FPI’s disease ecology program launched in 2012 and is now one of the most comprehensive studies of gastrointestinal parasites in South America. We use microscopic and genetic tools to evaluate parasite infections in noninvasively collected fecal samples. Parasite infections reflect environmental change, community interaction, animal behavior, and population stability. With baseline data on parasites from 11 primate species at our field site, we can monitor if and how climate change may be altering parasite-host relationships. Those joining this program will help us collect longitudinal data on the local primate assemblage, as well as usher in data from new taxonomic groups. Among the many questions we hope to tackle with these data, our goal is to expose new ecological linkages between Neotropical animals. Qualifications: This project is open to applicants of any background. Since this is a training program, field experience is helpful but not required. Participants will be required to obtain the following vaccinations: Typhoid, yellow fever, and tetanus. In addition, proof of health insurance coverage while at the field station is mandatory. Applicants must complete an application and provide two references before the interview process begins. Enrollment will remain open until May 1st, or until all slots are filled. At the end of the program, research assistants will be able to: *Track primates by movement and vocalizations, as well as radio telemetry *Work off trail systems, and conduct full-day follows *Conduct behavioral observations on known-individuals (scan and focal animal sampling) *Record data on feeding ecology *Correctly sex individual primates *Collect GPS data on species movements to create a large, overarching primate movement database *Demonstrate proficiency in collecting and storing primate fecal samples in field conditions, including participating in downstream applications like endocrinology and parasite analyses *Input sample and movement information into databases for further analyses Eligibility *We are currently recruiting participants with the following requirements. If you are uncertain if you are eligible, to confirm. *Must be at least 18 years of age by the time the training program begins *Demonstrate a grounding or strong interest in zoology, biology, or anthropology *Previous field experience is not required, but previous research experience (either outdoors or in the laboratory) will be a plus *Must be able to justify why this program is important to them and what they hope to gain from it *Able to provide a letter of recommendation from a source that can substantiate the participant’s experience and skills *Unafraid of insects, reptiles and the jungle in general *Must be in good physical condition, with the capability to walk 4 miles a day while carrying field equipment *Participants will not be discriminated against for medical conditions they might have if we determine that being on this project will not pose an immediate risk to their health. *Willingness to adjust your schedule to primate daily activity patterns. This can require waking up early, sometimes by 5 am, and going to bed early. *Due to the nature of the work and weather constraints, participants MUST be willing to be flexible about their days off. Assistants will typically have one day off per week; however, we cannot guarantee a set schedule each week. *Participants must sign waivers of liability for this project and for the field station before their participation in the project.
Participants must be willing to maintain long hours in the field, but also return to complete data entry in the evenings. Assistants will have the opportunity during days off to explore various attractions at the field site, such as searching for the resident anaconda at Pozo Don Pedro or looking for endangered giant river otters at Cocha Lobo. The $450/week program fee for this program covers: - All food and lodging at the field station - Travel to the field station from Puerto Maldonado and back (approximately 6 hours) - The use and maintenance of specialized equipment (telemeters, GPS, etc.) - Personalized instruction from principal investigators and field team leaders Application Deadline: April 15, 2018 - first come first serve Appeals to majors: Anthropology, Evolutionary Biology, Veterinary Science. Training areas: Sample collection and preservation, off-trail navigation, telemetry, land-use mapping, census data collection. Research Assistantship Program: http://bit.ly/2D36A01 Program dates: May 27 – July 30, 2018 Application deadline: April 15, 2018 Minimum commitment: 4 weeks Start dates: June 3 or July 1