

Healthy and inclusive Life – a path to a successful society Project - Iceland

This is a **Programme Countries EVS Project** with a hosting partner from Iceland, involving 2 Portuguese hosted volunteers, for 6 months. It is a health program in the way they not only have training and language orientation, but also some work in the field all over the country, according to the needs and different projects in the environment and sport areas. This will give them an excellent opportunity to know the country in great detail. They will be prepared for the work and finally there will be a phase of evaluation and planning for next season.

The volunteers carry out two distinctive tasks: the tasks of an International Workcamp's Leader and the tasks of an Environmental Messenger at SEEDS. The later will be responsible for organizing events and work that raise awareness in Iceland, about relevant environmental topics, etc. The first ones will, among others, be responsible for involving and motivating everyone in the activities, helping them feel comfortable, welcome, food management, etc.

This project will provide practice based methods which will enable the volunteers to have hands-on experience. Volunteers will be mentored and supported in their planning and executing their cultural dialogue and cultural skills development.

Volunteer profile

SEEDS are looking for volunteers having motivation for working with international groups; an interest in environmental and sustainability issues might be useful when developing activities for the groups.

Volunteer's enthusiasm and interest in order to engage with people, to work in teams but also willingness to accept personal responsibilities are highly appreciated. A readiness to work with flexibility in changing or developing situations is essential, as well as an ability to occasionally work in high-pressure situations. English language skills are of advantage. For the Environmental Messengers project they are additionally looking for volunteers with an active interest in conduction trainings on environmental education. Ethnic groups, religion, sexual orientation or political opinion are not taken into account. Guidelines are followed to ensure that their groups of volunteers are formed by a multicultural, international array of individuals and also to ensure that a gender and age balance are achieved. There are no specific qualifications or practical skills needed, as training will be given. Selection of candidates has been based on volunteer's motivations to join the project.

The work involved in this project:

Might be physically demanding and a reasonable level of physical fitness and health is required
Can be intensive and very demanding so both commitment and patience are required

Involves a lot of outdoor activities and, as weather conditions in Iceland are variable and often cold, they recommend volunteers to be prepared for harsh situations, to take with them warm, waterproof clothes and shoes. As working outdoors, they suggest volunteers to bring working and comfortable clothes as well as sturdy walking/hiking shoes/boots. A warm sleeping bag is a must.

It means travelling in Iceland very often. Volunteers shall be prepared to be moving around the country for at least 4 months, changing living conditions every 2 or 3 weeks as projects end and start again.

Projects

There will be a clear division of the EVS volunteers selected in this project in International Workcamp's Leaders and Environmental messengers. The selected volunteers for the International workcamp's project will be mainly in charge of leading the international workcamps at SEEDS, acting as a link between the Icelandic hosts and the international short term volunteers.

The project will be divided in 4 parts, training and language orientation (1), preparation for the work (2), work in the field (3) and evaluation and planning for next season (4). Volunteers will be in Reykjavik during stages 1 and 4, while 2 and 3 take place in different locations across Iceland, according to the needs and different projects in the environment and sport areas. Volunteers will then have the opportunity to experience Iceland in the capital but also to work and develop projects in different places and communities all around the country giving them an excellent opportunity to know the country in great detail.

The volunteers will be selected for one of these roles and carry it out throughout their project. Volunteers in the workcamps Leaders project and in the Environmental Messengers Project will both get the opportunity to carry out projects in the countryside, but the Environmental Messengers will conduct a considerably smaller amount of projects in the countryside, with many of their projects being located in Reykjavik.

The work in the field is extremely demanding and volunteers will be highly active, which requires a great deal of energy, enthusiasm, self initiative and ability to work under extreme conditions, travelling and moving very often, meeting new people and leaving them after relatively short time.

The different tasks are presented and given a priority, then the volunteers decide which ones they want to join or to do as their personal/group project

Conditions

Volunteers will stay in shared rooms in a house in Reykjavik and will return there for the breaks between the workcamps. The plan is that they stay at Eirikshus í Laugardal, a house that SEEDS has been renting since 2011, located inside Reykjavik Botanic in the valley of Laugardalur. The house has 5 sleeping rooms, living room, dining room, toilets, storage and laundry room. The size of the sleeping rooms range between 12 and 20 square meters. The house is 3000 meters away from SEEDS office, 2200 meters from Hlemmur bus station in downtown Reykjavik and 900 meters away from Icelandic National Agency. In the summer months, an additional apartment will be rented for the Long term volunteers to ensure that they can relax during their free time between camps. Volunteers are entitled to 2 days of holidays per every month of service at SEEDS, Usually, they are flexible on this specially when family or friends visit the volunteers while in Iceland. Food will be either provided by SEEDS, while volunteers find themselves in the accommodation in Reykjavik, or in the hosting projects during the different workcamps. Food shopping will be done according to SEEDS standard shopping list, ensuring that every volunteer has a balanced diet and the different needs of all volunteers are satisfied. The standard shopping list will be made in agreement with the volunteers, respecting their needs.

Domestic transport to the workcamps and back to the accommodation in Reykjavik will be provided by SEEDS. In the accommodation in Reykjavik SEEDS provides them with bicycles for their free time and local transport. During the workcamps in the countryside, volunteers stay there for a period of usually 2 weeks and no transport to Reykjavik is available

Pocket Money: 145€ per month

A certificate of Volunteering Service will be given to each participant (youthpass certificate).