

THE SCHOOL FOR FIELD STUDIES



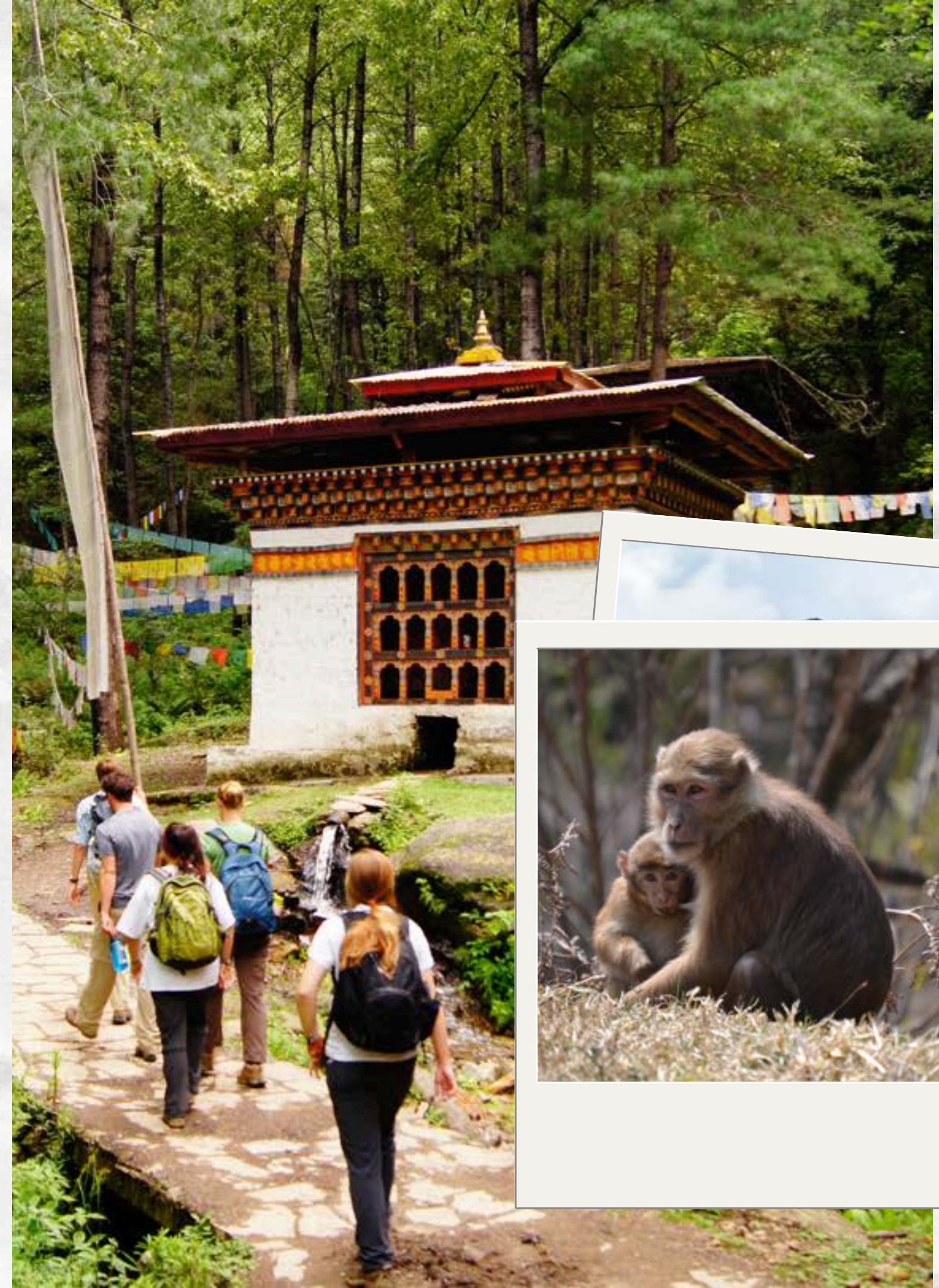
BHUTAN

A GUIDE TO PREPARE FOR YOUR
SFS PROGRAM

ADMISSIONS
DEPARTMENT

AGENDA

- INFORMATION ABOUT BHUTAN
- LIFE ON PROGRAM
- PACKING
- HEALTH & SAFETY
- TRAVEL & NEXT STEPS
- CONTACT US





BHUTAN

LOCAL CULTURE

LANGUAGE AND RELIGION

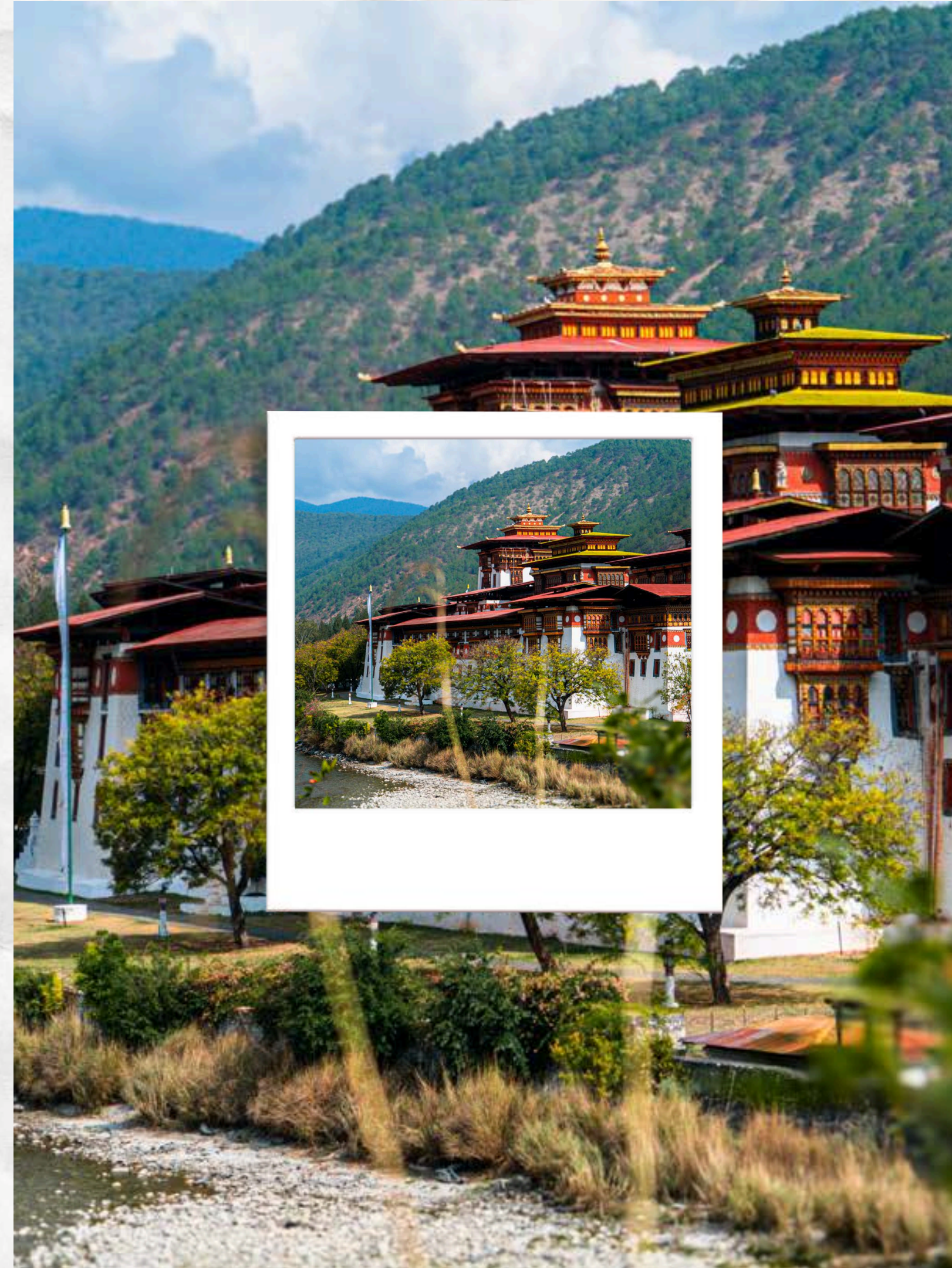
Dzongkha - official language. 18+ other languages spoken
Buddhism (84%) Hinduism (11%)

LGBTQIA+

Same-sex relationships legal. Social bias exists, but no reports of violence.

LOCAL LAWS AND CLOTHING

Strict laws and social guidelines. Conservative dress required by law in government and religious buildings.



AN OPEN MIND IS KEY

- You chose to study abroad and embrace a new culture, both for its positives and negatives.
- You may feel frustration, but it is important to keep a positive mindset.
- You are not here to judge or change, but rather to learn and experience.





LIFE ON PROGRAM

HOUSING, SCHEDULE & FOOD

FIELD STATION

CAMPUS

- Center is an old hotel, 10-15 min walk from Paro (pop. ~15,000).

HOUSING

- Student dorm with 9 rooms. 2-4 students per room with en suite bathroom and showers with hot water.
- Washing machines and dryers on campus.

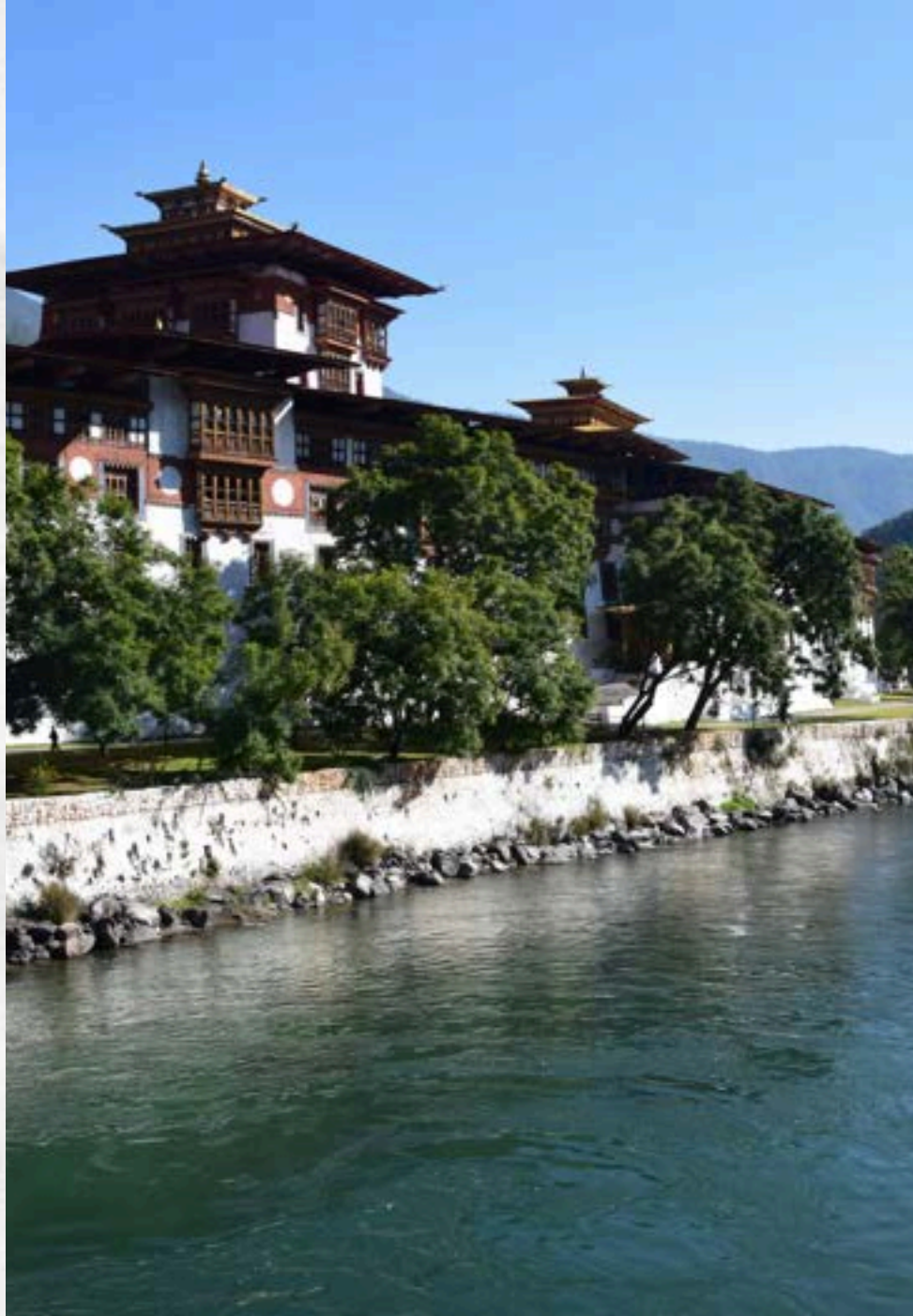
AMENITIES + MORE

- Student lounge with books, games, and movies, terraces, a collection of musical instruments, and more.

COMMUNITY LIVING

- Community living requires compromise and teamwork. You will work, eat, and relax together; personal time is extremely limited. Chore rotations will be assigned once on program.

THE CENTER FOR CLIMATE AND SUSTAINABLE FUTURES



CLASSROOM STANDARD

- Not an "easy A"
- Our coursework and research impact the community
- Grades must be earned

Schedule is high-intensity. Manage your time efficiently and use your days off to recharge. Use the utmost level of respect in your interactions with staff.



DAY IN THE LIFE



- Days are highly structured
- Typically, 8am - 4pm
- Some days are 100% in the field, while others are 100% classroom time
- Expect over half of your program time to be spent covering classroom-based theory
- Program activities are mandatory- including group meals!
- We work around our partners, weather, and other circumstances, so you should expect the schedule to always be changing. It's important to have flexibility and a positive mindset!



PROGRAM POLICIES

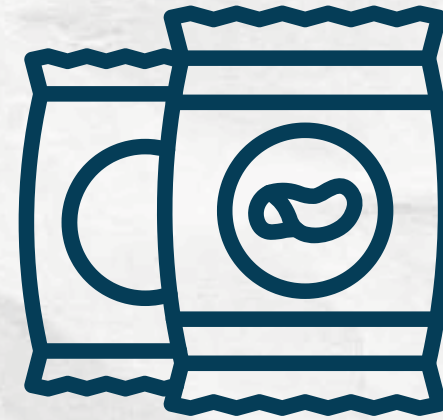
- ✓ Dry campus and curfew enforced
- ✓ No smoking on campus (no e-cig)
- ✓ No non-SFS guests without staff approval
- ✓ Sign out and buddy system
- ✓ No cannabis products (*)

(*) This includes medical marijuana and some types of CBD oil - contact Student Life before bringing any CBD product.

WHAT'S ON THE MENU?



MEALS



SNACKS



FRESH WATER

Breakfast Example: Fried rice, pancake, eggs, potatoes.

Lunch/Dinner example: Rice, lentils, vegetables, and spicy chilies, with rotating meat and vegetarian protein options.

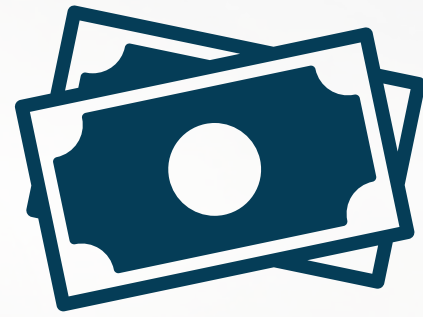
High dairy content is present in the food.

SFS can support most dietary needs, but the variety of food will be extremely limited based on local availability and cost.

A woman with brown hair in a braid, wearing a red t-shirt and dark pants, is sitting on a mossy rock in a lush forest. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. The forest is filled with green ferns and trees.

PACKING

WHAT SHOULD YOU BRING



CURRENCY

- Bhutanese Ngultrum (NU) and Indian Rupee (INR)
- Cash based economy
- ATMs not reliable
- Notify your bank



CLIMATE

- Varies widely by altitude
- Fall–Winter: September–March | 20–75°F
- Heavy rains during monsoon season (mid-June–late October)

WHAT YOU SHOULD BRING

Please do read your **field guide** for an itemized look!



CLOTHING

**TOILETRIES +
MEDICATION**



**FIELD
GEAR**



ROOM NECESSITIES

FOR CLASSROOM



PACKING CONSIDERATIONS

COMMUNITY CONSIDERATIONS

Pack enough jeans, T-shirts, and sweaters for casual wear in town as well as formal pants/skirts/dresses for special occasions.

TECHNOLOGY

Laptop with USB port
MS Office (or equivalent).

Electronics Protection
Voltage is 230 (need converter). Plug type D (need adaptor).

Unreliable Internet
Download podcasts, music, movies, + more.

LUGGAGE

SFS has no luggage limitations, although your airline(s) might!

You will be responsible for transporting your own luggage.

HEALTH & SAFETY

MEDICAL CARE & MEDICAL REVIEW



ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS

- ✓ Altitude sickness. Campus is at 7,000 ft.*
- ✓ Sunburn, dehydration, etc.
- ✓ Stray dogs
- ✓ Infections and insect borne illnesses
- ✓ Bears and other wildlife

(*) treks reach up to 14,000 ft.

MEDICAL CARE IN COUNTRY

BASIC MEDICAL

Center is 5 minutes from a clinic in Paro.

ADVANCED MEDICAL

Center is 1 hour from hospital in Thimphu. Surgery and other serious concerns would require flying to Bangkok, Thailand.

ROUTINE VISITS

Routine medical visits are not feasible while on program.

MENTAL HEALTH

Scheduled telehealth appointments with mental health providers may not be feasible.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES & OUTBREAKS

SFS follows CDC and host-country health guidelines. Entry and pre-departure health requirements vary by country and may change based on current outbreaks. Students should review current travel and health guidance before departure, and SFS will notify students of any major updates.

Students who test positive for, or develop symptoms of, communicable illnesses may need to isolate. Close contacts may be asked to test or monitor for symptoms. Because supplies may be limited locally, students are encouraged to bring rapid tests and high-quality masks.

Students are responsible for any medical or isolation-related costs incurred abroad and should confirm, prior to travel, that their international health insurance covers communicable diseases.



MEDICAL REVIEW



Complete your medical paperwork within 6 months of departure & before the due date



Schedule medical appointments in advance. SFS recommends consulting with a travel clinic in addition to your primary care physician



No student is permitted to participate on an SFS program until medical review has been completed



Obtain enough prescription medication for the full duration of the program prior to your departure



A wide-angle photograph of a courtyard where several Tibetan Buddhist dancers are performing. They are wearing elaborate, colorful costumes with long, flowing sleeves and traditional hats. Some dancers are holding small blue and yellow drums. In the background, a large crowd of people is seated on a raised platform, watching the performance. The courtyard floor is paved with light-colored stone tiles. The text "NEXT STEPS" is overlaid in large, white, bold, sans-serif capital letters across the center of the image.

NEXT STEPS

VISAS, FLIGHTS, & PAPERWORK

VISAS AND FLIGHTS

Travel Instructions sent at least 2 months prior to departure on buying your flights.

Students meet the staff in Thailand before flying as a group to Bhutan.

Bhutan visa requirements will be available upon acceptance in your SFS Student Portal. For U.S. citizens, please complete your visa-waiver form within 3 days before arrival in Thailand at: <https://tdac.immigration.go.th/>

Airport Letter sent 1-2 weeks prior to departure with arrival instructions, what you need to enter/carry with you, current entry requirements, and emergency contacts.

AT THE AIRPORT

A person with long, wavy red hair tied in a bun, wearing a red t-shirt and a green backpack, stands on a stone walkway with a wooden railing. They are looking out over a deep valley where a traditional Buddhist monastery with multiple tiers and golden roofs is built into a steep, rocky cliffside. The background shows more forested mountains under a blue sky with scattered clouds.

CUSTOMS & IMMIGRATION

Have your passport, health, & visa documents ready!

LUGGAGE

Afterwards, collect your luggage and leave the security area.

FINDING SFS

Find the designated meeting spot and look for SFS signs!

WAITING FOR OTHERS

You may need to wait for the rest of your cohort to arrive before heading to the hotel in Thailand.

NEXT STEPS

TRAVEL

- Apply for or renew your passport-must be valid for at least 6 months after departure from Bhutan
- Complete Visa Materials
- Book your flight

SET EXPECTATIONS

- Review the SFS field guide, financial planner, syllabus, and policies
- Talk with your family and friends about a realistic communication plan while you're in the field

MEDICAL

- Schedule all medical appointments
- Make a plan with specialists and/or mental health providers (if needed)
- Obtain prescription medication for the entirety of your program (if needed)
- See travel clinic (if desired)
- Schedule vaccinations (if needed)

FINANCES

- Pay for your program
- Apply for financial aid (if desired)

FOLLOW US ON SOCIALS



@THESFS
@THESFS_BHUTAN_LA

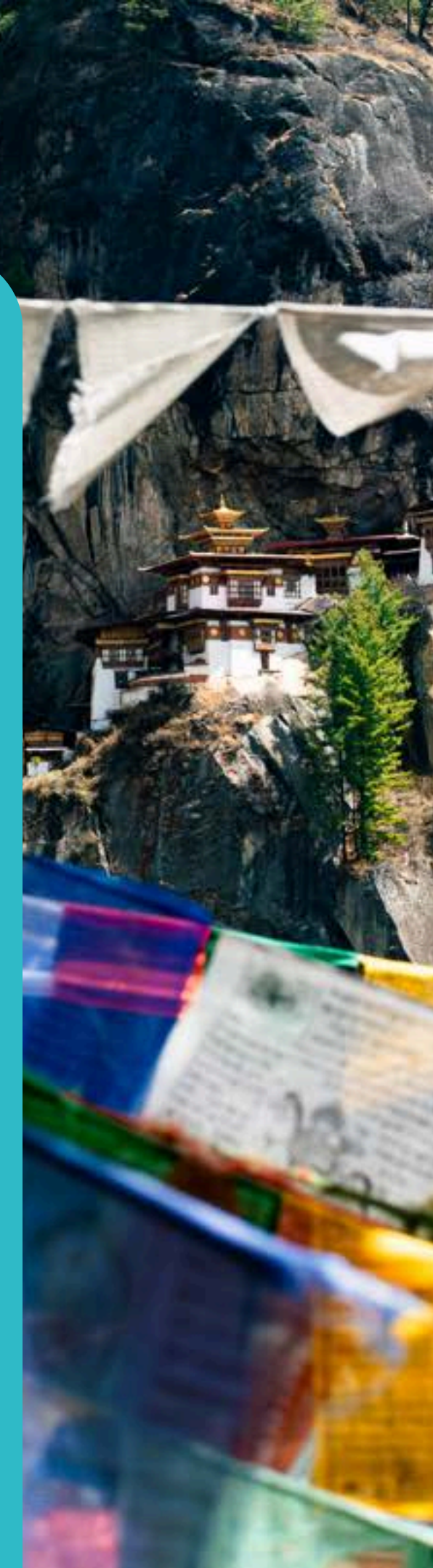
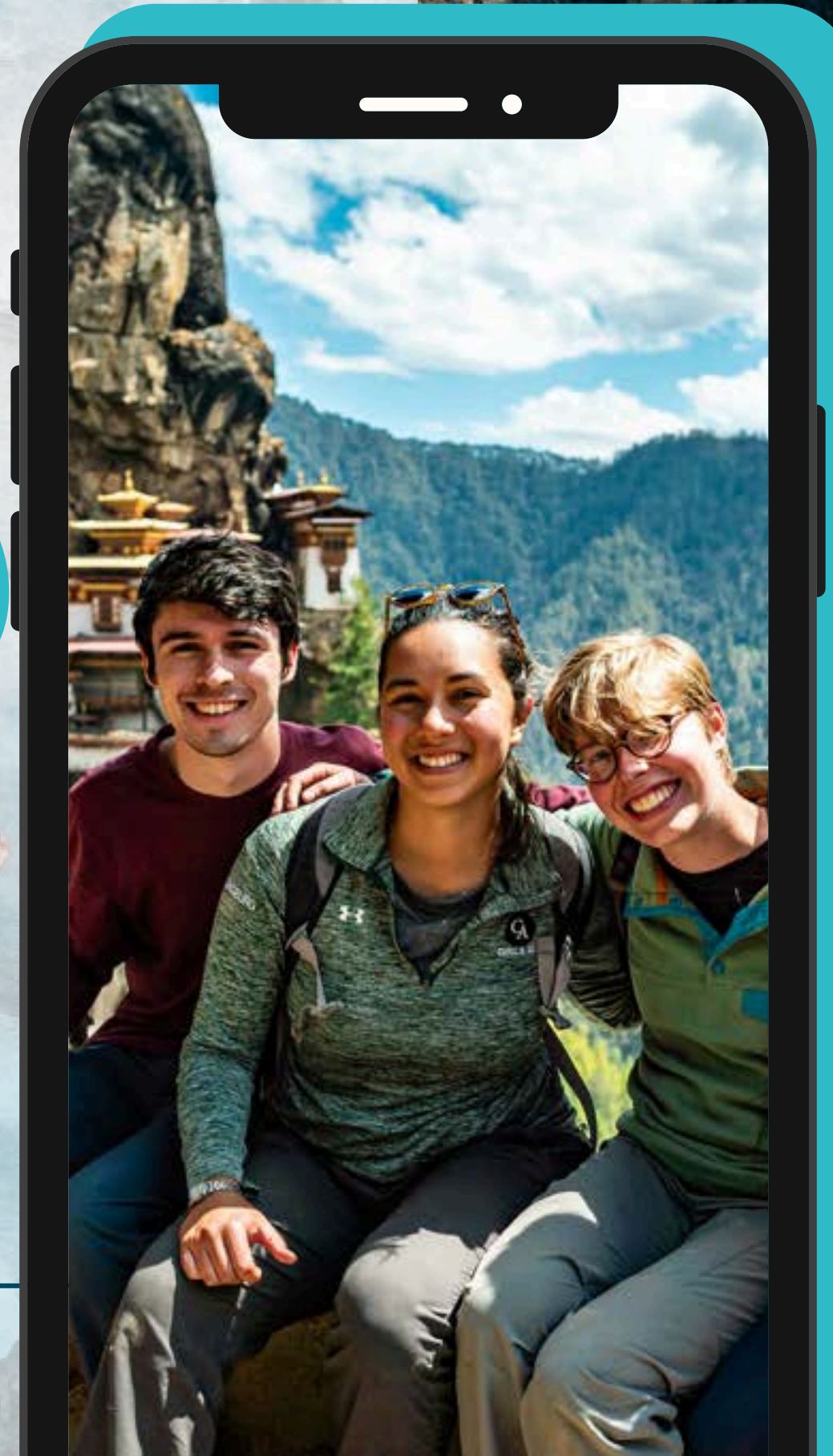
Tag us in your
posts @thesfs!



THE SCHOOL FOR FIELD STUDIES



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QUESTIONS?

Here is how you can get in touch:

MEDICAL + SAFETY

studentlife@fieldstudies.org

BILLING + FINANCIAL AID

billing@fieldstudies.org

ACADEMICS

academics@fieldstudies.org

GENERAL QUESTIONS

admissions@fieldstudies.org