



# The LIFE Program

Social Change & Leadership Development in Israel and India

## The LIFE Program | What to Bring – Tips for Participants

Updated September 14, 2011

Please review the following for our suggestions about “what to bring.” If you have specific questions that are not covered in this document, feel free to ask!

- **Luggage –**
  - **To/From Israel and India** - The best combination of luggage seemed to be a suitcase, a backpack and a small overnight-style backpack. Please check with your airline as to your luggage allowances as they vary for each airline. Even if you are allowed to bring two pieces, keep in mind that your luggage allowance to India will be limited to 20-23 kilos (42-45 lbs). Also, note that we do not provide a storage facility in Israel for extra goods that are not flying with you to India but you could perhaps store them with friends or family. Finally, suitcases are hard to handle a large backpack may be a better option.
  - **In India and Israel** – LIFE participants tend to spend weekends in India and in Israel traveling; the smaller backpack is for that kind of light travel. This combination prepares you for both short weekend trips and the longer holiday trips you will likely take. In general – pack light! Keep in mind that anything you need can always be purchased here or in India.
- **Computer and Internet** - While you will have computer and internet access at internet cafes and (usually) in the work-place, if you can, bring a laptop computer. It will definitely serve you well, also because we will have wireless internet in the apartment. Some thoughts about that:
  - Please backup your data, and consider insurance in case of loss or damage
  - Unless your data is backed up and stored elsewhere, please do NOT bring all your life’s valuable information – contacts, photos, college papers.
  - Have your program/software disks with you in case you need to repair, reboot or reinstall software.
  - For some people an e-notebook/ipad might be a good solution for note taking and web access while being convenient and very portable.
  - Do come with a serious-sized thumb-drive (or data key). It will prove invaluable. Again, this is easily purchased in Israel or India.
- **Cell Phone** - If you have a mobile phone with a SIM card, you can bring it and replace the SIM card here and again in India. If you purchase such a phone here, it will cost you about US\$100 for a phone and SIM card and initial batch of minutes. When you come back from India, it may be worth getting a plan rather than paying by the minute. There also rental options from firms such as this: [www.israelphones.com](http://www.israelphones.com).
- **Photocopies of Important Documents** - Have photocopies of your passport, visa, credit card (if you have one), driver’s license (for after LIFE; we prefer you not to drive while on the program) and other significant documentation (e.g. medicine, eyeglass details) with you and consider emailing digital copies to your own email and also leaving copies with a family member/friend before you leave.
- **Valuables** - Do not bring irreplaceable jewelry or. On the other hand, an ipod or mini speakers – if you like that sort of thing - will be nice but also a bit of risk/responsibility. In India we will find safe storage for your passport if you wish us to store it. There are pros and cons to that we will cover and you will choose.
- **First Aid** - There will be a group first aid kit, but if you know your own tendencies (to be allergic to mosquito bites, to get dehydrated, to sprain an ankle, etc), then bring some supplies of what you may need. No need to bring huge supplies, you can top-up along the way.

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**The LIFE Program** ♦ LIFE is an initiative of B'Tzedek; we are grateful for the partnership & support of Repair The World and of MASA Israel Journey. B'Tzedek is an initiative of Topaz (A.R.) ♦ Web: [www.LIFEprogram.org](http://www.LIFEprogram.org) | Email: [info@lifeprogram.org](mailto:info@lifeprogram.org)  
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- **Personal Information** - Have it available – like prescription glasses details, your visa card loss emergency number, etc. Note what was written about data backup, thumb drives (data-keys) in the last update.
- **Temperatures** - The web is wonderful, for Hyderabad weather, click here, Jerusalem here. Neither India nor Israel will be sweltering ☺.
- **Sleeping Bag** - Please bring a sleeping bag, it shouldn't be an expensive one and should not be for super cold weather (you'll sweat at night) or be too bulky (a hassle to carry).
- **Bedding & Towels** - You do not need to bring bedding (aside from the sleeping bag) as basic bedding will be provided. Please do bring your own towel(s).

- **Clothes:**

**For the India Internship**

- You can wear a western professional outfit (smart slacks, nice blouse, jacket combinations) OR business suit, if you have one/two already. In recent past programs, participants did not bring or purchase a business suit and it was not missed. Even for western style professional wear, shoes there tend to be more practical – flat rather than high-heeled.

OR

- You may choose to purchase traditional Indian clothes there to wear at work. Some NGOs we worked with welcomed this and felt that participants were being respectful. Note that 'traditional dress' does not mean a full-length Sari, which is primarily for married women, but rather regular (western or local), comfortable slacks/pants (jeans would be under-dressed) under a long Indian shirt/dress with or without a scarf.

OR

- A middle option - have 1-2 mix and match professional outfits for (a) while you work out what you feel comfortable in and (2) buy the local stuff without rushing into it and (3) you have a 'back up' for when you what you are used to. Then you can also get some Indian clothing there and have multiple options. This will allow you to get the feel of your specific internship placement.
- Many well-educated, professional people, especially women, do wear traditional dress (like I described if unmarried, or a Sari if married). It is not considered 'for ceremonial purposes only'. This is indicative of India...
- There is, culturally, a 'grace period' at the start while you get adjusted. Whatever you bring will be fine; if you don't have a business suit and don't want one, then stick with the slacks/blouse/jacket option. If you have none of this and can't get it at a reasonable price, you may be better to get something there (or here in Israel). I suggest not breaking the bank on clothes you may find you hardly wear there and won't wear afterwards.
- We will schedule in time for you to shop as necessary and help you find reasonably-priced stores.

**For the Israel Internships**

- You will have professional roles. Clothes styles range a lot in Israel from work-place to work-place. You should have one nice outfit you feel comfortable in. Not gala dress style, just casual/smart business.
- It might be appropriate to be in jeans or similar in some places, but please, nothing torn or with logos on...



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## For Travel and in general

- While traveling, you are the boss; wear what feels good.
- Bathing suit.
- Closed shoes for hiking will be needed, but hiking shoes are not necessary (again, unless you have them and love them). Decent sneakers or running shoes are fine.
- Serious (closed) sandals (not just flip-flops) will be very useful, but nothing you can't pick up cheaply here. They are also good for the times we may walk along water routes.
- One set of clothes to get dirty in will be helpful. The sort you'd hike in, garden in or paint in (that you'd not get upset if they got a bit stained or torn).
- One set of good clothes – for special meeting or opportunities.