your group members? Are you idea-oriented, detailed-oriented, or a little bit of both? Thinking through your leadership style will enable you to identify a co-leader who best complements you.
- If you don't already have a partner, but would like to propose a trip, contact Andrew Lardie (alardie@bowdoin.edu). He will meet with individual aspiring leaders and help facilitate matches.

2. Identify a social issue and location

- Be mindful of the need to attract students to participate. A trip location that is both distant (eg expensive) and cold would have to have a very attractive issue to be viable.
- Travel outside of the Americas is especially costly, and so such trips can only be offered once every three years (next for the 2020-2021 academic year). No trips to countries outside the Americas will be considered for 2018-19.
- Below is a list of some potential focal issues. Topics in bold have been addressed in past Bowdoin AB trips:

Ableism & Disabilities	Environment (incl. preservation, sustainability, water rights)	Military & Veterans
Age & Ageism	Food & Hunger (food access, food justice, agriculture)	Native American & Indigenous Nations
Animal Welfare	Health (HIV/AIDS, mental health, addiction, public health)	Race & Racism
Arts	Historic & Cultural Preservation	Religious Pluralism & Tolerance
Civil Discourse	Housing & Homelessness	Violence Prevention (gang/domestic/sexual)
Community Organizing	Human Trafficking	Workers' Rights
Criminal Justice & Prison Reform	Immigration & Refugee Resettlement	Youth Development
Disaster Recovery & Rebuilding	LGBTQ & Gender Equity	
Education	Media Literacy	

3. Reach out to community partner organizations

- You may reach out to as few as one or as many as six or seven community partner organizations whose mission addresses your target social issue.
- At this stage in the application process, *community partner organizations do not need to commit to the Alternative Break trip*. However, the organizations should demonstrate interest in your social issue and a willingness to accommodate a group of volunteers (7-8 people for Winter, 12 for Spring), for a few hours or days during the dates of the trip.
- Include positive email reply from Community Partner organization in your trip proposal (see sample proposal below for an example of appropriate style for correspondence).
- You do NOT need to assemble a prospective trip itinerary for your proposal.

4. **Reach out to housing partner** (if separate from the service partner)

- You will need them to agree to house your group and provide a cost estimate.
- Include housing possibilities in your trip application.

5. **Identify potential faculty advisors**

- Identify several whose research makes them a suitable advisor for your trip. Make sure they'll be on campus next year! *Do not solicit faculty* at this stage.

6. **Draft a budget for the trip**

- If your proposal is similar to a past trip, the McKeen Center can furnish a past budget for you to use as a basis for your budget proposal.
- Domestic trips must be under \$1000 and international (within the Americas) should aim to be under \$1500.
- International trips must include a line for a Staff Participant, whose expenses are covered by the combined fees of the trip participants.

Alternative Break Proposal Evaluation Criteria

Below are the criteria and guiding questions used by the Alternative Breaks committee to evaluate AB applications. Proposals are ranked from one (poor) to five (excellent) on each of the twelve factors.

Leaders

Community Service Experience – Do the trip leaders have prior experience in community service activities at Bowdoin and/or other places? Do they have a good understanding of what it means to serve the common good?

Leadership Experience – Have the applicants held leadership roles before? Have they had any similar experiences involving leading a group of people in service or in experiential education?

Commitment to/Passion for Issue – Do the applicants articulate why they personally are invested in this issue/trip? Have they worked on this issue before?

Follow-Through/Accountability/Organizational Skills – Do the applicants have experience with this type of responsibility? Have they demonstrated an aptitude for dealing with details and logistics?

Unique Skills/Talents to Contribute – Are there ways in which these students will specifically contribute to the ASB program? Do they have unique talents or skills that will be useful/important?

ASB Experience – Is at least one of the leaders a past AB participant or leader? Do the leaders have other similar experiences to AB?

Trip Proposal

Partner Organization – Have the applicants had contact with the prospective partner organization? Are the mission and goals of the organization described well? Does the organization appear to have the capacity to host a group of students for a week of service?

Social/Environmental Issue – Is the social/environmental issue that this organization works on clear? Do applicants have a clear understanding of this issue?

Service to be Provided – Is an underserved population helped? Is work that participants would do clearly defined and realistic?

Location – Does the applicant have a good understanding of the location? Would this location be appropriate (eg, safe) for students to travel to? Is it affordable? Do they have plans for how they would travel to and around this city/country? Have either of the leaders been there before?

Feasibility – Is the overall trip proposal a realistic endeavor? Would the logistics of organizing such a trip be too much work for a student? Would Bowdoin students be interested in going on this trip?

Budget – Is the budget well written and easy to understand? Is it accurate? Is the trip cost-appropriate? The trip application specifies that domestic trips must be under \$1000 and international should aim to be under \$1500.

Sample Past Proposal

Alternative Spring Break Trip Proposal: New York, NY

Leaders: Maya Reyes & Mariah Reading

Focal Social Issue(s): Art integration and public art use within urban communities

Connection between this location and this social issue: New York City is full of all forms of public art and art education, which range from world renowned museums to street murals. Having such a rich arts community within a relatively small location that is within driving distance from Bowdoin is one of the greater perks of having this trip in NYC. Maya grew up in the city and therefore knows her way around so we would be able to navigate ourselves easily.

There are great potentials in this large city to witness the interaction between public art and art education. Because of the great diversity of New York, we seek to understand how public art and arts education can be a tool for empowerment in a wide range of communities. The wealth of resources and organizations within the city will make for a great educational opportunity.

Primary Community Partner info: We have submitted volunteer forms to both Urban Art Beat and Dreamyard Project and have been looking into Arts East NY and Creative Art Works. These organizations focus on the youth of New York 's urban communities and bringing art to students who might not get the chance otherwise. Dreamyards motto is "the art of inspiring education and therefore focuses on developing young students ' artistic voices in order to make positive change within their urban communities. Their web address is: <http://dreamyard.com>

We have also reached out to the grassroots organization of Urban Art Beat which is an organization that focuses on music and art-based workshops to increase student 's self-confidence because they get the opportunity to create their own unique vision. Curriculums are based around the history and performance of Hip Hop. Projects within the curriculum lead to larger performances that further teach students about gaining confidence through the power of public speaking, which has been seen to improve students ability to actively engage within the classroom. Their web address is: <http://urbanartbeat.org>. We have been in contact with their communications director, Rosaleen Knoepfel, who responded promptly and positively to the idea of us volunteering with them next year.

We have also looked into Museum education programs because we think it would be helpful to see both ends of the art spectrum within such a large city.

Alternate Partner Possibilities: Arts East NY: "Committed to presenting and promoting multicultural arts to address socio-economic issues that hinder the growth and development of our community." They have a young artist institute that is involved with community beautification and exhibitions that we could volunteer with.

Groundswell: "Brings together artists, youth, and community organizations to use art as a tool for social change for a more just and equitable world." Their "projects beautify neighborhoods, engage youth in societal and personal transformation, and give expression to ideas and perspectives that are underrepresented in the public dialogue."

Socrates Sculpture Park: "Specifically dedicated to providing artists with opportunities to create and exhibit large-scale sculpture and multi-media installations in a unique outdoor environment that encourages strong interaction between artists, artwork and the public." They offer free art-making workshops for neighborhood youth that is multi-faceted, accessible, and empowering, and ranges from topics such as designing kites to building boats and creating sculptures, which we could volunteer with.

Plans for Housing & Transportation:

We plan on staying in a church for housing, which would most likely have a kitchen. If showers are not available, we would figure something out with a local YMCA. We are for the most part contacting churches in

Sample Past Proposal

the outer boroughs (Brooklyn and Queens) to keep costs down for housing and food. For transportation, we will purchase MetroCards for each participant, which will enable us to use the subway and bus system. We will take the bus to get to and from New York, so that we don't have to worry about parking or driving in the city.

Possible Advisors: Susan Bell (Sociology) or Erin Colleen Johnson (Visual Arts)

Advisors Rationale: Susan Bell 's work contributes to our trip issue because much of her research is on visual sociology- particularly regarding how performance is a reflection of self and society. She will be advising Maya 's summer research, which focuses on the role of public art making in a community.

Erin Colleen Johnson is a new professor in the Visual Arts department who will be teaching digital art. I was referred to her by my advisor because much of her interests focus on the intersection of art and social justice. Her background as an art professor will provide insight into the arts education aspect of our trip.

Cost Est: \$432.67

Sample AB Trip Proposal Budgets

AB Trip Budget Sample

<i>Item</i>	<i>Explanation of Cost</i>	<i>Individual Cost</i>	<i>Group Cost</i>	<i>Cost Source</i>
Flight	BOS-MSY; Rate for 6 tickets	\$ 500.00	\$ 6,000.00	Kayak.com
Airport bus	Shared Shuttle	\$ 49.00	\$ 588.00	Past ASB trip
Lodging	UU Church (\$12/night/person)	\$ 84.00	\$ 1,008.00	See attached email
Ground Trans	Enterprise; \$500/wk x 2 vehicles	\$ 85.00	\$ 1,020.00	Past ASB trip
Gas/Parking	Nightly parkig will be free	\$ 25.00	\$ 300.00	Past ASB trip
Meals	Cooking; host provides bfast & lunch (12 meals)	\$ 45.00	\$ 540.00	
Educ. Program	Swamp tour (\$10) & plantation tour (\$7)	\$ 17.00	\$ 204.00	NOSwamptours.com
Supplies	crafts with youth group	\$ 5.00	\$ 60.00	
Program Fee		\$ 50.00	\$ 600.00	
Total		\$ 860.00	\$ 9,660.00	

Item	Explanation of Cost	Individual Cost	Cost Source
Bus	To and from Bowdoin: \$960	\$80	Greyhound.com
Meals	Cooking at site/ Eating out \$10 per meal: \$2520	\$210	Past ASB Trip
Metro Card	7 day metrocard: \$372	\$31	MTA.info
Program Fee	\$50 per person: \$600	\$50	
Lodging	Church: ~\$500	\$41.67	Past ASB Trip
Recreation	Museum Trips: \$240	\$20	Various museum websites
Total	\$5192	\$432.67	