



*Educación para un Futuro Sostenible...Education for a Sustainable Future*  
Apartado 69-5655, Monteverde, Puntarenas. Costa Rica  
Teléfono: (506) 2-645-5053, Fax: (506) 2-645-5219  
<http://www.mvinstitute.org>

## Research Affiliates – An Overview

The Monteverde Institute invites applications from students and researchers who are interested in contributing with their research to the Monteverde zone. Affiliates are categorized as Junior or Senior; in general terms, **junior research affiliates** are upper-division undergraduate or master degree students who are conducting research that requires supervision by MVI; **senior research affiliates** are master or doctoral students, or professionals conducting independent research as part of their advanced degree program or professional development. During busy periods (January, March, and May-August) priority is given to faculty and student members of our partner and participating institutions.

## Criteria for Selection of Research Projects

**1) General selection criteria.** MVI uses the following criteria to determine affiliation. These include:

a. The proposed research must fit into our mission of advancing knowledge on the sustainable management of resources through education, applied research, and community engagement.

b. Research must fall within MVI academic and research foci, which include:

- i. Conservation biology
- ii. Land use planning and sustainable development
- iii. Water
- iv. Ecotourism
- v. Community health
- vi. Spanish language and cultural studies
- vii. Information access and equity

c. The researcher must demonstrate how the research will be disseminated to a local audience through presentations, document translation, talks in the local high school, etc. Costs associate with dissemination activities should be included in your project budget.

d. Given MVI's applied research focus, the researcher must demonstrate in their proposal how their research and findings contribute to informing decision-making and understanding of the challenges faced in the region.

**2) Methodology.** Priority will be given to research that utilizes a participatory or community-based approach and that seeks to link or build upon existing community efforts. MVI encourages interdisciplinary studies combining qualitative, quantitative and participatory research methods.

**3) Approval by an Institutional Review Board (where applicable).** Priority will be given to research that has already gone through an institutional review process at the host institution. The proposal will then need approval by the Monteverde Institute's review board before affiliate or associate status is granted. If your research is exempt from review, please explain.



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**4) Language Ability.** Researchers are expected to have Spanish proficiency commensurate with their project's likely interaction with and/or impact on the local community. If you do not already have conversational knowledge of Spanish, we strongly encourage you to participate in Spanish classes offered at MVI. Ideally it would be a minimum of 40 hours, equivalent to two intensive weeks or spread out throughout the duration of the affiliation. Our philosophy is that communication is essential to working with a community, even if one is doing scientific, field-based research. If you just have a basic knowledge of Spanish, we recommend 20 hours of language instruction. This would be included in the cost for affiliation.

#### **Expectations of Affiliates and Associates**

MVI expects that research affiliates adhere to the same norms and standards of research that they would at their host institution. Researchers are expected to conduct themselves in a manner respectful of the local culture and of fellow staff and community members during their time in Monteverde. In addition, MVI expects to be informed of any significant changes made in the research plan during the course of the research project.

Host researchers will be required to give at least one presentation (in English and/or Spanish) at the Institute during their stay as well as submit a written final summary of their project (including an abstract in Spanish) in electronic and hard copy form to the Institute's library prior to departure. Once the thesis, article or report is completed, we ask that a digital and hard copy be sent to MVI as well. Additionally, we encourage research affiliates and associates to participate in and contribute to the Institute's activities as much as possible during their time in Monteverde.

MVI affiliates working on multi-year projects will renew their agreement each year and provide annual updates on their progress.

#### **Services Offered by MVI**

The Institute can provide our affiliated researcher with the following services. Applicants should specify their needs in their application form. The Institute will attempt to accommodate researcher needs, but be aware that our facilities are limited and it may not always be possible or realistic. Our affiliation fee includes:

1. Access to the Institute's library and computer lab during designated hours
2. High speed wireless Internet connection
3. Access to basic computer programs, including MS Office Suite; access to GIS materials.
4. Shared works space, including wet and dry laboratory space (limited availability) with basic lab equipment.
5. Any Printing, faxing, and photocopying in B&W that you may need to conduct your research. MVI also has a color printers and a plotter for large printing we could provide you at cost.
6. Slide, overhead and LCD projectors, including adapters for Macintosh.
7. Written and oral orientation and general information material about the community and life in Monteverde.
8. Logistical assistance with finding accommodation while in Monteverde, coordinating transportation, airport transfers, reservations at Hotels, or any other logistical support you may require during your stay in Costa Rica. The cost for said services is *NOT* included.



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9. Administrative support to receive mail at the Institute, to use kitchen facilities, to network with staff involved in research and visiting faculty and researchers, to make local phone calls and to receive phone calls/messages.
10. Letters of support, if needed.
11. Assistance in applying for Research permits in Costa Rica; we will guide you through the permission process and coordinate all the paperwork and procedures for you.

*\* If your research requires the extraction of specimens or samples, we can assist you with that process for an additional fee as MINAE charges additionally for this permission.*

*\*\*If you are interested in improving your Spanish comprehension while you are here in Costa Rica, we can also offer classes for an additional fee.*

### **Fees**

Our MVI Research Affiliation fee including all services as indicated in the list here above is \$325.00 for up to a three month study. If your research requires a longer period of time, we can discuss the additional fee on a needs basis. This non-refundable fee can be paid via an electronic international transfer. Sarah Burbank will provide you with that information once your inquiry has been reviewed.

### **Research Affiliate Application Process**

- 1) Email an initial research inquiry to [interns@mvinstitute.org](mailto:interns@mvinstitute.org). Include the following information:
  - a. Complete name
  - b. Academic/institutional affiliation
  - c. Brief statement of research project proposal
  - d. Spanish language ability
  - e. Proposed dates for which you seeking affiliation
  - f. Statement of how your project will be funded (e.g., Fulbright grant, university-specific grant, self-funding, etc.)
  
- 2) Within two weeks, MVI will send you a response. If your inquiry is accepted you will be invited to submit a full application and provided with instructions on how to do so. The complete application will include:
  - a. Individual Participant Application Form (PF-102)
  - b. Project proposal summary (not to exceed five pages) that includes the theoretical framework, justification, objectives, methodology, status of research review process (e.g., IRB), local dissemination plan, timeline, budget, funding sources, and bibliography.
  - c. Current CV
  - d. Letter of intent which specifies why you are undertaking this research project, why you wish to affiliate with the Monteverde Institute, your experience living abroad, and your experience with Spanish.
  - e. Letter of recommendation (two letters are encouraged).
  - f. Copy of first page of passport.
  - g. Payment of the MVI Research Affiliation fee.



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7) Submit your complete research application by mail, along with the non-refundable \$325.00 affiliation fee. You may email your application as well, but be aware that your application will not be considered until the affiliation fee is received. Checks should be made out to *Asociación Instituto Monteverde* and the entire packet sent to:

Instituto Monteverde  
Affiliate Program  
Apartado 69-5655  
Monteverde, Puntarenas  
Costa Rica

Please allow two weeks application and check to arrive.

8) If you require a letter or additional information to receive credit from your home institution or for grant applications, please specify and provide necessary information or forms. This service is covered by the cost of your application fee, and includes any normal postal fees and faxing. You will need to cover any additional expedited mailing costs.

9) Within five weeks, applicants will be notified of acceptance and total affiliation cost.