Overall Assessment of Intellectual Merit: Very Good

Explanation to the applicant:

Excellent academic performance and good institutional fit. The candidate has leveraged his academic, work, and volunteer experience to shape his graduate interests. The factors he identifies in his research proposal are well thought out, and the proposal is logical, containing a nice balance of two lab studies and one field study. The studies could have benefited from more detail (e.g., how will impact be operationalized?), but in general a good proposal.

Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts: Excellent

Explanation to the applicant:

Good broader impacts. Figuring out what keeps volunteers motivated to continue their important line of work will be useful for a wide range of organizations. The candidate himself has also demonstrated a personal commitment to improving society through his own activities.
Overall Assessment of Intellectual Merit: Very Good

Explanation to the applicant:

Impressive evidence of academic awards, significant international experiences - support intellectual merit of applicant. Significant research experience supports ability to plan and conduct research, although somewhat less experience communicating results (in terms of publications, presentations) than comparable applicants.

Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts: Very Good

Explanation to the applicant:

Interesting topic with potential to have a broader impact; could elaborate on previous research in order to highlight how proposed research addresses gaps/enhances scientific understanding - i.e., what does previous research say re: what motivations are at play? this would also strengthen the theoretical basis for examining the proposed variables; could also elaborate on the details of studies - i.e., how will the task being asked by participants in study 1 be 'comparable' to volunteering; how do we/will we know they will experience internal incentives/
Overall Assessment of Intellectual Merit: Excellent

Explanation to the applicant:

The applicant appears academically very well prepared and is at an institution that is likely to be able to support his ambitious research program. His past international and volunteering experiences strengthen his application and have allowed him to define his research interests in a way that enhances the likelihood of him being committed to significantly advancing what we know about volunteerism. The weakest piece of the application from my perspective are the proposed lab studies - I am concerned about the external validity of telling someone who shows up for a lab experiment that they are volunteers or that they work. Although they may alter their behavior based on these instructions, I seriously doubt that findings would generalize to volunteering in field settings. The proposed sequence of studies is also described in a somewhat atheoretical manner: further discussion of the types of theoretical frameworks to be used and expanded by the research appear necessary. Further, I would encourage the applicant to increase the number of conditions proposed in the field studies so he can also investigate the role of interactive effects between different treatments.

Overall Assessment of Broader Impacts: Excellent

Explanation to the applicant:

The broad impact is as clearly defined in this study as it can be. The applicant has established meaningful connections with community and volunteering organizations and is committed to not only finding out about volunteering, but to also implement what he has learned. The potential societal impact of the proposed research is high as community and volunteer organizations continue to struggle to motivate volunteers to become involved and maintain their involvement through extended periods of time.