5 Tips to Become a Strong Applicant

1. *Explore the interactive placement portal:* www.peacecorps.gov/openings

   The sequence is simple: (1) Begin browsing through the projects, finding the types of Peace Corps placements that align with your interests and career goals. (2) Build your qualifications around *the actual "required" and "desired" skills* that those positions require—both the coursework and the hands-on experience.

   - The positions you'll find in that portal are only the ones accepting applications in this current quarter. You can learn more about the variety of positions within Peace Corps' six work sectors at http://www.peacecorps.gov/volunteer/learn/whatvol.

2. *Apply to positions for which you are qualified*

   Shortly after you submit your application, you'll receive a digital "assignment selection form" in which you'll be able to choose the top three places you want to go and things you want to do.

   - If you choose to express preference, it's *critical* that your preference align with currently open positions for which you are strongly qualified. You need to do your research!
   - *Recommendation:* Select your top two places and sectors, then choose "Anywhere I am Needed" and "Any Work Sector" for your third choice. This will enable you to be considered for many different countries – not just three!

3. *Bolster your hands-on experience in your sector of interest*

   <u>Ample, relevant work experience</u> is one of the primary measuring sticks Peace Corps Placement Officers use to cull out the strongest applicants. So . . . build it!

   - For example, if you want to be an Education Volunteer, you should get teaching experience!
   - If you want to be a Youth in Development Volunteer, work with children! *And so on.*

4. *Apply early and consider the "Featured Positions" on the website*

   Placements are posted quarterly about 8-12 months prior to departure, with application deadlines 6 months out. You are more likely to be noticed if you beat the rush and apply well before the deadline.

   - You should also consider any "Featured Positions" that align with your skill set, as those positions receive comparatively fewer applications.

5. *Competitive applicants have:*

   - Education and/or experience that is relevant to the project(s) they're most interested in
   - A history of community service and volunteerism
   - A tailored and professional resume
   - Done research into the many open projects on the Peace Corps Website
   - Applied well before the "Apply By" deadline