

CCIVS GUIDELINES FOR INTER-REGIONAL VOLUNTEER EXCHANGE

Preamble

In order to improve volunteer exchanges, the Global Networking Conference in Gotemba, Japan in October 2006, organised by CCIVS and hosted by NICE with participation of ALLIANCE, YAP, NVDA, EAWA and IPAN, agreed to the following guidelines regarding volunteer exchange. The CCIVS guidelines have been updated and developed with the input of the Alliance SDWG (Staff Development Working Group), the SCI Practical Procedures and those of the NVDA Network. This document was last updated during CCIVS General Assembly in Lviv, Ukraine, November 2007.

This document should be read as a tool to develop and improve volunteer exchanges, but not as a binding contract.

1.- Agreements between partner organizations

There should be a written annual agreement between partner organizations on their co-operation. Sending organizations should inform their hosting partner of their co-operation with other organizations in the host country.

If there is no partner in a volunteer's country, the hosting organization should refer the volunteer to partners in neighbouring countries (except in the case of Asia, where volunteers should be referred to NVDA.)

2.- Information

In general, for summer programs, partners can announce their programs before the Technical Meetings, but should not request placements of volunteers before the Technical Meetings.

The hosting organization should send its project programs well in advance (timing to be agreed bi-laterally).

If sending by post, partners should exchange information about the time taken for mail to arrive.

The hosting organization should inform the sending organization of transport arrangements (including costs) to the project at least one month before the project.

Information on how to reach the hosting organization's office and project including emergency contacts and suitable hotel / hostel addresses should be sent by the hosting organization to the sending organization.

The sending organization must inform the hosting organization of the volunteer's arrival details, if required.

Project description

Each project should have **different project code** as an abbreviation/ number (e.g.; IIWC/16).

Sufficient information is essential for volunteers to make a motivated choice.

Therefore information in the project description should be clear and concise and presented as follows:

- a) Organization code and project **code**
- b) Project **name** (and if possible, place). It is not necessary to translate the names of your projects into English.
- c) **Dates** in the format **dd/mm - dd/mm** or if unknown, **begin/ middle/ end** month, program START DATE should always be announced as the day partners want volunteers to arrive, including orientation, not as the 1st day of work.
- d) **Types** of projects (2 maximum for each project). We recommend;
ARCH – Archaeology / AGRI – Agriculture / ARTS – Arts (any type) / CONS –Construction / DISA – Disabled / EDUC – Teaching, Awareness raising / ENVI –Environmental / ELDE – Work with Elderly / FEST – Festival / HERI – Cultural or Heritage / KIDS – Work with Kids / LANG – Language / MANU – Manual / MEDI – Medical / PEACE – Peace / RELIEF – Disaster Relief / RENO – Restoration, Renovation / SOCI – Social / SPORT – Sport / STUDY – Study, Discussion, Research / YOGA – Yoga

Bi- or Tri-lateral programs should be indicated as such in the program heading and also at the beginning of the text of the description of the program.

- e) **Total number** of volunteers followed by word "vols." (and if possible, also mention the number of **international volunteers** as the example in the annex.)

< Paragraph with the description of the projects >

Background: Ideally a description of 5 LINES describing the project partners, political aims, objectives, background of the project and whatever else relevant; information should not mislead the volunteer!

Then, to come to a clear description, the following abbreviations should be used (where necessary):

W: type of Work

S: Study theme

A: Accommodation

L: Location

T: Terminal

LA: Leisure Activities

SR: Special Remarks (e.g., age limit, wheelchair accessibility, families welcome)

PF: Participation Fees

Programs should be provided as simple text without any formatting, icons, graphics, frames, etc. This makes data entry less problematic and reduces the size of files for data storage and transfer. An optional format can also be provided at European Technical Meetings, preferably as MS Word, but not as a pdf, dat or zip file format.

Info. sheet Guidelines:

Preferably all info. sheets should be emailed to each partner that has a volunteer in their program. Info sheets should be sent to partners no later than 4 weeks before the program starts.

Information sheets should be provided preferably in text only format or in Word with no formatting, frames and preferably no graphics. Preferably no info sheet zip files because of virus risks. Maps and drawings should be sent as separate files and not imbedded in the info. sheet document. Info. sheets should always have the organization name, program number and program name at the top. They should always and ONLY be emailed to partners who have a volunteer in that program.

The information sheets should include information at least about the following:

- a) Brief description of the **hosting NGOs** including **contact details**
- b) **Name, exact address, location** (the nearest town, etc.) of the project and optionally, the map
- c) **Dates** of the project
- d) The maximum or actual **number of the volunteers**
- e) **Qualification**, skills, experience required (if any)
- f) **Background and the aims** of the project
- g) **Work tasks** to be performed (and preferably, working hours)
- h) **Draft schedule** if available
- i) **Accommodation** and (if any) accessibility for volunteers with special needs (disabled, volunteers with children, etc.)
- j) **Study theme** (if any) and **leisure** time activities
- k) Project **language**
- l) **What to bring** (sleeping bag/ mat, instruments, work clothes, etc.)
- m) **Travel directions** to the project (preferably with the time tables, web. for the relevant info.)
- n) **Emergency** contact phone number.
- o) **Name and e-address** (if s/he has) of the responsible person for the project such as the camp leader
- p) **Participation Fees.**- Indicate if it is necessary to pay participation fee and give a brief reason for it.

The host organization should draw up guidelines for volunteers on safety, rules, code of conduct etc.

3.- Placement Procedures

Application procedure

a) **On application**, the sending NGOs should contain **Name of the volunteer, Code and Name of the project** and if you want, also dates of the project. References to a particular program should always include the program number or code, not just the name or location of the program. Volunteers LAST or FAMILY name should always be capitalized in all placement requests and communication.

b) When the hosting NGO sends an acceptance mail, it should have the **Name of the volunteer, Code and Name of the project, and dates of the project confirmed.**

c) When not accepting an application the organization should include in the mail the **Name of the volunteer and Code of the project, and explain the reason why the volunteer was not accepted.**

Acceptance

a) Hosting NGOs should **NEVER accept the volunteers directly** if they live in the countries where there are exchange partner organizations and refer their partners/ volunteers to each other .

b) **Hosting NGOs should answer** to the sending NGOs **within 3 working days** after the application has been received, always confirming the program dates (if the dates have been changed since the original announcement, it must be noted). In case there is a **special reason** for a delay, they **still should inform** of that within 3 working days.

c).- If, for good reasons, the hosting NGOs didn't give an answer within 3 working days, the placement officer can send an e-mail with the subject: Status Enquiry + NAME OF THE VOLUNTEER.

No show and cancellation

a) No show

Hosting NGOs absolutely have to inform the sending NGOs if the volunteers don't arrive at the project by the end of the 3rd day of the project.

b) Cancellation of projects

should be informed to the sending NGOs immediately or at the latest within 3 days and a reason should be stated. Also, they should try their best to find alternative places with similar dates (preferably also types of projects) for the vols.

c) Cancellation of volunteers

should be informed to the hosting NGOs immediately or at the latest within 3 days by fax or e-mail.

Friday Lists (list of available places on programs):

Should be emailed with the country, organization name or abbreviation code and date in the Subject Line.

In the subject line of e-mails, the name of the organization and preferably the date of vacancy status should be mentioned like "Friday list: IIWC: 05 Jun."

Vacancy status should be listed always in female/male order, stating the open spaces for each gender with the list of programs presented in program number order. The female and male columns should indicate the number of spaces available for each gender, not the number of each gender already placed.

Remove all programs which are cancelled, completed or in progress.

See the example in the annex.

4.-Practicalities

The host organization is responsible for adequate food and accommodation during the project.

Arrangements for insurance cover for volunteers should be agreed by both partners and communicated to the volunteer.

Hosting organizations should try to have a good mixture of nationalities, gender and ages on their projects.

Partners should agree on an appropriate application form.

If any organization closes their office (where the placement officer cannot answer) for more than 3 working days, the partners should be informed beforehand!

Any change of contacts should be immediately informed to the partners.

A physical address should be provided, not just a P.O. Box.

Fees and Finances

All fees charged by sending and hosting partners must be clearly explained to each other in writing and to the volunteer paying the fees.

The form of fee payment to be made by the volunteer to the hosting organization should be agreed e.g. cash, bank transfer, local currency etc.

Official receipts should be issued for all fees paid.

Any additional costs for participation must be agreed between hosting and sending partner and communicated to the volunteer before departure.

The budget of the project should be explained to the participating volunteers, and, if appropriate, the local community.

The selection of volunteers

Volunteers should be at least eighteen years of age, unless specified by the project. The sending organization is responsible for ensuring their suitability for the project.

Volunteers should be prepared before being selected for the inter-regional exchange program.

Volunteers should have previous project or related experience, as required by the project.

Volunteers should be motivated enough to participate fully in the project program, be a good ambassador for their country / organization and return to share their experience.

Volunteers should be able to communicate sufficiently in the project language.

Volunteers should be recommended and sent by a recognized partner organization within their home country. If an individual contacts an organization in the country where they want to do a project, s/he must be referred back to the partner organization in his/her country of residence. If no partner exists in their country of residence, volunteers should be referred to partners existing in neighbouring countries.

Volunteers/tourists who 'drop in' to a project organization should not be permitted to participate in a project.

Preparation of volunteers

Outgoing volunteers must be prepared well in advance of their departure to another country:

Role of the sending organization: Preparation should include;

Introduction to the voluntary movement / development education.

Introduction to attitudes fostering intercultural competence (refer to the CCIVS module on Cultural diversity), introduction to the volunteer's own culture and identity, and an introduction to conflict and conflict transformation (see general guidelines in annex 1; refer to the booklet "Conflict and volunteering"), as well as a brief introduction to the receiving country and region.

Volunteers should be reminded that it is their responsibility to collect more detailed information on their host country and culture and sources of information should be provided (web sites, bibliography).

Introduction to the projects including role and aim of projects, types of projects, socio-environment of the project.

Information on practical matters: health, money (including fees and other costs), insurance, visas, travel, local transport etc. Informing the hosting organization about the preparation the volunteer has received.

Role of the hosting organization:

Sending up-to-date relevant material, needed for the preparation of the volunteer, to the sending organization.

The preparation of a general information dossier that could be used over several years.

The organization of an In Country Orientation for the arriving volunteers to include basic language training.

The preparation of national volunteers going to international projects.

The organization of an *Evaluation Meeting* for the volunteers at the end of their project.

Drawing up guidelines for participating volunteers e.g. code of conduct, rules, safety etc.

5.- Evaluation

Sending organization

Organize an Evaluation Workshop for returned volunteers.

Send a summary of the evaluations to the hosting organization

Hosting Organization

Send information to the sending organization about the projects and the participation of the sending organization volunteers.

An Annual Evaluation of the exchange between partners should be made.

CCIVS GUIDELINES FOR INTER-REGIONAL VOLUNTEER EXCHANGE**ANNEX 1****General guidelines for how to deal constructively with conflicts in international voluntary service projects and organisations**

1. Openly acknowledge the existence of conflicts and see the potential of how they can be used as a vehicle for positive change.
2. Create an open, inclusive and democratic atmosphere, which allows problems to be identified before they escalate and negatively affect the work.
3. Ensure that communication is clear, open and non-violent in tone.
4. Include conflict and communication as major items in training and preparation of staff, leaders, and volunteers.
5. In situation of conflict, hear all sides and identify the issues and relationships involved, taking into account different cultural approaches.
6. Make full use of the CCIVS module on "Conflict and volunteering" and ensure that it is available.