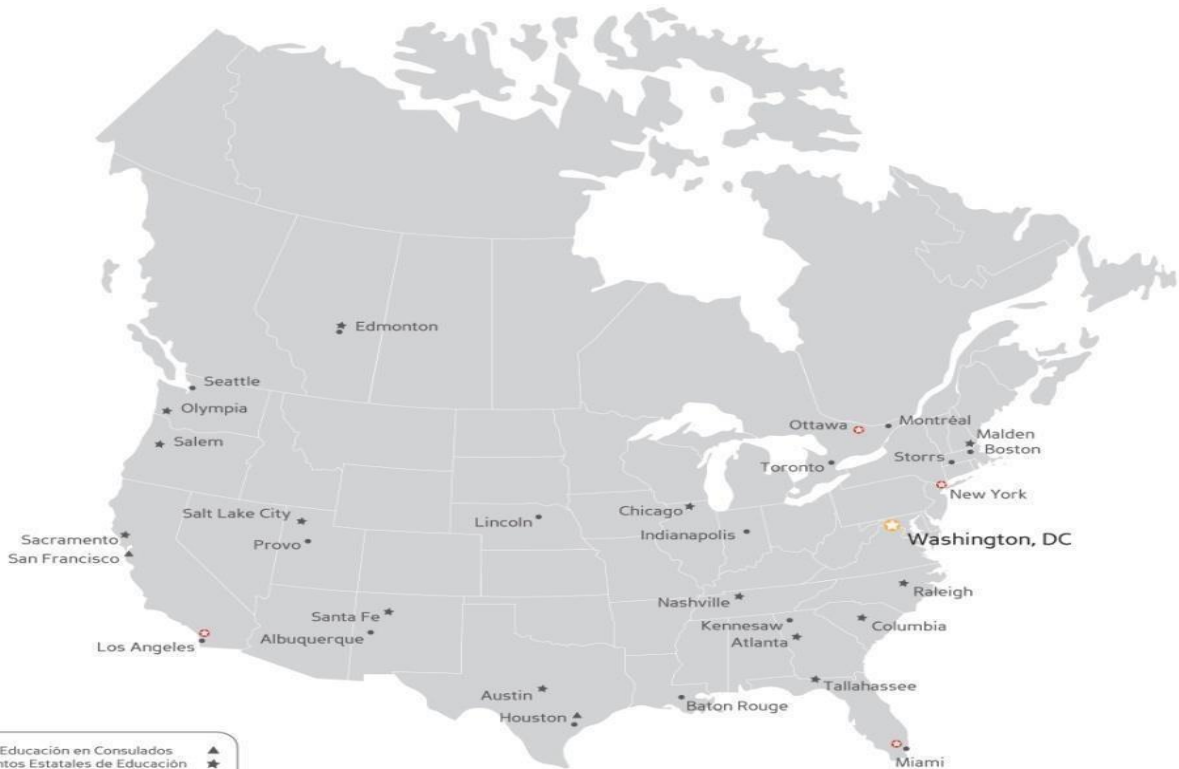


Spanish Language and Culture Assistants Program

Guidelines for Teaching Institutions in Canada

2024-2025



Oficinas de Educación en Consulados ▲
 Departamentos Estatales de Educación ★
 Centro de Recursos ○
 Agregaduría de Educación ◻
 Consejería de Educación ○★

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1. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Spanish Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and Sports (hereafter the Ministry) and the Education Office of the Embassy of Spain in Ottawa (Canada), sponsor a Spanish Language and Culture Assistants program for elementary, middle and high schools and for universities with Spanish Resource Centers sponsored by the Ministry of Education (hereafter universities with SRC) in Canada.

This program gives Canadian **students** the opportunity to learn Spanish language and culture from native speakers. Similarly, the **Spanish assistants** will have the opportunity to learn about Canadian culture, improve their command of English / French and use their knowledge upon their return to Spain, thus helping to develop cultural understanding between both countries.

The assistants may be college students in their senior year or may already have a B.A. in Education, English/French/Spanish or Translation and Interpretation.

The Ministry provides the assistants with an allowance and medical insurance between October 1st and May 31st.

Host institutions (schools, school districts or universities with SRCs) must provide the Spanish assistants with **free transportation** and **freelodging** (such as a room in a furnished apartment or dorm, staying with host families, etc.) and **meals** or alternatively will provide **financial assistance to help the assistants pay for their own accommodation, meals and transportation.**

If a school or university with SRC would like the assistant to **start their duties before October 1st** (provided that the assistant already has his/her work permit), the host institution is responsible for providing the assistant with medical insurance coverage and a stipend until the Ministry's scholarship comes into effect.

The Ministry of Education assigns each candidate to a specific school, school district or Spanish Resource Centre and organizes an orientation seminar in Madrid or via an online platform prior to the assistants' arrival in Canada.

All arrangements and details concerning assistants must be reported by their mentor to the Spanish Education Advisor in their area prior to their arrival.

2. THE ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT

- Assistants will help classroom teachers as native speakers and experts on their home country to encourage students' interest in Spain. Please note that their role is **different from** a regular teaching assistant or classroom aid.
- Assistants **must not be asked to undertake formal classroom teaching, substitute for absent teachers or be responsible for the discipline or supervision of students or grade the students' work.**

- Before the assistants undertake their own duties, their mentor should provide them with **information on** teaching methods, student's language proficiency levels, overall characteristics of students and the kind of activities and degree of initiative they are expected to carry out. The mentor will also facilitate the **observation of classes**.
- Assistants will be **informed** of the resources they are entitled to use such as computers, copy machines, email accounts or telephones, as well as the daily procedures to follow, where to access resources or the materials they may need, etc.
- Assistants should be given every opportunity to learn about and participate fully in the **social life** of the school/university and its community. They should be encouraged to take part in clubs and field trips. However, they will not be responsible for the safety or behavior of students.
- Assistants in a SRC may be responsible for ordering, cataloging and lending materials, organizing and collaborating in conversation clubs, film showings, etc.
- The Spanish assistant schedule spans from **16 to 20 hours maximum** per week, as per the conditions of their work permit and their scholarship.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEACHING INSTITUTIONS AND ASSISTANTS' MENTORS

- Teaching institutions must **comply with the conditions** expressed in this document and in the application form.
- Assistants assigned to elementary, middle and high schools will have will have a **schedule** of between **16 to 20 hours maximum** per week. In case special arrangements for the winter break or to take other days off can be negotiated with the assistant. The Spanish Education Advisor in the area must be notified of any changes or arrangements in the assistant's schedule. The assistant's working hours may be scheduled so that they have **Mondays or Fridays off**, thus allowing for long weekends for travel or study.
- School/university officials will provide the assistant, upon completion of their assignments and if warranted, with a **letter of recommendation stating the specific dates they have worked at the teaching institution**.
- The school must appoint a school/SRC **representative or mentor** to guide the assistants. It is important for the teaching institution to appoint somebody who will have the time and willingness to help the assistant throughout the school year and particularly during the first weeks of their stay.
- The mentor and assistant will both agree on the activities they will be involved in, including, for example, attending faculty meetings, making presentations in classes, and participating in extra-curricular events.

- The schools and mentors must plan the work schedule for the assistant in consultation with the assistants and teachers in the program. Cooperation and communication among teachers, administrators and the assistant are crucial for the program's success.
- The mentor will advise and guide the assistant, organize orientation and evaluation sessions when necessary, and prepare a final report of the assistant's activities.
- The **mentor or school representative** will also act as liaison between the school/SRC and the Education Advisor of the Spanish Education Office that services their province.

4. ACCOMMODATION ARRANGEMENTS

- Teaching institutions must ensure that the **assistants' lodging is adequate**, that they get **all meals** and **transportation** options to and from school.
There are several possibilities:
- Preferably, institutions should provide assistants with a **monthly stipend** to help them cover accommodation expenses. In this case, help to find a place to stay should be provided.
- **Free accommodation** in a room, in a furnished apartment or a dorm. **The address** where the assistants will be staying should be entered when the application is submitted. Assistants living in apartments may arrange to install telephone, cable TV, or Internet at their own expense. Since the assistants do not have credit history or may not have a Social Security Number, they may need help making these arrangements.
- Institutions will provide assistants with a **monthly stipend** of **\$1200** to cover accommodation if meals are provided, or of **\$1500** to cover for both **accommodation and meals**. In this case, help to find a place to stay will be provided by the school or university.

The Spanish Education Advisor must be informed of the lodging arrangements **prior to the assistants' arrival** and be notified of any changes in advance.

5. TRANSPORTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Teaching institutions are also responsible for providing the assistant with transportation to and from school. This can be done in different ways:

- Paying a monthly or annual transportation allowance.
- Facilitating carpooling or rides.
- Providing the use of a car for the school ride. If this option is chosen, insurance and repair costs will be covered by the school.

All specifications concerning transportation must **be stated** when the application is submitted, and the Spanish Education Advisor should be notified if there are any changes.

The school will arrange to pick up the assistant at the airport when they first arrive in the country.

6. STEPS TO TAKE BEFORE THE ASSISTANT'S ARRIVAL IN CANADA

It is **recommended** that the school describes the program in their newsletter or webpage so that the whole school community can welcome the assistants.

Assistants may be travelling to Canada for the first time and, therefore, be concerned about the experience that lies ahead of them. Providing written information prior to their arrival may help ease their worries. **Please send the assistant** as much information as possible. Be sure to include:

- A copy of the completed form of the offer of employment and a submission reference number given by the IRCC.
- A letter of invitation addressed to the assistant, which they might need to present to the Immigration Authorities at the port of entry.
- Details about the accommodation arrangements made for them. If it is with a family, please let the assistant know that a host family is expecting them and make sure they have previous contact before the assistant's arrival.
- Information on the teaching institution.
- Information on the schedule and the tasks the assistant will carry out.
- Information on opportunities for studying or attending courses at universities or other teaching institution, if any.
- Information on the community and its services such as transportation, banking, etc.
- Information on climate and appropriate clothing, etc.

7. SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ASSISTANT IN A SCHOOL

A. LANGUAGE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES FOR ASSISTANTS

- Oral reception/production activities.
- Presentations on Spanish culture: songs, newspapers, plays, etc.
- Presenting story-telling sessions and interpreting cultural aspects.
- Participating in computer-assisted activities.
- Tutoring students with individual needs.
- Small group practice.
- Developing materials for lessons.

B. EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES FOR ASSISTANTS

- Collaborating with Spanish Language Clubs.
- Participating in school clubs (theatre, chorus, etc.)
- Joining in sporting events, art festivals, etc.

Assistants must not:

- Be responsible for the entire class or whole group on their own.
- Correct all Spanish quizzes and exams or spend hours making copies.
- Be scheduled for more than 20 hours per week.
- Be assigned to teachers unfamiliar with the program who are not prepared to work with the assistant.
- Be placed in situations where the assistant may not feel comfortable (i.e., assigning them to inappropriate classes or class levels).

*Success happens when teachers
are involved from the beginning,
appreciate the contribution of the assistant,
and help plan assignments.*

8. SAMPLE ACTIVITIES FOR THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE ASSISTANT IN A SPANISH RESOURCE CENTER

- Ordering, cataloging and lending the resources.
- Collaborating with speaking clubs, film showings, etc.
- Helping the Education Advisor organize training and courses for teachers.
- Promoting the Education Office programs, etc.

9. APPLICATION PROCESS

If interested in participating in this program, please submit the corresponding application form. Be advised that due to the limited number of Spanish language assistants available, a position cannot always be granted to every teaching institution that applies.

Completed applications need to be emailed to auxiliaresesp.ca@educacion.gob.es by March 17th, 2024.

Teaching institutions will be notified of the decision made by **mid-June2024**.

If you have any further questions, please contact us at auxiliaresesp.ca@educacion.gob.es