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Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the TRAiLS Guide program!

GW TRAiLS was founded in the fall of 2002 to serve as an outdoor adventure education organization for GW students, faculty, staff, friends, and family. The mission of GW TRAiLS is to provide the greater GW community with diverse outdoor experiences that promote leadership, self-discovery, respect for the environment, and community service. TRAiLS arranges various outings and events throughout the year that are all planned, organized, and led by student Guides working in partnership with the GW Office of Student Life.

Every year, TRAiLS seeks out students who are interested in becoming a TRAiLS Guide and who are motivated to learn how to facilitate safe and fulfilling outdoor adventures for others in the GW community. TRAiLS is pleased to announce it will be accepting applications in January 2022 for the Spring 2022 Guide recruitment process.

If applying to the TRAiLS Guide Program is of interest to you, please read through this packet which contains information on the application process, Guide responsibilities, and the application schedule.

We look forward to getting to know you throughout the application process. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us at trainingtrails@gwu.edu.

Sincerely,

Lucas Laingen and Laurel Brodsky
GW TRAiLS Training and Recruitment Coordinators
trainingtrails@gwu.edu
What is TRAiLS?

TRAiLS is home to GW’s outdoor community. With support from the GW Office of Student Life, TRAiLS offers guided trips, various outdoor-related events, and the Guide Program. There are multiple ways to get involved with varying levels of commitment.

TRAiLS General Body

At our General Body Meetings (GBM), TRAiLS welcomes everyone who has an interest in the outdoors to attend bi-weekly meetings to participate in various outdoor-related activities. From open mic nights around a campfire to outdoor hard skills workshops, this is a space where everyone is encouraged to foster and share their interest in the outdoors. No commitment necessary!

TRAiLS Guide Program

The TRAiLS Guide Program is a university-funded leadership program for which an application is required. GW students working on behalf of the university are provided the training and resources to organize and lead trips for fellow members of the GW community.

TRAiLS Trip Participants

TRAiLS welcomes all members of the GW community—students, staff, faculty, alumni, and friends—to sign up for weekly trips that are led by TRAiLS Guides. There are costs associated with some trips, but TRAiLS has a scholarship fund and subsidized trips to ensure the outdoors are accessible to everyone.
SECTION I: ELIGIBILITY AND DESCRIPTION OF GUIDE RESPONSIBILITIES

Eligibility for Application

To apply to the TRAiLS Guide Program, applicants must fulfill the following eligibility requirements:

- Full or part-time undergraduate student in first-year, sophomore, or junior standing
- If a junior, you must intend to remain at GW for the entirety of your senior year (cannot study abroad in senior year)
- In good standing with the university; not on disciplinary probation

Training new Guides is a lengthy and costly affair. TRAiLS has a limited budget to work with, and as a result, TRAiLS looks favorably on applicants who will commit to the Guide program for the remainder of their GW careers.

Seniors, graduate students, PhD students, and exchange students are ineligible to apply as Guides but are welcome to come on trips and be a part of the TRAiLS General Body.

Requirements of the TRAiLS Guide Position

**Weekly Meetings:** Guides are required to attend weekly meetings on Tuesdays at 7 PM. Excused absences are as follows: religious holidays, illnesses, and family concerns. If you are a new Guide who has a class on Tuesday night, you may be exempt for your first semester. Three unexcused absences are permitted each semester. Once this limit is surpassed, the guide may be subject to dismissal from the program.

**Training:** Guides are required to obtain Wilderness First Aid (WFA) and CPR Training to lead trips. Training will be paid for by the Office of Student Life. WFA, CPR, and additional training will occur in the two weeks prior to the Fall Semester, meaning that Guides will be expected to be on campus approximately two weeks before the first day of classes. Additional required training sessions ranging from a few hours to overnight events will occur throughout the year. New Guides will be required to attend a series of onboarding training sessions during the Spring 2022 semester to orient them to the organization.
**Trip Requirement:** Guides are expected to plan and lead a minimum of three trips per semester. They are in charge of promoting and marketing their trips to the GW community. All trip fees for Guides are covered by the Office of Student Life.

**Service:** Guides are expected to participate in two service events per semester.

**Community Events:** As members of the TRAiLS community, Guides are expected to participate in GBMs and other community events such as Outdoor Adventure Week, Cocoa on Kogan, and student organization fairs.

**Adventure Bound:** Guides are required to lead an Adventure Bound (AB) trip, which will occur the week before the start of each fall semester. They also will assist in the preparation and organization of AB trips. Serving as a guide for AB entails leading first-year participants in a variety of outdoor education and team-building activities which can include backpacking, hiking, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, and various games and leadership activities. More information about AB can be found at go.gwu.edu/adventurebound.

**Leadership:** Guides will have the opportunity to become a part of the TRAiLS Guide Leadership Team. These positions allow guides to expand their skills and help direct the organization. Elections are held semesterly in December and May. If elected to be a part of TRAiLS Leadership, you must meet the basic expectations stated in the Guide Handbook.

**Driving:** Guides who are 20 years of age and older are eligible (and expected) to serve as official university-sanctioned drivers. These Guides are expected to take and pass a written driver’s exam and to hold a valid U.S. driver’s license.
Guide Behavioral Expectations

Guides may not be placed on disciplinary probation with the University.

Guides may not engage in the following forms of behavior while leading a TRAiLS trip:

- Consume alcohol, no matter your age
- Consume any illegal substances
- Pursue a romantic relationship or sexual encounter with a trip participant or fellow Guide
- Drive a vehicle in a reckless manner

Any violations of the above policies will result in dismissal as a Guide.

Disclaimer: TRAiLS takes Guide recruitment seriously due to the nature of the activities that Guides plan and lead. Outdoor activities carry with them a certain inherent danger. Because Guides are entrusted to safeguard the participants that they lead, and in the eventuality that something could happen, Guides must be well trained, well equipped, and well prepared to handle emergency situations in the outdoors. For this reason, there is no other student-run organization on campus that requires its members to maintain such a high standard of professionalism, awareness, preparedness, and maturity as does TRAiLS.
Section II: QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL TRAiLS GUIDE

Applicants to the Guide Program are not required to have any prior experience in outdoor recreation or leadership education. Having little to no outdoor experience will not negatively affect your application in any way. These are the personal and professional qualities that TRAiLS looks for in Guide applicants:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reliable and responsible:</th>
<th>Follows through with promises and commitments; completes assignments thoroughly</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexible:</td>
<td>Able to prioritize, multitask, and manage time effectively</td>
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<td>Detail-oriented:</td>
<td>Capable of visualizing both the big picture and the small pixels that compose it</td>
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<td>Professional:</td>
<td>Takes the &quot;Guide-participant&quot; relationship seriously, as well as the responsibility associated with being a Guide; behaves in such a way as to inspire confidence; takes pride in the quality of service delivered</td>
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<td>Sense of humor:</td>
<td>Able to relate to participants on a personal level, as well as on a professional one</td>
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<td>Strong leadership abilities:</td>
<td>Eagerly seeks challenges and strives to push personal limitations; inspires fellowship</td>
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<td>Positive attitude:</td>
<td>Strong interpersonal and communication skills, as well as a constant desire to improve</td>
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<td>Hard-working:</td>
<td>Eager to plan and prepare; understands that diligence facilitates both safety and fun</td>
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<td>Mature:</td>
<td>Makes sound, rational decisions; cool under pressure; able to appreciate that personal actions reflect on the group as a whole</td>
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<td>Passionate:</td>
<td>Has a strong interest in learning about the outdoors; eager and able to spread that passion to others</td>
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Section III: TIMELINE OF APPLICATION PROCESS

The application process is demanding and reflects the level of commitment required of TRAiLS Guides. Everyone is invited to fill out the Written Application. Following the Written Application stage, applicants selected to proceed to the next stage of the recruitment process will be contacted by email. At any point, applicants may not be invited back to the next round of Guide recruitment.

Informational Sessions

TRAiLS will be hosting two informational sessions to provide applicants with an overview of TRAiLS, the application process, and the key responsibilities and expectations of being a Guide. While attendance at these informational sessions is not required, it is highly encouraged that all applicants attend one session in order to familiarize themselves with the position and application. This will also be an opportunity for applicants to present any questions or concerns they have.

Mandatory Application Stages

Written Application: Applicants will be required to fill out a written application that will collect personal information and responses to a series of short essay questions.

Classroom Session*: Classroom Sessions will be held over two days, in which applicants will be required to attend one of the two days based on availability. It will be a 2-3 hour event and will occur in a lecture hall on campus.

Individual Interview*: Applicants will speak with a panel of current Guides and a University Learning Partner in a 45 minute interview. If you are invited to this stage, you will be asked to sign up for a timeslot within this period.

Applicant Trip*: Applicant Trip will occur over the course of an entire day, in which applicants will be engaging in a series of scenarios.

Summit Trip*: The Summit Trip is a half-day event in which applicants will participate in various leadership activities with other applicants.

*BY INVITATION ONLY
Application Process Dates

PLEASE note all of the below dates in your calendar. It is required for applicants to attend every stage of the application process. These dates are mandatory and non-negotiable. Exceptions will only be made according to GW policy (e.g. religious holidays, illnesses, family emergencies). Please contact the recruitment coordinators by email if any conflicts arise.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Important Dates:</th>
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<td>January 12th</td>
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<td>January 13th</td>
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<td>January 14th</td>
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<td>February 13th</td>
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<td>February 18th</td>
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Please note that this recruitment schedule is subject to change; however, applicants will be notified by email if and when any changes are made. It is also important to remember that at ANY point, applicants may not be invited back to the next round of Guide recruitment. GW TRAiLS adheres to all GW and Student Life policies regarding discrimination. You may discuss concerns with the Training Coordinators at any point in the process. GW TRAiLS reserves the right to waive any part of the application requirements under extenuating circumstances.
Section IV: WRITTEN APPLICATION QUESTIONS

This is a preview of the questions for the Spring 2022 Written Application. If you wish to submit an application for the TRAiLS Guide Program, please fill out the Google form posted on the TRAiLS website between **January 14th at 8:00 AM EST AM and January 21st at 11:59 PM EST**.

Each answer is expected to be answered between 1-2 paragraphs. You are encouraged to draft your responses beforehand in a separate document and then copy and paste the answers into the form when you are ready to submit.

1. Please explain why you would like to be a TRAiLS Guide and how doing so might help you achieve your future goals

2. There are many different types of leadership. What do you think it means to be a leader and how have you shown that in the past? How has this experience prepared you to be a TRAiLS Guide?

3. Explain a new idea/change you would want implemented in the outdoor community at GW.

4. What was one obstacle, big or small, that you’ve overcome, and how did you accomplish success?

5. Tell us about a time you failed. What did you learn, and how did you grow from that experience?