

SANPIETRO TRAVEL PRIZE

INFORMATION AND APPLICATION DIRECTIONS

Due March 10, 2026

Please follow these directions when preparing your application:

- All application materials must be submitted as **one continuous PDF**.
- Assemble your application in the order of the SanPietro Checklist which is available on FASA website.
- Title your application document **First name Last name**, e.g., Sara Smith.
- Insert your name in the upper right-hand corner of **each page** in the proposal.
- Insert a page number in the lower right-hand corner of **each page** in the proposal.
- Email all materials to the Fellowships Advising & Study Abroad Office:

SAapplications@caltech.edu

- Reference forms and letters need to be emailed **directly** from the recommender, submitted to **SAreferences@caltech.edu**

Craig SanPietro, Caltech class of 1969, has generously endowed a summer travel prize open to sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Travel provided Mr. SanPietro with a new perspective and allowed him to broaden his horizons. In his words, "Since leaving Caltech in 1969, I have traveled through 50 countries, mostly in the third world. This travel has greatly enriched my life and I want to make similar experiences available to Caltech students. Hopefully, this travel can immerse you in unusual cultural and physical situations that challenge you and make you feel more alive." It is in this spirit that he wishes to share this opportunity with Caltech students.

The SanPietro Summer Travel Prize allows students to travel solo or as a pair with another eligible Caltech student to travel abroad or in the **U.S. or abroad for two weeks to 12 weeks during the Caltech Summer Term**. Travel cannot begin before the end of spring term and must be completed before the start of instruction for fall term (including graduating seniors). Students must spend at least 14 days on the ground, not including roundtrip travel, i.e., that means that the day you arrive and the day you leave do not count.

SanPietro travel is meant for fun, adventure, and to expand a student's sense of the world during the summer after their sophomore, junior, or senior year. It can be a great follow-up to a summer research experience, before studying abroad in the fall, before graduate school or a full-time job, or as a summer experience on its own. The experience should be one that expands the applicant's horizons and challenges them. There is no limit on the number of countries visited (but travel to these countries should be experienced and not just another passport stamp). There are no language skills required either. 1 to 4 countries, with at least a week in each is a good standard. There is no academic component to the proposal as the focus is travel. Students must be enrolled at Caltech all 3 terms of the current academic year. (Official FASA run fall or winter study abroad counts as Caltech enrollment.)

General Requirements

There is NO GPA REQUIREMENT and NO CITIZENSHIP REQUIREMENT, but students must be in good academic and disciplinary standing and enrolled during winter and spring term. All students must be current Caltech sophomores, juniors, or seniors and must be enrolled all three terms of the current year. Early graduates or students on leave are ineligible. Applicants must be 18 years of age by application deadline. Exchange/visiting students, Graduate students, Alumni and student from other universities are ineligible.

Partner Travel

Travel can be done solo or as a pair with one other SanPietro eligible Caltech undergraduate. This means that two students can propose to travel together. However, both members of the pair must currently be Caltech students who meet the requirements for the prize. The applicants should clearly articulate how the experience will challenge them and expand their horizons in their joint essay, proposal, and itinerary. Each member of a pair must submit an individual application and 2 letters of reference. The references must be individual per student except for the optional peer reference in which an applicant can have a peer write only for them or one reference total for the pair that comments on each student related to their SanPietro proposal and qualities that would allow the pair to travel successfully. The joint proposal, essay, and itinerary should be written by both applicants (see directions below.)

Adventurous travel is different for everyone. We caution against selecting a partner who is “along for the ride.” Choose a partner who is as eager to travel to the locations proposed as you are and who is willing to equally share in the planning of the trip and preparation of the application materials.

SanPietro Travel Rules

- The proposal may not fund travel to obtain a medical procedure, to do volunteer work, research, start a job/internship or pursue any personal/business goal in the proposed travel locations, or visit family/friends. The SanPietro cannot be an “add-on” to other personal travel or professionally motivated travel. Students must spend at least 14 full days on the ground, not including arrival and departure days.
- Students must plan travel so that at the latest they are returning to the U.S. the day before Caltech fall term instruction starts. Travel by graduating seniors must end the day prior to the start of Caltech fall instruction.
- Students should not propose guided tours that are more than one-day long, a succession of such tours, or a one day tour that is unreasonably costly. Students must plan and organize their own travel and not use travel agents.
- Students MAY NOT propose travel to countries that:
 - Do not have diplomatic relations with the U.S.
 - Do not allow independent, non-group unsupervised travel
 - Are sites of active conflicts/wars
 - If there is a level 2 US State Department travel warning or travel alert in any of the countries an applicant wishes to visit, **the applicant must provide a copy of the alert or warning** in the application AND discuss in the application how they are going to travel safely in that area or

country. No countries with a level 3 or 4 are allowed. Make sure to check the U.S. State Department for any warnings or alerts at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en.html>.

- Students may not request additional money from any other outside sources (Housner Fund, Studenski Award, other Caltech Y funds/prizes, offices such as Student Activities and Programs, etc.) or use personal funds beyond those stipulated below.
- Students are not allowed to rent cars or motorcycles.

- If applicants need any kind of visa for their travel, it must be described in their proposal.

Awardees pay their own visa fees. Visas must be obtained prior to funds being dispersed to the recipients of the prize with the exception of visas issued on arrival in the country.

- If awarded a SanPietro Travel Prize, students must show proof of travel health insurance valid for their time abroad that provides coverage in their countries of travel. If a student's regular health insurance does not cover at minimum emergency health care in the countries proposed for travel, students must purchase health insurance. Payment for Health Insurance will **not** be covered by SanPietro Funds.

- Travel advances and reimbursements must be submitted to the FASA office a minimum of 4 weeks **prior** to the date of departure.

- The SanPietro Summer Travel Prize is taxable income. The taxation rates vary based on the recipient's citizenship. The rates will be explained in detail to winners of the prize.

Items funded by the SanPietro can include:

Meals, Accommodation, Airfare, rail, or bus travel – list separately by destination, Activities, e.g. museums, day tours, exhibitions, or other activities that are a central part of the experience and reasonably priced.

Not Funded by SanPietro are items such as those below:

Visa and passport costs

Inoculations/vaccinations and medical expenses

Cell phones, phone cards, personal phone calls, Wi-Fi fees, etc.

Souvenirs

Students may use personal funds as stated below:

Developed Countries:	Developing Countries:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2–4 weeks: \$600/person• 5–7 weeks: \$800/person• 8–12 weeks: \$900/person	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2–4 weeks: \$300/person• 5–7 weeks: \$500/person• 8–12 weeks: \$600/person

RULES RELATED TO AIR TRANSPORTATION

Flights to and from your SanPietro destinations will be funded based on the following, please make sure to follow these rules in the budget proposal:

- No stop over's during flights. For example, stopovers such as LA to NYC to stay with family for 2

days then on to SanPietro trip are NOT allowed. Funding pertains only to your departure location for the trip.

- Layovers without leaving the airport are allowed due to change of plane if essential. It is best to book nonstop travel or if needed a connecting flight in a major airport within a reasonable distance of the final destination.
 - If working or living in the US, the full round-trip cost of your airfare will be covered from a major US airport (LAX, SFO, JFK). The return airport should be either LAX, an airport near the permanent US residence, or US work destination.
 - If departing from LAX, a US home address located airport, or US work address located airport, the return airfare to LAX will be covered. (No stopovers)
- If living or working abroad during the summer, the return airfare will be covered up to the maximum airfare from LAX or to another US destination. The outbound airfare to the work or internship destination will not be covered and the fare to the start of the SP travel will be funded at most from a US travel departure from LAX or your US home permanent residence located airport.

EXAMPLE: If you are working in Paris and the start location of your SP travel is Japan, then lesser of the two airfares will be covered, i.e., CDG Paris to Japan cost \$3,000 vs. LAX to Japan cost \$2,000, then \$2,000 would be awarded.

For the return, flying directly home, to a job location, or university that is NOT a round trip flight after the SanPietro trip, recipients will be awarded the round-trip fare from the departure location or the lesser amount.

Return flight to Caltech will not be funded if flying to a home/job after the trip has ended.

Additional SanPietro Advice

- Travel does not have to have a theme but could if that theme does not dominate the trip.
- Students should be aware that a fluctuating exchange rate could significantly affect their travel plans!
- Lodging in hostels or bed & breakfasts is usually quoted per person and not per room.

Advice from previous SanPietro winners:

- Do not underestimate food, transportation, or lodging costs.
- Do not try to include too many activities in one day – keep a doable pace so you can enjoy yourself.
- Do not try to go to too many places in your trip – it is better to see 3 places in depth than the surface of 8 places. Also, you will need some flexibility in your itinerary for unseen circumstances (weather, sore feet, something better came up, etc.)
- Do find something that you're very enthusiastic about. It's a lot easier to write the proposal about something that you find compelling, than to make up reasons why you want to visit a particular place. Be honest and show why your travels will help you grow.
- Do not just go to all the usual destinations – get off the beaten path!
- Do not choose a travel partner just because you **want someone with** you. It is not desirable when one person is motivating the trip. The travel plan should be developed together, and both partners should be excited about the trip.
- Do plan for time for the extensive research that will go into your proposal. Only selected

proposals will be granted an interview. Do not attempt to pull a trip together at the last minute.

- Don't underestimate the advice of seasoned travelers! People who have traveled where you're traveling are a great source of information but make your own judgements about issues.

Upon return all recipients of the prize must submit a detailed budget report of their trip and annotated receipt with amount spent written in US dollars within 30 days of their return. All receipts must be organized, and submitted in PDF form. The budget report and receipts are submitted to the FASA Office for review. There are samples of proposals and reports available/pre-travel budget meeting during spring term. Students will also complete a report with photos including a summary budget of what was spent for each major category (food, activities, transport, etc.) for the entire trip and submit this to the FASA Office 30 days after the end of their SP travel.

Application Materials:

- 1. SanPietro Checklist** – Linked on website
- 2. Proposal Cover page** – Linked on website
- 3. SanPietro Application Form for each applicant** – Linked on website
- 4. Personal Essay:**

Write an essay, up to 1 page, single-spaced, that outlines the trip, articulates why you have selected these specific destinations, and what you hope to get out of the experience. Also highlight which skills or traits you possess that will help on your journey. Pairs and solo travelers must adhere to the 1-page limit and one essay per application.

Describe your personal motivation for this trip. Why do you want an adventurous travel experience? Why did you choose this itinerary? If you are traveling in a pair, why are you choosing to travel together? If you are traveling solo, why? What experience, if any, do you have with independent travel? How do you think this trip will impact your life? How is this travel adventurous for you? If you are traveling to a developing country, how will you be able to handle the associated challenges?

First time travelers are welcome to apply!

Additional Essay for Pair Travelers:

If you are planning on traveling as a pair, each applicant must provide an additional essay written without your partner's input explaining why each of you is choosing to travel with your partner specifically. Explain why you are selecting to travel with this person, how you got to be friends, how long you have known one another, what traits and experience your partner has that you think will

complement yours for your proposed SanPietro journey, what characteristics or experience make this individual a strong travel partner for you, and what could present challenges in your partnership, e.g., you are an early riser and they like to sleep in. Write this without consulting or collaborating with the other person. In other words, the essay must be written independently, and each person must provide one. The essay must be at least half a page long, no more than one page, single-spaced.

- 5. Travel Proposal Itinerary** explaining destinations, activities, and rationale.

This proposal should be a max of 4 pages (single spaced) for trips that are 2-4 weeks long.

Itineraries for trips that are 4+ weeks long have a max of 8 pages. Longer is not necessarily better!

For example:

Sept 1-2, Chawton, England: We will spend 2 days in the small town of Chawton to visit the home of Jane Austen as well as take a tour of a local distillery. We are both avid readers of Ms. Austen's books, and the distillery is a large part of the local economy. We also hope to spend an evening or two at the Seven Bells pub, which has been open since 1659. We will stay at the Alton Grange, a local B&B and then take the train south to Cornwall on the morning of Sept. 3.

The travel proposal should follow the page limits listed above, and not be programmed down to the minute. This is a general outline of each day and location. Students should not cut and paste descriptions from websites, nor should they fill the proposal with photos.

6. Travel Proposal Map:

You must include a clearly legible and annotated map or two showing the trip's route to clarify the itinerary. The proposal should be feasible yet exciting and should reflect the applicants' genuine interest in the location and time put into the proposal development. If certain steps need to be taken before departure, such as getting a visa, this should be described at the beginning of the proposal with the application date window, e.g., 60 days prior to travel or 3 days prior to travel, etc. Itineraries are not provisional. Prize recipients are expected to follow their itinerary. Make sure to indicate the major sights in the area, other places of interest that will be visited, and activities. Last minute changes are only approved under exceptional circumstances such as weather, political protests that block access to a site, an epidemic, etc.

7. Budget – Linked on website

8. Cost Breakdown:

This cost breakdown shows the locations, dates, and associated costs for your trip. Items should be listed in the local currency and converted to US dollars. Exchange should be calculated within 2 weeks of the SanPietro deadline. Amounts should be rounded up.

In addition to the cost breakdown by location, you must complete a categorized total budget for airfare, meals, accommodation, activities, and transportation. Please refer to the budget form. All budget numbers need to round up to the nearest \$10. \$212.52 should be listed on the report at \$220.

9. Country Specific Synopsis:

Include a summary that lists entry requirements such as any visas or vaccinations you are required to obtain independently beforehand, state seasonal weather threats for the area you are travelling to, language(s) spoken in the country/areas you are traveling, is there a mask mandate, any Covid testing or quarantine entry requirements, as well as detail any travel advisories the country may have listed on the US State Department website:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

10. Transcript – Unofficial transcript may be submitted.

11. Reference:

Two SanPietro Reference Forms and Reference Letters from faculty, employers, administrators, etc. are required. References should focus on the student's capacity for growth through travel, personal qualities that would enhance a student's ability to have a successful travel experience, as well as any other qualities the writer deems relevant to the application. If applying as a pair, each applicant must submit 2 references. Joint references are not allowed.

12. Optional Peer Reference:

From a friend at Caltech or another university. You may not submit letters from relatives.

Below is small list of some of the destinations to which Mr. SanPietro traveled and why he endowed this exciting prize:

Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, Peru, Bolivia, Antigua, Guadeloupe, Dominica, Canada, Japan, Egypt, Kenya, Tanzania; Holland, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Nepal, England, Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, Venezuela, Brazil, Paraguay

"Award decisions should be based more upon the potential for broadening the students' cultural experiences than relevance to academic coursework, and some preference should be given to cultures more different from America's. Since leaving Caltech in 1969, I have traveled through 50 countries, mostly in the third world. This travel has greatly enriched my life and I want to make similar experiences available to Caltech students. Hopefully, this travel can immerse you in unusual cultural and physical situations that challenge you and make you feel more alive."