

A-Z WEST

FAQ Sheet

Work Trade Residency

What is the A-Z West Work Trade Residency?

Work Trade at A-Z West is an opportunity to share the unique experience that is A-Z West, and to become involved in the intimacies of sustaining such a site. Work trade residents work ten hours per week in exchange for lodging in our shipping container micro apartments. (*Please note that kitchen and bathroom are outdoors – this is an indoor/outdoor living situation)

What kind of work would I be doing?

A-Z West upkeep often means grounds maintenance and can include a lot of manual labor—painting structures, digging, trenching, landscaping, watering plants/trees, sanding and re-finishing—but helping with the day-to-day of A-Z West can also mean assisting in the office, sorting laundry, cleaning or reorganizing.

In addition, we can use specialized help in the production of West Works, which are produced in the A-Z West ceramics studio and sold to help cover overhead of A-Z West. If you are an experienced ceramicist or weaver, please let us know in your application.

What are the criteria of a good work-trade resident?

- High level of competency in specific areas. We need help in the ceramic studio, weaving studio, groundskeeping and maintenance, and sometimes with skills such as photography or graphic design.
- Comfortable with manual labor including mopping, sweeping, digging etc.
- Able and willing to do occasional heavy lifting
- Experience camping and/or comfortable "roughing it"
- Areas of interest or artistic research that are relevant to rural living and the high desert.
- Clean, organized, attention to detail, considerate of others.

What would my work schedule be like when I'm there?

The work trade hours will mostly fall on Tuesdays and Thursdays - these are our regular studio workdays when most of the HDTs staff is present. All residents are expected to individually track and fulfill the 10 hours per week.

Will I be working with other people?

Usually yes. We generally take 2 residents at a time so you will likely be working with another resident and the HDTs staff of 5 people will almost always be present.

Where will I stay?

Each resident is housed in the shipping container compound in a micro-apartment, which comes with a bed, desk and mini fridge. Outside the micro-apartments is a shared outdoor

kitchen with a sink, camping stove, dishes/pots/pans, seating area, outdoor shower, and composting toilet. Residents are expected to feed themselves, empty the composts, and keep shared areas clean. It is a mix of indoor and outdoor living – sometimes in extreme weather conditions.

Will I get access to facilities or a studio while I'm there?

Work trade is about immersing in A-Z West, the surrounding landscape and community, and we do not accept residents based on their body of work. However, we know that most residents are artists, and we support the need to continue working—Toward this, we are working to create two small workspaces within an adjacent shipping container. These studios are a work in progress and will hopefully be completed during the spring 2023 season.

We are also happy to provide access to A-Z West weaving and ceramics studios on a case-by-case basis.

When can I come and for how long?

We welcome residents during our fall season from September 15th to December 15th and our spring season from January 15th to June 1st. Work trade residencies typically last for 2–4 weeks.

What's the weather like?

Be prepared for extreme weather conditions—it can get very hot (110) and very cold (freezing), windy, flooding, occasional snow—but for the most part it is quite beautiful. It is a desert, so very dry and about 2,700 ft in elevation.

Can I come without a car and use public transportation?

NO, and NO. Having a car is the only practical means of transportation in the desert and you are required to secure your own personal mode of transportation in order to visit A-Z West. You need a car to obtain daily supplies, to see any nearby sites (many things are located miles off dirt roads), to do laundry (A-Z West does not have such facilities), and so many other reasons. These are real reasons, that may seem strange if you are coming from a city but trust us. If you are not prepared or able to fund a car rental for the duration of your visit, you should reconsider this residency.

How do I apply?

Applications for our Spring season (January 15–June 1) are due November 15 with a notification date of December 15. Applications for our Fall season (September 15–December 15) are due May 1 with a notification date of June 1. Please include the following materials in your application:

- One-page letter describing who you are, what experiences have led you to apply to visit A-Z West, and a detailed description of any work/craft/skill sets. Also list any other professional experience you might have such as administration, writing, and editing.
- Resumé (not an art cv)
- Two references and their contact information
- The date range that you are interested in.

- When selecting date range please keep in mind that check in is on Saturdays between 10 AM and 5PM and checkout is on Fridays before 12:00 PM. (Also, accommodations must be thoroughly cleaned by residents before checking out)

We receive many work trade residency inquiries and are not able to accommodate all requests, but we do our best to fit in as many as we can. It is possible that you will need to apply for successive seasons if we are not able to schedule you the first time you apply. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Work residency applications and inquiries should be sent to info@hdts.site.