



# The Andean Alliance for Sustainable Development

Calca, Peru

## Summer Development Practicum

### Organization Overview

The Andean Alliance for Sustainable Development (AASD) works in the Andes of Peru supporting indigenous farming communities through agriculture projects and training. Additionally, we facilitate experiential learning programs connecting students to impactful social change actors in the region. We integrate participants in on-going development initiatives in order to deepen their understanding of other cultures, develop new perspectives on local issues, and strengthen leadership skills necessary for global citizenship.

Founded in 2011, the AASD is a small organization with a full-time staff of 7. We are based in the town of Calca, in the Sacred Valley of Peru. Despite our small size, we have been very successful in leveraging partnerships for big impact, including working with the Peruvian national school lunch program and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN to replicate our school greenhouse model on a national level. We currently work in 12 communities, focusing on the most remote areas where the growing climate is harsh and government support is minimal.

### Social Issue Focus & Impact

The AASD primarily focuses our work in high-altitude communities where the climate is harsh with limited market access and minimal support from the Peruvian government. A lot of these communities are self-sufficient but lack certain resources and support to flourish under their circumstances. For that reason, the AASD focuses on working with remote communities through greenhouse projects, capacity-building, and other agricultural initiatives. Our objective is that local community members feel empowered to know that they are experts in the field of agriculture who play important roles for our future generations.

### Position Description

The focus of the 2020 practicum will be determined by the needs of the communities we work with and will be finalized closer to the start of the program. Examples of past programs are: opportunity and threat analysis for connecting small-scale farmers to organic market or impact and mitigation strategies for high-altitude communities facing climate change. Students will learn to design and implement mixed-methods research. This is critical for informing every aspect of the initiative and ensuring projects remain adaptive to community needs. Students will also be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences, learning, and perceptions.

**Action Research:** As an integral component of every AASD development initiative, students will learn to design and implement mixed-methods research. This is critical for informing every aspect of the initiative and ensuring projects remain adaptive and responsive to community needs. Methods may include surveys, interviews, focus groups, and other participatory data collection approaches.

**Holistic Curriculum:** Students in the Summer Development Practicum will participate in a rigorous curriculum that uses observations from the field to explore concepts in development theory such as: power and privilege, the role of students



and development workers in responsible community engagement, perspectives on poverty, and many others. Students will also be encouraged to reflect on their own experiences, learning, and world-view.

### Student Profile

The AASD is looking for a team of 12 students, recruited from different universities around the United States, who possess the following characteristics:

- An interest in learning about the realities and challenges of working in development as part of a small NGO
- The ability to work independently and think critically to help us move the program forward
- Flexibility, as the situation on the ground can change and require frequent adaptation and potential shifts in focus
- Conversational Spanish language ability

### Time Frame

8 week program, June 1st to July 24th, 2020.