



# ROAD SCHOLAR<sup>®</sup>

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## Ambassador Guidebook





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# **SECTION ONE**

## **Introduction**

*(last updated June 2015)*



Dear Road Scholar Ambassador:

Thank you so much for volunteering to serve as a Road Scholar representative in your community! You play an integral part in the continued growth and success of Road Scholar by enthusiastically sharing your Road Scholar experiences with others. As a not-for-profit organization, our most effective outreach has always come from participants telling their friends about Road Scholar, and you — and the rest of our Ambassadors — lead the way by introducing thousands of newcomers to Road Scholar each year.

I am pleased to let you know that we have developed an Ambassador Benefits Plan in recognition of all your efforts to spread the good word about Road Scholar and our learning adventures in your communities and beyond. This plan is fully outlined in this guidebook.

In addition to making presentations about your Road Scholar experiences to local groups — libraries, retirement communities, affinity groups, etc. — we may also ask you to field media requests and to act as our liaisons at outreach events, fairs and conferences in your community.

We want to make your time as a Road Scholar Ambassador as easy, rewarding and enjoyable as possible. Leading this effort is Claire McGurn, our Ambassador Program and Event Manager. I know you will enjoy working with Claire!

Since 1975, we at Road Scholar have worked hard to provide educational programs of exceptional value that are extraordinarily creative and stimulating. Thank you for your dedication to Road Scholar and our mission of lifelong learning.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'J' followed by a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

James Moses  
Road Scholar President



Dear Road Scholar Ambassador,

My name is Claire McGurn and I am excited to represent Road Scholar as the Ambassador Program and Event Manager. I am a Road Scholar veteran, having worked with the Participant Services Call Center for 15 years. I am also an experienced expo staffer, introducing Road Scholar to the many interested folks who stop by the Road Scholar booth during conferences, events and travel shows. I began my career with Road Scholar in the late 1990s as a call center phone advisor. Over the years I have strived to give exemplary customer service as a call center supervisor, manager, and trainer and director of customer service.

I look forward to working with you as you reach out to others and share your Road Scholar experiences in your community.

Thank you for choosing to volunteer your time and talent to Road Scholar. Our success is made stronger by your commitment to our mission.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claire McGurn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Claire McGurn  
Ambassador Program and Event Manager  
(617) 457-5554  
ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org



# **SECTION TWO**

## **The Ambassador Program**

*(last updated June 2015)*

# The Road Scholar Ambassador Program

## Mission of Road Scholar

At not-for-profit Road Scholar, our mission is to inspire adults to learn, discover and travel. Our learning adventures engage expert instructors, provide extraordinary access, and stimulate discourse and friendship among people for whom learning is the journey of a lifetime.

## Mission of the Ambassador Program

The mission of the Ambassador Program is to have people who are passionate about Road Scholar educate their peers about the organization.

## Definition

Ambassador — an authorized representative of Road Scholar.

## Purpose

Through presentations and personal interactions, Ambassadors promote Road Scholar's enriching travel adventures and the value of lifelong learning in their local communities and beyond with the goal of adding new names to the mail list.

## Ambassador Requirements

- Attended two programs, preferably one domestic and one international; one in the past two years
- Complete Ambassador Application
- Minimum one-year commitment desired
- Participate in Ambassador Webinars
- Internet access a must

# Ambassador Roles & Responsibilities

## Role

Road Scholar Ambassadors communicate a positive, current and exciting image of Road Scholar to their communities. They focus on educating and reaching out to Baby Boomers and older adults. Ambassadors will be responsible for developing, launching and maintaining a proactive word-of-mouth effort on a community level.

## Basic Responsibilities

- Minimum commitment of one year desired
- Conduct at least one presentation each quarter (four presentations each year)
- Deliver presentations at events scheduled by Road Scholar; seek out and schedule speaking opportunities on your own within your community
- At presentations, collect names of newcomers to Road Scholar to be added to the mailing list
- Strategically place, monitor and update Road Scholar informational materials in public locations with high traffic (i.e. libraries, community centers, retirement communities)
- Share your Road Scholar enthusiasm and lifelong learning spirit with others in your region

## Enhanced Responsibilities

*(depending on your interest and proximity to other Road Scholar events)*

- Participate in local conferences, trade shows or expositions as a Road Scholar spokesperson
- Inform organizations of opportunities to charter Road Scholar programs, reserving one of more than 5,500 Road Scholar programs exclusively for its members

## Role of Road Scholar

- Send each new Ambassador a kit containing all the materials needed to conduct several presentations
- Schedule Ambassador speaking engagements
- Support the Ambassador team by providing up-to-date information about Road Scholar, sending updated materials for presentations, hosting Webinars and communicating regularly among and between Ambassadors through the Quarterly Newsletter and the Ambassador secure Webpages and new Facebook page
- Update the Ambassador Guidebook regularly to ensure that Ambassadors have the most up-to-date information about Road Scholar

# Ambassador Benefits

## Mileage Reimbursement

Road Scholar will reimburse Ambassadors for mileage to and from speaking engagements and other events or activities. Our standard is to pay mileage electronically, via direct deposit. Reimbursing in this manner — rather than printing and mailing checks — saves paper, reduces processing and mailing costs for us, and ensures reliable receipt and immediate access to funds for Ambassadors. To set up direct deposit, visit the online Ambassador Resource Center and complete and return the direct-deposit form to Mary Pratt, Senior Accounts Payable Associate, at [mary.pratt@roadscholar.org](mailto:mary.pratt@roadscholar.org). To request reimbursement, please send an email to [ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org](mailto:ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org) with the following information:

1. Details about your speaking engagement or other event (date, location, number of attendees, etc.)
2. Miles driven to and from each presentation and the amount requested (miles multiplied by Road Scholar's rate per mile, which is currently \$0.56)

Payments will be credited to an Ambassador's bank account at the end of each month. Our finance department will send an email when they initiate a direct-deposit payment to the account. These emails are typically sent out on Thursdays, and the funds are generally credited to your account the first week of the new month.

In lieu of receiving mileage reimbursement, Ambassadors may write off the expense as a tax-deductible donation to Road Scholar. In early January, send us an email itemizing your expenses for the

preceding year (providing the information in items 1 and 2 above), and we will consider your expenses a contribution and send you a tax receipt. Your contact is Mary Pratt. Please feel free to get in touch with Mary if you have questions about the direct-deposit form or Road Scholar's payment process:

[mary.pratt@roadscholar.org](mailto:mary.pratt@roadscholar.org).

## Program Credit for Names Added to the Mailing List

Upon submitting the names of presentation attendees, Ambassadors will have the opportunity to be awarded program credits on any International, North America or Adventures Afloat program. Additional rules apply:

- For every 100 new names obtained from presentations, Road Scholar will apply a \$500 credit toward any International, North America or Adventures Afloat program.
- The ambassador must utilize the credit within 24 months of receipt.
- The credit can be applied to only one program.
- The credit does not apply to airfare or incidentals (i.e. single-room supplements).
- The credit is not transferrable.

## Program Credit for Blogging

Start a Blog that will link to the Road Scholar website or post a program review to receive a \$25 credit toward any International, North America or Adventures Afloat program. Email [ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org](mailto:ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org) once you've completed your blog or program review to let us know.

## Program Credit for Private Charter Programs Booked

For every charter program with a minimum enrollment of 15 booked as a result of an Ambassador presentation, the Ambassador is awarded a \$250 program credit, in the form of a voucher.

## Program Credit for Staffing Travel Shows

A \$100 program credit, in the form of a voucher, will be awarded to an Ambassador who staffs a travel show for a full day.

*As a voucher recipient, you are responsible for all taxes (federal, state and local, if any) associated with the value of vouchers awarded. You must provide your Social Security number to Road Scholar as we will report voucher income by law. If you redeem vouchers in a calendar year totaling more than the income reporting threshold established by the I.R.S. (currently \$600), Road Scholar will send you a Form 1099-Misc on or before Jan. 31st of the following year.*

## The Friends and Family Incentive

Active Ambassadors who have achieved the goal of adding 100 households to the mail list are eligible for the Road Scholar Friends and Family Benefit.

From time to time Road Scholar will offer special prices on some of their programs. These special prices are possible because Road Scholar has committed to space many months before a program begins. As the departure approaches and we see empty space, we reduce the program price to a small circle of Road Scholar employees and friends. These special offers are made exclusively to Road Scholar “family and friends” and we appreciate your confidentiality while on the program.

The Ambassador will receive Friends and Family emails as long as the Ambassador meets the criteria for eligibility:

- Ambassador has obtained over 100 adds to the mail list since joining the Ambassador program
- Ambassador delivers at least two presentations during the current calendar year.



# **SECTION THREE**

## **Ambassador Presentations**

*(last updated May 2014)*

# Speaking Engagements

Road Scholar works closely with various organizations to arrange speaking opportunities for Ambassadors. In addition, we strongly encourage you to contact organizations directly to schedule your own speaking engagements in your community. In that case, please let Road Scholar know about your presentation so we can be sure to send materials and information. Please email us at **[ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org](mailto:ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org)** or call Claire McGurn at (617) 457-5554.

## Developing Ambassador Opportunities in Your Community

As mentioned above, Road Scholar will work with various organizations to arrange presentations for Ambassadors. However, by contacting organizations in your area, you will have more opportunities to share your Road Scholar adventures and to meet new people in your community while you polish your presentation skills. Some ideas to “get the word out” about your Ambassador volunteer position are:

- Contact your local library. In addition to scheduling their own lectures, libraries often host various organizations or clubs that need speakers. They also are great places to promote your future presentations.

- Send a press release to your local paper. By informing your community about the service you provide, groups will know to contact you to speak at their next meeting. *See Section 7 — Reference Material.*
- Distribute your Ambassador business cards. Carry your Ambassador business cards with you — you never know who could be a potential contact for a Road Scholar presentation. To request more cards, simply send an email to **[ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org](mailto:ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org)**
- Contact organizations in your community. You can send a letter, call, or even drop by some of the suggested organizations and groups listed below. If we can help research any of these organizations or if you would like us to make initial contact, please let us know! *You will find a sample Ambassador letter to organizations in Section 7 — Reference Material to help get you started.*

# Presentation Tips

## Some simple tips for your presentations:

**Arrive early and mingle.** Not only will you get to know your audience even before you start your presentation, but this has the added benefit of making you less nervous.

**Open with a bang!** Grab the listener's attention right away by making it personal, stimulating, visible and memorable. Share your enthusiasm for Road Scholar and have fun!

**Keep your notes simple.** If you are more comfortable having notes on hand, create some brief note cards or a general outline.

**Talk to their eyes.** Look each one of your listeners in the eye. Try not to look like you are reading notes. Carry on a face-to-face conversation and you'll build rapport and command their attention.

**Turn up your energy.** Project your voice and share your enthusiasm. Talk loud enough to be easily heard by the person in the last row.

**Move around.** Avoid a podium-style presentation, if possible. Don't make this presentation a lecture; engage the audience throughout the whole presentation.

**Smile.** Audiences react to their speakers. If you look and feel happy, they will, too.

**Be opinionated.** Audiences love people with strong convictions. Don't be afraid to state your own opinions, beliefs, understandings and ideas.

**Use examples.** Always back your assertions with solid evidence or proof. Use facts, statistics, personal experiences, anecdotes, jokes and stories.

**Emphasize key words.** To express the meaning locked in a sentence, you must emphasize the key word or phrase. Many people do not have a full understanding of Road Scholar. Don't assume they know what it is all about.

**Use humor.** Road Scholar is a lot of fun — make your presentation reflect the great times you have had on programs.

**Don't panic!** Don't worry if you don't know the answer to a question. If someone asks a question that you can't answer, tell the audience they can call us toll free at (877) 426-8056 to consult with our staff.

**Involve your listeners.** No one should sit for long without having something to do. Ask questions of your audience, pass around things for them to look at, or have them introduce themselves at the beginning — anything to tap their minds and keep them involved.

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**Use the sign-up sheets!** Encourage interested audience members to complete a sign-up sheet. Catalogs are one of our best tools to encourage people to participate in Road Scholar programs.

**Bring water with you.** After talking for an hour, you may want a drink.

**Have a strong closing.** End with a final sentence or idea that's strong, positive and memorable.

**Thank them.** Always thank the host and the audience for inviting you to speak. Don't rush out when you are finished speaking. People may have questions.

# Target Organizations for Ambassador Presentations

## Public Institutions

Library (book club/Senior group)  
Community Center  
Council on Aging  
Senior Center

## Senior Living

Active Adult Community  
Retirement Community  
Apartment Complex (with high 55-and-older population)

## Volunteer Organizations

Rotary Club  
Knights of Columbus  
Elks Club  
Mason Society  
Audubon Society  
Lions  
AARP

## Educational Groups

Lifelong Learning Institute (LLI)  
Retired Teachers Association  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
National Education Association (NEA)  
Sorority or Fraternity Group

## Retiree Groups

National Association of Retired Federal Employees  
Pioneers (retired telephone employees)  
Elfun (Retired GE employees)  
Industry Retiree Associations and Chapters  
Corporate Retiree Associations and Chapters

## Faith-Based Groups

Churches, temples and other houses of worship  
YMCA/YWCA  
Jewish Community Center

## Affinity Groups

Hiking Club  
Birding Group  
Biking Club

# The Presentation Process

## Preparing for Your Presentation

- **Confirm the details with your host prior to the engagement.** You should confirm the date and time of your speaking engagement, as well as the anticipated number of attendees. If you plan to use visuals, make sure the facility has the proper equipment. Also, confirm the amount of time that has been allotted for you and tailor your presentation to fit the needs of those you will be addressing. If there is a date change from the original request, please notify Road Scholar so we can keep our records updated.
- **Prepare and organize your presentation, visual aids and materials.** Take the time to go over your speaking points. Arrange the materials you need to bring with you. If you do not receive materials from us at least three weeks in advance, please contact us.
- **Review your speaking points, the Road Scholar Press Kit and the Frequently Asked Questions documents.** *See Section 7 – Reference Material.* The Road Scholar Press Kit and Frequently Asked Questions are excellent tools to help you prepare for your presentation. It summarizes the mission and spirit of Road Scholar, and familiarizing yourself with Frequently Asked Questions will help you answer questions during your presentation.

## Conducting a Presentation

- **Arrive 20-30 minutes early.** Be sure to give yourself enough time to arrange your materials and check equipment before your presentation.
- **Conduct your presentation.** We encourage you to make the presentation unique and enjoyable. From speaking clearly to including information that will interest a particular group, our Presentation Tips will help you make the most of your presentation. *See Section 7 – Reference Materials.*
- **Encourage attendees to fill out a sign-up sheet.** Be sure those who are interested in receiving catalogs have a chance to write down their names and addresses. They will receive their first catalogs about two weeks after you send us the sign-up sheet.
- **Conduct the raffle.** When attendees are checking into your presentation, let them know that if they fill out a sign-up sheet, they will be eligible for a \$50 program gift certificate **or** a copy of *Master Class*, Road Scholar's book about living longer, stronger and happier. Place all of the sign-up sheets in a box and have someone in the audience select a winner. Give the winner a copy of the gift certificate; there will be a name and phone number for them to contact to redeem the certificate.

## The Follow-Through

- **Ask attendees at your presentation if any belong to another organization and perhaps you can schedule additional presentations.**
- **Thank your host.** You should send your host a follow-up or thank-you note. This is a good opportunity to send them other useful materials, such as a Charter Program flyer or Road Scholar Fact Sheet, or to schedule another engagement. You can also include a Road Scholar Ambassador business card.
- **Follow-up with Road Scholar.** We care about your feedback. Let us know about your presentation, how many people attended, and be sure to send in your completed sign-up sheets with the date of the presentation.



# SECTION FOUR

## Media Relations

*(last updated June 2015)*

Working with the media can be an effective method of spreading the word about Road Scholar. Ambassadors should feel free to contact the media in their area to announce their availability to speak about Road Scholar and to promote their speaking engagements.

# Media Opportunities

There are two primary ways the general public becomes aware of a brand: What they learn from *you*, and what they learn from *others*. On occasion, a national media outlet (New York Times, Wall Street Journal or a broadcast news outlet) may reach out to you regarding a general Road Scholar article. In this instance, please contact the Road Scholar Associate Vice President of Public Relations, Stacie Fasola, at (617) 457-5418 or via email at [stacie.fasola@roadscholar.org](mailto:stacie.fasola@roadscholar.org). She will work directly with the national media outlet.

In the event you are approached by a reporter to discuss a particular Road Scholar program that you have attended, we ask that you refer to the press kit documents and strive to include the key messages or speaking points noted below as appropriate.

## Press Kit

The Road Scholar press kit includes the following documents:

- Fact Sheet
- Executive Bios
- The History of Road Scholar
- What Our Participants Have to Say
- Road Scholar Adventures

Please familiarize yourself with these documents and refer to the Frequently Asked Questions for additional information.

## Creating Your Own Press Releases

As an Ambassador, you are encouraged to contact the media in your area. We have created a sample press release for you to use. Please see the Ambassador Press Release Sample in *Section 7 – Reference Materials*.

## Calendar Listings

Many local newspapers publish a calendar promoting events in the community free of charge. Contact your newspaper or community newsletter to learn its guidelines and deadlines. As a general rule of thumb, calendar listings usually include date, time, place and details about the event. View a sample Calendar Listing to create your own. See *Section 7 – Reference Material*. We ask that you use our template to create a sense of uniformity between all Road Scholar public relations endeavors.

# Key Messages

## Organizational Key Messages:

1. Innovative Learning Adventures for Adults
2. Leadership in Lifelong Learning
3. Scholarships & Grants
4. Experiential Learning
5. Solo Female Travel
6. Engaged and Intellectually Curious Participants

## Innovative Learning Adventures for Adults

- Advancing its mission to inspire adults to learn, discover and travel, not-for-profit Road Scholar offers 5,500 exceptional educational adventures in 150 countries and 50 states that utilize experiential learning for the enrichment of all individuals dedicated to lifelong learning.

## Leadership in Lifelong Learning

- Road Scholar was at the forefront of the Lifelong Learning Movement, creating the expectation that learning is an important part of the 50+ years and the realization that learning makes lives richer.
- The not-for-profit organization played a leadership role in helping college administrators and educators launch 200 of the nation's first Lifelong Learning Institutes.

- For 30 years, the Road Scholar Institute Network (RSIN) has been advancing networking opportunities and collaboration among the 400+ Lifelong Learning Institutes that joined the network.
- On the inaugural National Lifelong Learning Day, Road Scholar will release research supporting the value of staying mentally active and engaging in lifelong learning in retirement. Through this day of recognition, we hope to build awareness and encourage communities to recognize the benefits of lifelong learning.

## Scholarships & Grants

- Not-for-profit Road Scholar is the nation's largest educational travel institution for adults and is the only organization to offer financial assistance that makes experiential learning available and accessible to lifelong learners.
- Thanks to the generous support of our donors, we are able to offer grants toward experiential learning programs that enrich the lives of low-income older adults and deserving caregivers.
- The financial assistance made possible through Impact scholarships and grants not only enriches the lives of its recipients; it also enriches the Road Scholar community by creating a more diverse social, educational and economic group of scholars.

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## Experiential Learning

- Road Scholar programs immerse participants in a wide variety of experiential learning activities, leading to a richer and more meaningful experience.
- We offer 5,500 programs in 150 countries and 50 states that enlist world-renowned faculty and experts who offer insider access not available to the independent learner.
- We welcome participants of all backgrounds and physical abilities by offering a wide variety of Activity Levels to ensure participants experience programs at their own pace.
- There are no hidden costs. Program costs include:
  - Accommodations
  - Transportation within the program
  - Lectures, activities and excursions
  - Gratuities and taxes
  - Travel assistance and insurance plan

## Engaged and Intellectually Curious Participants

- Road Scholars share a passion for learning and an extraordinary thirst for knowledge and new experiences.
- Road Scholar participants are highly educated; most possess a bachelor's or graduate degree and many are either a working or retired educator.
- Road Scholars are active, engaged and respected individuals who volunteer in their local communities but are always interested in making new friends and forming new relationships.

## Solo Female Travel

- Today's female baby boomers are more adventurous and active than their predecessors and are traveling solo at an unprecedented rate.
- Whether traveling with friends, with a partner or as a solo female traveler, Road Scholars are embraced by a warm, inclusive community that bonds easily over shared interests and a love of learning.
- Road Scholar's experience and reputation assures solo female travelers that they are safe whether attending a North America adventure in a big city or an International program in a remote locale thousands of miles from home.
- Road Scholar offers solo travelers the opportunity to share accommodations to avoid paying the single supplement. In addition, Road Scholar offers several programs with no single supplement.

# Elevator Pitch

How do you respond to the question: “What is Road Scholar?” If it’s a request from a print journalist, you can simply forward a press kit. However if it’s a broadcast journalist, interviewees are rarely given much time to clearly outline their very well-crafted key messages. To that end, we’ve created an elevator pitch. Easy to remember, you can communicate the key messages in one snappy sound bite:

*“We’re a not-for-profit organization that for 40 years has created exciting learning adventures for people who love to learn.”*

Please feel free to use this elevator pitch in lieu of the key messages if pressed for time.



# **SECTION FIVE**

## **Ambassador Policies**

*(last updated May 2014)*

# Ambassador Policies

## Accepting, Declining and Canceling Engagements

We try to ensure that you receive speaking requests at least two weeks prior to an engagement, but we sometimes receive last-minute requests. We encourage you to accept speaking requests whenever your schedule and circumstances permit, but we understand that it will not always be possible to accept all requests. If you do accept an engagement and then find you are unable to attend, please call our office as soon as possible. The more advance notice we have, the more time we will have to find a replacement speaker. If you do need to cancel at the last minute, please contact your host immediately to let them know you will not be able to attend and then contact us to let us know that you were unavailable.

## Honorariums or Stipends

As volunteers, Ambassadors do not receive payment for their presentations. Road Scholar does not charge a fee to organizations that request speakers. However, a host organization may offer an honorarium as a “thank you” for your presentation. You may accept or decline the gift at your own discretion. We recommend that you consult with a tax advisor if you accept the gifts. Some Ambassadors use the honorarium to defray their traveling costs, while others donate it to the Road Scholar Annual Fund. If an honorarium is offered and you wish to decline, you might ask your hosts to donate it to Road Scholar instead.

## Travel and Related Costs

All presentations arranged for you by Road Scholar will be in your community and within a reasonable driving distance. Road Scholar will reimburse mileage at 56 cents per mile. For all presentations that you arrange on your own, we ask only that you travel the pre-defined distance you have stated on your Ambassador application. If you have further concerns about traveling, please let us know.

*We are a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit organization. As a Road Scholar Ambassador, you are making a charitable contribution of your time to a not-for-profit cause. Therefore, some of the expenses you incur, such as cost of a meal, may be tax-deductible. We recommend you consult with a tax adviser for information and guidance on this subject.*

## **SECTION SIX**

### **Resources from Road Scholar**

*(last updated May 2014)*

# Resources from Road Scholar Headquarters

All of us at Road Scholar are thankful to you for your enthusiastic support of our organization and mission of inspiring adults to learn, discover and travel. The work you do is essential in introducing other adults to the joys of lifelong learning and educational travel. If you have questions, need guidance or suggestions, need more supplies for a presentation, or require specific program information, we are always happy to help.

Part of our support for the Ambassador Program includes the following communications:

## Quarterly Newsletter

Our seasonal newsletter, Ambassador News, provides a look at featured Ambassadors, news from headquarters, speaking ideas and pointers, and much more! It is sent to all active Ambassadors.

## Webinars

We will host training Webinars for new Ambassadors, as well as those who want to hone their presentation skills.

## Ambassador Secure Pages on the Road Scholar Website

We have a secure section on the Road Scholar website that is exclusively dedicated to Road Scholar Ambassadors. Please visit **[www.roadscholar.org/ambassador/ambassador\\_login.asp](http://www.roadscholar.org/ambassador/ambassador_login.asp)** for a periodic Ambassador update.

## Regular Communication and Updates

It is very important to us that the Ambassadors are kept up to date on the happenings at Road Scholar. So, in addition to the regularly scheduled communications, we will send out new information to you as it occurs.

# **SECTION SEVEN**

## **Reference Material**

*(last updated June 2015)*

# Road Scholar Frequently Asked Questions

## What is Road Scholar's Mission?

At not-for-profit Road Scholar, our mission is to inspire adults to learn, discover and travel. Our learning adventures engage expert instructors, provide extraordinary access, and stimulate discourse and friendship among people for whom learning is the journey of a lifetime.

## Why did Elderhostel change its name to Road Scholar?

In 2010, Elderhostel renamed its programs Road Scholar. "Road" connotes a journey and real-world experience, and "Scholar" reflects a deep appreciation for learning. Together, the words capture the heart of our program experience: learning from expert instructors, enhanced by direct discovery of an idea, issue, subject or place.

## What Does Road Scholar offer?

Since our first programs at the University of New Hampshire in 1975, we have grown to include an extraordinary range of program topics, formats and locations in every state in the U.S., 150 countries, and aboard ships and sailing vessels on waterways throughout the world. Despite the range and diverse themes of our offerings, they share four unique attributes:

- Exceptional content and experiences provided by our expert instructors and through special behind-the-scenes access to the world's most fascinating places.
- A shared fellowship of learning and warm camaraderie.

- Comfortable accommodations and appetizing meals.
- Excellent value.

Road Scholar programs can be as small as 10 participants, with an average of 30 participants — the experience is developed so that everyone benefits from the attention of the expert instructor, while providing the opportunity for participants to get to know each other. Prior formal education or knowledge of the subjects is not necessary. Our programs are designed to be intellectually challenging, but there are no homework assignments, exams, grades or credits.

## What distinguishes Road Scholar from commercial group tours?

Road Scholar programs are nothing like commercial group tours. We are a not-for-profit organization dedicated to lifelong learning and we serve a community of participants who want to engage socially and intellectually through experiential learning and travel.

Educational excellence has always been at the heart of our mission. The college and university professors, teachers, staff members of cultural institutions, specialists and local experts who make up our global network of instructors are not only passionate about their fields of expertise, but through their enthusiasm inspire participants to explore subjects more deeply on their own.

People who come together on Road Scholar programs are naturally curious, interesting and interested in their fellow participants, their surroundings and the topics under discussion and consideration. Our programs are geared to

foster camaraderie and a sense of community, where participants are learning with and from their peers. Solo participants have commented that they find the community to be particularly warm, welcoming and inclusive.

Commercial tour groups also frequently surprise their customers with extra fees — from the cost of added excursions to gratuities. With Road Scholar there are no hidden costs; the published price is the price you pay.

## What makes Road Scholar the world's not-for-profit leader in educational travel for adults?

- Road Scholar partners with leading universities and other not-for-profit organizations around the world to create programs with exceptional learning.
- Participants can choose from a variety of programs including “Intergenerational” adventures, “Adventures Afloat” shipboard voyages and other programs on every conceivable subject.
- Road Scholar programs feature outstanding experts, often with a lifetime of local knowledge, whether the subject is the ecology of the Costa Rican rainforest or the finer points of Italian olive oil making.
- Backed by nearly 40 years of experience and relationships, the Road Scholar program-development team and its partner organizations and instructors have access to places and resources that solo travelers and other organizations will never have.
- There are no hidden costs — the published Road Scholar program price is the price you pay.
- Each year, 50,000 donors contribute more than \$2 million to our Annual Fund to help close the gap between the tuition we charge and the actual cost of our programs.

## Who are Road Scholar participants?

Road Scholar participants, mostly over the age of 50, come from all socioeconomic groups and various geographic regions. All participants have one thing in common: a love of learning. Program participants grow and learn through new experiences and the active exploration of subjects and interests around the world.

## Who are Road Scholar providers and instructors?

Road Scholar is affiliated with more than 200 of the world's leading colleges, universities, conference centers, museums and cultural institutions that, collectively, we call “Providers.” Each Provider works closely with Road Scholar staff to create fulfilling, stimulating, comfortable and safe educational experiences. Through rigorous evaluation and training processes, Road Scholar assures that these Providers offer programs that meet our very high standards.

Educational excellence is at the heart of the Road Scholar experience. The college and university professors, teachers, staff members of cultural institutions, specialists and local experts who make up our global network of instructors are not only passionate about their fields of expertise, but through their enthusiasm inspire participants to explore subjects more deeply on their own.

## Do people travel solo on Road Scholar programs?

Absolutely! There are many solos travelers who participate in our programs. We often hear from Road Scholar participants who say they look forward to attending programs because they are excited to meet friendly people who share similar interests. On Road Scholar programs, the atmosphere is very warm and social, and solo travelers quickly become

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part of a congenial group. This kinship has resulted in many long-lasting friendships. In fact, many Road Scholar participants currently attend programs with friends whom they first met on a previous Road Scholar program.

### **I would like to request single accommodations. Is it possible to have a single room?**

Yes. Almost all of our programs in the U.S. and Canada offer single rooms and most International programs offer single accommodations as well. We can't guarantee a single room for all of our programs, but if you request one, we will make every attempt to accommodate you. There is usually an additional charge for a single room.

### **I am attending on my own, but would like to share a room.**

#### **May I have a roommate?**

Of course! If you enroll in a double-occupancy room on your own and have not requested a single room, we will assign a roommate to you. Road Scholar participants who opt to share a room with a roommate do not have to pay a single supplement in the event that there aren't enough roommates to go around.

### **What kinds of accommodations does Road Scholar provide?**

From well-appointed city hotels to country inns, from conference and retreat centers to lodges, cabins aboard vessels, and even safari tents, Road Scholar accommodations are comfortable, pleasant and well-suited to the program. Most programs offer single-room options, and almost all accommodations — whether single or double — offer private bathrooms. Generally, Road Scholar groups stay in comfortable motels, hotels or conference center facilities.

### **Are there provisions for disabilities?**

Our goal is to accommodate everyone who wants to take part in Road Scholar. We will work with you if you have special needs or dietary requests, and provide specific information regarding the suitability and functionality of accommodations, physical demands of the program, and availability of special menus. If you have a question, please contact us by calling toll free at (877) 426-8056 or attach a note to your registration form. Our TTY line at (877) 426-2167 is available for the hearing-impaired. Our customer service staff will help you find the programs that fulfill your needs.

### **What is the cost of a Road Scholar program and what is included?**

In general, U.S. and Canada program costs average around \$168 per day. Road Scholar tuition is all-inclusive and covers registration, accommodations, meals, lectures, field trips, and often a variety of extracurricular activities and social functions. There are no hidden costs. Programs in the U.S. and Canada require you to provide your own transportation to get to the program site, but once you are there your tuition covers all required costs. International programs average about \$292 per day and are again all inclusive. We can also help you make air travel arrangements when you enroll in one of our international adventures!

### **Can I support Road Scholar by making a contribution?**

Yes. Like colleges, universities and other educational not-for-profit organizations, we depend on contributions to defray expenses not covered by tuition revenue. Charitable gifts are vital to our financial health and perpetuate our founding mission that programs remain affordable and available to all adults who wish to participate. The Annual Fund and Planned Giving are two ways of supporting our organization.

The programs are so varied.

### How will I know if the Activity Level is appropriate for me?

Our catalogs contain program and site descriptions that detail the Activity Level, the terrain, type of facilities provided, and other factors, for all of our offerings. For example, the catalog description for a bicycle program will note the number of miles per day that participants should be able to pedal, as well as the terrain that will be covered. A program located in a mountainous area will include mention of the elevation at which you will be staying, and whether the campus has numerous stairs or hilly terrain. If you have concerns about your ability to participate in certain activities or environments, please consult with your physician before enrolling in a program.

### Can Road Scholar accommodate my special diet requirements?

We'll be happy to check whether a particular program can accommodate the more common requests, such as low-salt or kosher meals. While there are no guarantees, some program sites are able to accommodate these requests, as long as they receive sufficient notice prior to the start of the program. Contact us with your inquiry.

### How do I register for a program?

You can register by telephone. Just call us toll free at (877) 426-8056, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. ET, and we'll be glad to assist you. You can also register online! Our website's online catalogs help you to search out a program by season, subject and location. You can also check program availability and use the online registration form to enroll.

### Do you offer scholarships?

At Road Scholar, we believe that lifelong learning should be accessible to all adults — no matter their economic status. Each year, we award hundreds of scholarships, known as Impact Grants, to enthusiastic lifelong learners. Road Scholar Impact Grants increase the social, educational and economic diversity of Road Scholar's participant group, enriching the program experience for all, not just those who receive financial aid.

There are two kinds of Impact Grants:

- Enrichment Grants (our general scholarships)
- Caregiver Grants (for people taking care of a loved one)

For more information on the Road Scholar Impact Grants, please visit <http://www.roadscholar.org/about/scholarship.asp> or call (877) 426-8056, Monday through Friday 8a.m. to 7p.m ET.

### Can I pay for a program by credit card?

Yes, Road Scholar accepts MasterCard, Visa, American Express and Discover for your deposit as well as your program balance.

### My group is interested in chartering a program for our exclusive use.

#### How do we proceed?

Road Scholar Private Group Charter Programs are ideal for all groups — ranging from clubs to alumni groups to family reunions. If you are interested in exploring the possibility of reserving a Road Scholar program exclusively for members of your family or affinity group, please call us toll free at (877) 209-4634 or send an email to [groups@roadscholar.org](mailto:groups@roadscholar.org).

# Ambassador Press Release Sample

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: [Name] at [Telephone number and/or E-mail address]

Local [man/woman] Appointed Road Scholar Ambassador

[CITY]: [name] was recently selected as the [your area] region's new Ambassador to Road Scholar.

Road Scholar is the name of the programs created by Elderhostel, the leading not-for-profit organization that provides educational learning adventures for adults at an exceptional value. Offering more than 5,500 programs annually, Road Scholar partners with educational organizations and cultural institutions throughout the United States, Canada and in 150 countries around the world to provide unique educational experiences infused with the spirit of camaraderie and adventure.

As a member of the Road Scholar volunteer Ambassador Program, [Mr./Ms./Mrs.] [surname] is now available to share [his/her] Road Scholar experiences with local groups by giving informational lectures, free of charge, about Road Scholar and lifelong learning. [name] began traveling with Road Scholar in [year] and has since attended programs focusing on [subjects/locations].

For more information, please call [Mr./Ms./Mrs.] [surname] at [telephone number].

### **About Road Scholar**

Not-for-profit Road Scholar's mission is to inspire adults to learn, discover and travel. Our learning adventures engage expert instructors, provide extraordinary access, and stimulate discourse and friendship among people for whom learning is the journey of a lifetime. Since inception, more than 5 million people have enrolled in our 5,500 iconic educational adventures offered annually in 50 states and 150 countries around the world.

Road Scholar educational adventures are created by Elderhostel, the not-for-profit world leader in lifelong learning since 1975. To learn more, please visit our website at **[www.roadscholar.org/press](http://www.roadscholar.org/press)**.

# Sample Calendar Item

Contact: *Ambassador Name*

*Today's Date*

Contact Information: *Ambassador Telephone Number or Email Address*

**WHAT:** Do you love to travel, enjoy learning new things, explore interesting places and meet people who share a love of adventure? Come and learn about Road Scholar — America's first and the world's largest educational travel organizations for adults. We offer more than 5,500 programs each year in all 50 states and 150 countries worldwide.

**WHEN:** *Date & Time of Presentation*












**WHERE:** *Location of Presentation*

## **About Road Scholar**

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# Ambassador Kit Checklist

-  Ambassador Guide
-  Ambassador Business Cards
-  Black Identification Lanyard with photo ID
-  Copy of “Master Class” by Road Scholar Executive Vice President Peter Spiers
-  Mailing list sign-up sheets
-  Road Scholar-branded pens
-  Road Scholar-branded tote bag
-  Road Scholar polo shirt
-  Our “Welcome to Road Scholar” brochure
-  Most recent Road Scholar International, North America and Afloat catalogs
-  Gift certificates for raffles and “Master Class”

# Sample Letter to Organizations from Road Scholar

*Date*

*Contact Name*

*Organization*

*Address*

*City, State Zip*

Dear *(Name)*,

My name is Claire McGurn, and I oversee Road Scholar's Ambassador Program, comprised of enthusiastic participants who volunteer to share their Road Scholar experiences with groups like yours. *(Name of Ambassador)*, an Ambassador extraordinaire from the *(Ambassador's City)* area and veteran of *(number of RS programs the Ambassador has been on)* Road Scholar Lifelong Learning adventures, is available for a complimentary Road Scholar informational presentation. I think that Road Scholar can offer you an unparalleled fun and educational experience!

Road Scholar is the world's leading not-for-profit educational travel organization providing learning opportunities specifically for adults. Our programs provide an environment for intellectual exchange and discovery. No prior formal education or knowledge of the subjects is required to enjoy Road Scholar programs, just an open, inquisitive, mature mind. Programs are designed to be stimulating with no homework assignments, exams, grades or credits. For 40 years, Road Scholar programs (until 2010 known by the organization's official name, Elderhostel) have expanded to encompass an extraordinary range of subjects and locations in every state of the U.S., the provinces of Canada, 150 countries around the world, and aboard vessels that traverse rivers and seas. Road Scholar offers programs in almost every area of interest. Whether you enjoy hiking through the Grand Canyon, birding in Costa Rica or rebuilding homes on the Gulf Coast — there really is something for everyone!

*(Name of Ambassador)* is available to speak with your group and tell them all about everything Road Scholar has to offer. The presentation is free of charge and is easy to set up. There are three different ways to schedule a presentation: 1) contact me directly via phone at (617) 457-5554, 2) via email at **[ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org](mailto:ambassadorprogram@roadscholar.org)** or, 3) you can visit the Road Scholar website at **<http://www.roadscholar.org/ambassador>**.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions. I look forward to hearing from you!

Very truly yours,

Claire McGurn, Ambassador Program and Event Manager

# Sample Letter from Ambassador to Organizations

*Date*

*Name*

*Organization*

*Address*

*City, State Zip*

Dear (Name),

Road Scholar would like to offer a unique and complimentary opportunity to you and your (name of organization). I am a member of the Road Scholar volunteer Ambassador Program. We are a group of seasoned Road Scholar participants who volunteer our time to give informative and enthusiastic presentations about the educational travel adventures available through Road Scholar.

Road Scholar is the world's leading not-for-profit educational travel organization providing learning opportunities specifically for adults. Each year 100,000 participants join us in 5,500 programs across the United States and 150 countries. As a not-for-profit organization, we are committed to being the preeminent provider of high-quality and affordable educational opportunities for adults.

In Road Scholar's early days, interest was spread rapidly through word of mouth, from one friend to another. As Road Scholar Ambassadors, we continue this tradition today by sharing Road Scholar with the people in our communities. As a service to you, I would be happy to make a presentation for your organization. To arrange for a Road Scholar presentation, please call me at (your telephone number) or email me at (your email address).

If you would like to learn more about Road Scholar and the Ambassador Program, please visit the Road Scholar website at **[www.roadscholar.org](http://www.roadscholar.org)**.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Road Scholar Ambassador

# Road Scholar Private Group Charters

## Extraordinary Learning Adventures for Affinity Groups

“Road Scholar programs are especially suited for Lifelong Learning organizations when combined with a prior overview study opportunity. This combination added a depth of understanding to our in-country lectures, home visits and cultural understanding of China.”

— Lee Ann, *The Plato Society*, UCLA Extension School

Private Group Charters allow a group to reserve a Road Scholar program for its members. It's an ideal way to bring a community together — for reunions, annual gatherings or special occasions.

Road Scholar Private Group Charters are perfect for ...

- Lifelong Learning Institutes
- Family Reunions
- Biking, hiking and walking clubs
- Birding groups
- Church and temple groups
- Alumni groups
- Affinity groups of all kinds

Three easy steps to get started on planning your Group Charter:

- Visit **[www.roadscholar.org](http://www.roadscholar.org)** or browse through any of our catalogs to find the program for your group.
- Once you have chosen a program, tell us about your group by calling us at (877) 209-4634.
- When we have confirmed the program date for your group, we will provide you with materials to help you to promote the program to your members.

Once you have selected a program and agreed upon a date:

- Road Scholar requires a signed agreement letter setting forth the terms of the arrangement and a \$500 deposit for a program in North America or a \$1,000 deposit for an International program.
- The deposit is fully refundable provided you meet the agreed-upon minimum enrollment requirement for the program within the allotted time frame — generally between 45 and 60 days after the program opens for enrollment.
- We handle all the details — following the receipt of your signed agreement and deposit we will collaborate with you to:
  1. Offer assistance for your marketing plan.
  2. Provide a special toll-free number for your charter group members to enroll.
  3. Collect all deposits and payments via direct communication with the members of your group.
  4. Prepare and send program-specific preparatory materials to each individual.
  5. Assist with air arrangements, if desired.

*continued on page 44*

## What do charter programs include?

Like all Road Scholar educational adventures, charter programs include:

- Informative lectures by leaders in their field.
- Course-related field trips with special “behind-the-scenes” access.
- Excursions to significant local attractions — all included in the program cost.
- Enrichment activities, such as cultural events and performances.
- Accommodations in comfortable, centrally located hotels, conference centers and inns.
- All meals, except where specifically noted.  
Some programs in areas with exceptional dining options exclude a small number of meals so that participants can explore local restaurants on their own — these exceptions are noted in our program descriptions, and are never hidden.

- Group transfers throughout the program.
- A Group Leader to accompany you through the program to handle all logistics.
- Gratuities, taxes, and destinations fees.
- The Road Scholar Emergency and Travel Assistance Plan, including 24-hour assistance for medical and other emergencies.

Our Private Group Charter Team is looking forward to working with you. Give us a call at (877) 209-4634 or email us at [groups@roadscholar.org](mailto:groups@roadscholar.org). Please contact us as soon as you have chosen a program for your members to ensure enough lead-time for us to make arrangements.

“Working with Road Scholar has been wonderful. As we planned our first charter program, Road Scholar has been there every step of the way providing all the things we’ve needed — taking care of all details, providing professional handouts and responding to every question.

Road Scholar does the work. I take the bow. It’s so easy.”

— Barbara, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute



# Notes

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