



Press Release

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Gap Year: A Time to Work, Travel and Evaluate Options

Deciding which path you want your life to take is a massive decision to make at 18 years old and one that not many high school leavers are necessarily ready for. The opportunity to spend a year working and travelling overseas provides young Australians with the chance to evaluate their options and make a more informed decision about what sort of work they want to undertake.

Non profit organisation International Exchange Programs (IEP) specialise in helping young Australians embark on work or volunteer holidays overseas and regularly witness recent graduates departing on their gap year adventures.

IEP's Marketing Manager Tennille Balaz is a firm believer in using the year after school to 'find your feet.'

"It's really hard to know what university course you want to commit yourself to for three or four years when you don't even really know what career options there are out there," Ms Balaz said.

"A year away can provide some general work and life experience giving the graduate the chance to mature and gain independence away from their family and friends. It's exciting, it's challenging and for many it's a life changing experience."

Whether the traveller decides to return home to full time work or enrolls in university they will have been exposed to much more of the world and a wider range of people than they would have in their home towns. A working holiday no longer means just working at a pub in London (although this proves to still be a very popular option amongst Aussies), visas allow work in almost any sort of field so whether it's working as a lift operator at a Canadian ski resort, a hostel in Dublin, at a summer camp in the USA or an office job in Manchester, the possibilities are endless.

Applicants will generally need to be over 18 to gain a working visa and regulations vary from country to country so it is best for interested people to contact IEP to discuss suitability.

IEP's services range from assistance with visas, travel insurance, bank accounts, tax file numbers and social events along with ongoing support while the participant is away and for young, first time travellers, it is this ongoing support that gives them and their parents, real peace of mind.

A gap year is increasingly looked upon as a positive step in a young person's life rather than a distraction from their career path and most young working holiday makers will return to Australia with more work experience, more confidence and a clearer idea of what their next step in life should be.

*****ENDS*****

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